

# Greater than the Sum of Its Parts



## **Part II: Lessons on Regional Scale**



October 2009

**About this Report**

In keeping with one of VPP's core values to share knowledge and inform the field of philanthropy, VPP prepared this report to offer practical lessons from the experiences of four nonprofit leaders in the VPP portfolio who expanded to new jurisdictions to fill unmet service needs. In addition to interviews with each of the four leaders, long-time observers of the region's human services sector also shared insights about the short- and long-term implications of the demographic trends in light of the economic crisis that the region, the country and the world are experiencing.

This report follows two VPP reports released in early 2009, "Demographic and Economic Trends in the National Capital Region and Their Effects on Children, Youth and Families," produced by the Brookings Institution, and "Greater than the Sum of Its Parts: A Regional Perspective on Changing Demographics." These two reports provide a snapshot of just how dramatically the population of the National Capital Region has changed in a very short time and the implications of those changes for the delivery of human services throughout the region and beyond.

All of the reports are available on VPP's website: <http://www.vpppartners.org/learning>

## Introduction: The Challenge

The National Capital Region, like many others, is undergoing seismic changes, quickly growing more diverse and more decentralized. There is a serious gap between the location and availability of critical social and health services and the location of the populations who need those services—a gap that will likely widen. The systems designed to help people move out of poverty are frayed and the result is that more children and more families are falling further behind, stunting their futures and endangering our collective future.

The movement of people across jurisdictions to receive services puts tremendous pressure on non-profit organizations. Nonprofits need a great deal of help to adapt in response to these changes. Successful community-based organizations that have been rooted in one location or national organizations seeking to bring their programs and services to a new jurisdiction face many barriers as they try to expand regionally.

Nonprofits need a healthy ecosystem to nurture and sustain the kind of growth required to meet rising demands. Growth capital, strong pipelines for talent, strategic assistance, data and research, and a favorable regulatory and policy environment are essential if service providers are to change the future trajectories for the most vulnerable in our metro area.

Venture Philanthropy Partners (VPP) has experienced these trends firsthand since it began in 2009. Nearly half of the nonprofits in its first portfolio have expanded their operations to other jurisdictions in order to respond to the changing needs of the populations they serve. The path to expansion that each of these organizations took with their boards, staff and clients was paved with many challenges and opportunities. VPP was privileged to travel with these organizations on their journeys, providing financial support and strategic guidance as they charted their new course.

Each organization had a unique journey to expansion; nonetheless, all of the organizations had similar lessons learned that are relevant for nonprofits seeking to expand regionally in the National Capital Region and other metropolitan areas. This report will highlight the following key lessons of regional expansion from VPP's first portfolio work:

*Lesson 1: Planning and Data are Paramount*

*Lesson 2: Relationships Matter*

*Lesson 3: Adapting, Not Replicating, Services*

*Lesson 4: Get the Human Capital Needs Right*

*Lesson 5: Cohesiveness through Strong Organizational Culture*

*Lesson 6: Protect and Nurture the Brand*

## Bellwethers of Change

Nonprofit organizations are often bellwethers for change. Because they are on the ground in neighborhoods, they see and experience changes in human service needs often before they and others realize that a trend is taking shape. But seeing a trend and marshalling the resources to respond quickly challenges even the most nimble and well-run nonprofits.

This was clearly the case for four well respected nonprofits in the District of Columbia: Asian American Lead (AA-LEAD), CentroNía, the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) and Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care (Mary's Center). For many years these organizations have been delivering quality social services to immigrant and low-income populations, primarily to the Columbia Heights and Adams Morgan neighborhoods in DC.

