



2023
IMPACT
REPORT



**ACTION IN
MONTGOMERY**

Building on Strength for a Brighter Future

This year AIM has created real change for real people based on the deep relationships we have built over the last 24 years. Thank you for the many ways YOU have contributed to these victories, and we hope you enjoy reading about them!

This year we took a step back to ask ourselves, “how can our relational people power be most useful and effective in this cultural and political moment?”

The dual crises of climate change and threats to our democracy are weighing heavily. With once-in-a-generation funding for infrastructure coming to Maryland, but continued gridlock in DC, our states are our best hope for creating lasting change.



At AIM we are strategically shifting our efforts to focus on statewide solutions, while not leaving behind our work on local issues. Our meetings with statewide elected officials and administration leadership have highlighted how crucial our connections to schools, religious institutions, and business leaders are to tackling climate change while addressing issues of health, housing, transportation and jobs.

Maryland can lead our country in implementing climate solutions in a way that creates better infrastructure and an economy that benefits everyone, regardless of socioeconomic or racial background. But only if we step up to demand it.

We hope you will join us as we work with statewide elected officials in 2024, and in building the organized people power needed to win a better and brighter future for us all.



← Get Involved! Join an Issue Action Team!

AIM Hosts 640-Person Action in March 2023

AIM's in-person actions are how we show our organized people power across faith, socioeconomic background, race, and ethnicity. We meet with elected officials to make sure our People's Agenda, built from listening to hundreds and hundreds of people, is enacted.

For 2023 our agenda included affordable housing, early childhood care, affordable dental care, tenant protections, safe youth spaces, and addressing how climate impacts low-income housing.

In March, 640 AIM members joyfully gathered from schools, tenants' associations and congregations to move the AIM People's Agenda from hope to reality. Our County Executive and a super-majority of our council resoundingly committed to move forward on each of these issues.



"In the book of James, we read, 'Faith without works is dead.' This is exactly what we are doing, as AIM, together as one, on behalf of our neighbors and ourselves. We are using the huge power we have to ensure that no one in Montgomery County be denied basic rights to medical care, affordable housing, safety, adequate work and good education. We gather together to fight in order for our democracy to work for ALL OF US!"

— **Bishop Darlington Johnson**
Harvest Intercontinental Ministries

AIM's Impact in 2023

■ Affordable Housing

Won additional funding in the Housing Initiative Fund, bringing the total to well over \$1.1B over 20 years! A portion of this funding was used to buy and preserve 345 units of affordable housing in Wheaton where AIM leaders have been organizing.

■ Community Safety

\$250,000 for security cameras in local communities, improved communication between the police department and the local residents, and more lighting.

■ Tenants' Rights

Won an online portal where tenants can report unaddressed maintenance issues. Working as part of a movement with partners to push forward historic rent stabilization with vacancy control- the first in Maryland.

■ Dental Care

A pilot mobile dental program that will provide basic services plus a case manager to connect patients to a "dental home," for specialty dental care.

■ Early childhood education

\$23 million to increase childcare for children birth through 4, including expansion of who qualifies for child care subsidies.

■ Increase in After school programs

Expansion of the Excel Beyond the Bell Elementary after-school program to two additional high poverty schools, for a total of 16 schools, serving 1920 students. The program provides an hour of academics, an hour of enrichment and a hot meal five days a week for students.

■ Pedestrian Safety Interventions

New bus service for students at Argyle Middle School who were walking 35 minutes each way along dangerous roads. With CHEER, AIM won new stop signs, repainted crosswalks, and pedestrian flashing lights for New Hampshire Estates families who walk to school.

■ Opening of Two New School Buildings

AIM parent and congregation leaders worked together to win \$70M to fully rebuild two Title I Elementary schools that had been neglected for years. South Lake and Burnt Mills students proudly walked into beautiful new buildings this fall!

■ Ongoing learning opportunities- building community power

Over 200 people participated in our formal power building training sessions this year, from congregation leaders to tenants fighting for better living conditions to parents seeking better education outcomes for their children.



"We parents organized ourselves, built a community network, and clearly and firmly expressed our requests to MCPS. A representative from an AIM congregation was present and that gave us more confidence to know that we were not alone in the fight."

