



The Ivy Village Incubator for Nonprofit Excellence (Ivy VINE): Accelerating Excellence for Nonprofits in Prince George's County, MD

July 2025
Cheryl Petty Garnette
Foreword by Dr. Gretchen Vanderveer, Fair Chance

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Foreword

In 2018, Fair Chance—the organization I have the privilege of leading—partnered with Venture Philanthropy Partners (now Youth Invest Partners) and the Prince George’s County Council (Maryland) to launch the Nonprofit Capacity Building Program. The goal was clear: to create more opportunities for children and youth to thrive by strengthening the capacity of local youth-serving nonprofits. A key priority for the County Council was to help participating organizations increase their fundraising capacity, enhance sustainability, and ultimately improve outcomes for the young people they serve.

The Program officially began in 2019 and delivered three years of intensive, transformational capacity-building support to 14 nonprofits, organized into four annual cohorts of three to four organizations each. Lessons learned and measurable results from the first cohort were captured in a 2022 report [*“Strategically investing in communities of color by strengthening local nonprofits”*](#), and further amplified in the *Nonprofit Quarterly* article, [*“How Funders Can Strategically Invest in the Growth and Impact of BIPOC Nonprofits”*](#) (December 2024).

The Ivy Community Charities of Prince George’s County, Inc. was selected to participate in the third cohort and undertook significant work to strengthen its infrastructure in eight core areas of nonprofit effectiveness: Board Development, Leadership Development, Fundraising, Financial Management, Planning and Strategy, Human Resources, Community and Outreach, and Program Evaluation. I first met Executive Director Cheryl Garnette during the selection interview process and was immediately struck by her deep knowledge of Prince George’s County, her entrepreneurial mindset, and her genuine commitment to the community and its small businesses.

So, when I later learned that Cheryl was inspired through her experience with Fair Chance’s strategic planning process to create a new capacity-building initiative within Ivy Community Charities, I was not surprised. What began as a vision has now become a reality—captured in this white paper: *The Ivy Village Incubator for Nonprofit Excellence (Ivy VINE): Accelerating Excellence for Nonprofits in Prince George’s County, MD*.

The achievements of the VINE Program are especially impressive given the small size of the participating organizations. That these nonprofits are now implementing core practices of effective nonprofit management—and that 100% would recommend the program to others—is a testament to the program’s design and Cheryl’s leadership.

Congratulations to Cheryl and the Ivy Community Charities team for recognizing a community need and responding with a program that is already strengthening the nonprofit ecosystem in Prince George’s County. In a time when many nonprofits face declining public funding and economic uncertainty, initiatives like the Ivy VINE and organizations like Fair Chance are more important than ever. Thanks to Cheryl’s leadership, small but vital nonprofits now have the support they need not only to survive—but to thrive.

Gretchen Vanderveer, PhD
Co-CEO, Fair Chance

The Ivy Village Incubator for Nonprofit Excellence (Ivy VINE)
Accelerating Excellence for Nonprofits in Prince George's County, MD

The purpose of this paper is to share the vision of the Ivy Village Incubator for Nonprofit Excellence (Ivy VINE), accomplishments from the first two years of the capacity building program, lessons learned about serving emerging nonprofits, and recommendations for the future. However, the paper begins with a brief status and background of nonprofits in Prince George's County followed by the role of incubator and accelerator programs and their benefits particularly for businesses in Maryland.

