FIVE YEAR REPORT

203317















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HELEN J SERINI

















BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul A. Serini Founder and President

Susan Serini Founder and Treasurer

Kerry McHugh Secretary

Kevin McHughDirector

P. Alex Serini
Director

J. SeriniDirector

Robert Geis Director

STAFF

Paul A. Serini CEO

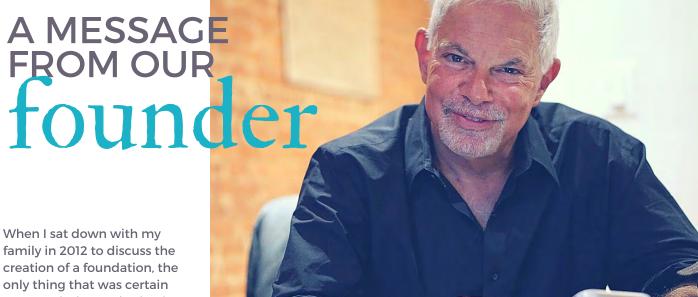
Lisa M. Clark Executive Director

Kerry McHugh Program Officer

ADVISORS

David Gilner

David Rosen



was our desire to give back.

We knew we wanted give back to our community, and to do so in a structured and formalized way. We were starting with a blank slate. We read much, learned much, and talked to many existing large and small foundations. It was inspiring. It was daunting.

It didn't take long for us to decide that we wanted to name the foundation after my late mother, Helen J. Serini. Though she passed away tragically in 2004, her legacy of giving and support has lived long past her. Our family attributes much of our personal, spiritual, and professional growth and happiness to the inspiration and mentoring my mother provided during her lifetime.

It's important to note, however, that though my mother was exceptionally generous, she was never wealthy. Her gifts were of the classic "small but mighty" tradition, as she looked for ways to stretch her dollars in her personal philanthropy just as she did at the grocery store. So, it seems fitting, though somewhat unintended at the outset, that the foundation that exists in her name has continued that tradition.

That strong desire to stretch our dollars for greater impact is reflected in our new mission statement, which

Though we are but one foundation, and one family, we are excited to do all we can to help address our community's most pressing problems.

is outlined in the pages to come. It's also reflected in the work of the many grant partners highlighted in this report. And it's become an integral part of our approach as much as our focus, as we look for ways to support our grant partners beyond just dollars.

I serve as Board Chair and President. but I am also father and friend to our board members, and in each of those roles, I am proud to see the board of the Helen J. Serini Foundation doing the hard but rewarding work of getting more deeply involved with the organizations we fund -- be it wrapping presents at an after-school holiday fair, volunteering as literacy tutors, helping plan and draft marketing strategies, or serving on the boards of start-up organization.

In addition to highlighting this type of beyond-check-writing support, this report attempts to detail our strong belief in the importance of general operating support and capacity building. We recognize, as funders, that we can't achieve our mission unless the organizations we fund can

achieve theirs. We also recognize that it is impossible to achieve those missions, as important as they may be, without unrestricted funding to allow for creative solutions to our communities' most pressing problems. Just as it's impossible to solve those problems without the infrastructure. organizational capacity, and staff required to do so.

We look forward to partnering with organizations who are as hungry for meaningful change as we are, and we strive to provide flexible, creative funding options to allow those organizations to grow, adapt, and advance their own solutions.

We live in one of the richest nations in the world, vet our communities are challenged by embarrassing levels of extreme poverty, and persistent economic, racial and social inequity. Though we are but one foundation, and one family, we are excited to do all we can to help address these challenges.

> Paul Serini Founder and President



Through our grantmaking activities, board service, and volunteerism, we aim to change the systems of poverty in our communities.

The Helen J. Serini Foundation was founded in 2012, and began formal operations in 2013. In our early years, we approached our work through the lens of youth and families. In 2017, we took a step back to examine the work we'd done to date, process feedback received from our grant partners and the communities we aim to serve, and reflect on how we could best effect change Following an intensive strategic planning process, we articulated our vision:

We envision thriving communities where all people live healthy, dignified lives regardless of means or identity.

