

Excellence in Adult Education Since 1985

February 22, 2017

Sara Bardin, Director
DC Office of Zoning
441 4th Street NW Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

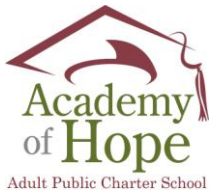
Dear Director Bardin:

As the CEO of Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School, I am writing this letter in recognition of the philanthropic and community-building investments of Eugene F. Ford, Sr., the founder of MidCity Development, his son Eugene F. Ford Jr., Chairman of MidCity's Board of Directors, and the Ford Family Foundation.

Academy of Hope serves some of our city's most vulnerable residents, helping them to overcome limited educational and workforce opportunities. More than 90 percent of our students live below the poverty line and many have reading, math, and digital literacy skills at the sixth-grade level or below. Since 1985, we have helped more than 700 adult learners obtain a high school credential and over 6,500 improve basic reading, writing, math, and computer skills. We have two campuses – one in Ward 5 and the other in Ward 8. Our students complete and enter career training in high demand industries and occupations, secure living-wage jobs, enter post-secondary education, and achieve self-sufficiency for themselves and their families, helping to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Over the past 10 years, the Ford Family has exhibited incredible generosity and leadership in its support of Academy of Hope. Mr. Ford Sr. understood the need to invest not only in a community's infrastructure but also in its residents. For this reason, he provided significant financial support for Academy of Hope's programs including funding for our 2010 expansion to Ward 8. He also made a very generous provision in his will on our behalf to continue serving DC residents in need. We are but one of the many non-profits that has been the benefactor of the Ford family's generosity. In short, the Ford family cares about DC residents.

More recently, Mr. Ford Jr. and other family members have begun working with Academy of Hope to continue their father's legacy of community investment through their own philanthropic efforts to our school. Recognizing Academy of Hope's close proximity to Brookland Manor and the critical education and workforce needs of the residents currently living there, the family partnered with us to make repairs to a new, larger school facility within walking distance of the apartment complex. We are now able to serve more residents in need and several Brookland Manor residents have enrolled in our programs in recent months. We look forward to this ongoing partnership as we seek to serve more students from Brookland Manor and from throughout the District of Columbia.



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I wish to extend my sincere thanks and recognize Mr. Ford Jr. and his family, and the Alice and Eugene Ford Foundation for the continued and steadfast support they have demonstrated to advance adult education, workforce development, and the overall wellbeing of DC residents through their support of the Academy of Hope.

Sincerely,

Lester Johnson
Chief Executive Officer
Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School