Understanding the Prince George's County Nonprofit Landscape

While nonprofits provide tremendous resources in their service to the community, they also face a host of challenges including financial stability, recruiting and retaining qualified staff, compliance with mounting regulations at the state and federal levels, attracting and retaining donors, maintaining effective and knowledgeable Board members, and in some cases drawing participants who can benefit from their services. Nonprofits represent one of the top five sectors of the business community in Prince George's County. Yet according to Maryland Nonprofits, approximately 75% of the nearly 6000 nonprofits in the County report their annual revenue as below \$25,000 and have no staff who are compensated. Maryland Nonprofits also reported that significant inequities exist in the provision of programs for people living in poverty in Prince George's County compared to its neighboring jurisdictions. Not only do the nonprofits lack the necessary funds to meet the growing needs of the community, their leadership and often their Boards do not have the requisite knowledge or skills to properly manage or govern the organization.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Prince George's County residents, particularly low-income Black and Brown residents. The Greater Washington Community Foundation's 2020 Prince George's County Impact Report noted that many communities already struggling with the weight of underinvestment endured even greater hardship as the pandemic took a bigger toll on communities of color.

In June 2021, the County Executive presented the County's strategic plan for attaining its economic stronghold in the region that focused on increasing: (1) the number of new jobs; (2) average wage of County residents; (3) the number of college graduates who stay in the County after graduation; (4) the employability of non-college students; and (5) job placement for the hardest to serve unemployed residents. The County further cited its plan to target new incentives and access to capital for small, minority and women businesses, startups, and small-scale makers around anticipated growth sectors.

Accelerator and Incubator Programs in Maryland

While research often differentiates accelerator versus incubator programs, The Ivy Community Charities of Prince George's County, Inc., (Charities) employed a strategy that incorporated elements of both options in the Ivy VINE. For example, in an August 2023 report, the Harvard Business School noted that accelerators generally support businesses in their early stages of operation while an incubator may focus on efforts at the idea stage. The report continued that accelerator programs generally have shorter timelines of three to six months while incubators generally have a longer time frame of one to five years. In constructing the Ivy Village Incubator for Nonprofit Excellence, it was determined that the Ivy VINE participants must have existed for at least two years and demonstrated evidence that they provided direct services or programs for youth, adults or families. Participants were also required to make a two-year commitment to the training, networking and coaching elements of the Ivy VINE.

In June 2024, the Maryland Innovation Center reported that Maryland accelerator programs made significant positive impacts on participating businesses by providing financial support, expert mentoring, and networking opportunities which have helped the organizations build capital, gain critical business knowledge, and connect with other businesses, leading to business growth and stronger economic activity. As will be noted in this paper, the Ivy VINE similarly: (1) successfully carried out its purpose to build the capacity of small, emerging nonprofits; and (2) documented evidence that further substantiates the merits of incubator programs to help local businesses attain their strategic goals.

Charities' Vision to Build Economic Success in Prince George's County, Maryland

When the Board of Directors of The Ivy Community Charities of Prince George's County, Inc., purchased the property at 6118 Walton Avenue in Suitland, Maryland, there was a dilapidated structure behind the main building which in years past served as an external garage. At the time, it was approximately 600 square feet. As Cheryl Petty Garnette, Executive Director of The Ivy Community Charities of Prince George's County, looked over the property, she immediately envisioned transforming the building into a facility where other nonprofit organizations could thrive and grow. She talked about "paying it forward" to help other organizations benefit from our experience, network of strategic partners, and training.

The original concept was to complete the construction of two new buildings where the Ivy VINE would be housed. The first building is the Ivy VINE Training Center and Podcast Studio which will accommodate approximately 50 individuals in an open space lecture format. A

podcast studio will be available in a separate room as well as a reception area, mini kitchen and storage area. The second building is the Ivy VINE Office Suites that will be constructed next door at 6112 Walton Avenue in Suitland, Maryland. The proposed two-story facility will include office space for up to 10 organizations as well as a separate meeting room, supply room, kitchenette and reception area. Both structures were designed by Redlef Group Architects, a black-owned, woman-led business in Prince George's County, Maryland.

