

For Immediate Release



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Arlington Community Foundation awards 2 Community Impact Grants totaling \$105,000 to support collaborative efforts that benefit local at-risk youth

Arlington, VA., April 11, 2016—Arlington Community Foundation has awarded Community Impact Grants totaling \$105,000 to two groups – consisting of both nonprofits and government agencies – that are working collaboratively to address the needs of vulnerable youth in Arlington County.

Groups chosen to receive Community Impact Grants are:

- **Doorways for Women and Families** and **Northern Virginia Family Services (NVFS)**; \$80,000 to launch the **Pathways for Youth** program. This grant will allow these partners to hire a youth advocate working with young families to mentor life skills and help secure safe, permanent housing; and a part-time youth therapist to provide youth-oriented, non-traditional trauma and mental health counseling.
- **Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC), Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation** and **Arlington County Department of Human Services, Public Health Division**; \$25,000 to launch a pilot **Healthy Play Initiative** serving children ages 2-5 who are at high-risk for poor nutrition and childhood obesity. The initiative will engage children in physical activity and provide healthy snacks while their parents pick up weekly food distributions from AFAC. The program also will provide families with weekly bilingual workbooks encouraging nutrition and exercise, and will conduct periodic assessments of healthy weight, proper height and cognitive development.

The Arlington Community Foundation launched its new Community Impact Grant initiative in fall 2015, aiming to enhance the community impact of multiple organizations working together to achieve common goals. These larger Community Impact Grants, which grew out of a nine-month review of the Foundation’s competitive grantmaking, represent an evolution of the previous Community Enhancement Grants, which were smaller in size and awarded individually to a larger number of recipients.

“We are always looking for new and better ways to benefit the Arlington community,” said Arlington Community Foundation’s Executive Director Wanda Pierce. “By transitioning to fewer, larger grants awarded to multiple organizations working together, we are leveraging our resources to help stakeholders do something better through collaboration. This includes creating new programs or services, or extending and enhancing existing efforts, to significantly improve persistent problems in the Arlington community.”

The Foundation acts as a connector, convener and catalyst for organizations working to make lasting, positive changes in the local community. As priorities for focus areas of Community Impact Grant recipients, the Foundation identified youth in early childhood and at-risk older youth, with a broader goal to ultimately break the intergenerational cycle of exposure to risk experienced by many in Arlington. This focus on youth – determined after a series of focus groups of nonprofit leaders, county employees and educators conducted during summer 2015 – provides ample opportunity for nonprofits to address unmet needs through partnership and collaboration.

About Arlington Community Foundation: *Founded in 1991, Arlington Community Foundation is an independent charitable organization that actively promotes, protects and improves the quality of life for those who live or work in Arlington. The Foundation provides philanthropic leadership and raises capital for grants and scholarships to address community needs now and in the future. Arlington Community Foundation has awarded more than \$11 million in college scholarships and grants to nonprofit organizations. For more information, please visit our website at www.arlcf.org or call 703-243-4785.*

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