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Baltimore & St. Mary's County

**NATIONAL  
HEALTH  
POLICY  
FORUM**

## Site Visit Report

# Welfare Reform in Maryland: Flexibility in Action

The  
George  
Washington  
University  
WASHINGTON DC

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### **Site Visit Managers**

Jennifer M. Ryan, *NHPF Staff*  
Lynda Fox, *Consultant*

### **Site Visit Coordinator**

Dagny Shiells

### **National Health Policy Forum**

2131 K Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington DC 20037

202/872-1390

202/862-9837 [fax]

[nhpf@gwu.edu](mailto:nhpf@gwu.edu) [e-mail]

[www.nhpf.org](http://www.nhpf.org) [web site]

**Judith Miller Jones** – *Director*

**Judith Moore** – *Co-Director*

**Michele Black** – *Publications Director*

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The Forum would especially like to recognize Lynda Fox, the former director of Maryland’s Department of Human Resources, who worked as a consultant on the site visit. Lynda’s time and energy in developing the agenda—as well as her close relationships with key individuals throughout the state—played a critical role in ensuring a successful program and a warm reception at all of the sites that were visited.

Several people were kind enough to host on-site meetings, allowing site visitors to interact with a variety of front-line staff as well as current and former customers of the state’s Family Investment Program. For their hospitality, the Forum thanks Barbara Gradet and the staff of the Baltimore County Department of Social Services; Ayesha Bajwa, director of the Young Parents Support Center, and the group there that prepared our delicious lunch; Betsy McCaul and the staff at CASAWORKS; Joe Jones and the staff at the Center for Fathers, Families and Workforce Development; and Ella Mae Russell and the staff of the St. Mary’s County Department of Social Services.

The Forum would also like to thank Charles Henry, Will Kincannon, and Tekisha Everett and the staff at the Family Investment Administration for their assistance with planning and for providing materials for the site visit briefing book. Finally, thanks to Bill Walker, Patti Mannion, David Engle and Rob Hart for traveling to St. Mary’s County from distant parts of Maryland to participate in the site visit. As always, we appreciate the interest, enthusiasm and thoughtful discussions generated by our federal site visitors.

# Welfare Reform in Maryland: Flexibility in Action

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## BACKGROUND

The state of Maryland provides a dynamic look at local flexibility in action. It is one of only a few states that have almost entirely devolved programmatic decision-making and administration to the county level. With state-established priorities as a guide, county departments of social services have broad flexibility to establish policies and leverage funding, which enables them to best serve their individual communities. Because of this unusual structure, Maryland's Family Investment Program provides an opportunity to illustrate the differing needs of urban, suburban, and rural service delivery in a diverse state.

The Family Investment Program was created by the Welfare Innovation Act of 1996. Administered by the state agency renamed the Family Investment Administration, the program has been in operation since October 1, 1996. Caseloads have dropped by nearly 80 percent outside the Baltimore metropolitan area, and combined state and local efforts have resulted in a 67.5 percent cash assistance caseload decline across the state. (Caseloads increased slightly during the economic downturn that began in July 2001, but enrollment has since leveled off.)

Like many other states, Maryland has worked continuously to improve the program to better serve families and to maximize a wide variety of resources and funding streams. And the Maryland General Assembly has demonstrated its commitment to welfare reform by amending the Welfare Innovation Act each year in support of the Family Investment Administration's efforts. "Life After Welfare," a study conducted by Catherine Born, Ph.D., at the University of Maryland School of Social Work, has found that, after one year, most families who have left the cash assistance caseload are working, are financially better off, and have not generally returned to welfare.

## ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL— LOCAL FLEXIBILITY IN ACTION

The Family Investment Program provides services through local departments of social services in 24 jurisdictions with more than 50 satellite offices located throughout the state. The involvement of business and other community partners has been a key component of the program's success, particularly in the rural areas of the state. In addition, the state and local agencies have shifted their focus from reducing caseloads to providing supportive services to low-income families that help them achieve and sustain self-sufficiency.

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Maryland has assigned addictions specialists to each local department of social services to conduct substance abuse screening.

## KEY STATE POLICIES

Individuals seeking assistance through the Family Investment Program are given an assessment of their family circumstances in order to determine what, if any, barriers to employment may exist. Caseworkers then determine an appropriate course of assistance, and families may receive one or more of the following types of service, if eligible:

■ **Welfare Avoidance Grant (WAG)** – A one-time, cash assistance grant is awarded to assist families in addressing immediate needs, such as car repairs or a security deposit for an apartment. Families who accept WAGs are ineligible for temporary cash assistance.

■ **Child Care and Medicaid** – In lieu of cash assistance, families receive child care and are enrolled in the state's Medicaid program for three months. At the end of that period, if the parent finds employment, extended child care and Medicaid are provided, as long as the family has a child under age 13. These benefits are funded through child care and Medicaid, rather than through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

■ **Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)** – If the assessment of needs reveals that the family's circumstances merit assistance beyond supportive services, the Family Investment Program provides cash assistance payments in the amount of \$472 for a family of three, adjusted annually for inflation. (Maryland is the only state to increase its cash grants to account for cost-of-living increases.)

