

Increasing Access: A Coalition's Efforts to Bring English Classes to Employees at Work

September 27, 2019





- ❖ Introduction to MCAEL/Montgomery County
- ❖ Our approach to English classes at work
- ❖ Examples of MCAEL-supported programs
- ❖ Lessons learned, future direction
- ❖ Q&A



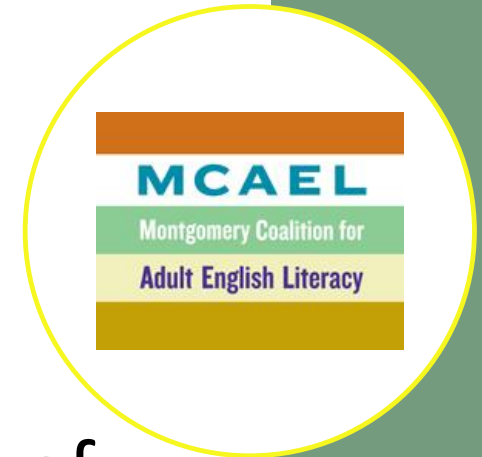
Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy Montgomery County, Maryland

- ❖ County-based coalition established in 2006
- ❖ Collaboration, capacity-building, coordination
- ❖ Increasing access to quality English instruction



“21,000 by 2021” - Strategic Goals

- ❖ Empower providers to offer quality programs and instruction that lead to learning gains
- ❖ Increase number of high-quality instructors
- ❖ Expand partnerships to enable access to a range of new workplace and community-based classes.



Capacity-building and public engagement

- ❖ Grantor of county money for community grants –
 - \$1.26m for FY20 (27 programs, 20 organizations)
- ❖ PD, resources and technical assistance for program administrators and Instructors
- ❖ Community engagement
 - class directory
 - data collection, analysis, sharing via interactive Storymap
 - advocacy



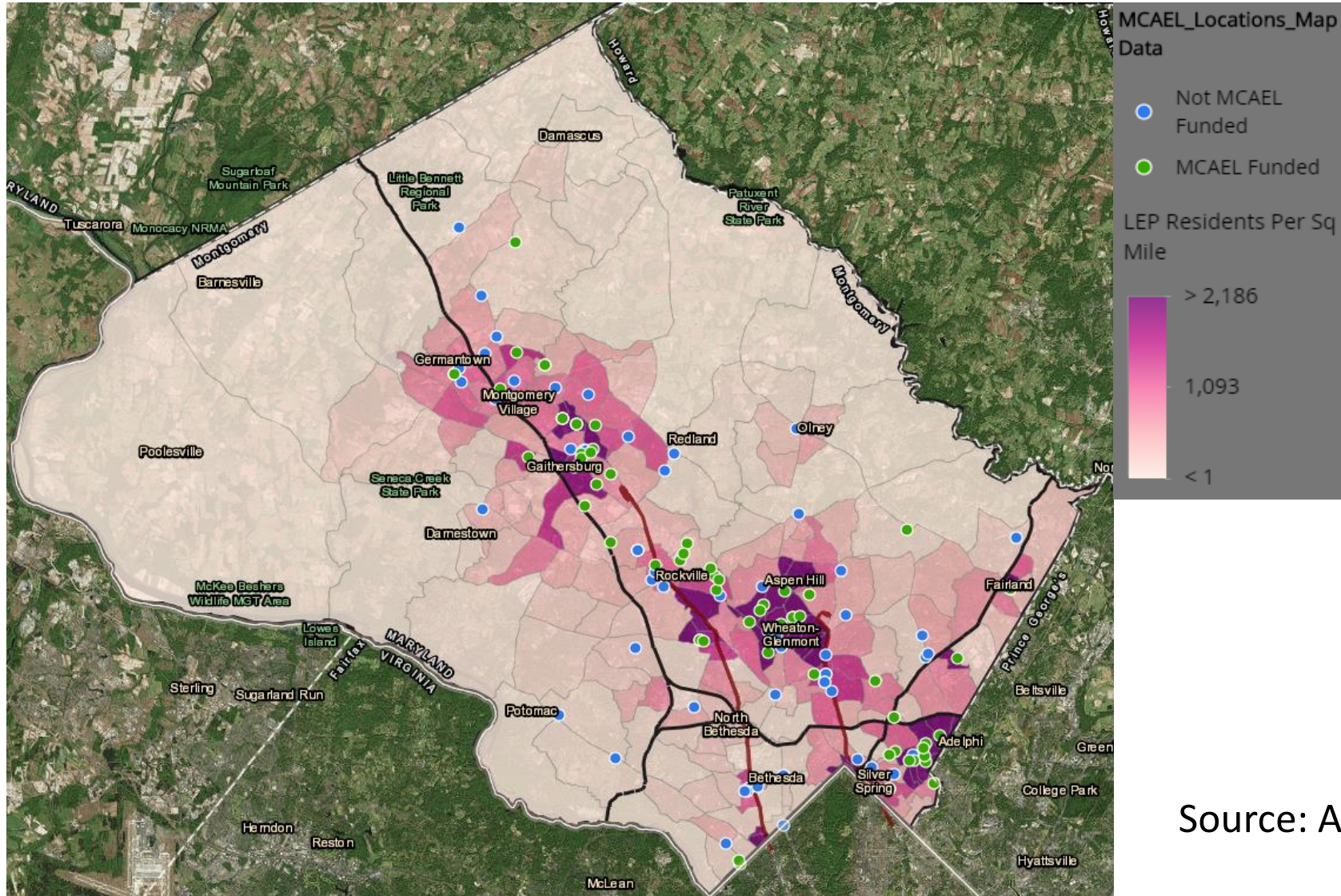
Who is in the MCAEL coalition?