The groundbreaking for the two facilities was held on September 26, 2021, at 6118 Walton Avenue in Suitland, Maryland. The event was attended by elected officials and prominent leaders from the business sector, reflecting a strong commitment to collaboration and community impact. Redlef Group Associates submitted the applications for the construction one month prior to the groundbreaking. However, when the County had not provided permits to begin construction by 2022, Cheryl Petty Garnette decided to move forward with the capacity building activities to support local nonprofits. She remarked that "The Ivy VINE is more than a building. It is an opportunity for nonprofits to grow and excel." Therefore, she assembled a community advisory committee that was instrumental in the program's design and rollout which included developing the application process, evaluation strategy and infrastructure considerations. Capacity building coaches were interviewed and hired, and the syllabus for the first year of the program component of the Ivy VINE concept was completed. An information webinar was conducted with interested nonprofits in the fall of 2022.

The following objectives for the Ivy VINE were established in Charities' Strategic Plan for 2022-2026:

- 80% of participating nonprofits will attend at least 80% of the training provided each program year
- 80% of participating nonprofits will attend at least 40 hours of capacity building coaching sessions each year
- 80% of participating nonprofits earn the Maryland Nonprofits Standards for Excellence Basics Level by the end of the two-year program
- 80% of participating nonprofits receive at least \$5,000 in grants within two years
- The Ivy VINE Training Center and Office Suites are recognized as model facilities equipped with state-of-the-art technology by 2026
- The number of new partnerships that support the Ivy VINE operations will increase by 10% annually through 2026
- The number of grants awarded to support the Ivy VINE will increase by 10% each year through 2026

Realizing the Dream

“Build it and they will come” became the mantra for the Ivy VINE in 2022 as seven nonprofits originally applied to the program. After a rigorous review and interview process, six of the seven applicants were selected and began the training program in February 2023. As a result of the interview process, it became clear that the seventh nonprofit had not yet conducted its programs and was not selected to participate in the first cohort. Three coaches were originally selected, however, due to unforeseen complications, two coaches subsequently completed the two-year program, and their caseload was increased by one nonprofit each to account for the departing coach.

Each coach and each nonprofit Executive Director signed a memorandum of understanding that defined the expectations of the program and their responsibilities at both the nonprofit partner and coach levels, respectively. An orientation session was held to clarify the expectations and to introduce the coaches and participants as well as our Ivy VINE team. Each nonprofit was assigned a coach, and each coach was assigned two nonprofit partners. Coaches and nonprofit Executive Directors scheduled their monthly meetings, which ranged from one or two sessions a month to weekly sessions in some cases. In general, coaches met with each nonprofit for up to five hours each month.

The first assignment of the nonprofit partners was to complete an assessment that identified their status regarding critical elements of the Maryland Nonprofits Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector. Standards for Excellence is based on the legal foundations of how nonprofits should operate and be governed. Nonprofits must complete 26 areas that define ethical, responsible and effective organizations at three hierarchical levels: Basics, Basics Enhanced and Accreditation. Ivy Community Charities earned the highest level of Accreditation in 2022 and through the Ivy VINE strives to increase the number of Prince George’s County nonprofits that earn Standards for Excellence recognition. As of 2024, only 20 County nonprofits had earned at least the Basics level.

Subsequent assessments were completed at the end of year one, mid-year of year two, and the end of year two. The results of the end of the program year two assessments compared to the pre-assessment conducted in 2022 are presented in this report.

The nonprofit partners participated in a series of two- to three-hour workshops each month from February 2022 through December 2023. Six of the nonprofit partners also elected to attend Maryland Nonprofits Standards for Excellence Basics Skills Bootcamp that included intensive workshops on key Standards for Excellence Code of Ethics topics.