## Identifying Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is widely recognized as one of the most significant barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. In response, the state has assigned addictions specialists to each local department of social services to conduct substance abuse screening and refer individuals for testing and treatment as appropriate. The addictions specialists also track TCA customers' status to ensure that their needs are being adequately addressed. Preliminary results from June through November 2001 indicate that 11 percent of customers screened were referred for further substance abuse assessment, and 84 percent of those assessed were referred for treatment.

## Disregards

Once an individual finds unsubsidized employment, Maryland disregards 35 percent of the person's earnings, allowing him or her to augment earnings with TCA supports. In addition, the Family Investment Program allows a deduction of \$200 per child per month from earnings for out-of-pocket child care expenses. The state also disregards a car of any value and other assets up to a value of \$2,000, recognizing the need for transportation to work and to child care providers. This

policy appears to be in line with the overall goal of providing a system of support for families that will enable them to maintain their self-sufficiency on a long-term basis.

### **Fatherhood and Family Formation**

Like many other states, Maryland has made several efforts to remove barriers to marriage and the establishment of two-parent families. The state and the local departments of social services have established and implemented several father-focused initiatives intended to enhance the capacity of noncustodial parents to provide emotional and financial support for their children. More than 2,000 low-income fathers have been served in these types of programs. In addition, the state has waived the “100-hour rule” that previously limited access to medical and financial assistance for two-parent families if the principal wage earner was working more than 100 hours a month. Waiving this rule enables both parents to work and to stay in the same household and still receive benefits. It should be noted, however, that the state has not elected to provide a “pass-through” of child support payments, which would enable families to keep money collected for child support, rather than turn it over to the county as a repayment for TCA benefits.

### **Medicaid/SCHIP**

Maryland has had significant success in enrolling families in the state’s Medicaid and children’s health insurance programs. On July 1, 2001, the state implemented its latest expansion to provide health coverage to children and families up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level (\$54,300 for a family of four). One of only a few states to extend eligibility to parents of children enrolled in the State Children’s Health Insurance Program, Maryland has emerged as a leader in innovation of health programs as well.

### **GOALS OF THE SITE VISIT**

Among the goals of this site visit were the following:

- To gain an understanding of how Maryland has implemented TANF and how it has used a unique system of local flexibility to develop programs that meet the needs of each distinct population.
- To demonstrate how TANF funding can leverage other community resources and better serve families.
- To better understand how significant barriers—such as substance abuse—can affect families and prevent them from achieving and/or maintaining self-sufficiency.
- To provide another state’s perspective on welfare reform and to highlight issues that many states continue to struggle with, placing them in the context of TANF reauthorization.

**More than 2,000 low-income fathers have been served by Maryland’s fatherhood initiatives.**

## **PROGRAM**

During the course of this site visit to Baltimore and St. Mary's County, 17 federal policymakers participated in discussions and tours that provided an in-depth view of welfare reform in a diverse state. The program covered a wide range of topics, including substance abuse treatment, fatherhood, and family support initiatives. Site visitors also saw how a variety of funding sources have been leveraged to meet individual community needs.

In an attempt to address the stated priorities of the group of site visitors—many of whom had attended one or more of the three previous welfare reform site visits in the past year—the program was made up primarily of on-site sessions at locations in the areas visited, with less time spent at a headquarters hotel. In addition, the agenda was developed with the goal of covering policy issues that had either not been covered during the previous site visits or had emerged during a past visit as needing further exploration.

The site visit opened on the afternoon of Wednesday, February 20, in Washington, D.C. Speakers from the state's Family Investment Administration, the University of Maryland, and the advocate community presented a history and overview of Maryland's programs and outlined successes and challenges that have arisen since implementation began in October of 1996.

The program continued on Thursday morning with a bus departure from Washington to several locations around the Baltimore metropolitan area. The first stop was in Essex, Maryland, a northeastern suburb of Baltimore. There, site visitors learned about From the Ground Up, a pilot program developed to test the "work-first" philosophy for welfare reform. From there, the group toured the Young Parents Support Center and enjoyed lunch prepared by several of the individuals involved in the parenting, nutrition, and GED/work preparation programs sponsored by the center. Participants had an opportunity to talk with many of the women and their children, as well as the center's staff, in an informal setting.

Next, the program moved into inner-city Baltimore, where the group visited CASAWORKS, an outpatient substance abuse treatment program for women. Site visitors heard personal stories from four women who were at various stages of recovery from many years of substance abuse and learned about the successes and challenges of establishing self-sufficiency. Thursday's final stop was at the Center for Fathers, Families, and Workforce Development, where site visitors heard a presentation from the program's director and from several fathers who have been working to develop employment skills and parenting skills that will help them become more effective participants in their children's lives.

At dinner on Thursday evening, participants had a candid discussion with the current and former co-chairmen of the Joint Committee on Welfare Reform in the Maryland General Assembly. Their presentations covered a range of key TANF reauthorization issues, both specific to Maryland and national in scope.

The bus departed Friday morning for St. Mary's County, a rural area of southwestern Maryland where the county administrators have taken a holistic approach to supporting families, leveraging a variety of funding sources to accomplish the task. Site visitors heard from the team responsible for ensuring that families have access to all of the community programs for which they are eligible. The group also visited a local child care center and mobile health van that provides preventive care to children around the county. Finally, site visitors heard from several of St. Mary's County's community partners and completed their visit with a panel discussion among the leaders of Allegany, Somerset, and Washington Counties' departments of social services, which serve rural parts of the state.