*“What became clear was the demographic shift taking place throughout the city—a clear trajectory of families moving up the green [metro] line and north of the location of our headquarters. The new immigrant community was skipping over the District and settling in to the neighboring jurisdictions, and that was a new phenomenon.”*

*BB Otero, President and CEO, CentroNía*

Increasingly, their clients were no longer coming from the surrounding neighborhoods but were traveling, sometimes for hours, often by public transportation, from the suburbs of Maryland and Virginia to the District to receive services. All of these organizations faced growing demand from their clients as well as local government to bring their services and delivery models to these areas.

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The reason for the demographic shift was simple—suburban areas offered affordable housing, better education, and jobs. As immigrant populations moved to the suburbs, they found that their new jurisdictions were unprepared for them. The social networks and fabric to support the needs of these populations was not strong or big enough to meet the demand.

Each of these organizations recognized there was a huge gap in services for their clients, a gap that they could uniquely fill. After years of working with immigrant and low-income populations, they had developed proven models of service delivery. They were well-known and respected by local government, trusted by communities, and examples for other organizations to emulate. The challenge was how and when to grow.

## Investors in Change

About the same time that these organizations were weighing their responses to the profound changes occurring around them, Venture Philanthropy Partners was examining how it would invest in non-profits serving children and youth of low-income families in the region. VPP was created in 2000 with a dual mission: to help great nonprofit leaders in the region grow their organizations to serve

### what do we believe?

LARGE AMOUNTS OF SCARCE GROWTH CAPITAL



HANDS ON, STRATEGIC ASSISTANCE



TRUSTED RELATIONSHIP



**STRONGER ORGANIZATIONS, DELIVERING BETTER PROGRAMS TO MORE CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

more children and youth in need more effectively, and to influence and inspire others with its unique philanthropic investing model.

The VPP model concentrates money, expertise and networks to help non-profit leaders build strong, high performing institutions. VPP invests in “growing to scale,” that is helping organizations not only to increase the

number of children and youth served but also to increase operational capacity in order to deliver consistent performance and sustain that performance for the long-term.

As a demonstration project itself, VPP has not only sought to build stronger individual nonprofits but also works to create a framework for systems change within the National Capital Region’s social services sector. It also seeks to influence the way talent and capital flow into this sector, starting with its own investor community.

## Partnerships for Growth: Four Investment Partners

VPP's investment focus on growth and capacity building very much aligned with the goals and stage of organizational development of each of these nonprofits. These organizations had in place the strong leadership, board commitment, proven track record of success, and aspirations for growth that would enable them to derive benefit from VPP's unique approach.

**Asian American LEAD (AALEAD)** provides after-school programs, leadership training, mentorships, and family-support services for Asian-American youth.

**Expansion Goals:** To serve more children and educate lawmakers to affect national and local policies to benefit Asian American children.

**Investment Opportunity:** For VPP, AALEAD provided an opportunity to learn how best to support an earlier stage organization with great potential and to help that organization expand its impact and reach.

### Key Facts

- *Year founded:* 1998
- *2009 Children and youth served:* 338
- *2009 Children and youth served in Maryland:* 137
- *Regional expansion to new places and coverage:* 1 new independent site and 4 school co-locations



**CentroNía** is a multicultural learning community that has pioneered an innovative approach to education that helps guide children, youth and families to achieve their goals.

**Expansion Goals:** To become the premier education leader for bilingual multicultural children in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, expanding its services to serve new families and communities.

**Investment Opportunity:** The expansion into Maryland was a significant part of the VPP investment, although the organization also expanded its services to other communities of need within the District.

### Key Facts

- *Year founded:* 1986
- *2009 Children and youth served:* 1,240
- *2009 Children and youth served in Maryland:* 85
- *Regional expansion to new places and coverage:* 3 new sites and 10 school co-locations



**The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC)** serves multicultural youth in Washington, DC and Maryland with a comprehensive set of social services and educational, work skills, advocacy, and residential programs. The LAYC network includes three charter schools.



**Expansion Goals:** To deliver services with broad regional impact including expansion into Maryland. Specific goals included improving the delivery of the organization's social change model and determining the best mix of delivery options to achieve outcomes for youth.

