Community Foundation
HOWARD COUNTY

ANNUAL DINNER

& Celebration of Philanthropy

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2026 | 6:00 PM

Cameo Ballroom, Turf Valley Resort
Ellicott City, Maryland

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome

Good evening, and welcome to the 2026 Annual Dinner & Celebration of Philanthropy. The Community Foundation of Howard County (CFHC) inspires, promotes, and facilitates philanthropy in Howard County. Our vision is a thriving, connected, and equitable community powered by generosity.

Tonight is one of our favorite nights of the year, when we come together to honor the people who strengthen our community every day by sharing gifts, including time, energy, expertise, financial support, and other resources.

Every gift tells a story, and at the heart of philanthropy in Howard County, we have the privilege of witnessing, helping to write, and sharing those stories. We are so grateful to everyone who gives in countless ways to make the world a better place. On behalf of the Board of Trustees and our staff team, thank you for trusting us to help turn your generosity into lasting impact.

To tonight's honorees: your spirit, generosity, and commitment inspire us all. To our sponsors, partners, and guests: thank you for being here and for standing with the nonprofits that strengthen our community. Your passion is remarkable, and we are fortunate to see it at work in our community.

Please enjoy this evening of connection, generosity, and celebration. We are so glad you're here.

With gratitude,



Melissa Curtin
President & CEO

Brown ADVISORY
Thoughtful Investing.

Brown Advisory is proud to partner with the Community Foundation of Howard County to promote and facilitate philanthropy across Howard County.

Congratulations to all of tonight's deserving award recipients.

Thank you for all that you do to make our community vibrant, healthy and strong.

(410) 537-5400

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TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

2026 Annual Dinner

& Celebration of Philanthropy

6 p.m.	**Social Hour**
7 p.m.	**Welcome & Opening Remarks** Melissa Curtin, President & CEO Barbara Rishel, Chair, Board of Trustees Calvin Ball, Former Howard County Executive
7:15 p.m.	**DINNER SERVICE**
7:35 p.m.	**AWARDS PROGRAM**
	Youth Philanthropy Award Ihsaan Mohsini
	Professional Advisor Award Jennifer McManus
	Jean Moon Legacy Builder Award Howard County Foundation for Black Educational & Cultural Achievements
	Leadership Council Award Ryan Rogers
	Casey & Pebble Willis "Making a Difference" Award Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park
	Amanda & Jill Dean Direct Support Professional Award Grace Odagwe
	Community Foundation Remarks Melissa Curtin, President & CEO
	Business Philanthropist of the Year Award Bra-la-la
	Individual Philanthropist of the Year Award Sherri Collins-Witzke
	"I'm a Philanthropist!" Raffle CFHC Team
	Closing Remarks Melissa Curtin, President & CEO

WITH GRATITUDE

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Community Foundation
HOWARD COUNTY

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The Heart of Howard County Giving

The Community Foundation of Howard County (CFHC) is a 501(c)(3) public nonprofit organization. We connect people who want to give with the causes that make this county a great place to live.

Our vision is a thriving, connected, and equitable community powered by generosity. We are committed to our vibrant, compassionate, and engaged Howard County community.

CFHC is governed by a local volunteer Board of Trustees and led by professionals with expertise in assessing community needs, connecting generosity with need, and managing philanthropic assets.

We promote, inspire, and facilitate local philanthropy, offering individuals, families, and businesses a variety of easy, tax-efficient ways to impact our community through philanthropic giving. CFHC assists donors in building an enduring source of philanthropic assets by supporting donors to establish permanent endowment funds under the umbrella of one large foundation.

In the simplest terms, there are three ways to give to the Community Foundation of Howard County. First, you can open a philanthropic fund. We work with individuals, families, and businesses to establish philanthropic funds that reflect their interests and help them support the causes they care about.

Second, you can leave a legacy. Through planned giving, you can make a lasting investment in Howard County and ensure that the causes you care about continue to benefit from your generosity for generations to come.