## IMPRESSIONS

### Overall

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*The success of the Family Investment Program is rooted in the state's commitment to providing local flexibility to create programs, establish relationships, and leverage funding with community partners in order to best serve families.*

Presenters from all perspectives confirmed the importance of local flexibility in serving communities. Although a locally driven administrative structure creates some difficulty for the state in managing policy implementation, the high level of trust and frequent communication between the state and the county administrators seems to create a comfort level for all involved. This was particularly evident in the rural parts of the state, where significantly smaller caseloads provide an even greater opportunity for creativity.

*As in many other states, the majority of individuals still receiving TCA in Maryland are those who are "hard to serve."*

These families need more significant case management and supportive services and often have multiple barriers to employment that cannot be easily remedied. The state has taken steps—by strengthening the initial assessments that determine if an individual is work-ready—to identify and address major barriers such as substance abuse, mental illness, or a lack of housing.

WAGs have assisted 30,000 families by meeting immediate needs—such as car repairs or a security deposit on an apartment—rather than enrolling them directly in TCA.

### Diversion Strategies

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*Maryland implemented a modified “work first” philosophy, combining an emphasis on job search and training activities with a network of other supports provided with the help of community partners.*

Maryland has taken a fairly comprehensive approach toward employment, focusing on sustainability and increasing total family income, but recognizing the need to address barriers before placing unrealistic expectations on individuals. Baltimore County implemented a strategy that combines mandatory and rapid labor force attachment with support “packages” that include tax credit information, a Medicaid application form, food stamps, and child care vouchers. The county’s data show that this strategy has significantly reduced the rate of recidivism (to 9 percent after 12 months) and increased job retention (to 70 percent after 90 days).

*The state’s use of one-time Welfare Avoidance Grants has been an effective diversion strategy.*

WAGs have assisted 30,000 families by meeting immediate needs—such as car repairs or a security deposit on an apartment—rather than enrolling them directly in TCA. The ability of local departments of social services to access these funds has proven to be an advantage over states that have more restrictive policies around accessing emergency assistance funds.

*While most families who leave TCA for employment do not return, they continue to live fragile lives, often with earnings that do not bring them above the federal poverty level.*

Seventy-five percent of families had not returned to TCA one year after leaving; however, little is known about these families’ employment status or financial situation. Only half of leavers are working in jobs covered by the unemployment insurance system, and their incomes are still below the poverty line, even several years after leaving the cash assistance rolls. The state has struggled to assist the 25 percent of families who do return in need of assistance within the year, attempting to address often debilitating barriers to employment.

### Key FIP Policies

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*Maryland’s use of a state-sponsored earned income disregard has enabled many families to move ahead more quickly.*

The state’s policy of allowing customers engaged in part-time work to have 35 percent of their earnings disregarded when calculating

eligibility and benefit levels has been shown to be a successful strategy in moving families toward self-sufficiency. This supports the argument that families need continued support while working their way up the employment ladder.

*The debate over family caps on cash assistance payments continues to be politically charged and difficult to implement effectively.*

After a great deal of heated discussion in the state legislature, Maryland enacted the “child specific benefit,” crafted as an alternative to a “family cap” on cash assistance. If a TCA customer has a child after being enrolled in the program for 10 months, the state does not provide an increase in the cash benefit to account for that child. The child’s portion of the benefit can be paid only to a third party to support the child. Critics of this policy say that it does little more than confuse families and create administrative hassles.

*Maryland is one of only a handful of states that provide a refundable state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to supplement the federal EITC.*

While often underutilized, the EITC provides an important financial support to low-income families.

*Education as a work activity continues to be a topic of debate.*

Providing GED classes for TCA customers appears to be a logical first step toward employment and the primary goal for many of the women, as illustrated in Baltimore as well as in the rural areas. This issue will likely continue to come to the fore as the national welfare reauthorization debate heats up.

*A lack of affordable housing continues to be a major issue for low-income families.*

The absence of this important element of stability only exacerbates the many barriers to employment. Coordination of eligibility requirements and communication between departments seem to be the clearest problems beyond the basic issue of availability of safe and economically accessible housing.

### **Substance Abuse Treatment**

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*Substance abuse is one of the most debilitating and pervasive barriers to self-sufficiency for low-income women, both in Maryland and across the country.*

**Providing GED classes for TCA customers appears to be a logical first step toward employment and the primary goal for many of the women.**

Fathers who achieve milestones, such as completing job training, becoming employed, and making current child support payments, are forgiven a portion of the state share of past-due child support.

*The state has mandated that individual assessments for customers include interviews with state-funded addictions specialists, which are now housed in each district office.*

This very unusual commitment by the state has significantly increased the ability to identify and address substance abuse as a barrier to self-sufficiency.

*While employment can play a critical role in recovery, a comprehensive approach has proven to be both necessary and effective.*

Programs that incorporate substance abuse treatment, mental health services, literacy and job training classes, as well as family safety and parenting skills seem to be the best approach to removing barriers to self-sufficiency for many low-income women. Follow-up support and case management services beyond employment are a critical element in maintaining self-sufficiency for all TCA customers.