**Investment Opportunity:** The LAYC had a promising opportunity to build upon its outstanding program delivery by expanding the range of services into Maryland.

**Key Facts**

- *Year founded:* 1974
- *2009 Children and youth served:* 4,942
- *2009 Children and youth served in Maryland:* 1,721
- *Regional expansion to new places and coverage:* 5 new sites and 8 new co-locations

**Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care (Mary's Center)** is a Federally Qualified Health Center, providing an integrated set of health care, education, and social services for a diverse community.



Mary's  
Center

**Expansion Goals:** To strengthen overall community health by delivering integrated health and human services and expand its presence to serve more children and families.

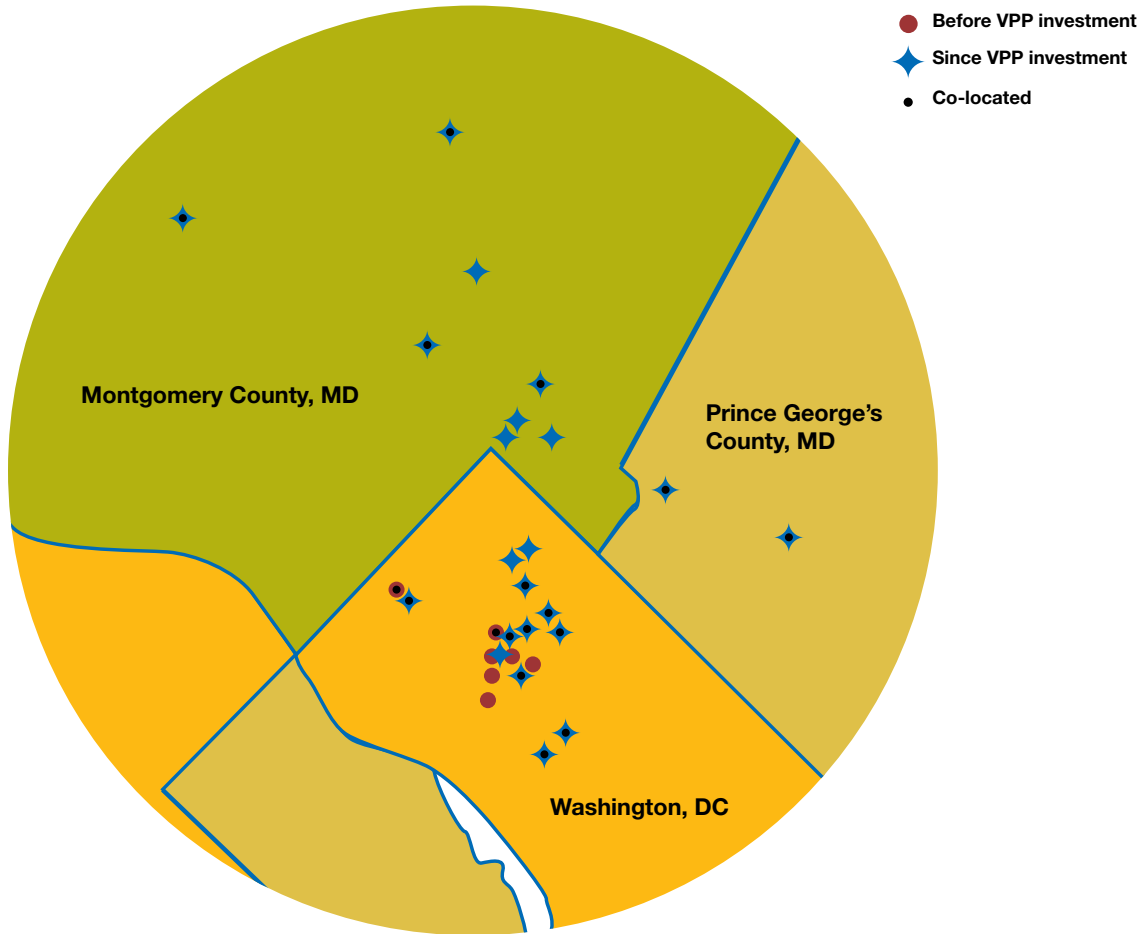
**Investment Opportunity:** VPP saw an opportunity to strengthen community well-being through Mary's Center's integrated health and human services approach to supporting individual and family well-being, and by expanding to serve more children and families on a broader scale in the National Capital Region.