Ivy VINE workshops included the following topics:

- Understanding the Nonprofit Management Structure
- Board Development
- Leadership Development
- Overview of Maryland Nonprofits and Standards for Excellence
- Financial Management
- Strategic Planning
- Program Evaluation
- Grant Writing (I, II, III)
- Grants Management

Accomplishments

This section is organized into four categories: (1) outcomes based on the pre-assessment vs. post-assessment survey completed by the nonprofit partners regarding the Standards for Excellence criteria; (2) results of the overall programming survey completed by the nonprofit partners; (3) results of the coaches' survey; and (4) status of the objectives cited in Charities 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

A. Outcomes of the Standards for Excellence pre-assessment and post-assessment

The following data reports some of the most substantial outcomes based on the pre-assessment taken in March 2023 compared to the post-assessment survey taken in December 2024. The elements of the assessment were aligned with the requirements for Standards for Excellence recognition at the Basics level. For example, in March 2023 only two nonprofits stated that they had clear mission statements that had been approved by their Boards. By the end of the program, all six had approved mission statements. At the beginning of the program, 66% of the nonprofits indicated that their Board did not monitor the budget throughout the year, however, by the end of the program, 66% of the nonprofits stated that their Board consistently monitored the budget. And while none of the nonprofits had engaged in substantive evaluation processes at the beginning of the program, 66% of the nonprofits had documented evaluation processes that included effectively monitoring financial and human resources by the end of the program. A full report of all the elements surveyed may be provided upon request.

Achieving Intentional Results: Effective Outcomes

March 2023

A. Mission & Impact: Please select the response that best reflects the current state of your organization's mission statement.

6 responses



- Our organization does not have a mission statement.
- Our organization has a mission statement, but the statement does not encompass all organizational activities.
- Our organization has a clear and formal mission statement that defines our purpose and captures our organization.
- Our organization has a clear and formal mission statement that defines our purpose and captures our organization.

B. Strategic Planning (1): Please select the response that best reflects the current state of your organization's strategic planning.

6 responses



- Our organization has not evaluated our mission (please specify).
- Our organization has evaluated our mission within the past 5 years to determine whether the need to update.
- Our organization has evaluated our mission within the past 5 years to determine whether the need to update.

C. Organization Evaluation: Please select the response that best reflects your organization's current evaluation processes.

6 responses



- Our organization has not developed organizational evaluation processes.
- Our organization occasionally discusses how financial resources and human capital are used effectively, but has no...
- Our organization has documented organizational evaluation processes in place, but does not monitor human ca...
- Our organization has documented organizational evaluation processes in...

A. Board Member Independence: Please select the response that best reflects your organization's policies to ensure Board independence.

6 responses



- Our organization does not have policies in place related to Board member independence.
- Our organization maintains at least the independent and unrelated directors, and has written processes prohibiting...
- Our organization maintains at least seven independent and unrelated directors.
- Our organization maintains at least seven independent and unrelated directors.

A. Financial Budgeting, Reporting, and Monitoring: Please select the response that best reflects your organization's current approach to budgeting.

6 responses



- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, but does not monitor the spending against the b...
- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, and monitors the budget's status but the...
- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, and mon...
- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, and mon...

December 2024

A. Mission & Impact: Please select the response that best reflects the current state of your organization's mission statement.

6 responses



- Our organization does not have a mission statement.
- Our organization has a mission statement, but the statement does not encompass all organizational activities.
- Our organization has a clear and formal mission statement that defines our purpose and captures our organization.
- Our organization has a clear and formal mission statement that defines our purpose and captures our organization.

B. Strategic Planning (1): Please select the response that best reflects the current state of your organization's strategic planning.

6 responses



- Our organization has not evaluated our mission (please specify).
- Our organization has evaluated our mission within the past 5 years to determine whether the need to update.
- Our organization has evaluated our mission within the past 5 years to determine whether the need to update.

C. Organization Evaluation: Please select the response that best reflects your organization's current evaluation processes.

6 responses



- Our organization has not developed organizational evaluation processes.
- Our organization occasionally discusses how financial resources and human capital are used effectively, but has no...
- Our organization has documented organizational evaluation processes in place, but does not monitor human ca...
- Our organization has documented organizational evaluation processes in...

A. Board Member Independence: Please select the response that best reflects your organization's policies to ensure Board independence.