### **Fatherhood and Family Accountability**

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*Like many states, Maryland does not have specific policies in place to encourage marriage per se.*

However, the state has adopted policies that reduce the disincentives to marriage and, perhaps more importantly, made a commitment of resources to initiatives that encourage fathers' involvement in their children's lives beyond just the financial level.

*Fatherhood programs encourage responsibility through self-esteem building, job training, and education activities, developing parenting skills and helping re-establish relationships.*

Programs like STRIVE, as described during the site visit, use confrontational techniques to reach men and impress upon them the importance of commitment and accountability.

*Collection of child support continues to be a barrier to self-sufficiency for many families.*

Maryland has not elected to "pass through" child support payments directly to families; instead, it requires payments to go to the state as a reimbursement for TCA expenditures. Many fathers simply "go underground" and provide money or other items to their families here and there, rather than trying to formally pay back to the state what can amount to thousands of dollars in arrears. In a pilot program known as "debt leveraging," fathers who achieve milestones, such as completing job training, becoming employed, and making current child support payments, are forgiven a portion of the state share of past-due child support.

## Reform Strategies in a Geographically Diverse State

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*Caseload declines in the “balance of state” outside of the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas have been sharper and more sustained.*

This has enabled local jurisdictions to provide a comprehensive set of services to a much smaller population than in urban areas. Several rural and some suburban counties have only a few dozen families remaining on the TCA roles.

*The establishment of multidisciplinary teams enabled St. Mary's County to work together with the greater community to leverage funds and establish programs that meet a wide range of needs of the low-income population.*

The level of commitment within the community, in conjunction with the ability to combine public and private funds has fostered creative and effective solutions.

*Regional collaboration among several counties' departments of social services, county governments, and a local university succeeded in establishing a much-needed public transportation system.*

The lack of transportation in rural Maryland had been a major barrier to finding work for many families. The new bus and van system enables families to get to work at jobs in their own county as well as in neighboring counties, which can lead to better-paying, sometimes career track positions.

**AGENDA****Wednesday, February 20, 2002**

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2:15 pm Arrival at Reserve Officers Association of the United States, Washington, D.C., Refreshments available [5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Reserve Officers Association, One Constitution Avenue, N.E.]

2:30 pm Welcome and Introductions

2:45 pm OVERVIEW OF WELFARE REFORM IN MARYLAND

**Charles Henry**, *Executive Director*, Family Investment Administration

**Lynda Meade**, *Director*, Social Concerns and Parish Social Ministry, Catholic Charities of Maryland

- What is the overall vision for Maryland's Family Investment Program (FIP)?
- What principles guided the implementation of welfare reform in Maryland?
- What are the key Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) policies adopted in Maryland?
- How has the use of federal TANF funds changed over time?
- What have been the greatest successes and challenges in implementing the Family Investment Program?
- What are the most significant barriers to self-sufficiency that FIP families experience?
- What are the most important issues for Maryland in the upcoming reauthorization of TANF?

4:15 pm REFORM GROUNDED IN RESEARCH:  
A STATE-ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP

**Catherine Born, Ph.D.**, *Research Associate Professor*, University of Maryland School of Social Work

- In what ways did research inform the original design of Maryland's welfare reform effort?
- What has been learned from the longitudinal research "Life After Welfare"?
- What is known about "leavers" in Maryland? How do individuals who are just now leaving welfare differ from the earlier "leavers"?
- What is known about families who have had their Temporary Cash Assistance benefits sanctioned?
- What is the experience of children in FIP? How often do children whose families have left welfare become subjects of abuse or neglect investigations, or enter out-of-home care?

- What are the greatest challenges for long-term recipients who are most at risk of reaching the 60-month time limit on benefits?

5:30 pm Adjourn for the evening.

## Thursday, February 21, 2002

8:30 am Bus departure for Essex, Maryland, from Union Station [*Main Entrance, Union Station*] (Box breakfast provided)

9:45 am FROM THE GROUND UP: LOCAL FLEXIBILITY IN ACTION  
[*Essex District Office, Baltimore County Department of Social Services, 439 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore*]

**Barbara Gradet**, *Director*, Baltimore County Department of Social Services

**Max Elsmann**, *Project Director*, From the Ground Up

- What is From the Ground Up? What was the program's genesis?
- Who are the primary partners in operating the program?
- What have been the program's greatest successes and outcomes?
- What is the average rate of job placement?
- What lessons can be learned from the From the Ground Up approach?

11:15 am Break

11:25 am Bus departure for tour and discussion of the Young Parents Support Center [*201 Back River Neck Road, Baltimore*]

11:45 am THE YOUNG PARENTS SUPPORT CENTER:  
INVESTING IN YOUNG FAMILIES

**Barbara Gradet**, (see title above)

**Ayesha Bajwa**, *Director*, Young Parents Support Center

- How does the center help parents and families? How do the programs help promote the healthy development of children?
- How does the Young Parents Support Center collaborate with From the Ground Up?
- What is the extent of Maryland's network of family support centers?