— Yolanda Flores
Hewitt Ave. Community Leader

CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT

Climate, Housing, and Health

For years, tenants organizing with AIM have struggled with chronic respiratory illness. In 2022, we learned that gas appliances, especially stoves, can be a contributing factor. AIM joined the “Beyond Gas” campaign to work on improving low-income housing while addressing our climate crisis by moving off of fossil fuels to sustainable energy.



Strategy: AIM is doing “Community Science” to build people power and highlight the need to act now on climate. Tenant leaders have measured NO₂ (a by-product of burning “natural” gas, which has been shown to cause respiratory illness and affect brain development in children) in over 300 apartments. Shockingly, well over half of the apartments measured NO₂ levels that are considered dangerous by the EPA after stoves had been on for 20 minutes.

AIM tenant leaders have already played a key role in shaping how Maryland is addressing climate through building regulations and funding. With billions of dollars coming to the state to invest in improving infrastructure from the federal government, AIM is poised to ensure that everyone, regardless of income, will benefit from these improvements and contribute to climate solutions.

Join us! In 2024 we will be working more closely with the state legislature and the Maryland Energy Administration to fight for more equity in climate solutions, and insure that multifamily housing is included in energy upgrades.

“For me it is personal. First, I want to inform and educate my community that we are paying to breathe unhealthy indoor air everytime we cook. Second, I want to make sure that us renters are a part of the solution to be able to live and thrive with our families in healthier, safer apartments that we call home.”

— Adama Moussa Harouna
AIM PROJECT ORGANIZER



← Sign up to get your home tested for NO₂

CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT

Big Victory for Affordable Housing

Residents in Westchester West Apartments were deeply concerned when they received notice that their building was being sold. New ownership often means rent increases and other changes that hurt existing tenants.



“With AIM I feel like all of the campaigns are in our own interest, we don’t feel like they are using us for other purposes, like we have with other groups. Before I was active in AIM I felt alone with my family, but now I feel like I have a bigger family”

— **Flor Veliz**
COMMUNITY LEADER

Tenants, many of whom are parents we work with through their school, told AIM about their fears. Our first conversations with public officials were discouraging. Only through persistent follow-up with the County Executive, Housing Department, and Councilmember Natali Fani-Gonzales were we able to get the county to exercise its “Right of First Refusal” to enable a nonprofit developer to purchase the property in order to maintain its affordability.

The Housing Initiative Fund, which AIM has championed for over 20 years, was used to subsidize the purchase of the 345 units and ensure affordability for decades to come. It was especially rewarding to see our work on different aspects of affordable housing come together to benefit the families we work with. Without the tenant leadership and AIM’s collective power, it would not have happened.



← Support AIM’s work today!

Thank you to our supporters!

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Catholic Campaign for Human Development	Energy Foundation
Children's Opportunity Alliance	Hazen Foundation
Climate + Clean Energy Equity Fund	Meyer Foundation
Children's Opportunity Alliance	Presbyterian Hunger Program
Delta Dental Foundation	Takoma Park Foundation (GWCF)



AIM Members


CONGREGATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Arts on the Block	Safe Places/ Lugares Seguros Tenants' Association, Montgomery Village
Gaithersburg Beloved Community Initiative at Asbury United Methodist Village	Saint Mark Presbyterian Church, Rockville
Bethesda Friends Meeting	S.E.A. Change Coalition of B'nai Israel and Washington Hebrew Congregation
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Bethesda	St. Camillus Catholic Church, Silver Spring
Colesville United Methodist Church, Silver Spring	St. Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Church
Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Silver Spring	St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Gaithersburg
Harvest Intercontinental Church, Olney	Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, Takoma Park
Jewish Community Relations Council	Takoma Park Presbyterian Church
Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, Potomac	Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church
The People's Community Baptist Church	Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ, Bethesda
River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Bethesda	

EXCEL BEYOND THE BELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Burnt Mills Elementary	New Hampshire Estates Elementary
Cresthaven Elementary	Oak View Elementary
Gaithersburg Elementary	Roscoe Nix Elementary
Georgian Forest Elementary	South Lake Elementary
Greencastle Elementary	Weller Road Elementary
Harmony Hills Elementary	Wheaton Woods Elementary
JoAnn LeLeck at Broad Acres Elementary	Whetstone Elementary



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**ACTION IN
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