

## STORIES OF IMPACT

Each year since 2014, the Arlington/Alexandria Extension Master Gardeners have supported local urban agriculture and community gardening projects by acquiring and donating vegetable, herb, and flower seeds at the Extension office, public education classes, community events, local schools, and community gardens. From a humble start working with the America the Beautiful Fund, in 2019 we acquired an estimated 12,000 seed packets for public use.

When COVID-19 hit, the Agriculture and Natural Resources agent and volunteers extracted these seeds from storage and facilitated socially distanced seed distribution events at community gardens, created an online seed request form, and established three neighborhood distribution sites for seed pickup. They distributed 10,500 seed packets to 1,250 recipient families. One recipient wrote, “Although it was the first year of planting and during a pandemic year, these seeds gave a long-lasting burst of color to brighten everyone’s day! Bright yellow marigolds, pink coreopsis flowers, and an array of colorful zinnias in 66 planters helped spread joy. It was a pleasure to see how a handful of seeds can nurture a caring community.”



Seed distribution event at Arlington’s Four Mile Run Community Garden.

### AGENTS OF POSITIVE CHANGE

“Since mid-March, I have met with 23 safety-net providers either weekly or biweekly to discuss issues, share information, and work toward solutions. As a result, our Family and Consumer Sciences programs are filling the gaps. Their initiatives include creating a produce bagging site to donate over 6,602 pounds of fresh produce, grown by gardeners, to local food pantries. They have also created more than a dozen information-rich COVID-19 newsletters for partners, focusing on financial assistance programs.”



**Aisha Salazar**  
Extension Agent  
Family and Consumer Sciences

### COMMUNITY VOICES

“Working with 4-H during this pandemic has been a highlight for the elementary after-school program here at AHC’s Fort Henry Gardens. A challenge since March has been finding balance between academic and enrichment activities with constant virtual learning. 4-H activities have offered an escape from the monotony of virtual engagement.”



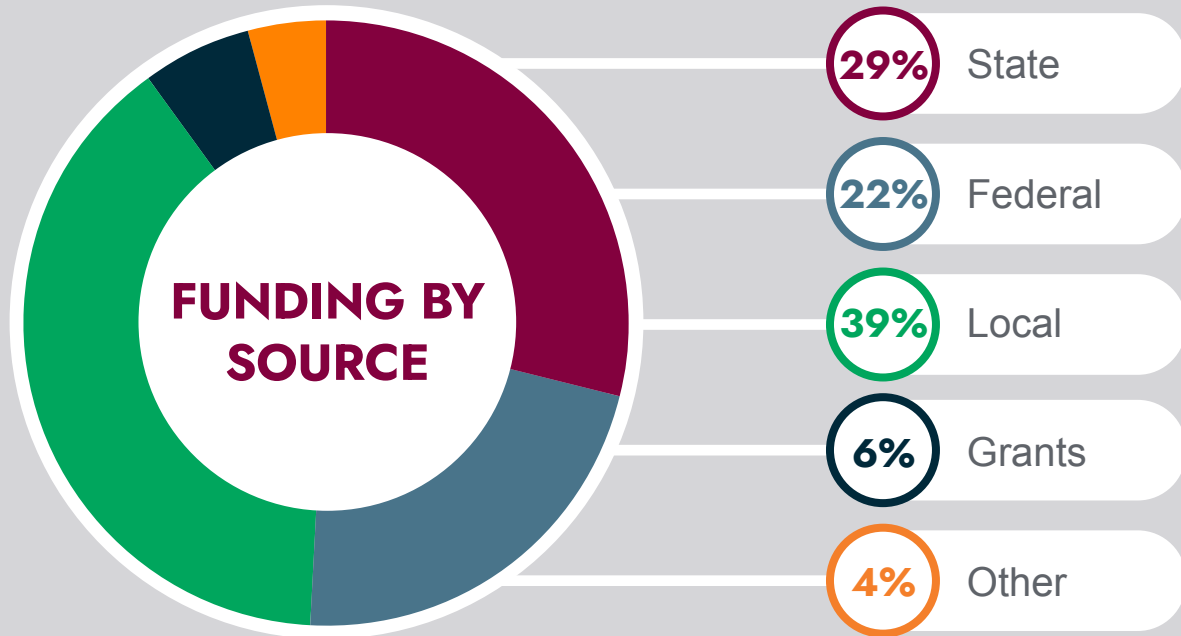
**Edgar Awumey**  
Resident Services Manager, AHC

## GET IN TOUCH

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arlington.ext.vt.edu | 703-228-6400 | 

# ARLINGTON COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

## TOTAL FUNDING: \$318,309



### ARLINGTON POSITIONS

**Caitlin Verdu**  
Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development

**Kirsten Conrad**  
Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources

**Aisha Salazar**  
Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences



RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED BY THE COUNTY IN ARLINGTON COUNTY

## \$1,215,685

VALUE OF EXTENSION VOLUNTEER HOURS IN ARLINGTON COUNTY