**Key Facts**

- *Year founded:* 1998
- *2009 Children and youth served:* 6,631
- *2009 Children and youth served in Maryland:* 1,463
- *Regional expansion to new places and coverage:* 2 new clinics

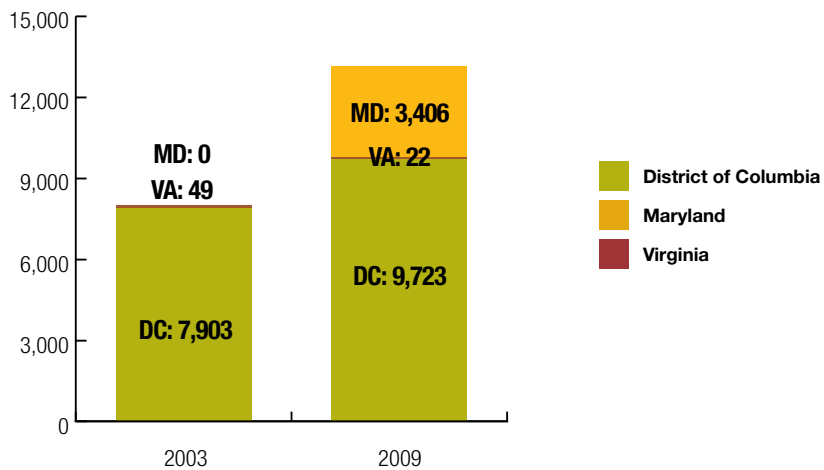
## Expansion to Maryland

- **3,406 more** children and youth served in Maryland
- **10** new independent and co-located sites in Maryland



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**Regional Growth in Children and Youth Served during VPP investment for AALEAD, CentroNía, the LAYC, and Mary's Center (2003 – 2009)**



## The Lessons of Expansion

Each of these organizations confronted growth issues differently and followed a unique path to expansion. But they all shared similar lessons along the way that are relevant for nonprofits looking to expand regionally in the National Capital Region and other metropolitan areas.

### Lesson 1: Planning and Data Are Paramount

Extensive planning is essential to the success of expansion. The entire planning process accomplishes a number of things that are critical to smart growth:

- Alignment at all levels of the organization—staff, board, clients, and partners
- Data on which to base strategic decisions, including community asset mapping, demographic data, financial models, etc.
- Assessment of the organization’s strength and weaknesses and identification of areas where increased organizational capacity is needed
- Identification of financial and human capital resources needed to achieve goals and strategies to obtain them
- Long-term thinking, targets and goals
- A clear road map in the form of an implementation plan with established performance targets

“The VPP funded strategic plan really helped us put into words what it meant [to expand]. It’s one thing to say we’re going to expand into Maryland, it is another thing to have a concrete road map on growing to scale in Maryland and information about where there were service gaps and where we could best add value for young people and their families.”

*Lori Kaplan, Executive Director,  
the Latin American Youth Center*

With support from Venture Philanthropy Partners, each organization was able to undertake a rigorous strategic planning process facilitated by external consultants. While some of the organizations had already begun planning processes on their own, the more formal strategic planning process brought greater structure and focus to their efforts.

While for some organizations, planning produced all the data they needed, for others, particularly for those dealing with more complex data, planning surfaced the need to create new, more robust, integrated performance measurement systems to determine outcomes more precisely in the future. The organizations were also limited by the lack of publicly available and consolidated data on the communities and populations to be served.