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- Our organization does not have policies in place related to Board member independence.
- Our organization maintains at least the independent and unrelated directors, and has written processes prohibiting...
- Our organization maintains at least seven independent and unrelated directors.
- Our organization maintains at least seven independent and unrelated directors.

A. Financial Budgeting, Reporting, and Monitoring: Please select the response that best reflects your organization's current approach to budgeting.

6 responses



- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, but does not monitor the spending against the b...
- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, and monitors the budget's status but the...
- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, and mon...
- Our organization's board approves an annual organizational budget, and mon...

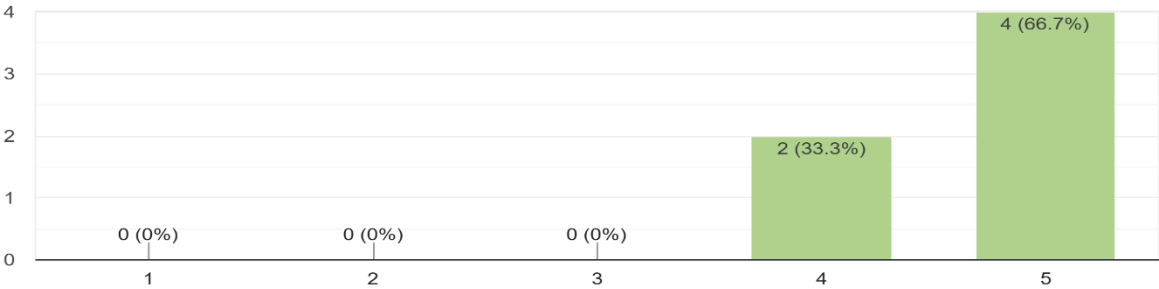
B. Results of the overall program survey

In addition to the pre-assessment vs. post-assessment results, the nonprofit partners completed a survey at the end of the year regarding the overall program that was conducted by the Ivy VINE. The results of the nonprofit partners' survey are summarized below. The results of the full survey are presented in the Appendix of this report.

1. Prior to the Ivy VINE program, only one of the nonprofit partners had met or spoken with a Prince George's County elected official. Since participating in the Ivy VINE program, all the nonprofit leaders have met with at least one Council Member, and one had the opportunity to meet Maryland's First Lady, Mrs. Dawn Moore, at a county event where Charities sponsored the nonprofit partner's attendance.
2. Prior to the Ivy VINE program, only one of the nonprofit partners had submitted a grant application for funding to a local official. Since participating in the Ivy VINE program, all the nonprofit leaders have submitted applications to at least one Council Member. By the end of 2024, all who applied received at least one grant from County officials.
3. At the time of their application to the Ivy VINE, all nonprofit partners stated that their Board of Directors was in a flux, was not engaged or had not met. Since participating in the Ivy VINE program, each of the nonprofit organizations has revamped or enhanced their Board with new members who have participated in at least one retreat designed to enhance Board engagement.
4. Prior to the Ivy VINE, only one of the nonprofit partners was aware of Maryland Nonprofits' Standards for Excellence recognition program. As a result of participating in the Ivy VINE, one nonprofit partner earned recognition at the Basics level and one earned recognition at the Basics Enhanced level. Two other organizations are expected to apply in 2025.
5. Prior to the Ivy VINE, none of the nonprofit partners had received structured executive coaching. As a result of the Ivy VINE, the nonprofits received up to 5 hours of coaching every month and credit their coaches for their success. Two Executive Directors stated their intent to continue the services of their coach at their own expense beyond the program.

Additional results from the program survey are summarized on the next page.

