AIM

AIM (Action In Montgomery) is a non-partisan organization of almost 30 faith and civic institutions in Montgomery County. We organize to build power and do justice in low and moderate income communities in Montgomery County. Uniting people across lines of race, class, religion, political party, and geography, we take action on key issues in our communities including (but not limited to) affordable housing, equity in education, immigrant rights, transportation, and quality housing.

Founded in 2000, AIM is an independent non-profit organization led by a strategy team of religious, and community leaders.

AIM is affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), the nation’s first and largest network of multi-faith broad-based citizen organizations, which has seven decades of experience winning tough fights on housing, health care, education, living wages, immigrant rights, and other issues across the nation.

Vision

We believe that people working together have the power to change their communities and their country for the better.

Need

Political and corporate leaders often do not embrace change unless they are pressured by the people they serve. And too many people do not realize they have the potential to join forces and create change in their communities through organizing.

Approach

We work with people who want to transform the world from what it is to what they believe it should be. We challenge people to imagine the change they can accomplish, connect individuals and organizations to multiply their power, and organize people by the hundreds and thousands to make their voices heard. We set bold goals, we create effective strategies, and we act by taking on the powerful interests that stand in the way. We often do this by gathering hundreds or thousands of people at an “Action” to demonstrate power to elected officials.
Organizing for Power and Change in Montgomery County for Nearly 20 Years!

Over $725 million for affordable housing
Established the first dedicated funding for affordable housing in Montgomery County, and have been the primary power organization pushing to increase the funding annually.

Organized low-income tenants to win housing improvements in more than 2,000 units
Residents, with support from local congregations, have fought for and won mold remediation, vermin control, quality policing, and washer and dryer service.

Secured $30 million to renovate community centers in historic African-American neighborhoods
In 2005, four centers, all in communities where people are living on land their ancestors bought when they were freed from slavery, were severely neglected. After a two year campaign and an Action with 1,000 leaders, AIM secured funding for all four centers. The last ribbon cutting happened in 2016.

Won quality after-school programming for 1,200 low-income students
AIM fought for and won the creation of the Excel Beyond the Bell Elementary school program, serving 10 of the highest poverty schools in Montgomery County with an hour of academics, an hour of enrichment, and a hot dinner five days a week, 28 weeks a year. The program has been proven to improve academic outcomes, reduce truancy, and increase parent engagement.

Passed the Dream Act
AIM first won in-state tuition at Montgomery Community College, and then led campaigns to win in-state tuition at all Maryland community colleges and state universities. Thousands of students who have completed three years of high school in Maryland can now pay in-state tuition instead of international fees.

Transportation reform
Won improvements in transportation service to seniors and disabled individuals who were being stranded and cut off from the community because of an unaccountable taxi cab monopoly.

All-day kindergarten
Won all-day kindergarten to include all kindergartners in Montgomery County.
**Advancing Educational Equity through Excellent After-School Programs**

Excel Beyond the Bell Elementary (EBBE) will almost double in size this year, from 6 to 10 of the county’s highest-poverty schools, and serving 1,200 students and families with 2 hours of quality academic and enrichment activities, and dinner, 5 days a week, 28 weeks a year. Parents are trained in leadership development and civic engagement to address pressing issues, including inadequate school facilities and community safety. The County’s Office of Legislative Oversight found that EBBE was the primary program addressing educational inequity in Montgomery County. AIM believes that we will not obtain an equitable system until the parents engage with the school board and elected officials represent the true diversity of the county. Thank you to the County Council for prioritizing funding for this program!

**Affordable Housing**

AIM won big this year for affordable housing. The County Council included a record amount of funding—$68 million—in the Housing Initiative Fund, which will house thousands of people in dwellings they can afford. This brings the total to over $725 million since AIM first won dedicated funding for housing many years ago. Additionally, AIM has worked on a number of specific projects, supporting over 100 units of senior affordable housing in Wheaton, and a project under review for 100 units of senior affordable housing in Kensington, where no affordable housing has been built in a generation.
Tenant Organizing

AIM has worked directly with some of the most vulnerable residents in Montgomery County, many of whom are undocumented immigrants from around the world who live in substandard conditions with toxic mold, unsafe neighborhoods, vermin, and other terrible conditions. AIM has identified, trained, and developed local leaders in several communities to effectively build the power to win mold remediation, better policing, community lighting, increased responsiveness by elected officials and landlords to community concerns, and pedestrian safety improvements.

Support for Immigrants At-Risk of Deportation

In March, Afomu Kelley stood before an AIM Action with 400 people, and shared the terrible fear she was living in, as it looked like her Deferred Enforced Departure protected status would end in less than 3 weeks. She would then have to move to Liberia, a country she hadn’t been to in over 30 years, and where she might not be able to receive the treatment she needs for her chronic health problems. She would also have to choose whether or not to have her children come with her or stay in the U.S. with relatives they do not know well. Her feelings were familiar to many in the room, as...
well as hundreds and hundreds of AIM members who are undocumented, or whose current legal status could disappear in the near future. At this meeting, the County Executive and County Council publicly committed to putting $540,000 in the budget to provide legal support for immigrants facing deportation. Often, the barrier for people seeking a legal pathway to remain in the U.S. is access to qualified legal representation. AIM is committed to increasing funding for this purpose.