As a result of the planning processes, each organization concluded that it made sense to expand into suburban Maryland because:

- A move to Maryland more closely mirrored the migration of the clients they served
- Logistically, Maryland was easier to navigate than Northern Virginia because it was closer to the headquarters and more accessible to public transportation for both staff and clients.
- Virginia counties with the most rapid population growth, including a rising immigrant population (e.g., Prince William County), were moving toward restrictionist policymaking towards immigrants. In particular, proposed issues and policies focused on the legal status of immigrants in service provision and made serving immigrant and low-income clients more complicated.<sup>1</sup>
- Many of the organizations had stronger connections with other nonprofits and local government officials in suburban Maryland. In some cases, Maryland officials had been in touch with these organizations to learn about their service delivery models and to invite them to open up branches in Maryland.

“Bringing external experts and leaders onto our strategic planning committee gave us a broader view of the landscape of education and regional planning than a team that was made up solely of our internal staff members.”

*BB Otero, President and CEO, CentroNia*

## Lesson 2: Relationships Matter

Forging relationships with key stakeholders in new geographic areas is critical. Stakeholders include the clients, current and future; community leaders; other nonprofit leaders; local funders; national funders who work in those geographic areas; social service providers and coordinators; and local and state government. Introductions from a trusted intermediary facilitate relationships, as does understanding the community and political dynamics. Listening is key.

“I felt bringing these organizations to the county would help, and it has, both in providing services to the people as well as providing role models for the earlier-stage [local] organizations.”

*Chuck Short, Special Assistant to the Montgomery County Executive*

Developing those relationships in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties wasn’t easy for the four nonprofits in VPP’s portfolio, and it took time to understand the landscape and players within each jurisdiction. Each leader wanted to add value, not duplicate the services of others already in the community, and dispel fear and distrust among some local organizations about the intent of these nonprofits coming from the District. Having third parties such as VPP, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, county agencies and even other nonprofits make introductions and suggest people they should connect with was invaluable.

1 Singer, Audrey, Wilson, Jill H., and DeRenzis, Brooke, February, 2009, “Immigrants, Politics, and Local Response in Suburban Washington,” Survey Series for the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings [http://www.brookings.edu/-/media/Files/rc/reports/2009/0225\\_immigration\\_singer/0225\\_immigration\\_singer.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/-/media/Files/rc/reports/2009/0225_immigration_singer/0225_immigration_singer.pdf)

In Montgomery County, various relationships with many different entities and individuals have paved the way for the successful expansion of these four organizations, including city council members, politicians at the state level, county school officials, other nonprofit leaders, community leaders, and members of the executive office. BB Otero spoke of the important role of the public school system in partnering with the organizations. She also emphasized how critical it was to reach out to the public sector on multiple levels.

In Prince George’s County the task of building relationships has been more difficult. According to both the nonprofit leaders and local officials, the social services infrastructure is not as developed or coordinated as in some other jurisdictions. All of the nonprofit leaders interviewed for this report expressed great concern over their lack of ability to navigate the political and social services networks in Prince George’s County. In addition, the social service sector in Prince George’s County is smaller and under-resourced relative to neighboring jurisdictions. In particular, significant inequities exist in the supply and coordination of programs serving low-income children and youth compared to adjacent jurisdictions such as Montgomery County.<sup>2</sup>

Of the four expansions, only the Latin American Youth Center has opened facilities in Prince George’s County so far—one in Riverdale and the other in Langley Park—and has forged successful partnerships with County agencies and local nonprofits. Each of the nonprofit leaders would like to find ways to collaborate more in Prince George’s County in the future.