And how will we get there? By partnering with organizations like yours. Organizations who demonstrate an appetite for collaboration and partnership, who solicit input from their communities and champion solutions that are constituent-driven, who work to change systems and address root causes of cyclical poverty and inequity.

Which brings us to our new mission statement:

The Helen J. Serini Foundation supports innovative interventions that remove or address the root causes of systemic barriers to health, safety, shelter and opportunity in the communities where we work and live.

Support doesn't just mean funding. Our mission statement will guide not only our grantmaking decisions, but our allocation of staff and board time.

Across our communities (Anne Arundel County, Frederick County, Baltimore County, and Baltimore City) we aim to go beyond dollars to support nonprofit work as best we can. After all, we can't achieve our mission if you can't achieve yours.

We believe wholeheartedly in the power of nonprofits to change the world we live in today, which is why we offer capacity building and leadership development grants as well as traditional general operating support and project-specific grants. It's also why we're open to supporting advocacy in our work. We are excited to see what the next five years brings, and the five years after that.



\$913,248 in lifetime

134

Total grants made between 2013-2017



56 nonprofit training events shared on the foundation's blog



Over 200 volunteer hours with grant partners



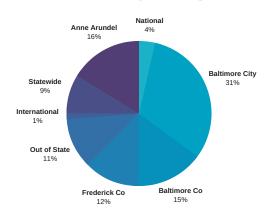
Over 1,200 staff hours spent supporting nonprofit capacity beyond dollars

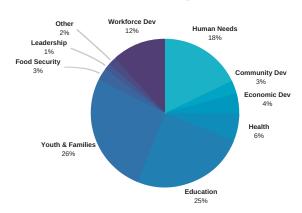
what we've funded

The Helen J. Serini Foundation has issued 134 grants over the past five years totaling \$913,248.

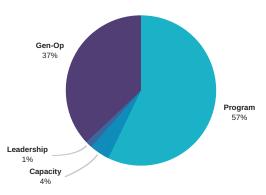
Dollars Awarded by Geographic Area

Dollars Awarded by Issue Area





Dollars Awarded by Type of Grant



Note that grant history includes grants made prior to our shift in mission in 2017, so may not be reflective of future funding priorities

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

The Light House ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND



Since 1989, The Light House has provided emergency shelter, transitional housing, homelessness prevention, and related support services to people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness in Anne Arundel County. The Light House is a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week program that provides a structured environment in combination with professional clinical services to support and promote behavioral change and recovery, while empowering clients to gain the tools towards self-sufficiency. Each client progresses through the program via a variety of services including individual and group services, that are tailored

according to his or her needs and capacities. Interpersonal and group living skills are promoted through community activities. Beyond providing food, clothing, and shelter, The Light House also addresses the underlying causes of homelessness such as lack of marketable job skills, addiction, and the debilitating effects of both mental and physical health issues. The organization offers a number of programs and services, available to both residential and community clients, including: Housing Assistance, Employment Training; and Support Services, such as Case Management and Educational Programs.

In fiscal year 2017, The Light House staff and over 1,200 volunteers provided emergency shelter as well as transitional and supportive housing apartments that served 248 adults and children. Through the donations of food and volunteer labor, the Food Pantry Program distributed 37,834 bagged lunches, 85,000 pounds of donated food, 9,800 hot breakfasts, 18,783 hot lunches, and 20,040 dinners.



In 2017, The Light House opened the Light House Bistro. Located at the location of the previous shelter at 202 West Street in downtown Annapolis, the Bistro is a revenue-generating social enterprise project that supports the ongoing workforce development and housing programs at The Light House.

Since opening in February of 2017, Light House Bistro has hired over 50 graduates of their B.E.S.T. Culinary Program, and the top floor of their 202 West Street property also includes four permanent supportive housing apartments for homeless men.