12:30 pm Lunch (prepared by center participants) and informal discussions with staff and participants of From the Ground Up

1:15 pm Bus departure for historic East Baltimore/CASAWORKS [*911 North Broadway, Baltimore*]

## AGENDA

### AGENDA

Thursday, February 21, 2002

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- 1:30 pm CASAWORKS FOR FAMILIES: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT
- Betsy McCaul, Ph.D.**, *Director*, Comprehensive Women's Center, Johns Hopkins University
- Roshanda Contee-Davis**, *Project Director*, CASAWORKS for Families
- CASAWORKS Participants**
- What is CASAWORKS for Families? How is the program structured and operated?
  - Who are CASAWORKS partners in Baltimore?
  - What have been the most significant successes and challenges thus far? What challenges do you anticipate in the future?
  - What are the key lessons that have been learned since the inception of CASAWORKS? How might the program serve as a model for other states and localities?
  - What do participants think of the program?
- 3:00 pm Break and bus departure for the Center for Fathers, Families and Workforce Development [3002 Druid Park Drive, Baltimore]
- 3:30 pm FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS: MAKING THE CONNECTION
- Joe Jones**, *President and Chief Executive Officer*, Center for Fathers, Families, and Workforce Development
- STRIVE Program graduates**
- What are the goals and objectives of the STRIVE program and what is the recruitment process?
  - What are the biggest barriers to success for STRIVE participants? What hurdles have they overcome?
  - How does the Center for Fathers, Families, and Workforce Development serve fathers? Who are the key partners of the organization? How is it financed?
  - What does the state of Maryland do to help fathers support their children, both financially and emotionally? How could these efforts be improved?
  - How does the center approach the subject of marriage in the context of building two-parent families?
  - How do STRIVE and other programs work for participants? What are the most effective services the programs provide?
- 5:00 pm Departure for headquarters hotel and dinner [Admiral Fell Inn, 888 South Broadway, Fell's Point]

## AGENDA

- 5:45 pm Refreshments/mingling available at hotel
- 6:30 pm Dinner at Hamilton's restaurant, followed by panel discussion  
*[Admiral Fell Inn]*
- THE FAMILY INVESTMENT PROGRAM:  
A VIEW FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
- Del. Samuel Sandy Rosenberg**, *Co-Chair*, Joint Committee on Welfare Reform
- Martin Madden**, *former Senator and Co-Chair*, Joint Committee on Welfare Reform
- What are the Joint Committee's primary goals for reforming welfare? How has the evolution of welfare reform in Maryland been unique?
  - What have been the key successes and challenges of meeting those goals? How were the challenges overcome?
  - How much of a factor will the economic crisis in Maryland be in determining the next Family Investment Program budget?
  - Based on Maryland's experience, what priorities should Congress address in reauthorizing the federal TANF program?
- 8:30 pm Adjournment

### Friday, February 22, 2002

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- 7:30 am Breakfast available *[Admiral Fell Inn]*
- 8:30 am Bus departure for St. Mary's County, Maryland
- 10:30 am ST. MARY'S COUNTY: TANF-INSPIRED INNOVATIONS IN RURAL MARYLAND *[St. Mary's County Department of Social Services]*
- Ella May Russell**, *Director*, St. Mary's County Department of Social Services
- Linda Wolf**, *President*, Sow's Ear/Silk Purse, Inc.
- How did a rural county use welfare reform as an opportunity to reconfigure its service delivery system?
  - How do geographically based teams combining TANF and child welfare serve families more effectively?
  - What groups partner to improve the quality of life for low-income families in St. Mary's county?
  - How have TANF funds been used to leverage other moneys to develop new community resources?
- 11:20 am Bus departure for Sunshine Day Care Center *[Leonardtown, MD]*

**AGENDA****Friday, February 22, 2002**

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- 11:30 am REACHING OUT AND CARING FOR CHILDREN  
Tour of Sunshine Day Care Center and Mobile Health Connections Van and informal discussion with administrators and providers
- 12:15 pm Return to St. Mary's County Department of Social Services office for lunch and panel discussion
- 12:30 pm ST. MARY'S COUNTY: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION  
**Ella May Russell**, (see title above)  
**Martin Fairclough**, *Executive Director*, Community Development Corporation  
**Dana M. Jones**, *Executive Director*, Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee  
**Kathleen O'Brien, Ph.D.**, *Executive Director*, Walden Sierra Crisis Center  
**Marcus Tyrone Harris**, *Special Facilities Manager*, St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks
- How did the partnership with the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services come about?
  - What are the greatest needs of the populations served by these organizations? What are the most significant challenges in serving these families?
  - How have TANF and other federal and state funding streams been utilized to develop new community resources?
  - How can these programs serve as models for other states and localities?
- 1:30 pm RURAL MARYLAND: A TANF SUCCESS STORY  
**Bill Walker**, *Assistant Director*, Allegheny County Department of Social Services  
**Patti Mannion**, *Director*, Somerset County Department of Social Services  
**David Engle**, *Director*, Washington County Department of Social Services  
**Rob Hart**, *Director*, Shore Transit Association
- What accounts for the amazing caseload reductions in rural Maryland?
  - How have rural counties addressed the lack of available public transportation?
  - How have departments of social services partnered with others in their communities to create new resources for families?
  - What changes to TANF would better address the unique needs of rural communities?
- 3:30 pm Adjournment/Bus departure for Washington, D.C.

