

*A Network
in Action*



EDELSA BARRIOS

Sewing Academy

The Sewing Academy was the dream of Latina participants in a women's empowerment group facilitated by IMPACT Network Builder Carmen Hernandez. The women envisioned a space for learning foundational sewing skills and regaining human connections lost during the isolation of the pandemic. The six-month Academy launched in February of 2021 with weekly sewing classes. A July graduation ceremony (which included a fashion show!) boasted 17 Sewing Academy graduates. The Sewing Academy continues this fall.

"IMPACT is providing everything for them. All they need is the will to learn."—Edelsa

Dear Friends,

2021 has been a year of making connections, deepening relationships, emergency response, and sustained focus on building mutual support, resiliency, and hope as we continue to witness the devastating and racially and economically disproportionate effects of the COVID pandemic on our communities and throughout the nation.

We worked with Silver Spring filmmakers Slice4Life Productions to lift up the voices of community members in our network through a minidocumentary titled "A Network in Action." These talented network members, some of whom are featured here, contribute their skills, leadership and energy to form the foundation of our community-based work.

With your support, we look forward to maintaining and expanding the variety of programs and initiatives highlighted here. **We invite you to use the QR code below which links to both our new minidocumentary and a "Donate Now" button for making a one-time or recurring monthly contribution to IMPACT.** We believe that together, we will achieve our mission of bringing about a more racially just and economically equitable Montgomery County.

In Solidarity and Healing,

The IMPACT Silver Spring Staff
and Board of Directors





KYREE CLARK

Community Gardens

IMPACT's Community Gardens increase food equity, strengthen community ties, promote health and wellness, and teach horticulture and environmental stewardship in neighborhoods with high rates of food insecurity. "Prosperity," our first community garden, opened in January 2021 in Wheaton. Since then, more than 255 adults and children have volunteered to prep, maintain, and harvest the garden.

"There's a certain magic being out here. It gets you out of those feelings of isolation and individualism and paints a bigger picture that we're all connected in this experience of life." —Kyree

"I'm going to launch a healing circle for women of Asian descent... Hopefully we can politicize each other into action that can make further changes in our political system that can elevate our voices." —Sandy

IMPACT's Weaver Learning Lab (WLL) is a cohort-based, online workshop for slowing down and taking a more holistic approach to addressing racism. With an emphasis on the inner awareness needed for outward action, participants explore the challenges in seeking equity, justice, and liberation alongside others on the same journey. The 5-week-long WLL is grounded in the social change framework Build-Block-Be. This program year, IMPACT facilitated three cohorts with a total of **86** diverse participants.