And third, you can simply give. You can make a gift to one of our many existing funds, including the Women's Giving Circle, the Black Philanthropy Circle, the Fund for Howard County, and others. These funds offer opportunities for people to support the causes they care about, at whatever level is meaningful to them.

www.CFHoCo.org

OUR LEADERSHIP

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Senior Advisor, Philanthropy & Communications
Juliet Gomez
Executive Assistant
Diane Zanko
Philanthropic Services Assistant

NEW AWARD FOR 2026

Youth Philanthropy Award

The Youth Philanthropy Award is one of two new awards added to the Celebration of Philanthropy in 2026. This award recognizes an exemplary individual or group of youth, age 21 or younger, who has shown outstanding commitment to the Howard County community and exceptional leadership in coordinating and motivating volunteers for a major fundraising or volunteer project with one or more nonprofit organizations. Nominees must have served in a voluntary capacity.

2026 RECIPIENT

Ihsaan Mohsini

Ihsaan co-founded Feeding Forward, a teen-led initiative that has mobilized more than 75 young volunteers to prepare hot meals for residents of Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center. Since 2024, the effort has raised more than $12,000 in funding, served nearly 2,500 meals, and expanded to a second chapter in Virginia.

NEW AWARD FOR 2026

Professional Advisor Award

The Professional Advisor Award is one of two new awards added to the Celebration of Philanthropy in 2026. This award recognizes a professional advisor who demonstrates an outstanding commitment to philanthropy in their business by helping individuals, families, and businesses incorporate charitable giving into their financial, estate, and legacy planning.

2026 RECIPIENT

Jennifer McManus

A Howard County native and estate planning attorney, Jen McManus has combined her professional expertise with a longstanding commitment to philanthropy and community service. A former CFHC Trustee and current Chair of the Howard County Estate Planning Council, a CFHC partner, she helps strengthen the connection between professional advisors, charitable giving, and meaningful community impact.

The Heart of Philanthropy Fund

Strengthening Our Mission. Powering Philanthropy.

Your gift strengthens the mission of the Community Foundation of Howard County, powering the work behind local giving across our community.

- **Community Grants**
- **Student Scholarships**
- **Fund Stewardship**
- **Community Learning**

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INSPIRING PHILANTHROPY TO CREATE A THRIVING HOWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY



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AWARD

Jean Moon Legacy Builder Award

The Jean Moon Legacy Builder Award promotes and celebrates efforts to strategically grow an endowed fund at the Community Foundation of Howard County. The award is named after Jean F. Moon, a champion for endowments and building organizational sustainability through philanthropy. The award includes a $2,500 grant from CFHC to the endowed fund of the recipient.

Jean has built a legacy of unwavering commitment and support to our community. She served as chair of the CFHC Board of Trustees from 1989–1990. As Board chair, Jean began CFHC's planned giving program and championed endowed funds. In 2002, she was one of the pioneering women who founded the Women's Giving Circle of Howard County, now one of the Foundation's largest and most active funds. The Giving Circle utilizes shared values and collective giving to maximize philanthropic impact. The WGC has grown into a nationally recognized giving circle and has made a consequential difference in the lives of women and girls in Howard County.

2026 RECIPIENT

Howard County Foundation for Black Educational & Cultural Achievements

For more than four decades, the Howard County Foundation for Black Educational and Cultural Achievements (HCFBECA) has supported educational opportunities for Black students in Howard County. The organization has awarded more than $1 million in scholarships and book awards to more than 900 students while building resources to sustain these efforts for future generations. Over the past few years, HCFBECA has taken significant steps to promote and grow its endowment fund held at CFHC.

AWARD HISTORY

2025	Chamber Music Maryland
2024	Howard County Poetry and Literary Society (HoCoPoLitSo)

AWARD

Leadership Council Award

The Leadership Council was created in 2008 to extend the Foundation's outreach to the community, to enhance CFHC's asset development capacity and to draw upon the knowledge, abilities and experience of key friends of the Foundation. The founding members were former chairs of the Board of Trustees, and now the Council is made up of past board chairs and leadership executives with a demonstrated commitment to the Foundation's mission and a willingness to use their time and talents to further that mission.

The Leadership Council Award recognizes a next generation person (25–45 years old) who serves as a member of a nonprofit board in Howard County and has exemplified leadership and commitment to the organization and to the community. The Leadership Council Award includes a $1,000 grant to the organization of the recipient.

2026 RECIPIENT

Ryan Rogers, Elkridge Assembly Rooms

Ryan Rogers has served on the Elkridge Assembly Rooms Board of Directors since 2023, helping steward and preserve an important historic community gathering place. She is also co-owner of neighboring Morningside Farm, strengthening her connection to the Elkridge community and its history.