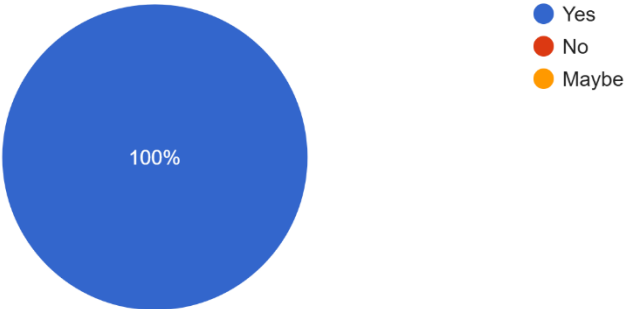
How successful was the Ivy VINE training program in meeting your needs as an Executive Director?
6 responses



Were there any changes in your Board's development and engagement as a result of the Ivy VINE program?
6 responses



Would you recommend the Ivy VINE program to other nonprofits?
6 responses

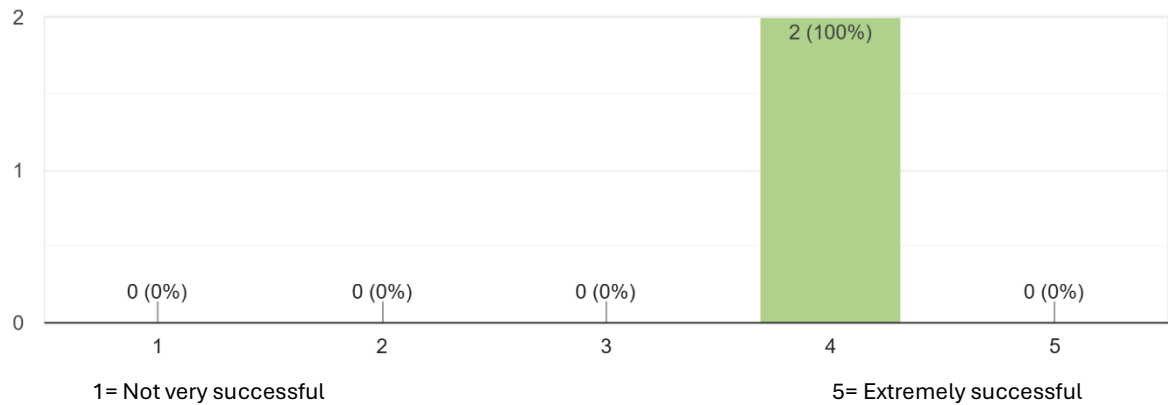


C. Results of the coaches' survey

The two Ivy VINE coaches responded to the end of the program survey. Their comments are summarized below:

How would you rate the success of the Ivy VINE training sessions?

2 responses



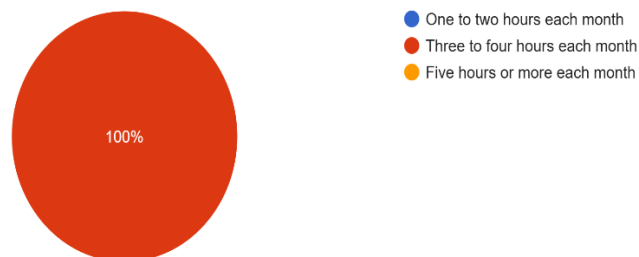
In general, the Ivy VINE met its intent to help build the capacity of small, emerging nonprofits through training, coaching, etc.

2 responses



How much time would you recommend be required with the Ivy VINE coach each month?

2 responses



Coach Erica: “Perhaps 5 or more hours per month for those pursuing Standards for Excellence.”

One coach provided the following statements:

“The most significant accomplishment that I observed with my initial partners was an increase in their belief that they could achieve success in the program and in advancing their organizations as desired. When I first started working with them, the two directors felt discouraged for a number of reasons. They overcame it and successfully tackled the issues they faced. They developed their boards, strengthened their “brands” thereby significantly increasing exposure of their organizations among stakeholders and local funders, and increased revenues. One submitted the application for Standards for Excellence Basics Enhanced recognition. The other positioned the organization to be able to submit an application in early 2025. In addition to completing the program, the most significant accomplishments for the third cohort member included finding a strong, engaged chair for the board, and successfully pursuing funding.”

