

Long Branch Partners (LBP) Meeting Minutes (6/2)

❖ **Meeting Scheduled Start (3:30)**

➤ **Agenda**

- Updates on Needs
 - Are there any new or emerging needs you have seen arising in the community?
 - Are there any helps or resources that you or community members need help with that are not currently being addressed?
- Update on Resources and Programs
 - Rental Assistance Program through HOC
 - Economic Impact Payments
 - Microenterprise Stabilization Grants
- Volunteer Recruitment Tool
- Floor Open for Information Sharing

❖ **13 Attendees**

- Bruce B. - CHEER
- Christopher H. - CHEER
- Maureen L. – TESS Community Action Center
- Melissa F. – Community Action Agency
- Dayana M. - CentroNía
- Reemeberto R. - Director of Silver Spring Regional Center
- Febe H. – Montgomery County Public Libraries
- Sara M. – Impact Silver Spring
- Vanesa P. - CHEER
- Anthea L. - CHEER
- John B. - CHEER
- Emily L. - Community Health Advocates
- Maria H. – Spanish Speaking Community of Maryland

❖ **Overview of Agenda (3:40)**

- Updates on Needs
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❖ **Update on Needs**

➤ **Vanesa (3:43)**

- Would like to share some experiences from community members at free testing sites
 - A frequent experience is that for those with construction related jobs, they are required to get testing if they wish to go back to work

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- Did not have a good experience herself. Her husband, who works for a construction company went to get a test from a site at six flags in partnership with LabCorp; the testing site had the wrong phone number which prevented them [testing site] from getting in contact with her husband; they were told to open an account with LabCorp received some false information which made the process difficult
 - Recommends that if people can afford the \$120 fee to receive a test, they should because it will save time and will have a better chance of avoiding complications
- **Sara (3:50)**
- Impact's system for processing individuals with COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Individuals' name, address, and symptoms are entered
 - Information is sent to DHHS
 - Individual or family is then contacted to set up an appointment for "Go Team" to go to the home and complete testing
 - Nurse is then supposed to call family member to give results verbally
 - Individual or family will later receive their results in the mail
 - The \$120 fee for testing may be a lot for some people right now, but there are other options including calling 311 and Impact
- **Anthea (3:54)**
- Wondering how many people are suffering from job loss, or being prevented from returning to work because they are waiting for their test results
 - **Sara**
 - Everyone IMPACT tests have at least one symptom related to COVID-19
 - IMPACT does not conduct testing unless the person(s) are showing symptoms
 - **Maureen**
 - Is also hearing that employers are requesting a negative test to be produced before allowing employees to return to work
 - TESS Center is now able to refer people to get a test at home if they are not able to leave their home
 - ◆ TESS will ask for information including address, telephone number, and language needed in order to schedule an appointment
 - CVS and a few other places are able to complete testing
- **Bruce (3:59)**
- Food distribution is continuing
 - A number of people have had difficulty getting food because they are unable to go to a distribution site for various reasons
 - CHEER has identified families in Long Branch and Takoma Park who fall into this category and is working on delivering food to them
 - **Reemberto**
 - Last Saturday (5/30) held a "grab-and-go" event with Jesus House D.C. in downtown Silver Spring, great event
 - These events are being held every weekend
 - There will be an event held this Saturday (6/6) at Sligo and Piney Branch from 3-6 PM

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- In preparing for the event, calls came in from people who wanted to attend but could not
- Reemeberto and a few others were able to deliver goods to those who could not attend the event
- There is a big need to continue doing this
- **Maureen (4:03)**
 - This week the County opened an extension for food access programs
 - There is a team receiving referrals about people who cannot leave their homes to get food, apply for services like SNAP, etc.
 - ◆ Team is able to speak in 5 languages
- **Melissa (4:04)**
 - Included information from Monday's Food Access and Recovery group meeting in the chat
 - Shared a statewide number for Maryland Access Point for people who cannot leave their homes and need food delivered
 - Program was originally set up for seniors and people with disabilities but has since been expanded
 - Also included in the chat the number for the County's Aging and Disabilities Services

