December 2022 Newsletter
Thoughts from the Executive Director

Wowsa! 2022 flew by like at 747 Boeing Jet!

As we end this year, I reflect on the incredible work of Howard County’s social sector. Do you remember the story of the Elian Gonzalez, the little boy who was stranded at sea for days? When he tried to describe how he survived, he said it was these black animals in the water that would push him back into the tube when he would fall out. He was describing dolphins. You are those dolphins, pushing people back into the raft of hope. Despite the ever-increasing constraints of limited resources, you continually work hard to deliver the critical services to ensure that all people of Howard County have the quality of life to survive and thrive. And if not for this sector, where would we be? You are so important to this county.

As a 30-year nonprofit professional who understands the pain of wanting to do more but simply can’t, I want you to know that I’m committed, along with the staff and board of ACS, to bring you in 2023 and beyond the types of tools and resources that will help you grow and sustain your organization. We are creating a strategic plan that we hope will bring value to the work you are doing and make your burden a little lighter. We are still tweaking it but soon we will invite your feedback to make sure we are on the right track.

In advance of that roll-out, I want to get to know you better. I’m a Southern girl and I believe that the best way to know someone is to have a hot brew, a slice of something delicious and the open environment to speak freely. And I have a catchy name for it too – *Sip and Chat with Val*. I want to know what’s on your mind, what challenges keep you up at night and how ACS can help you sleep a little better. Watch out for an invitation in the next few weeks for the first sip to happen sometime in January 2023.

Thank you for being a great partner to us and a beacon of light to so many. Wishing you an abundantly blessed holiday season and a prosperous New Year!