FreeState Justice



FreeState Justice provides legal services for low-income LGBTQ residents across Maryland and strives for systemic solutions that impact LGBTQ Marylanders of all income levels.

In their most recent fiscal year, FreeState Justice fielded more than 400 requests for assistance; opened over 160 client cases (and closed another 170); grew their panel of pro bono lawyers to more than 230, who then contributed more than 750 pro bono legal hours on 61 cases. Additionally, the client cases represented by FreeState Justice's in-house representation provided the opportunity to set precedent and expand inclusionary policies in both healthcare and school policies regarding treatment of transgender persons. FreeState Justice launched the Youth Equality Alliance (YEA) in 2013, a coalition that works to identify issues faced by Maryland's LGBTQ students and develops policy solutions to those issues.

Banner Neighborhoods BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

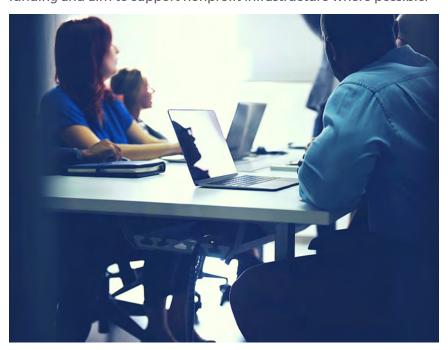


Banner Neighborhoods is a community-based non-profit that has helped stabilize the neighborhoods of East & Southeast Baltimore since 1982. After years of population loss, many neighborhoods in Baltimore suffer from decades of divestment, resulting in thousands of abandoned homes and vacant structures; a lack of recreation centers for families and children; and a need for educational and enrichment opportunities for youth.

Banner's programs work to reverse these trends by promoting resident-based leadership, neighborhood pride and stability, and providing direct services that contribute to the overall viability of Baltimore City. They offer a variety of youth-centric programs, including a homework help and literacy achievement program, art club, workforce training, and entrepreneurial skills training. Each year, Banner's unique community programming directly touches the lives of hundreds of Baltimore residents.

general operating support

Of the 134 grants issued to date, 37% were general operating support. We understand the importance of flexible, unrestricted funding and aim to support nonprofit infrastructure where possible.



For some time now, the nonprofit sector has been dogged by the "overhead myth" -- the dangerous idea that financial ratios (and specifically the ratio of administrative costs versus program costs) can be used as an indicator of nonprofit success.

At the Helen J. Serini Foundation, we believe that flexible, unrestricted dollars are crucial to the success of our grant partners, and strive to offer general operating support grants wherever possible and appropriate. We understand the need to "keep the lights on" and intend to use our grantmaking dollars to support nonprofit infrastructure wherever possible.

Moreover, we believe that a successful nonprofit is the result of the people that work within it and for it, and maintain that a healthy, livable work environment—which includes hiring enough staff to complete the job at hand, and paying that staff appropriately—is the only way to sustain that success over time.

Put another way: we love giving general operating grants, and we love hearing how those grants are used over time to meet a nonprofit's everchanging and adapting needs. While we do consider financial ratios in reviewing any proposal, those ratios are only one very small part of our evaluation.

capacity building

Our grant partners told us that capacity and professional development were ongoing concerns in their organizations. So we designated funding specifically to support those needs.

Since our inception, we have offered both general operating (see page 8) and program-specific support grants. In 2015, after hearing from our grant partners and our communities that capacity issues continued to be of concern, we added capacity building grants to our portfolio. These grants can be used for any capacity project an organization wants to undertake, such as a website overhaul, a strategic planner, technology upgrades.

But we understand that the need for capacity goes beyond technology, evaluation, or other traditional capacity tactics. At the end of the day, it's the capacity of the individuals within an organization that make up the capacity of an organization, and we wanted to invest in those people.