### Lesson 3: Adapting, Not Replicating, Services

Strategically and thoughtfully analyzing service and program offerings for a new area must be a component of scale. It is the rare model which can be duplicated “as is” for a new community, particularly if a different population is to be served. Multi-service providers in particular need to think through their models and ask themselves questions like:

- How does the community identify its needs and can we engage and partner with the community?
- Is the population the same as the one we currently serve, and if not, how do we make sure our programs are culturally competent?

“The local government and agencies were just so welcoming. One council member even got on his motorcycle to visit us in DC to see what we could bring to the county. Another public official got in the car with us and gave us the low down of the community, saying, ‘This is where you need to be’. This kind of collaboration gives you the “live” data about what’s really going on.”

*Maria Gomez, President and CEO, Mary’s Center*

“While it will never look exactly like the DC anchor site, the Maryland anchor site has a personality of its own. We first figured out how to bring certain services and support to different sites that were meaningful to the communities around them and meeting the needs of the kids.”

*Lori Kaplan, Executive Director, the Latin American Youth Center*

2 Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations, 2007, “Making Connections: The Nonprofit Sector in Prince George’s County,” [http://www.marylandnonprofits.org/documents/MakingConnectionsReport\\_000.pdf](http://www.marylandnonprofits.org/documents/MakingConnectionsReport_000.pdf)

- What funding streams are available?
- What are the regulatory issues in the new jurisdiction that might affect our services?
- What changes will we need to make because of the transportation, facilities, and other logistical issues of the new geography?

The nonprofits from DC quickly realized that they couldn't literally transplant what they'd built in the District into their new facilities in Montgomery or Prince George's County. They had to recognize the unique needs of the communities they were entering and ensure they had the resources to support the programs and services they would now offer in the suburbs.

Lori Kaplan notes that the suburban centers will never look exactly like the original youth center, and have begun to take on their own personality and shape based on the partnerships they've built. While there is a huge need for mental health work and substance abuse treatment in LAYC's Maryland sites, Kaplan says they do not provide those services there, although they do in the District. This is partly because they couldn't find the funding support. In Maryland the centers focus on job training, an out of school time program, and GED preparation.

Because Mary's Center is a federally qualified health center, there were some strict requirements governing where they could open a new site—it had to be in an area designated by the federal government as an area of medical need and accessible by public transportation. The site they found that met all of those needs was a former grocery store, which had to be converted into a medical clinic. But it also meant that they couldn't bring all of the services that they had in the District to Maryland.

For Sandy Dang of Asian American Lead, adapting meant that at the Silver Spring site, they had to adjust the delivery of services to work with an Asian American population that was different from the one they had been working with in Columbia Heights.

In their case, they decided to focus on the largest population in the new community—Chinese—so they hired a Chinese speaking family support worker. They are still going to work with other ethnic groups, but they have to be creative to address their needs; they can't afford to hire one person for every group that they are now serving in Montgomery County.

*"It's no longer just the Chinese and Vietnamese in Maryland. Now we have in the mix Indonesians, people from the Philippines and Thailand. So we are now asking ourselves, how are we going to expand and address all of these culturally distinct groups of people and how are we going to build a sense of community in such a large geographic area?"*

*Sandy Dang, Founder and former Executive Director, AALEAD*

*"Having been in an urban setting where all your traffic is walking traffic and parents can walk in the door, we had to think about how we can reach out to the community, a community that is very isolated and that doesn't necessarily utilize the traditional means of communications."*

*Lori Kaplan, Executive Director, the Latin American Youth Center*

BB Otero, of CentroNía, notes they also had to figure out how to work with a local government that wasn't necessarily used to working with the new populations on an ongoing basis. She says that Montgomery County worked hard to figure out how to reach these families.

#### Lesson 4: Get the Human Capital Needs Right

Getting the right people on the bus is always important for organizations, but is even more so when the organization is expanding. It's important to have the right senior management team members in new areas, and to figure out what roles need to be filled in the new locations and which functions can stay at headquarters. Staff members in a new site need to represent a balance between a solid knowledge of the new geography and/or population served, and a deep understanding of the organization and its original model. Ensuring that the board represents new locations, communities, and connections is also very important.