One Executive Director provided the following statement regarding her coach:

“My Executive Coach is a blessing! She understands nonprofit management and is knowledgeable in everything from board development and resource development to grants. From the very beginning of the Ivy VINE program, we both connected because she leads with her spirit, which is full of love and compassion. She is a great listener. As a nonprofit leader building capacity there are so many emotions and disappointments you may have throughout the process. However, she helps to turn your negative thoughts around by remaining positive. She helps you break down your goals into doable tasks. She helps you plan your day, week and month so you can get things accomplished. She helps to guide your ideas into a meaningful agenda for your board meetings. She also shows up for you when it counts and has donated to our organization because she believes in our mission. She celebrates your success and holds you accountable. She encourages you to give yourself grace, make time for self-care and cheers you on for "at a girl" and "pat yourself on the back" moments. I highly recommend [her] without any reservations. I will continue to use her coaching and consulting services beyond the program. I am so happy that [our organization] was able to honor her for advocating for brain health at our 2023 Board Retreat and Awards Luncheon! She deserves her flowers now!”

D. Progress toward meeting the objectives of the Strategic Plan

Objective	Status as of May 2025	Result
80% of participating nonprofits will attend at least 80% of the training provided each program year	5 out of 6 nonprofits attended all of the training = 83%	Exceeded
80% of participating nonprofits will attend at least 40 hours of capacity building coaching sessions each year	5 out of 6 nonprofits participated in at least 40 hours of coaching sessions = 83%	Exceeded
The number of grants awarded to support the Ivy VINE will increase by 10% each year through 2026	Office of the County Exec is the baseline = 1 at \$50K; Received Non-Departmental award for \$75K =2 at 50% increase in funding	Exceeded
80% of participating nonprofits receive at least \$5,000 in grants within two years	5 out of 5 that applied received grants totaling \$5,000 or more =100%	Exceeded
The Ivy VINE Training Center and Office Suites are recognized as model facilities equipped with state-of-the-art technology by 2026	Construction still pending	Pending
The number of new partnerships that support the Ivy VINE operations will increase by 10% annually through 2026	No new partnerships confirmed to date	Pending

Lessons Learned

1. Each of the Ivy VINE Cohort 1 Executive Directors was employed full-time outside of their nonprofit organizations, however they generally met the time commitment to attend the training sessions during the day. They also sought opportunities to meet in person.
2. The coaches were essential to the growth and effectiveness of the Executive Director and the nonprofit organization, including its Board of Directors. Their candid and structured sessions along with their support with resources, networking and reviewing grant drafts ensured the success of the nonprofits and the Ivy VINE program.
3. Small, emerging nonprofits benefit from incremental funding rather than a lump sum at the end of the program. As a result, mini grants were split in half and provided at the end of each year.

Recommendations

Recommendations were provided by the Ivy VINE nonprofit partners, coaches, Ivy Community Charities staff and the Achieving Intentional Results (AIR) team of professors, educators and other volunteers who dedicated their skills and time to review Ivy VINE reports and documents. A summary of their comments is presented below:

1. Clarify the objectives of the program including the goal to achieve the Standards for Excellence recognition and the processes to attain those goals at the Orientation as well as the dates for training workshops; submissions of reports and assessments; conference attendance, etc.
2. Clarify expectations and definition of “coaching” when contracting with coaches. The services listed in the position description go beyond true coaching and comprise both coaching and consulting, both of which the program requires.
3. Provide more time for Cohort interaction, team building, and learning from each other, perhaps quarterly.
4. Provide a database, vault or central location for recordings, presentations, materials, Standards for Excellence templates, etc. so that participants can review them as needed.
5. Start the process for applying for the Standards for Excellence earlier, perhaps in the first year.
6. Nonprofit eligibility requires that the organization demonstrates at least one year of community service implementation, maintain a budget of at least \$10,000 annually, and the Executive Director spend a minimum of 20 hours per week on nonprofit work.

