

# 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**

≤30% AMI for a family  
of 4

**25,000**

individuals (10,000  
households) living at  
≤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

**\$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
<b>Proximate</b>	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

# ARLINGTON'S GUARANTEE

**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!**