In 2017, we piloted a small Leadership Development grants program, offering individual grants of up to \$1500 to be used for professional development of organizational staff or volunteers. The budget for this program was exhausted a mere three weeks after the program was announced, and we continued to be flooded with additional requests, leading us to double the size of the program for 2018. Additionally, we encourage our board and staff to support non-profit capacity by sharing their time

talents where useful and appropriate. To date, we have provided support for several grant partner websites, volunteered for marketing and development committees, and served on boards of community non-profits, in addition to partnering with others on non-profit educational opportunities in each of our geographic areas.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Baltimore Community ToolBank





The Baltimore Community ToolBank stewards an inventory of tools for lending to charitable organizations to increase the impact of their mission-related efforts in the community. Gone are the days when your volunteers stand around waiting for an extra shovel or rake to be able to jump in and help.

Now—whether it's a school playground, a community garden or an abandoned lot that needs some extra attention—community partner groups have enough tools and equipment to focus on their important work in service to others. In addition to

providing crucial tools, materials, and resources to community-based groups, the ToolBank remains committed to dynamic sustainability practices at its location in the Carroll-Camden Industrial Park, as evidenced by two rain gardens featuring native plants and the new Stormwater Factory, which collects stormwater to be used for native habitats and tool cleaning.

There are now nine ToolBank locations across the country. In addition, two mobile units deploy to disaster areas in the domestic US in times of need. In 2017, these mobile units deployed to Texas and

Florida in the wake of devastating hurricanes. Two staff members from the Baltimore ToolBank also deployed to Houston to aid in the effort.

The ToolBank is a vital resource in the growing non-profit landscape in Baltimore and beyond. By the close of 2017, the organization had filled more than 850 orders for over 230 community partners, loaning the equivalent of 1.95 million dollars' worth of tools for just pennies on the dollar. More than 52,000 volunteers put ToolBank tools to work to achieve their most ambitious community goals.

Youth Empowered Society BALTIMORE, MARYLAND





The Youth Empowered Society (YES) Drop-In Center is Baltimore City's first and only drop-in center for homeless youth. YES offers a safe space for youth who are homeless between the ages of 14-25 to get basic needs met and establish supportive relationships with peer (formerly homeless) and allied (without homeless experience) staff. YES grew out of the work of the Baltimore Homeless Youth Initiative (BHYI) Youth Leaders, a group of youth with personal experiences of homelessness that formed as an arm of the BHYI Coalition to help set its direction during 2009-10. Among other priorities, they identified the need for and worked to create a comprehensive, one-stop-shop drop-in center for youth, located in a central location, and staffed by

formerly homeless young adults with whom the youth could relate. This vision was realized when YES opened its doors in 2012.

As an organization founded and run by formerly homeless youth and their allies, YES works to end youth homelessness in Baltimore by (1) providing urgently-needed direct services to youth experiencing homelessness, (2) developing the leadership and employment readiness of youth who have experienced homelessness, and (3) engaging in system-level reform.

YES staff work hard to build and sustain trusting relationships with youth who, through their lived

experience, have learned to be guarded. Both peer and allied staff reinforce the role of supportive relationships in establishing stability. These relationships offer a platform for YES's case management and connection to long-term resources. In 2016 alone, YES served 212 youth through more than 4,500 contacts and coordinated over 500 sessions between youth and visiting practitioners. Among many other activities, YES assisted youth in applying for public benefits, insurance, and identity documents; connected youth with mental health services, job readiness training and/or employment opportunities; provided education assistance, housing assistance, and driver's ed; and conducted a trauma recovery group.

Mental Health Association of Frederick County FREDERICK, MARYLAND





The Mental Health Association (MHA) of Frederick County supports the community through mental health education and advocacy. The organization envisions a future where children can grow and thrive without fear, where good mental health is valued, where people of all ages know when and how to seek help for emotional or family problems without shame, and where everyone will have access to mental health services without barriers.

MHA builds a strong foundation of emotional wellness for our community by preparing resilient children (kids with the mental and emotional strength to face life's challenges); supporting

vulnerable families (ensuring safe environments and supportive relationships for children in troubled situations); and facing crises together (MHA stands ready to help individuals through suicidal thoughts, incidents of abuse, and other life changing crises).

