Guaranteed Income Pilots in the Greater Washington Region

Evidence, insights, and a path forward for local government

Melen Hagos
Chief of Staff & Community Investment Lead
Greater Washington Community Foundation

Greater Washington Community Foundation

Leads, mobilizes, and ignites the power of philanthropy to build a racially equitable, just, and thriving region where everyone prospers

- **Disbursed more than $1.7B over 50 years**, making us the largest grantmaker in the Greater Washington region
- Help charitable neighbors identify and **pursue their philanthropic goals**
- **Meet urgent needs** of our most marginalized neighbors

Our Core Belief

Shared Prosperity = Economic Justice

We believe that by increasing economic mobility and advancing economic justice, we will ultimately improve the quality of life for everyone who lives, works, and raises a family in this region.

Economic Mobility Strategies

- Guaranteed Income
- Homeownership & Preservation (Heired Property)
- Entrepreneurship
- Debt Reduction
- Asset Building
- Workforce Training
- Policy & Advocacy
- Children's Savings Accounts
- Small Business Support

Guaranteed Income Pilots

WHAT ARE GUARANTEED INCOME PROGRAMS?

Programs that offer monthly cash transfers directly to individuals for a limited period, with no strings attached, and no requirements that are tied to work.

Since 2017, **100+** guaranteed income pilots have launched in the U.S., helping **38,000** people navigate difficult economic conditions.

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH?

The positive impact of Guaranteed Income has been studied for decades, with evidence indicating that monthly cash transfers are an effective anti-poverty and economic stability measure with an array of social well-being benefits.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES?

For individual participants, they may see increased flexibility and financial freedom to live with dignity and be empowered to overcome whatever barriers they may face.

For our region, guaranteed income can stimulate economic mobility and help close the racial wealth gap.

PROGRAM DESIGN

How Guaranteed Income Pilots Are Structured

ELIGIBILITY & RECRUITMENT	PAYMENT STRUCTURE	EVALUATION & SUPPORT
Screened by income, geography, or population	\$500–\$1,000/month, most commonly	Baseline, midpoint, and endline surveys
Community partners and agencies recruit applicants	12–36 months, unconditional — no restrictions on use	RCT where feasible; comparison-group or pre/post otherwise
Low-barrier screening, then random selection among those eligible	Delivered by direct deposit, prepaid card, or app	Optional “Cash Plus”: coaching, benefits navigation, peer support

Our Pilot Investments at a Glance

Regional Pilots — Direct Investments

Pilot	Amount & Duration	Population
Thrive Prince George's ★ *Community Foundation investment*	$800/mo, 24 mo (175 participants)	Seniors & former foster youth
Arlington's Guarantee	$500/mo, 18 mo (200 households)	Families <30% AMI; returning citizens; undocumented residents
MoCo BOOST	$800/mo, 24 mo (300 households)	Families with children & people exiting homelessness
ARISE (Alexandria)	$500/mo, 29 mo (170 participants)	Residents ≤50% AMI
Let's GO DMV!	$1,000/mo, no strings attached (75 participants)	Hospitality workers who lost jobs due to COVID-19

Health Equity Fund — Via Nonprofit Partners

Six guaranteed-income & direct cash assistance pilots

My Sister's Place	RISE Trust	Social Justice Public Charter School *Guaranteed Together*
Bread for the City *CashRx*	Mother's Outreach Network *Mother Up*	Calvary Women's Services *Women's Empowerment Fund*

Thrive Prince George's

A GUARANTEED INCOME PILOT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

ABOUT THE PILOT	REACH & PAYMENTS	PARTNERS & FUNDING
A two-year, $4 million public-private guaranteed income pilot	$800/month, no strings attached, for 24 months (March 2024–2026)	Funded by The Community Foundation, Prince George's County Executive & County Council, and the Meyer Foundation
Seeks greater economic stability and mobility for families in Prince George's County	50 former foster youth (age 18–24) 125+ seniors (age 60+)	Delivered with UCAP (seniors) and CASA (foster youth) Evaluated by the Urban Institute

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For Seniors, the Gains Are Clear — and Holding

BEFORE → AFTER

1 in 4 → 1 in 6

seniors forgoing medical care due to cost (8 mo, held at 16 mo)

BEFORE → AFTER

18% → 8%

reporting frequent anxiety — sustained at 16 months

71%

of seniors better off financially at 16 months

Food security improved across all measures for seniors at 8 months — and gains held at 16 months, not a temporary effect.

98% of seniors who reduced debt say Thrive is the reason — unusually clean, direct evidence of impact.

Interim results (Urban Institute, 2025): pre/post design, no comparison group. Senior survey response rate 61–76%.

For Foster Youth, Real Progress — and a Policy Lesson

54.5% → 10.2%

youth housing cost burden at 8 months — a 44-pt drop, the most dramatic finding in the dataset

56%

of foster youth better off financially at 16 months

−15 pts

unable to afford balanced meals, by 16 months; 100% who reduced debt say Thrive is why

IMPORTANT CAVEAT

Severe housing cost burden rose slightly (12.1% → 17.0%) — CASA attributes this to guaranteed income affecting housing-subsidy eligibility. This is a benefits-cliff problem, not a failure of the program — and a genuine policy hook for Maryland legislators.

Interim results (Urban Institute, 2025): pre/post design, no comparison group. Youth survey response rate lower (40–58%) — interpret with caution.

"After aging out of foster care, WT used Thrive to stay afloat through a medical crisis. By 16 months, she'd earned her associate's degree and moved into a full-time nursing role."

WT, Thrive Prince George's participant

While caring for a child with special needs, she still saves only about $50/month and worries about what happens when the payments stop — the honest case for permanence.

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REGIONAL SYNTHESIS

Across the Region, One Consistent Story

1. **Cash meets people's own priorities**

   Housing, food, debt, children — directed without top-down conditions

2. **Health & wellbeing improve**

   Across all four pilots, in both physical and mental health measures

3. **Work effort doesn't decline**

   GI enables better job matches and caregiving choices, not disengagement

4. **Duration & predictability matter most**

   Longer, steadier pilots show deeper, more durable gains

5. **Cash helps, but isn't sufficient alone**

   In a high-cost region, it can't fully close the affordability gap

6. **The benefits cliff is fixable**

   A legislative and administrative fix — not a reason to abandon GI

RECOMMENDATIONS

How Local Government Can Build on This Work

1. **Tailor design to the population you're serving**

   One size doesn't fit all — seniors, families, and youth need different supports

2. **Build longer programs with graduated offboarding**

   24+ months, with a tapered exit rather than a hard cutoff

3. **Fix the benefits cliff**

   Through legislative and administrative reform — not by abandoning guaranteed income

4. **Pair cash with optional "Cash Plus" supports**

   Financial coaching, benefits navigation, and peer support, voluntary and unconditional

5. **Treat pilots as proof of concept**

   The goal is permanent, publicly funded policy — not an endless pilot cycle

Thank You

Melen Hagos · Chief of Staff & Community Investment Lead

GREATER WASHINGTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

1325 G Street NW, Suite 480 | Washington, DC 20005
202-955-5890 | info@thecommunityfoundation.org
www.thecommunityfoundation.org

@communityfndn

@communityfndn

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