All of the organizations noted that it was essential that the staff at the expansion site not only know the community but also understand the mission and values of the organization. Maria Gomez says she learned this valuable lesson the hard way, from an expansion they did into Ward 4 in the District before moving to Maryland.

She said that the new staff at Ward 4 didn't fully understand the mission and values that are so much a core of the Center's success and ethos. For the Silver Spring site, Gomez asked a colleague who has worked with her in DC for more than 20 years and is "the heart and soul of Mary's Center" to run that facility. They also hired people who knew the community very well.

Otero concurs with Gomez about having people at the expansion site who really know the organization, the community and its issues.

"I did whatever I could with the Board to seed it, and then we started adding Maryland people to the Board and we're going to add more Maryland people to the Board, because everything about our work is about relationships—political and community—and in the end the quality of programs' outcomes and values is how we will succeed."

*Lori Kaplan, Executive Director,  
the Latin American Youth Center*

"We cannot keep up with the need to have bilingual people in very key positions. How do we engage young people who are culturally competent in these professions? That is the next phase of planning."

*Maria Gomez, President and CEO,  
Mary's Center*

## Lesson 5: Build Cohesiveness in Expansion Sites through Strong Organizational Culture

As an organization grows, particularly when programs, services, and even the model may be changing to fit the needs of new sites, organizational culture becomes all the more critical. Communication and ongoing reinforcement of the values, mission, and goals of the organization must occur at all levels of the organization. In addition, the leaders say that it is important to develop people internally because they are the ones who will maintain the cohesion of the organization in a multi-site environment. Each site must see itself as part of a larger organization and it is vital to have the staff in place who cannot just articulate the organization's ethos but live it and carry it forward at all levels—management and line staff.

All of the leaders of the organizations said that they have spent a great deal of time with their board and staff thinking through how to build and maintain a sense of unity among all of the sites their organizations run.

For BB Otero it was about having staff in place that were able to articulate the organizational culture and transfer the values, not just in management, but at all levels. She says that at least one third of the teachers in Maryland had been teachers at CentroNía in the District. Many of these teachers live in Maryland and wanted to make the shift from the District. She also said it was critical for the management team and the administrative team members to see themselves as responsible for the whole organization, so that everyone feels that they are receiving the same level of attention and resources. Having strong internal communication is critical.

“When you have two offices, there is a tendency to become distant and separate. We had one staff meeting where central office staff went out to Maryland so we would all see ourselves as one group even though our work would be serving a larger number of people. I'm very much sharing the strategic planning, why we are doing it and why we started the organization in the first place. We are one organization with one mission that we need to build upon.”

*Sandy Dang, Founder and former Executive Director, AALEAD*

“Sometimes in the urgency of getting things started, there isn't enough pollination between the existing success and the upcoming success. You need to take the time for that mentoring so services are all done the same way at the same level of quality.”

*Maria Gomez, President and CEO, Mary's Center*

## Lesson 6: Protect and Nurture the Brand

If organizational culture is essential internally, maintaining consistency and strength of brand is the key challenge externally. Expansion is a time to reexamine an organization's brand. Does it reflect the new goals and strategies going forward? Will it resonate with new stakeholders and clients? How do you convey your brand in a new market? Growth is an opportunity to increase the reach and visibility of a brand, and should not be suboptimized.

Each of the VPP investment partners noted that having a strong brand and positive reputation in the community played a critical role in the success of their expansion. But it also presented some new challenges in terms of how to deliver that brand in the new location.

Lori Kaplan says that her organization has struggled with how to brand itself in Maryland. In DC, she says, everyone understood that, although the organization was called The Latin American Youth Center, more than a third of the youth it served were African American. When they were moving into suburban Maryland, where the organization was less known, people didn't understand that it was a multi-cultural and multi-racial organization.

