

Advocacy @ Arlington Community Foundation



What it takes to get by in Arlington, VA

\$152,100

Arlington's 2023 AMI
for a family of 4

\$45,650

$\leq 30\%$ AMI for a family
of 4

25,000

individuals (10,000
households) living at
 $\leq 30\%$ AMI

Our program focus

The affordability crisis and rapid displacement of neighbors living on low-income are the greatest threats to Arlington's long-term economic prosperity.

Our focus is on preventing the economic displacement of these neighbors earning less than 30% AMI.



ARLINGTON'S GUARANTEE

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair and glasses, smiling warmly at a young child. The child, with short dark hair, is also smiling. They appear to be in an indoor setting with a wooden structure in the background.

\$500/mo. for 18 months (2021-2023)

200 households with children, under 30% AMI

Experimental design: Participant & comparison group, surveys every 6 months

Protection from benefits loss through private funding + select criteria

Targeted inclusion of formerly incarcerated + undocumented

Shared Prosperity priorities (2019)



LACK OF AFFORDABLE
HOUSING



LACK OF AFFORDABLE
CHILDCARE



LIMITED PATHWAYS
TO LIVING WAGE JOBS

Bridges Out of Poverty (2016-18)

- Redesign of Safety Net system using Bridges Out of Poverty framework
- 300+ frontline staff and safety net leaders, including APS
- **Result:** Streamlined processes and info sharing across network, led to 200 Bridges pilot (2018-2023) with improved economic outcomes for households



One of the Bridges out of Poverty trainings attended by hundreds of County and nonprofit staff

Bridges Out of Poverty

What did we learn, and what did we do with those learnings?

	Challenge	Response
Proximate	Siloed services, leading to too many families “falling through the cracks”	Redesign convened by ACF, led by practitioners; improved procedures and outcomes

Influencing Policy

- Engaging in advocacy is **not new**, but increasingly CFs view policy change as not only central to their mission, but also as wise stewardship of limited grant dollars.

"Public policy can have significantly more impact on issues we care about than our grant dollars alone can"



Advocacy evolution

- Engage in general safety net advocacy (2016)
- Launch Housing and childcare demonstration pilots (2019)
- Join Guaranteed Income Community of Practice (2020)

Articulate our Guiding Principles of Advocacy

Conduct due diligence on parameters of advocacy + lobbying

- Use housing + childcare findings for local budget advocacy (2021)

Formalize a Lobbying Policy and training board + staff on advocacy

- Using GI findings to advocate for state + federal policy change (2023)

Arlington's Guarantee Findings



Increased employment levels and incomes

Increased time to pursue job training and certifications

Increased family time as some parents could afford to reduce overtime or weekend work

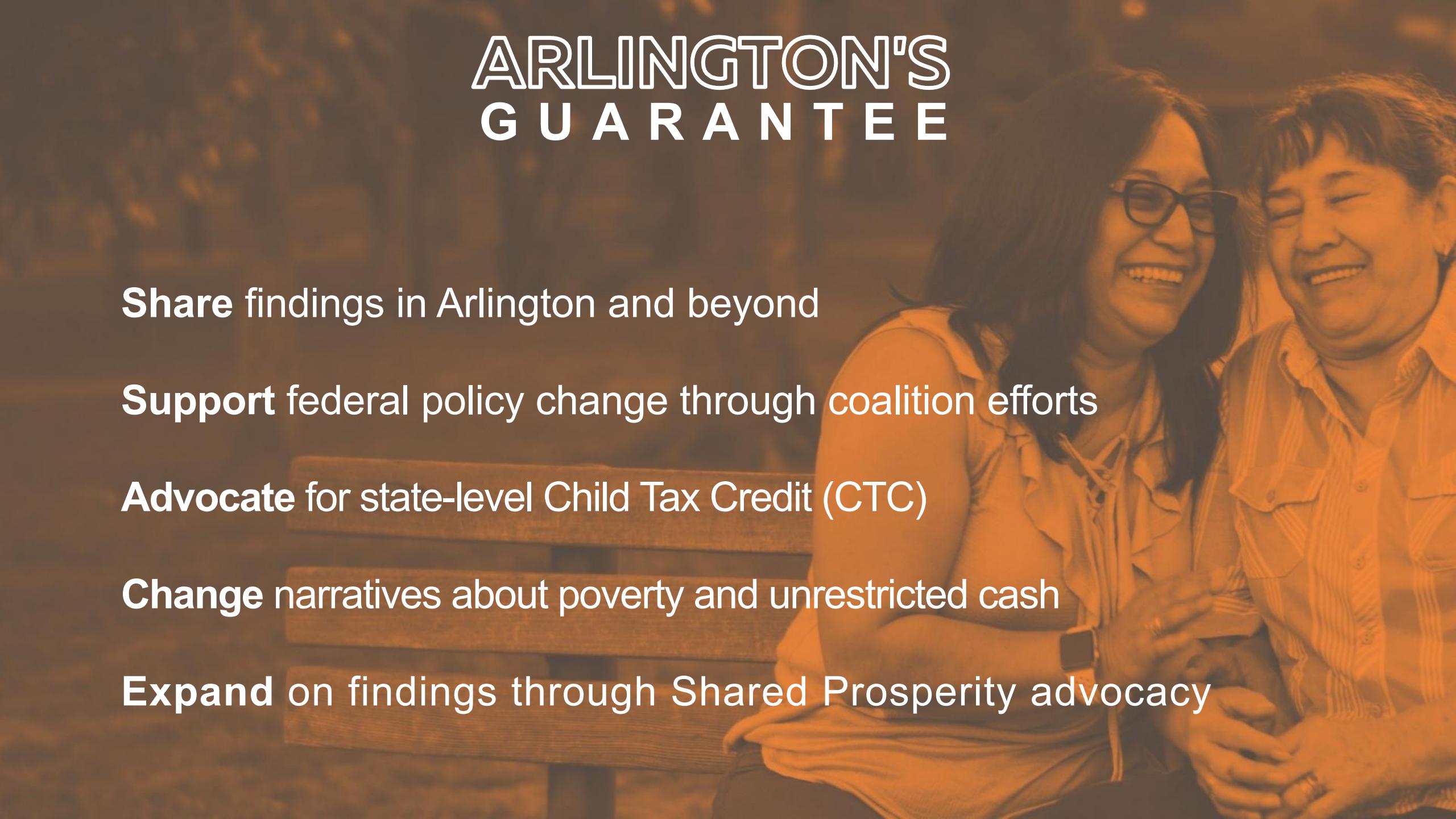
Improved physical and mental health

Increased sense of belonging and connection to community

Increase in use of mainstream banking

Decrease in borrowing from family, friends, or predatory sources

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A photograph of a woman with long dark hair and glasses, and a young child with short hair, both smiling warmly at the camera. They are positioned on the right side of the image, with the woman's arm around the child. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting.

Share findings in Arlington and beyond

Support federal policy change through coalition efforts

Advocate for state-level Child Tax Credit (CTC)

Change narratives about poverty and unrestricted cash

Expand on findings through Shared Prosperity advocacy



Thank you!