AWARD HISTORY

2025	Toniann Mendelzon, Bridges to Housing Stability
2024	Alison Canning, Howard Community College Foundation
2023	Rashel Taylor, Columbia Housing Center
2022	Jessica Zuniga, Bridges to Housing Stability
2021	Matthew Plantz, Howard County Autism Society
2020	Erika Strauss-Chavarria, Columbia Community Care
2017	Yashica Maclin, Community Action Council
2016	Laura Yoo, HoCoPoLitSo
2015	Steve Poynot, Howard County Arts Council
2014	Alice Giles, League of Women Voters
2012	Laura Weathersbee, Domestic Violence Center
2011	Tom Coale, Voices for Children

AWARD

Casey & Pebble Willis "Making a Difference" Award

The Casey & Pebble Willis "Making a Difference" Award recognizes a new or ongoing project of a human services organization that was operational sometime over the last 12 months. The program or project must have directly impacted a resident or residents of Howard County and has made quantifiable difference in the lives of people. The Willis Award recipient organization receives a $5,000 grant.

The award was established in 2003 by the Willis Family to honor Casey Willis, a remarkable woman who was engaged in both civic organizations and nonprofits throughout our community. Casey's husband, physician Pebble Willis, loved presenting the award at the Annual Dinner. When Pebble passed away in 2009, the family renamed the award to honor the memory of both Casey and Pebble and their legacy of "Making a Difference" in our community.

2026 RECIPIENT

Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park

Through its Adaptive Recreation Initiative, Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park is expanding access to the park's trails, waterways, and recreational programs for people with physical, developmental, and sensory disabilities. The initiative has grown from individual accommodations into an integrated approach designed to make Patapsco Valley State Park more accessible to people of all abilities and their families, caregivers, and support networks.

AWARD HISTORY

2025	Winter Growth *(for its Ensemble-in-Residence program)*
2024	Humanim *(for its Youth Transition program)*
2023	A Home of Our Own Howard, Inc.
2022	Bridges to Housing Stability *(for its Circle of Support program)*
2021	OhanaHC
2020	Girls on Fire *(for its girls mentoring program)*
2017	Humanim *(for its Healthy Transitions program)*
2016	Community Action Council *(for services after the Ellicott City flood)*
2015	A-OK Mentoring
2014	Camp Attaway
2013	Domestic Violence Center of Howard County *(for its Sexual Assault Hospital Accompaniment Program (SAHAP))*
2012	Neighbor Ride
2011	Linwood Center *(for its Linwood Center Boutique)*
2010	Community Action Council *(for its "One Month's Rent" initiative)*
2009	Chase Brexton *(for its dental screening & health promotion program)*
2008	Rebuilding Together Howard County
2007	Howard County Autism Society
2006	FISH of Howard County, Inc.
2005	Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center
2004	The Health Alliance
2003	Christ Church Link Program

AWARD

Amanda & Jill Dean Direct Support Professional Award

The Amanda and Jill Dean Direct Support Professional Award was established to honor exceptional employees in the Direct Support Professional field who have made a significant impact on the lives of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. This award is presented annually and includes a $1,000 cash gift to the award recipient as a token of appreciation for the outstanding dedication and commitment demonstrated by the recipient.

The award, created by Richard and Carol Dean in honor of their daughters Amanda and Jill, has been an annual tradition at The Arc of Howard County for a decade. In 2022, Richard and Carol sought to set up a permanent endowment for the award at CFHC to keep this important recognition ongoing in perpetuity. We are pleased to include this recognition at our Annual Dinner & Celebration of Philanthropy.

2026 RECIPIENT

Grace Odagwe

Grace Odagwe was selected for the Amanda & Jill Dean Direct Support Professional Award for her incredible care and compassion for the individual she supports, and for the thoughtful and creative ways she has helped her build greater independence. Grace's work has included creating visual schedules and helping the individual she supports to learn to use a voice output device to communicate and make choices.

AWARD HISTORY

2025	Millyanne Mudibo
2024	Elaine Irons
2023	Josephine Bangura
2022	Nikia Tucker
2021	Phelisa Smith-Huff
2020	Annie Caldwell
2019	Joe Collins
2018	Robert Kress
2017	Rose Ofori-Amato


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Downtown Columbia is the regional hub for culture and commerce. This is a place where minds are open, creativity is unleashed and new ideas take shape to accelerate business, promote progress and build a better tomorrow.