Within MHA, the Foundation supports the Systems Navigation program. Systems Navigation is a free service to assist parents and children (under the age of 21) with multiple or intensive needs related to behavior, development, school, health or mental health, to navigate the services available in Frederick County. Systems Navigators identify the needs and strengths of each family and then address barriers to accessing resources and services, working

collaboratively with other agencies to meet each family's unique needs. Navigators stay connected with families until the stress is reduced and the need is fully met. In 2016, MHA served a total of 81 families in the Systems Navigation program, with families consistently reporting a high level of satisfaction with the services received.

One participant in the program said of working with his navigator: "She was able to connect me to a world of services. But she was also there for my daughter. Our life has changed in a positive way. I've had someone that's held me accountable, someone that who reaches out to both of us. That's changed so much of my life."

ANNUAL GRANTS LIST

\$172,701 | 32 Grants

Adoptions Together American Diabetes Association Anne Arundel County Volunteer Center Ausherman Family Foundation Baltimore Community ToolBank Baltimore Urban Debate League Believe Big Challengers Independent Living Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership (2)

Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County

Downtown Frederick Partnership FreeState Justice Friends of Patterson Park

Give Back Yoga Foundation Homeless Persons Representation Project Humanim, Inc.

Humanim, Inc., City Seeds Program Improving Education, fiscally sponsored by Strong City Baltimore

Literacy Council of Frederick County Maryland Center on Economic Policy Maryland Environmental Health Network, fiscally sponsored by Association of

Baltimore Area Grantmakers Mental Health Association of Frederick

County, Systems Navigation Parks and People Foundation, BRANCHES Pigtown Main Street

Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs, Case Management for Homeless Families

Special Olympics Maryland Thread

University of Baltimore Foundation, Children and the Courts Truancy Program

University of Maryland College Park Foundation, 2017 Mission of Mercy and Health Equity Festival

Weinberg Center for the Arts, 2018 Frederick Speaker Series

Youth Empowered Society (YES), fiscally sponsored by Strong City Baltimore

American Diabetes Association Baltimore Green Space Banner Neighborhoods Community

Chesapeake Challengers Independent Living Charm City Youth Lacrosse

County
Courtney's House
Creating Communities Corporation

Frederick County Public Schools

Housing Authority of the City of Frederick Irvine Nature Center, Urban Education

Literacy Council of Frederick County Literacy Council of Frederick County, Database Improvement Project Maryland New Directions

Parks and People Foundation, BRANCHES
Paul's Place, Children & Youth Programs

Homeless Families Rob's Barbershop Community Foundation, The Woodland Grooming Project

Yoga Alliance Foundation Youth Empowered Society (YES), fiscally sponsored by Strong City Baltimore

\$259,034 | 35 Grants

All Saints Community Service and Development Corporation, Jubilee Center

American Diabetes Association Believe Big Broadview Community Playground

Bouncing Bulldogs
The Catholic University of America
Columbus School of Law, Securities Program

Challengers Independent Living The Community of Curtis Bay Association, Summer Youth Grant

Courtney's House, Drop-in Services Creating Communities Corporation DonorsChoose.org, Glyndon Elementary School

DonorsChoose.org, Hillcrest Elementary DonorsChoose.org, Walter P. Carter Elementary School

Dyslexia Tutoring Program, Summer Camp Enoch Pratt Free Library, Family Reading Circles

Foodshare, Inc. Friends of Great Kids Farm

Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Chesapeake, CTE Programming

The Hampden Family Center, After School Enrichment Program

Hands Across the Sea Literacy Council of Frederick County Mariposa Child Success Programs National Aquarium, Aquarium on Wheels and Henry Hall Summer Camps

The Odyssey School

Paul's Place, Ambassador Program Rob's Community Barbershop Foundation, Phoenix Academy Grooming Project