## Federal Participants

**Mike Anzick**

*Congressional Fellow*  
Office of Senator Lincoln  
U.S. Senate

**Brenda Benesch**

*Policy Analyst*  
Division of Human Services Policy  
Assistant Secretary for Planning and  
Evaluation  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Catherine Brown**

*Legislative Aide*  
Office of Representative Langevin  
U.S. House of Representatives

**Katie Burns**

*Program Analyst*  
Health Benefits and Income Support  
Division  
Assistant Secretary for Management and  
Budget  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Joseph Grubbs, Ph.D.**

*Program Analyst*  
Office of Planning, Research and  
Evaluation  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Nicholas Gwyn**

*Staff Director*  
Subcommittee on Human Resources  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives

**Joanne Cianci Hoff**

*Program Examiner*  
Income Maintenance Branch  
Office of Management and Budget

**Richard Jakopic**

*Program Analyst*  
Office of Planning, Research and  
Evaluation  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Katie Ash Kitchin**

*Professional Assistant*  
Subcommittee on Human Resources  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives

**Elizabeth MacDonald**

*Legislative Assistant*  
Office of Senator Lincoln  
U.S. Senate

**Mary Ann MacKenzie**

*Strategic Planner*  
Office of Planning, Research and  
Evaluation  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Cheryl McMillen**

*Branch Chief*  
Health and Family Support Branch  
Health Benefits and Income Support  
Division  
Assistant Secretary for Management and  
Budget  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Matthew McKearn**

*Program Examiner*  
Income Maintenance Branch  
Office of Management and Budget

**Carmen Solomon-Fears**

*Specialist in Social Legislation*  
Domestic Social Policy Division  
Congressional Research Service  
Library of Congress

**Bill Van Horne**

*Legislative Assistant*  
Office of Representative Cardin  
U.S. House of Representatives

**Laura Walker**

*Legislative Assistant*  
Office of Representative McCrery  
U.S. House of Representatives

### Federal Participants

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**Nicole Young**

*Public Health Policy Analyst*  
Maternal and Child Health Bureau  
Health Research and Services  
Administration  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

### NHPF Staff

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**Judith D. Moore**

*Co-Director*

**Randolph A. Desonia**

*Senior Research Associate*

**Richard E. Hegner**

*Senior Research Associate*

**Ginger Parra**

*Senior Research Associate*

**Jennifer M. Ryan**

*Senior Research Associate*

**Eileen Salinsky**

*Senior Research Associate*

**Wakina Scott**

*Research Assistant*

**Dagny Shiells**

*Program Coordinator*

**Lynda Fox**

*Consultant*

## Biographical Sketches — Speakers and Panelists

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**Ayesha Bajwa** is the director of the Young Parents Support Center in Baltimore.

**Catherine Born, Ph.D.**, is a research associate professor at the University of Maryland's School of Social Work where she directs a large multi-disciplinary Family Welfare Research and Training Group which, for 20 years, has carried out research, training, and technical assistance projects with and for the state's public human services community. The group's primary areas of research focus during this time have been cash assistance, child support, and welfare reform. Born and her team have published numerous studies of Maryland's cash assistance customers and many of the "statistics" cited about AFDC and TANF in Maryland come from her research studies. Born has provided invited testimony before Congress, frequently appears before legislative committees in the Maryland General Assembly, has given numerous presentations throughout the country on her research work and findings, and provided consultation to several other states and federal agencies. She holds an M.S.W. and a Ph.D. in social policy from the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

**Roshonda D. Contee-Davis** is the program coordinator of the BE-WISE (Baltimore Eastside-Women's Initiative Supporting Employment) Project at Johns Hopkins Hospital. She has worked as an addictions therapist at both the Center for Addiction and Pregnancy at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center and the Comprehensive Women's Center at Johns Hopkins Hospital. She has many years of experience with addressing the issues of women with addiction and holds a master's degree in education.

**Max Elsmann** is the project director of From the Ground Up in Baltimore County.

**David A. Engle** has been director of the Washington County Department of Social Services for the past 13 years. Previously, he spent 14 years at the Baltimore City Department of Social Services, where he reached the rank of assistant director for child support enforcement. Engle has also worked on the city's child welfare and income maintenance programs.

**Martin Fairclough** is executive director of the St. Mary's County Community Development Corporation (CDC) as well as director of the Patuxent Partnership. A primary function of the CDC is to manage the Jobs Connection program, which provides on-site counseling, training, and job placement opportunities for customers referred by the Department of Social Services. The Patuxent Partnership is a consortium of industry, government, and academia with a mission to grow the technology employment base in southern Maryland. Previously, Fairclough spent five years with the St. Mary's County Government as the director of the Department of Economic and Community Development and the St. Mary's County Housing Authority. Born and educated in the United Kingdom, Fairclough is a chemical engineer and has worked in the private sector at senior management levels, primarily in the aerospace industry.

**Marcus Tyrone Harris** is the special facilities manager at Chancellor's Run Regional Park, a division of the St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks. He is responsible for the program operation, budgeting, and community partnership development at

### Biographical Sketches — Speakers and Panelists

the park facility, which serves over 300,000 people annually. The facility offers programs ranging from computer literacy to basic golf. In addition, Harris has negotiated 41 community partnerships with organizations such as Booz-Allen Hamilton; Walden/Sierra Crisis Center; Tomorrow's Child; Grace Works, Inc.; and St. Mary's College. Harris received his bachelor of arts degree in business administration from Concord College and a bachelor of science degree in technology and management from the University of Maryland.