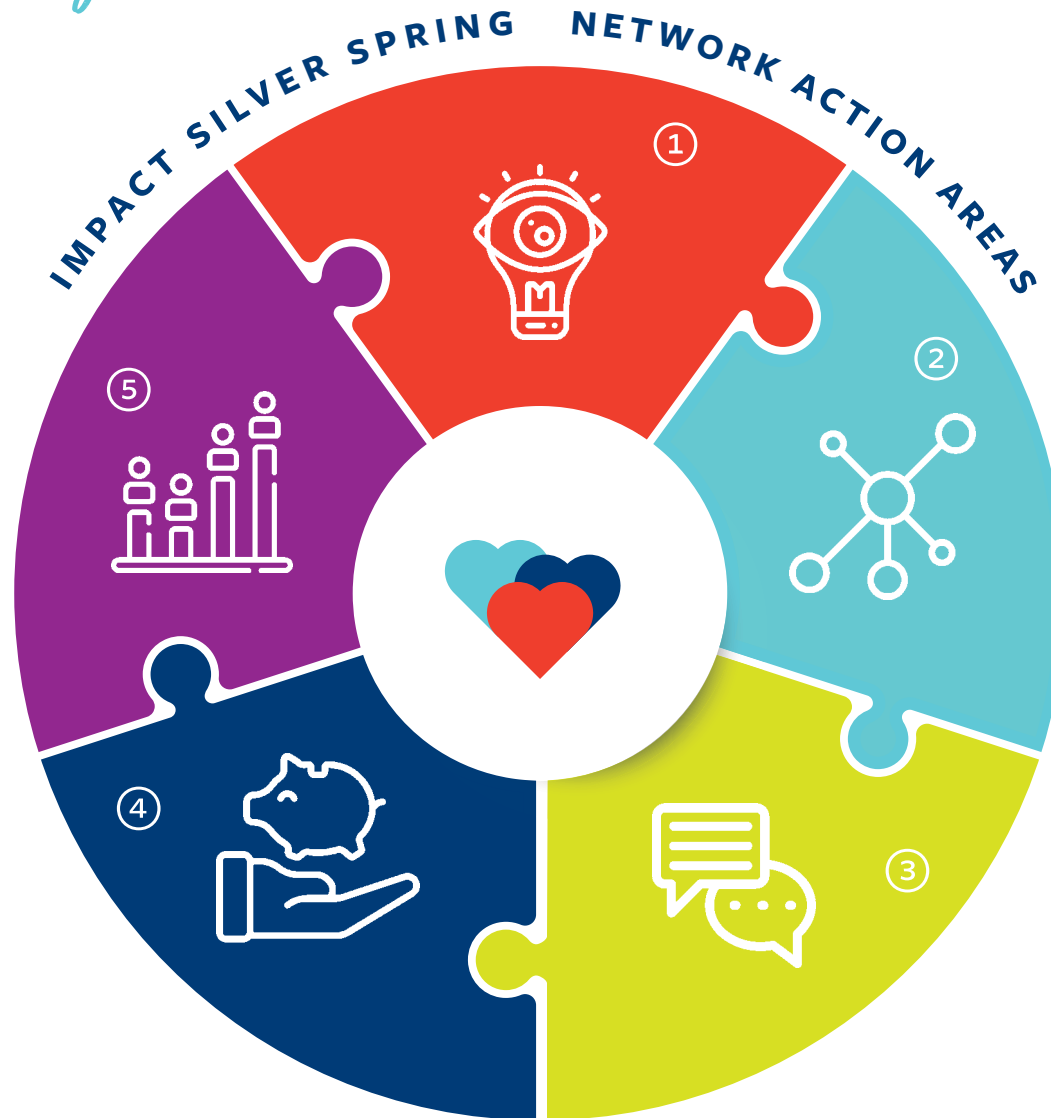
SANDY SHAN

Weaver Learning Lab



Networks Make Us Stronger.

At IMPACT, we know complex problems like racial and economic inequity are hard to solve because they are caused by many different, interconnecting factors. That's why we've adopted a network approach to addressing these issues. The beauty of a network approach is that it allows a variety of possible solutions to be applied to problems, increasing the likelihood of finding answers. The IMPACT network is made up of diverse Montgomery County residents who share common equity and justice goals while bringing a multiplicity of good ideas for how to achieve these goals. When care is taken to connect the people across a network, the approach can bring change by improving the quantity and quality of relationships, mobilizing more leadership, and generating more actions that lead to breakthroughs.



1) We Fight Racism

Holding space for anti-racism education and awareness-building

- Weaver Learning Lab
- Film and Discussion
- Book Club
- MORE Network

2) We Grow Leaders

Sparking people's innate power for personal and community betterment

- Sewing Academy
- English Language Classes
- Neighborhood Action Circles
- Parenting Empowerment Workshops

3) We Connect Communities

Supporting diverse people to build relationships of trust across lines of difference

- Diversity Dinners
- Youth Sports Program
- Community & Hydroponic Gardens

4) We Boost Economic Power

Promoting initiatives to close the wealth gap, build assets for worker-owners, and help create a more thriving local economy

- Montgomery Community Investment Cooperative
- Worker Cooperative JUMPSTART
- Anytime Taxi

5) We Build Democratic Workplaces

Aspiring to build a non-hierarchical workplace model focused on wholeness and purpose

- IMPACT Democratic Conversion Underway



ANDREW PRICE

Book Club

The East County Book Club launched in Spring 2021 with a discussion of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Online discussions were facilitated by East County Network Builder Rudy Logan who observed, “The book invited us to contemplate not only Malcolm’s social and political evolution, but also the relationship between our interior lives and advancing systemic change.” The Club’s goal is to have relationship-building and book discussion morph into sustained methods of solidarity and social action.

“You should have a safe space anywhere you are but the reality is that’s not the case, so it was surprising to me that I found that safe space within a book club.”—Andrew

“We have received unconditional support from IMPACT. Not only on the financial and local aspect but also with logistical support and coaching.”—Bianca

The goal of IMPACT’s local economy work is to support place-based economic development. At its heart is a “democratized economy,” where immigrants and people of color from working class backgrounds collaborate to own a network of micro- and cooperative-income-generating enterprises. IMPACT has provided technical assistance and fiscal sponsorship to help launch multiple cooperatives including Montgomery Community Investment Cooperative and Anytime Taxi.

BIANCA DELCASTILLO

Local Economy





DENISE YOUNG

MORE Network

The Montgomery County Racial Equity (MORE) Network is a growing coalition of community members, grassroots organizations, and nonprofits working toward racial equity. IMPACT was a founding member when MORE was launched to support the County’s proposed racial equity and social justice legislation. IMPACT proudly remains a fiscal sponsor of MORE which is led by a Coordinating Committee working with subcommittees focused on housing equity and environmental justice.

“I have not seen organizations across interests, across race come together... to stop duking it out over these scraps... and really talk about building a table that recognizes all of our voices.”—Denise

Thank You!

IMPACT is grateful for the support of our partners:

- Adventist Healthcare
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*FY21

Watch it Now!



Our minidocumentary elevates and amplifies community voices and speaks to lessons learned and truths illuminated during this past, unprecedented year. Click on the image above to watch “A Network in Action.”



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