In the end they decided to brand themselves as the Maryland Multi Cultural Youth Center, a program of the Latin American Youth Center.

Mary's Center felt like it was critical that they keep their name to engage both their clients and their funders.

Extending the brand, however, is much more complex than naming. It is about creating positive experiences for clients, partners and other stakeholders. These kinds of experiences result by creating the same spirit and delivering the same quality of services that people have come to expect.

BB Otero says that one way they have been able to extend and nurture their brand is through consistency of architectural style, colors and management across all four of the sites the organization runs.

*"If you walk into a place, you know it's a CentroNía site. It has certain characteristics...our constant work around how we treat people, the presence in management around the organization. We have spent a lot of time fine-tuning this management piece...which also lends some level of uniformity because you have the same person looking across early childhood at four different sites."*

*BB Otero, President and CEO, CentroNía*

## Conclusion: Creating a Healthy Ecosystem for Nonprofit Regional Growth

As the experience of these four organizations show, making the decision to expand services is complex and nuanced. There is a whole range of internal management issues to be addressed: planning; collecting data; understanding the expansion opportunity; aligning staff and board around the expansion; and ensuring that the organization has the proper resources, both human and financial, to undertake an expansion. There are also external issues: understanding the needs of the community in the expansion site; developing partnerships and relationships with people and institutions in the new jurisdiction; and demonstrating that the expansion is a win-win for everyone.

These nonprofits have been very successful, providing 3,406 more children and youth with much needed services. However, their expansion only closes one or two holes in the threadbare social service delivery system in our region. The intractable and complex challenges presented by poverty in a metropolitan region require equally deep and comprehensive interventions and services. Nonprofits need a healthy ecosystem that encourages and sustains the growth needed to meet rising demand. First and foremost, they need a welcoming community and partnerships within the new community upon which to build. Growth capital, strong pipelines for talent, strategic assistance, data and research, and a favorable regulatory and policy environment are essential if they are to change the future trajectories for the most vulnerable in our metro areas.

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A number of questions must be asked along the way, including:

- How is an ecosystem for regional growth created and nourished?
- What roles do federal, state, and local governments play?
- What kind of support do organizations most need from funders in order to grow and scale?
- What research must be done to accurately pinpoint need and service gaps?
- How do nonprofits collaborate to create an integrated, culturally competent, seamless model which crosses boundaries—organizationally, programmatically and geographically—as they grow?
- How does this work link with local and state public education systems?
- What kinds of regulatory and policy changes must be made to encourage, and not hinder, growth of and collaboration among service providers?
- How do organizations ensure cultural competency when scaling?
- If a community has primarily early-stage nonprofits and nonprofit leaders, how can those organizations be strengthened at the same time that larger organizations are brought in to provide broad scale services?
- If scale and growth is part of the answer, how can that be attained at a time of rising need and a contracting economy?

- What is needed to cause a fundamental mind-shift to recognize the untapped assets in some of our neediest communities? How can we develop human capital to avoid costs and have positive contributions to the region? What are the opportunities to leverage the assets of these populations in ways that the region has never been able to do before? And what is the cost if we do not?

Creating that ecosystem is not the work of one organization or one local government, but of multiple stakeholders working together in new and different ways to coordinate support that is grounded in the assets, needs, and realities of our communities. There must be an orchestrated effort among government, philanthropy, nonprofits, and community members to work together to transform the social services delivery system. The health and future of our region, and other metropolitan regions struggling with similar issues, depends on it.



**v p investing in social change**  
venture philanthropy partners

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**VENTURE PHILANTHROPY PARTNERS (VPP)**

is a philanthropic investment organization that helps great leaders build strong, high-performing nonprofit institutions. We concentrate money, expertise, and personal contacts to improve the lives of children and youth of low-income families in the National Capital Region and cultivate an engaged donor community to generate funding and influence in support of these institutions and of social change.