Save the Date!



Spring Party

THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2027

5:00 - 8:00 PM

Where Community Blooms and Generosity Grows

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Congratulations to
all of tonight's
award winners!

"Congratulations
to tonight's
award recipients!"

Sue
Song

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PROUD TO
SUPPORT
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PHILANTHROPY

AWARD

Business Philanthropist of the Year

The CFHC Philanthropist of the Year Award shines a light on the extraordinary generosity and leadership of philanthropists in Howard County, recognizing businesses and/or organizations who have shown exceptional leadership in the area of corporate philanthropy and who, through their giving, have made a remarkable difference in bringing about a positive change in our community.

In keeping with our mission of inspiring lifelong giving and connecting people, places and organizations to worthy causes across Howard County and beyond, we hope the recipients will serve to inspire and challenge others to think about how they can have a lasting impact on Howard County's future through their own philanthropy.

Awardees must have demonstrated a commitment to philanthropy through giving their time, talent and treasure to make a substantial impact in Howard County. This award primarily seeks to recognize and encourage significant charitable giving to support nonprofit organizations in our community that provide human services, arts and culture, civic, and/or educational programs and services.

2026 RECIPIENT

Bra-la-la

For nearly two decades, Mary Jordan has made giving back an integral part of her business Bra-la-la, a women's apparel store she founded in Fulton. A longtime supporter of the Women's Giving Circle of Howard County, Mary now serves on its Advisory Board and mentors the next generation of philanthropists through the Young Women's Giving Circle.

BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION AWARD HISTORY

2025	Davis, Agnor, Rapaport & Skalny
2024	The Kahlert Foundation
2023	Howard Hughes Holdings, Inc.
2022	M&T Bank
2017	Iron Bridge Wine Company
2016	Security Development Corporation
2015	Orchard Development/ Armiger Management
2014	Howard Bank
2013	Carney, Kelehan, Bresler, Bennett & Scherr
2012	Harkins Builders

Mercer Advisors is proud to support Community Foundation Howard County and the 2026 Annual Dinner & Celebration of Philanthropy.

MERCER ADVISORS

We believe strong communities are built through education, leadership, and opportunity, and we're honored to recognize the people and organizations whose generosity, leadership, and service are making a meaningful impact in Howard County.



Scan the QR code to learn how Mercer Advisors helps amplify and simplify your financial life.

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Guided by an entrepreneurial mindset, our trusted attorneys deliver creative yet practical legal solutions to businesses, individuals, and families. We have the national reach, regional prowess, and Main Street sensibilities to represent clients wherever they are.

Offit Kurman is proud to support the Community Foundation of Howard County and the good works it accomplishes every day in our community.

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SCAN TO LEARN MORE

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Williamsburg Homes is proud to celebrate philanthropy in Howard County.

Congratulations to all of tonight's award winners!

The Fund for Howard County

One gift. Many nonprofits. One stronger Howard County.

The Fund for Howard County brings together gifts of all sizes to fund grants to local nonprofits through CFHC's annual Community Grants Program.

- **You give**
- **We pool your gift**
- **We fund local nonprofits**
- **Howard County benefits**

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AWARD

Individual Philanthropist of the Year

The CFHC Philanthropist of the Year Award shines a light on the extraordinary generosity and leadership of philanthropists in Howard County, recognizing outstanding individuals and/or families who have shown exceptional leadership in the area of personal philanthropy and who, through their giving, have made a remarkable difference in bringing about a positive change in our community.

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2026 RECIPIENT

Sherri Collins-Witzke

A longtime Howard County resident and third-generation funeral director, Sherri Collins-Witzke has spent decades giving back through her leadership, service, and support of organizations across the community. Her involvement spans organizations including Gilchrist, Blossoms of Hope, Lutheran Village at Miller's Grant, Leadership Howard County, the Howard County Chamber of Commerce and others.

INDIVIDUALS/FAMILY AWARD HISTORY

2025	Thomas Clement & Wonsook Kim	**2016**	Fred & Mary Agnes Lewis
2024	Greg & Roberta Kahlert	**2015**	Vivian "Millie" Bailey
2023	Dr. Carlessia Hussein	**2014**	Ed & Fern Hamel
2022	Dr. Lillian Bauder	**2013**	The Doetsch Family
2017	Bob & Bach Jeffrey	**2012**	The Lundy Family


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