



The MASSB Minute

Message from the Chair



Greetings, everyone!

I want to take a moment to thank those of you who were able to take the time from your busy schedules to attend our first post-COVID conference. It was wonderful to see so many of you in person! We hope to provide the same hybrid offering to you next year, when we address Foster Care. A couple of areas we are working to improve: Innovative Program Award submissions and better inclusion of our virtual attendees. We still need a host county for 2023, so please let us know if you're interested. The Executive Team will work hand-in-hand with you to make this a success for all of us.

The Executive Team is finalizing the update of our strategic plan, and we have a lot of exciting ideas to share with you. Look for more information in the next issue of the Minute. In the meantime, we hope you enjoy the pictures and factoids from our conference at the bottom of the page.

Happy Thanksgiving to all of you!

Chris



Community Connection: Washington County

Megan Turner

Adoption Worker, Washington County DSS

"Above all else, we want the families to be successful."

November is the month when we celebrate adoptive families, so Washington County's Megan Turner is busy planning the agency's annual adoption celebration event to be held at Sky Zone Trampoline Park. The event brings together families who have completed their adoptions this year as well as all currently licensed foster/adoptive parents. Everyone is looking forward to the first in-person celebration since the beginning of the pandemic.

As a DSS Adoption Worker, Megan has the responsibility of helping families who are adopting children from foster care. She estimates that in Washington County, between 10 and 12 children are adopted from foster care into loving families each year. Megan helps families navigate paperwork requirements and educates them about challenges they may face in the future. She also discusses available post-adoption assistance. (Maryland DHS has recently provided grants for post-adoption services to the [Center for Adoption Support & Education \(C.A.S.E.\)](#), and [Adoptions Together](#)).

"One of the best things about my job is that I attend the adoption hearings. It is so special to share in this wonderful day for the families and children!"

Most families are foster families who want to adopt a child in their care. The adoption process does not start until all efforts at reunification with the biological family have been exhausted. Additionally, the child must have been in the home for at least 6 months, during which the family and child are assessed to ensure a good match.

Megan also works with families whose adopted children have special needs or issues that require referrals to specialists or support organizations. Adoption subsidies may be available for children with special needs or other risk factors up to the age of 21.

Washington County is fortunate to have a strong and supportive Foster Care and Adoptive community. Foster and adoptive parents are recruited through a variety of ways including advertising at community events and on billboards; and communicating with local churches. Megan says that finding foster or adoptive families for teenagers is the greatest challenge.

Megan began her career with Maryland DHS 27 years ago after earning a degree in Psychology. She worked briefly with the DSS Adult Services Unit in Caroline County. Upon moving to the Frederick area, she accepted a position with Washington County DSS where she has served as a Foster Care case worker and an Adoption Worker.



The 2022 Conference in Numbers...

9 DSS DIRECTORS ATTENDED - THANK YOU!

10 ATTENDEES (WOW!) FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

11 EXCEPTIONAL SPEAKERS & PANELISTS

17 COUNTIES REPRESENTED

41 ATTENDEES IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL

ALLEGANY'S DIRECTOR DROVE **172** MILES TO JOIN US!

and Words...

I found the panel discussion very helpful. I was able to get so much information to take back to my county and revive our board. Being able to network in person makes a big difference!

~

The presenters were outstanding – the topics were useful and informative. I learned a great deal. The interactions with like-minded people were awesome.

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Enthused, excited and eager to fundraise for the local board. Received a wealth of information to accomplish this goal. So many ideas and thoughts were triggered.

~

Encouraged to take our local board to the next level of community engagement, legislative advocacy for the needs of our residents, and support to enhance the goals/missions of our local DSS.

~

Enlightened by *Telling Your Story*; it gave me confirmation of my role and the importance and impact.



SAVE THE DATE!

Jan 21: Legislative Meeting & 2022 Financial Review (Annapolis & virtual)



What topics would you like to see on the agenda? Let us know!
trustee@massfoundation.org

Don't miss an issue! Be sure to add MASSB Foundation to your e-mail contacts.

What's going on in your county?

Have an idea to share? We'd love to include your success stories in the MASSB Minute. Email trustee@massfoundation.org.

www.massfoundation.org

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