Rude Ranch Animal Rescue Smith Medical Clinic

St. Coletta of Greater Washington, Healthy Lunch Program
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore

Stonehill College, Paula Ann Hiltz Memorial Scholarship

Teen Challenge of Baltimore, Inc. TurningPoint Breast Cancer Rehabilitation Wheeling Jesuit University, Cristo Rey

Summer Academy Program
YMCA of Frederick County, Reach and Rise Youth Mentoring



Dyslexia Tutoring Program
Esophageal Cancer Action Network

The Light House, B.E.S.T. Catering Van The Odyssey School Peninsula Habitat for Humanity Susan G. Komen Foundation Odyssey Youth Marine Training Program YPI Summer Camp for the Creative Arts

9 Grants

Anne Arundel Community College Foundation, Al Johnston Memorial Scholarship Anne Arundel Medical Center Foundation, Pathways Alcohol and

Drug Treatment Center Creating Communities Corporation Dyslexia Tutoring Program Enoch Pratt Free Library Friends of the Light House

Seattle Community College Foundation, Spike Perry Memorial Scholarship Mariposa Child Success Programs Peebles Hospital, NICU Expansion*

Because The Helen J Serini Foundation did not begin full activities until late 2013, arantmakina for this calendar year was limited.

WHAT'S NEXT

Want to work together? Here's what we're planning for the coming year:

We have two grant programs planned for 2018: Major Grants (over \$5,000) and Leadership Development (capped at \$1,500).

LOIs are required for any organization seeking Major Grant funding, though unsolicited LOIs are welcome and encouraged. We are particularly looking for organizations whose work addresses the systemic issues surrounding poverty and economic inequality, and those who demonstrate a strong commitment to partnership—with funders, yes, but also with other non-profits, and most importantly, with the communities they aim to serve. Major Grants will be considered for

General Operating, Capacity Building and/or Program-Specific Support.

Additionally, the Foundation will renew the Leadership Development grants program piloted in 2017, allocating twice the budget to the program for 2018. This program provides financial support for individuals working in nonprofits who are seeking professional development in their industry, field or area of expertise.

More information on both grant programs, including eligibility requirements and how to apply, is available at www.hjsfoundation.org.

Within our grantmaking programs, the Foundation remains committed to reducing the paperwork burden on grantseekers as much as possible. To this end, we've implemented Guidestar for Grant

Applications (G4G) in our grant forms, allowing applicants to auto-populate much of the narrative portion of a proposal with existing Guidestar content. We're also looking at how to streamline our reporting processes to provide more and better opportunities for conversation and dialogue.

Outside of our traditional grantmaking activities, we remain committed to investing our time and talent in the capacity of our nonprofit communities. To that end, we are excited to once again be partnering with the Ausherman Family Foundation and other funders in Frederick to present the Frederick County Nonprofit Summit in March 2018, and to continue to work with the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County (CFAAC), the Association of Baltimore-Area Grantmakers (ABAG), and others to bring nonprofit educational opportunities to our communities. We'll continue to share news around these and other training opportunities on our blog at hisfoundation.org/news.

Last, but certainly not least, we are investigating ways to convene our grant partners for conversation and connection across issue areas, geographies, and organizational size. We are so privileged to be given the opportunity to learn from and partner with each and every organization we fund, and we want to share that opportunity with others.

Here's to an incredible 2018. We are looking forward to working together to fight for equity and opportunity for all and effect positive change in our communities.









2018 GRANT CYCLE DEADLINES

1/20: Letters of Inquiry due
3/10: Invitations to submit
proposals sent
4/15: Proposals due
6/15: Notification of
proposal acceptance or
declination

6/30: Letters of Inquiry due
8/25: Invitations to submit
proposals sent
9/30: Proposals due
11/15: Notification of
proposal acceptance or
declination

KEEP IN TOUCH

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Stay up to date on foundation news, announcements, grant opportunities, application instructions, and educational events at www.hjsfoundation.org.