**Rob Hart** is the regional coordinator of Shore Transit, a nonprofit organization designed to help increase mobility and coordination of public transportation on the lower Eastern Shore. After beginning his career as a restaurant manager, Hart managed a transport company in Northern Virginia. He was the superintendent of transit with Wicomico Transit for two years before moving to Shore Transit. Hart graduated from Salisbury State University with a degree in business management.

**Charles E. Henry** has been the executive director of the Maryland Department of Human Resources' Family Investment Administration since June 2000. Before his appointment as executive director he was the office director, Administrative Services and Continuous Improvement, in the Family Investment Administration for five years. Henry began his career at the Baltimore City Local Department of Social Services and worked there for 20 years in positions including assistant director for child welfare services, assistant director for adult and family services, manager of adult services, child care regional supervisor, intake specialist, and community organizer.

**Dana M. Jones** is the executive director of the Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc., a large, regional, private nonprofit community-based organization. Jones serves on the board of directors of several organizations and is a past president of the National Association of Community Action Agencies. He also served on the Calvert County School Board for ten years. Noted for his agency's efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in southern Maryland, he has received numerous awards including the governor's Smart Growth Award. Jones has received several appointments by Maryland governors and has served on the Maryland Welfare Reform Commission and the School Finance Reform Commission. He is currently the chairman of Maryland's Poverty Commission.

**Joseph T. Jones, Jr.**, founder of Men's Services for Baltimore's federally funded Healthy Start program, is the founder and president/chief executive officer of the Center for Fathers, Families, and Workforce Development, Inc. (CFWD), in Baltimore. Jones has served on the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference and the U.S. Agency for International Development's delegation to Jamaica. He is a founding board member of the National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (NPNFF), and a member of the fatherhood advisory committee for the National Conference of State Legislatures. He serves on several boards, including the Board of Directors of Campaign for Our Children and the Board of Trustees of the Open Society Institute-Baltimore.

**Patricia M. Mannion** has been the director of the Somerset County Department of Social Services for 24 years. A lifelong advocate for the poor, she began her career with the Baltimore City Department of Social Services. She holds a master's degree in social work.

### Biographical Sketches — Speakers and Panelists

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**Mary E. McCaul, Ph.D.**, is a professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Medicine at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. She is the director of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Comprehensive Women's Center, a specialized intensive outpatient treatment program for drug-dependent women. McCaul has been the principal investigator on several women's health research projects, including a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation project examining service delivery systems for substance abusing welfare mothers, a HCFA-funded project examining intensive case management services for pregnant substance abusers, and a National Institutes of Health project examining the impact of specialized women's treatment. She has provided congressional testimony on the scope of problems and service needs of alcohol and drug-dependent women and has authored numerous papers and book chapters on these issues. In addition to her work on women's health, McCaul is active in several related lines of research and treatment, including medications development for the treatment of alcohol and drug dependence, and the effects of alcoholism family history on offspring behaviors and substance use.

**Lynda Meade** is the director of social concerns and parish social ministry for Catholic Charities. Meade has worked for 16 years as an advocate for meeting the needs of vulnerable children, the poor, the aging, and people with disabilities. She plays leadership roles in numerous coalitions and interfaith efforts and is active on boards as well as public policy and steering committees. Meade currently chairs the Welfare Advocates coalition and received the Excellence in Public Policy Award from Associated Black Charities. She also chairs the Maryland Medicaid Advisory Committee and was recently honored with the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council's Service Award.

**Kathleen O. O'Brien, Ph.D.**, has been the executive director of Walden/Sierra, Inc., since 1990. She began her association with Walden/Sierra in 1974. She has served as the Attorney General's and Lieutenant Governor's Family Violence Council, the Mid-Atlantic Network for Youth, the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, and on a subcommittee for the White House Drug Policy Council. She is currently a member of several councils and organizations, including the Governor's Drug and Alcohol Council, and is the chairperson of the St. Mary's County Local Management Board. O'Brien received her doctorate in clinical psychology from LaSalle University.

**Ella May Russell** has been the director of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services since 1986. She began her work in St. Mary's County in 1964 as a social work assistant and has worked as a social worker in positions throughout the agency, working in the areas of child protective services, foster care, adoption, and single-parent services, and was family and adult services supervisor. Russell also participated in the design and development of Maryland's welfare reform plan. She serves on a number of committees and boards both in the community and at the state level. Russell received a master's degree in social work from Virginia Commonwealth University and completed a post-master's program at the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

**Bill Walker** has been with the Allegany County Department of Social Services since 1992. His initial assignment was that of an eligibility specialist (case manager). In 1997, Walker became the assistant director of the child support enforcement unit of this agency.

### Biographical Sketches — Speakers and Panelists

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Since 1999, he has been the assistant director of the family investment program. Previously, he was a self-employed retail store owner and, before that, worked for the U.S. Treasury Department. Walker holds a bachelor of science degree in accounting from Frostburg University.

**Linda Wolf** is president of her own consulting firm, Sow's Ear/Silk Purse, Inc., a corporation specializing in transformation change strategies and performance excellence within public-sector organizations. She has a 30-year history of work in public human services, including a 20-year career as deputy director of the American Public Human Services Association. Her posts have included director of social services agencies, village manager, university associate professor, and consultant-trainer. Wolf has worked with both state and local agencies in Maryland for more than eight years. She holds a master's degree in English literature from the University of Connecticut and master's and doctorate degrees in public administration from the University of Southern California.

