



## The MASSB Minute

### Message from the Chair

Greetings everyone. As we welcome October, let us focus on another month of awareness —Domestic Violence. As we know, domestic violence remains a major issue across our country. As such, this is more than a calendar event; it is a call to action and an opportunity for us to remain involved in our communities to create a safer world. Volunteering is the heart of what we do and serves as a tangible way for us to contribute to our community's well-being and champion hope. In addition to the important efforts in our communities, we have another major opportunity coming up very soon.



The annual MASSB conference during this month will provide an enriching platform to deepen our understanding, share experiences, and learn from experts. Your attendance not only enriches our knowledge of best practices and community involvement strategies, but also amplifies our collective impact in our communities. As such, your involvement is crucial to the success of our shared mission – lifting lives by supporting vulnerable populations in our communities. I am looking forward to seeing you at the conference.

Best,  
Tony

### Fall Conference

October 12-13, Theme: Foster Care  
Location: Montgomery College, Rockville, MD

We are just days away from our annual conference! This is a great opportunity to learn about Foster Care, get tips on how to improve your board's operations, and network with our awesome board members from around the state. It's not too late to register!

- Hear from Foster Care and Kinship Care Experts on the topics of Youth-Adult Partnerships, Preparing Older Youths for Independence, and the Urgent Need for Foster Parents in Maryland
- Attend Board Workshops for Chairs and New Members, Finance & Metrics, Program Development & Fundraising
- Celebrate Innovation and Impact with our new "Lifting Lives Award"

**Keynote Speaker: Mr. Daniel Wait, Deputy Secretary of Operations, Maryland Department of Human Services**

[AGENDA](#)

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Community Connection:  
Anne Arundel County



Interview with new Board Chair,  
Gulayat Hajiyeva

#### 1. How did you learn about the Advisory Board and why did you choose to get involved?

I am a children's rights advocate and I conducted a comparative independent research study while at Stetson University. My study focused on the American Child Welfare system and Eastern European residential institutions for children. Since then, I was aware that almost every local county Department of Social Services (DSS) has a board. I chose to get involved because I am interested in being a bridge between my community and the DSS. During my meeting with our local DSS director, I mentioned that DSS is often viewed as just a collective of CPS workers. We are aware that DSS does more than just employ CPS workers. My aim is to create a connection between my community and DSS, where both parties can benefit from each other. I want residents to receive information about DSS works. I want them to not be afraid to come forward when our county residents need help from them. I also want our community to help children in foster care and their families by helping our DSS. That's why I joined the board.

#### 2. Is your board working on any plans or activities?

We have plans, and one of them is to attend the MASSB conference to gain more information and establish connections. We have been informed that 160 children are currently in foster care, and our county is unable to find enough foster parents. We have not taken on a project yet, but we are working with the director to help our county residents and their needs, including possibly recruiting foster parents.

#### 3. What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure as Chair?

During my leadership, I aim to accomplish three things:

1. To encourage young, passionate individuals interested in child welfare or DSS to become board members by collaborating with local community colleges or universities.

2. To educate local residents about DSS's works and programs.

3. Work with legislators to develop programs for foster care students in Maryland. For instance, the Tuition Waiver for Foster Care Recipients is for students under the age of 25 who have resided in an out-of-home placement in Maryland and who are attending a Maryland public college or university. I have met foster care young adults in my community, who are aged out of the system, but are now 26 years old and cannot benefit from this waiver. Some of them, at a young age, have been victims of serious crime and sexual assault or rape. They say it takes them many years to heal mentally. I believe there should be an exception in this tuition waiver for foster care recipients. Especially for those who were victims of crimes or rapes at a young age. Because there is no guarantee that a child who was raped at a young age will be mentally healed by the age of 25. Healing takes time with the aid of mental therapy, friends, and communities, etc. Of course, we want them to be self-sufficient and independent adults. However, study shows that violence impacts the lives and education of young children or young adults.

We have to come up with the most suitable solution to aid these foster youths who are no longer in foster care but have a desire to attend college. The tuition waiver for foster care recipients is not available to them due to their age. There must be exemptions for foster care youth's age, who have been victims of rape or serious crimes and are still receiving therapy due to that. I would love to work with our legislator to come up with an idea that would serve the best interest of this vulnerable community and foster youth.

October is  
**Domestic Violence**  
Awareness Month



### Domestic Violence is a Control

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior in which one person dominates and controls another. This usually occurs between intimate partners. The domination and control are shown through physical, psychological, emotional, verbal, sexual, and/or economic abuse.

#### Who Are the Victims?

##### Women

- Women, especially, pregnant and postpartum women
- Teen girls and young women are at high risk for dating violence.

##### Children

- They may be abused themselves or see their parent being abused.
- They grow up seeing abuse as normal.

##### Teens and Young Adults

- Teenagers are vulnerable to relationship violence, and may not seek help because they distrust adults.

##### People in LGBTQ+ relationships

- People in LGBTQ+ relationships experience domestic violence at about the same rates as straight women and may not seek help because they don't believe that help is available or because they fear discrimination.

##### Older adults and people with disabilities

- They may be abused by their spouses or partners, adult children, or caretakers.
- They may be physically or mentally unable to defend themselves or report the abuse.

##### Men

- Abusers of men may be of any gender.
- Men are very unlikely to come forward because of the stigma of being labeled weak.

#### Who Are the Abusers?

##### Abusers may:

- Be anyone, of any age, gender, orientation, economic class, or background.
- Be hard workers, good providers and loving parents.
- Be witty, charming, attractive, and intelligent.

##### Abusers are not "out of control."

- Abusers choose how to respond to a situation. They decide to behave in a violent manner.
- They are not acting purely out of anger or only reacting to stress.
- They are not helplessly under the control of drugs and alcohol.

##### Abuse is learned.

- It is not "natural." or "normal"
- It is may be a part of a cycle coming from the home where the abuser grew up.

Adapted from <https://www.mnadv.org/get-help/understanding-abuse/>

The National Domestic Violence Hotline provides crisis intervention services 24/7 in a few different ways. If you are in need of help, you can:

• Call [1-800-799-7233](tel:1-800-799-7233)

## 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@massbfoundation.org](mailto:trustee@massbfoundation.org)

[www.massbfoundation.org](http://www.massbfoundation.org)

Our mailing address is:  
MASSB Foundation  
P.O. Box 2351  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