Justice and Freedom for Edy Macario

Edy Macario was a hero and pastor to the survivors of the deadly Flower Branch fire. He led the group to fight with AIM for additional mental health and housing resources when they were struggling with physical injuries and PTSD. Nine days after he spoke out publicly, ICE apprehended him and put him into detention, away from his young wife and 1-year-old daughter. AIM worked diligently with his lawyer, gathering evidence, arranging witnesses, and showing up with more than 30 clergy to his hearing in front of a judge. AIM also held a prayer vigil on his behalf to bring attention to his cause. Edy came to the U.S. after his life was threatened by gangs because he was recruiting young men out of the gangs and into his church. In an unlikely outcome, the judge granted Edy legal status, and immediately returned him to the community. Since then, Edy has spoken at several AIM congregations as a witness to the power of organizing and prayer.
AIM is funded by dues from member institutions, individual donations, corporate donors and foundations. The bulk of AIM’s annual budget pays for professional staff members who guide and serve the member organizations. The budget also funds the training of volunteer leaders each year, and covers expenses associated with operating issue campaigns. AIM is able to keep its cost down by having almost no overhead. Thank you to Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, The People’s Community Baptist Church, and Bethel World Outreach Church for donating space for meetings and Actions for AIM.

### AIM Expenses 2018

$320,658

- **Staff** ($231,562)
- **Administration** ($48,588)
- **Dues** ($40,508)

**Staff**
Includes salary and benefits for two full-time organizers, a part-time office manager, and part-time contracted development associate.

**Communications and other Administrative Costs**
Includes publications, database, and website fees; training and travel costs; insurance.

**Dues to Metro and National IAF**
Help start new affiliates, support coordinated campaigns, and increase the impact of our organizing efforts regionally and throughout the United States.
In 2018, we ended the year in a strong position financially, with a small reserve of funds and the news that we have been awarded three new grants in 2019, which will significantly expand our organizing efforts across the County. Our goal for our Friends of AIM Campaign is to increase our individual and corporate contributions by $20,000, which will ensure that we are able to fully fund a second organizer and deepen our work in Montgomery County’s high-poverty elementary schools.

Please consider giving to the Friends of AIM Campaign to support our continued organizing for affordable housing, quality after-school programs, tenant and immigrant rights, and other vitally important campaigns in Montgomery County. To become a Friend of AIM, you may use the enclosed response envelope, or donate online at www.actioninmontgomery.org.
Thank you to these Friends of AIM who contributed generously to support our work this past year. To become a Friend of AIM, you may use the enclosed response envelope, or donate online at www.actioninmontgomery.org.
Funding
AIM would like to thank some of our many institutional supporters including:

- American Heart Association
- Art that Matters
- Bethesda Friends Meeting
- Burks Family Giving Fund
- Catholic Campaign for Human Development Center for Community Change
- Charles Hazlehurst Moura Family Foundation
- Eagle Bank
- Eugene and Agnes Meyer Foundation
- Little Friends of Peace
- Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
- National Capitol Presbytery
- Network for Good
- Roberts Oxygen
- Speer Fund
- SunTrust Foundation
- Takoma Park Friends Meeting
- Training Resources Group
- Wells Fargo Bank
- Westmoreland UCC Board of Social Justice and Action

Membership Organizations, Leadership, & Staff
AIM is governed by a Strategy Team of clergy and community leaders which makes recommendations for organizational strategy.

AIM 2019 Strategy Team Members

**Rev. Dr. Michael Armstrong** - Chair, Senior Pastor, Colesville United Methodist Church

**Rabbi Mark Raphael** - Vice Chair, Chaplain, Shady Grove Hospital, former Lead Rabbi at Kehilat Shalom Synagogue

**Steve Yank** - Treasurer, Organization Development Consultant, Training Resources Group, member of St. Camillus Catholic Church

**Linda Bleadingheiser** - Secretary, Medical Practice Consultant, member of River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation

**Ogechi Akalegbere** - Service Coordinator at the Connelly School of the Holy Child, Co-chair of the Parish Council at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church

**Yvonne Brooks-Little** - Retired. Ministry Leader at Bethel World Outreach and resident at Victory Towers

**Terri Jo Hayes** - Cybersecurity Strategist, Mfusion Inc, Board member at Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church

**Bob Essink** - Retired Vice President of Kaiser Permanente, member of Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Congregation

**Diana Bird** - Retired employee of the Housing Opportunities Commission, member of The People’s Community Baptist Church

**Carmen Vasquez** - Third Grade Teacher at South Lake Elementary School, Teacher’s Union Building Representative

**Adama Harouna** - Parent at South Lake Elementary School and Tenants Union Leader
AIM Member Organizations
AIM’s members are institutions and organizations that support AIM’s mission to create a more participatory democracy by identifying, training, and developing leaders to engage in public life. AIM member organizations are the source of the leaders who create and shape our issue campaigns. Each member organization has a Core Team of people who are committed to doing justice and building bridges across racial, socioeconomic, and language divides. Core Team members participate in AIM activities in a variety of ways depending on their interests, talents, and passions. Member organizations can call on the AIM staff to help them develop strategies and to act to address issues within their institutions and their community.

Is your organization interested in joining AIM? Email us at cynthia@actioninmontgomery.org for more information. Or call us at 301.588.0330

2019 AIM Schools
Burnt Mills Elementary
Gaithersburg Elementary
Harmony Hills Elementary
JoAnn LeLeck Elementary at Broad Acres
New Hampshire Estates Elementary
Oak View Elementary
South Lake Elementary

2019 AIM Member Organizations
Beloved Community at Asbury United Methodist Village
Bethel World Outreach Church, Olney
Bethesda Friends Meeting, Bethesda
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, Bethesda
Colesville United Methodist Church, Silver Spring
Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Silver Spring
Islamic Center of Maryland
Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, Potomac
The People's Community Baptist Church, Silver Spring
River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Bethesda
Saint Mark Presbyterian Church, Rockville
St. Camillus Catholic Church, Silver Spring
St Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Church
St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Gaithersburg
Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, Takoma Park
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church
Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ, Bethesda
Washington Hebrew Congregation, DC & Potomac