## Biographical Sketches — Federal Participants

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**Mike Anzick** is a congressional fellow in the Office of Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.), working on TANF reauthorization, aging issues, and Social Security. He is a senior policy analyst in the Social Security Administration's Office of Policy, where he focuses on long-term solvency of the Social Security trust funds and research on the effects of reform options on women and low-wage workers. Just prior to his congressional fellowship, he served as the designated federal officer on the President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security. His career includes experience working on welfare reform, retirement income security, and rural health issues at the National Health Policy Forum, the American Academy of Actuaries, the Employee Benefit Research Institute, and the 1989 Quadrennial Advisory Council on Social Security.

**Brenda Benesch** is policy analyst, Division of Human Services Policy, in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**Catherine Brown** is a legislative aide in the Office of Rep. Jim Langevin (D-R.I.).

**Katie Burns** is program analyst for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). She previously worked for the Office of the Secretary and, before coming to Washington, as a research assistant at the University of Minnesota.

**Joseph Grubbs, Ph.D.**, is a program analyst in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to joining DHHS in October 2001, Grubbs worked in an academic setting, teaching public and nonprofit administration, with research emphasis on health and human service delivery. He holds a Ph.D. in urban affairs and public policy from the University of Delaware and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Central Florida.

**Nicholas Gwyn** is a professional staff member, minority, for the Subcommittee on Human Resources, Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives. He focuses on issues related to welfare, child support, child care, SSI, foster care and unemployment. Before joining the committee, Gwyn was a senior legislative assistant for Rep. Barbara Kennelly (D-Conn.) and, previously, as legislative director for Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.).

**Joanne Cianci Hoff** has been a program examiner for the Income Maintenance Branch of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) since 1997. Previously, she worked as analyst for the Lewin Group from 1991 to 1994 and as a special assistant to the Under Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education from 1995 to 1996.

**Richard Jankopic** is a program analyst in the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. His office funds all types of research around child care and welfare programs. Jankopic is currently working on two national child care studies, with

### Biographical Sketches — Federal Participants

additional focus on “hard-to-employ” welfare customers. In addition, he is responsible for writing grant proposals and research contracts for ACF. Jankopic has been with ACF for 25 years.

**Katie Ash Kitchin** is a professional staff member of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources. Her areas of concentration are welfare, child welfare and child care issues under the subcommittee’s jurisdiction. Before joining the Ways and Means staff in February 2001, Kitchin was an analyst at the U.S. General Accounting Office in the Education, Welfare and Income Security Division. She also served as federal legislative staff to the governor of Pennsylvania, with primary responsibility for public welfare and health issues, from 1998 to 2000. She has a background in local welfare and children’s issues, having represented county welfare departments as a policy analyst for Craig Associates from 1996 to 1998 and as a graduate student in the office of the mayor of Los Angeles in 1995. Kitchin has a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Southern California.

**Elizabeth MacDonald** is a legislative assistant for Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.) and is responsible for health care, TANF reauthorization, aging issues, and other social policy. She has been with Senator Lincoln since 1999, serving first as a legislative correspondent and then as speech writer. MacDonald worked at EMILY’s List as a researcher during the 1998 election cycle.

**Matthew McKearn** is a program examiner in the Income Maintenance Branch of the Office of Management and Budget.

**Mary Ann McKenzie** is a senior strategic planner in the Office of Research, Planning and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families, DHHS. McKenzie is responsible for all of the performance measurement activities for ACF. She began her career with ACF as a VISTA volunteer, when the agency was known as the Office of Economic Opportunity.

**Cheryl McMillen** has been the branch chief for health and family support in the Division of Health Benefits and Income Support in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget at DHHS since 1998. She was a program analyst at DHHS from 1990 until 1997.

**Carmen Solomon-Fears** is a specialist in social legislation in the Domestic Social Policy Division of the Congressional Research Service (CRS). She joined CRS in 1979 and her principal subject areas are child support enforcement, teenage pregnancy prevention, fatherhood initiatives, and the TANF block grant. Solomon-Fears holds a master’s degree in public policy from the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota.

**Bill Van Horne, J.D.**, is a legislative assistant to Rep. Benjamin Cardin (D-Md.), the ranking Democrat on the Human Resources Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee. He began his work with Representative Cardin in 2000 and is responsible for issues including human resources, Social Security, judiciary and legal issues, defense, and foreign policy.

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**Laura Walker** is a legislative assistant in the office of Rep. Jim McCrery (R-La.).

**Nicole Young** is currently a program analyst in the Office of Program Development at the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, DHHS. She has been a presidential management intern since 1999 and has completed rotations in the Office of Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), both the Atlanta Regional Office and the Central Office of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Centers for Disease Control. She holds a master's degree in public health from Emory University in Atlanta and is a candidate for a master's in theology at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.



**National Health  
Policy Forum**

2131 K Street, NW  
Suite 500  
Washington DC 20037

202/872-1390  
202/862-9837 [fax]  
[nhpf@gwu.edu](mailto:nhpf@gwu.edu) [e-mail]  
[www.nhpf.org](http://www.nhpf.org) [web site]

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