- ❖ Literacy organization
PT and FT ESOL-trained staff
- ❖ Social service organization
PT and/or FT professional staff
- ❖ Community-based organization
Paid or volunteer program staff and instructors
- ❖ Faith-based institution
Often volunteer instructors – little or no funding



LEP Residents per Square Mile

Montgomery
County,
Maryland



Source: ACS 2016 (1-yr)

Montgomery County Facts

- ❖ Total Population: 1.06 million
- ❖ Percent foreign-born: 32%
- ❖ Number Limited English Proficient: 127,563
- ❖ Number accessing adult ESOL: about 15,000

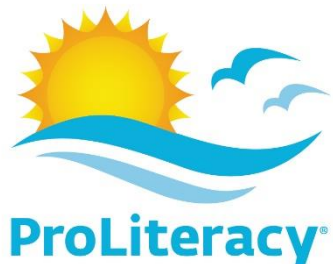
Provider Workplace English Programs

- ❖ Montgomery College – English for the Workplace, vocational English
- ❖ STEP – training for restaurant workers, etc
- ❖ CASA – drop-in classes at welcome centers
- ❖ Charles E. Smith Life Communities/Bender JCC of Greater Washington

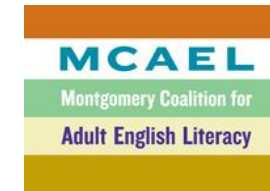
Why support English classes at work?

- ❖ Coordinating role to increase access

- ❖ Bring classes to where learners are, address barriers of
 - work schedules
 - reliable and affordable childcare
 - reliable and affordable transportation
 - time in the day



English classes at work (2017 - present)



Company	Industry	Department	Focus	Hrs/week	Session length
Asbury Methodist Village	CCRC	Housekeeping	4 skills	1.5 hrs x 2	8/10 weeks
Adventist Healthcare	Hospitals	Various/ Housekeeping	Conversation	1 hr x 2/ 1 hr x 3	8/10 weeks
Denizens Brewing Company	Restaurant	Kitchen staff	Conversation	1.5 hr	
BF Saul (3 hotels)	Hospitality	Housekeeping, Facilities	Oral communication	1.5 hr x 2	19 weeks
GEICO	Insurance	Facilities Maintenance	Business Writing	2 hrs x 2	13 weeks

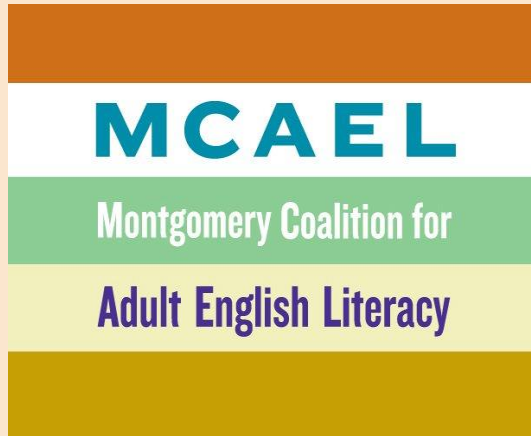
Lessons Learned (selected)

- ❖ Involve HR leadership and managers early
- ❖ Informal instruments more appropriate for pre-class assessment
- ❖ Outcomes indicators for both specific English skills gained and improved performance on the job – important, but challenging to assess
- ❖ Instructors should have an understanding of the work environment/culture
- ❖ Instructors need ongoing support with customizing content, identifying instructional materials, coordination with employer

Going forward

- ❖ Focus classes on life skills rather than job-related English
- ❖ Integrate in some job-related content when teaching skills
- ❖ Literacy, beginning, and intermediate levels
- ❖ Fine-tuning working with partners (employers and providers)





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