



For media inquiries:
Lauren Walbert, 443-683-0294
lwalbert@hillmanpr.com

Susan Repko, 410-895-1588
United Way of Central Maryland
susan.repko@uwcm.org

Horizon Foundation and United Way of Central Maryland Launch Changemaker Challenge, Seeking Innovative Ideas to Address Social Issues in Howard County

Four prizes totaling \$60,000 will be awarded

Columbia, MD (July 23, 2019) – The Horizon Foundation and United Way of Central Maryland announced today the launch of the second Changemaker Challenge, focused on sparking innovation and fresh thinking to address some of Howard County’s most pressing social issues.

Individuals, teams and nonprofit organizations are invited to pitch a big idea and have a chance to potentially receive up to \$25,000 in prize money. Ideas are not limited to specific categories and could focus on people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, health, the environment, social justice, children, teens, older adults or a host of other issue areas.

“Despite all the strengths of our community, we recognize that many pressing problems continue to persist,” said Sandy Monck, Chief Impact Officer at United Way of Central Maryland. “One in four Howard County households do not earn enough to meet a basic ‘survival budget’ and face barriers beyond their control that limit their ability to become financially stable. Chronic diseases like diabetes disproportionately affect people of color in our community. Public transportation infrastructure remains a hurdle for residents who need to get to work, school or grocery shopping without a car. There are many issues that changemakers could address.”

How does it work?

- All big ideas to make Howard County better must be pitched at www.changemakerchallengehc.org by September 16.
- If an idea is chosen, it will be presented to a live audience on November 11.
- Four grants totaling \$60,000 will be given in the amounts of: \$25,000, \$15,000, \$10,000 and \$10,000. One will be awarded to a project serving people with developmental or intellectual disabilities.

Howard County has a long history of tireless work by many individuals and organizations that have brought creative solutions to some of these pressing problems. The Changemaker Challenge is designed to spark and celebrate new and continued innovation in our community. Social innovation is a novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than current solutions.

“We know Howard County is a community of big thinkers and innovative problem-solvers,” said Nikki Highsmith Vernick, President and CEO of the Horizon Foundation. “As we continue to see results from our first Changemaker Challenge in 2017, we hope even more community members will join us in sparking fresh ideas for meaningful, lasting, social change.”

Since 1998, the **Horizon Foundation** has invested \$53 million in community programs, including grants to more than 300 organizations serving the county, from after-school programs to faith-based organizations to health care providers.

United Way of Central Maryland makes the communities it serves, including Howard County, stronger. The organization works directly with families and individuals to keep them in their homes and out of shelters, with kids who are falling behind in school, and with people who need easier access to healthy food and jobs that pay the bills.

Learn more about the Changemaker Challenge, including official rules, terms and conditions online at: www.changemakerchallengehc.org

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Hosted by the Horizon Foundation and United Way of Central Maryland, the Changemaker Challenge is an event focused on sparking innovation and fresh thinking to address some of Howard County’s most pressing issues. www.changemakerchallengehc.org

Please see the [Official Rules](#) for the specific Terms and Conditions of the Changemaker Challenge.