Bibliography

Websites

- The Ivy Community Charities of Prince George's County, Inc. [www.iccpgc.org/ivy-vine-complex]

Other Sources

- Maryland Nonprofits. Maryland Nonprofits by the Numbers: Key Findings, 2021. Chelsea L. Newhouse.
- Greater Washington Community Foundation. 2020 Prince George's County Impact Report.
- Prince George's County Economic Development Platform. June 2021

Appendix A: Ivy VINE Cohort 1 Nonprofit Partners

Head to Speech, Inc. – www.headtospeech.org
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DcuJkvVC7f3zE4PyEgLS4P7GJ-EM6_AH/view
Executive Director: Dr. Tabia Pope

It Takes a Village Collaborative, Inc. – www.itavcollab.org
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N78iRweYppaSjqtUNEYUZf6shS46736W/view>
Executive Director: Shoaregard Philpotts

Next Generation Youth Programs, Inc. – www.nextgenerationyouthprograms.org
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yRu2v2v3HpZRPK1GffFYE_dTE_PY-4Xx/view
Executive Director: Dane Smith

Southern Prince George's County Community Charities, Inc. – www.spgccc.org
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11VoSnczug7DCOrmksiT9jAMyIPPEgfyH/view>
Executive Director: Sacha Thompson

The Aafiyah Project, Inc. – www.theaafiyahproject.org
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g270D3o3EMyV59y9GT-qOWS7laEqVKn8/view>
Dr. Demi Fauziyyah Adebo-Adelaja

The Right Fit, Inc. – www.therightfitinc.org
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ULJgzyTuVMrfaRuCQyix-UO9rACwGZj/view>
Executive Director: Alesha Wilson

Appendix B

Comments from the Nonprofit Partners

"I truly didn't know what I was getting into or that this program was two years. However, it has been the best two years ... Thank you for providing me and [nonprofit] with so many opportunities to grow! We are looking forward to our continued partnership with Ivy VINE and want to support other cohorts and Ivy Community Charities' programs. On another note, my Executive Coach, Coach Kaye is a blessing! She understands nonprofit management and is knowledgeable in everything from board development and resource development to grants. From the very beginning of the Ivy VINE program, we both connected because she leads with her spirit, which is full of love and compassion. She is a great listener. As a nonprofit leader building capacity there are so many emotions and disappointments you may have throughout the process. However, she helps to turn your negative thoughts around by remaining positive. She helps you break down your goals into doable tasks. She helps you plan your day, week and month so you can get things accomplished. She helps to guide your ideas into a meaningful agenda for your board meetings. She also shows up for you when it counts and has donated to our organization because she believes in our mission. She celebrates your success and holds you accountable. She encourages you to give yourself grace, make time for self-care and cheers you on for "at a girl" and "pat yourself on the back" moments. I highly recommend Coach Kaye without any reservations. I will continue to use her coaching and consulting services beyond the program."

"Participating in the Ivy VINE program was a transformative experience, providing invaluable tools and connections that have significantly strengthened [nonprofit's] capacity to fulfill its mission. The tailored support and practical strategies offered by Ivy VINE have empowered the organization to operate more effectively, expand its impact, and build a sustainable foundation for the future."

"I am truly grateful for this opportunity and for all the hard work and dedication that made it possible for us. The intentionality and care shown throughout the experience were deeply felt and made it incredibly valuable for our organization."

"Being a participant of this program opened my eyes to the many areas where [nonprofit] needs improvement, we had an accountability partner in our coach, helped us put into context what we were doing and why we do it. I just wish we had more hands-on board that would participate in some of the training to help receive and distribute the information. At times it felt overwhelming to do it alone and moments of defeat. Things changed for us, and while it's not the most exciting, we enjoyed the journey and all the impact we've had in the community. Proud to be a part and say we did it!"

"Thank you for this opportunity. It was truly beneficial to my growth as a new ED."

"Great experience and very thankful for how it has helped our organization."