❖ Update on Resources and Programs

➤ Rental Assistance Program

- **Bruce (4:06)**
 - Administered through the Housing Opportunities Commission
 - Applications began being accepted on Monday and ends on Friday
 - There is an online portal for individuals to use to make and submit those applications
 - You have to be a legal immigrant to be eligible for this program

➤ Economic Impact Payments

- **Maureen (4:09)**
 - TESS, Impact Silver Spring and other private nonprofits can help people submit this application
 - Program is for people who do not have an income and did not receive any federal assistance
 - You DO NOT have to be a legal immigrant to be eligible for this program
 - A benefit of this program is that, for day laborers, the organization that is accepting the application can sign off on the applicant's proof of employment
- **Sara**
 - Impact has entered just over 200 people so far
 - Many people do not qualify because the income eligibility is 50% below the poverty level

➤ Microenterprise Stabilization Grants

- **Febe (4:11)**
 - Public Health Emergency Grant (PHEG) closed on the April 25th
 - It had over 6000 applications

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- Small businesses that meet the low-income limit with 5 employees or less can apply for this new grant
- Daily informational webinars are being held
- Applications will go live on June 10th and will only be open for a short period
- If a business is qualified and approved, they can receive up to \$10,000 dollars

❖ Volunteer Recruitment Tool

➤ Reemberto (4:15)

- Created a survey tool that can be distributed to volunteers
- Survey asks volunteer to identify how they can contribute, where they can contribute, and when they can contribute
- Following gas explosion in 2016, it was discovered that there was a desire among community members to help the community
- Reemberto, Bruce, and Sara modified this form, that was created in response to the desire to volunteer, so that it became relevant to the COVID-19 outbreak
- **Sara (4:20)**
 - Some of the volunteers that helped in 2016 have continued to volunteer and have developed close ties to community organizations
- **Anthea**
 - Is there a database where volunteer names are kept?
 - How can we call on these volunteers?
- **Reemeberto**
 - When people complete the survey, their answers automatically are entered into a spreadsheet that will be viewable by Long Branch Partners
- **Anthea**
 - If volunteers are needed this weekend, could they be called and asked to volunteer?
- **Reembeerto**
 - ◆ Yes
 - ◆ This tool is not replacing anything, it is simply a new tool that is available to connect people
- **Maureen (4:28)**
 - ◆ Would like to know who is tracking this tool?
 - ◆ Is it a Long Branch Partners tool?
 - ◆ Would like to be able to thank volunteers for their efforts
- **Bruce**
 - ◆ Potentially when an organization uses the list, they could report back how useful the tool had been for them
 - ◆ We could also have a column on the spreadsheet that describes who participated in what
- **John (4:30)**
 - ◆ Could have a column on the spreadsheet that asks “How did the volunteer help your organization” to simplify the tracking of what volunteers are doing, specifically.

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❖ Floor Open for Sharing

- **Maria (4:34)**
 - Would like to have access to a list of food banks that deliver direct-to-home
- **Bruce**
 - There is a link to Food Access Point in the chat with a list of organizations that deliver food directly to home
- **John**
 - We could have a section of the volunteer document that describes resources that Long Branch Partners do not offer but may need
 - **Bruce (4:38)**
 - Organizations typically have a list of resources on their website. In addition, we are currently putting together the “Needs Tool” which lists resources and services from all of the Long Branch Partners; this as well as meeting notes can be found on the Long Branch Partners webpage on Communitycheer.org → select “Partners” tab → select “Long Branch Partners”

❖ Next Meeting: Tuesday June 16th @ 3:30 PM

❖ Additional Resources:

- **844-627-5465 – Statewide number for Maryland Access Point**
- **240-777-3000 – Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Aging and Disability Services**
 - People 60 years and older and people with disabilities in need of food delivered to their homes can call these numbers
 - Additional information for seniors and people with disabilities can be found at www.marylandaccesspoint.info or by calling 211
- The following are two separate rent relief programs:
 - <https://www.hocmc.org/extra/878-covid-rental-assistance-program.html>
 - https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/RightNav/COVID19_RentReliefProgram.html
- <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/Biz-Resources/msp/> - link to Microenterprise Stabilization Grant