



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Maryland Rural Development Corporation Receives PNC Foundation Grant

\$40K grant supports Early Educator Development Position in Head Start

GREENSBORO, MD, Jan. 10, 2020 — Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) is pleased to announce it has received a \$40,000 grant from the PNC Foundation in support of PNC Grow Up Great®, a bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life.

“PNC recognizes the role kindergarten readiness plays in the wellbeing of local children, their families and ultimately, our economy,” said Laura Gamble, PNC regional president for Greater Maryland. “By preparing our youngest citizens for educational success, we help build a solid foundation for the future of this region.”

This grant from PNC Foundation will enable MRDC to help further the education and certification of teachers and future teachers in its Head Start programs in three counties. In partnership with Cecil College, Chesapeake College, and Harford Community College, MRDC will help connect teachers, staff, and parents with educational opportunities within the field of early childhood education.

“Our local colleges have long wanted to coordinate with us in meeting the needs of teachers and parents within Head Start beyond our current adult education programs,” said Chris Benzing, MRDC’s executive director. “PNC is playing a vital role in helping us expand our ability to address workforce development needs for low-income adults eager to work toward a better future.”

MRDC has hired Juanita Farrington, an early education leader for over twenty years, who will facilitate access to training, educational programs, and professional development as appropriate on an individual basis, helping teachers and staff identify and apply for the scholarships and grants available for this purpose. Additionally, MRDC will be able to enhance its workforce development efforts by recruiting interested parents to serve as interns within the program while becoming certified in early childhood education.

“Our teachers and parents want to seek educational opportunities that make job advancement possible,” said Marisol Rodriguez, MRDC’s Head Start director. “This new staff member will help connect parents and staff with the opportunities they are seeking, and help us fulfill our mission more fully than ever.”

About The PNC Foundation

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (www.pnc.com), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through Grow Up Great, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$500 million,

multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, visit <http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com>.

About Maryland Rural Development Corporation

The Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) is a private non-profit organization that has been providing services in response to the needs of rural, low-income households and communities since 1979. Since 1986, MRDC has served as Caroline, Cecil, and Kent Counties' official Community Action Agency. MRDC creates and operates programs that align with specific needs of low-income rural communities in order to fight the effects of poverty and lift individuals, families, and communities into self-sufficiency.

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