ALL-AMERICA CITY FINALIST

MONTGOMERY COUNTY/DAYTON, OHIO

Community Snapshot

On a crest overlooking Dayton, Ohio, are final resting places of three famous natives of the city, buried just yards apart. The Wright Brothers, Wilbur and Orville, who at their bicycle shop a few city blocks away developed plans for human flight; and nearby is the grave of the great African-American poet and educator Paul Laurence Dunbar, for whom numerous schools are named throughout the U.S. Located in the southwestern part of the state, Dayton has a rich history of innovation. Manufacturing has left the city during the past four decades but there is a growing movement to bring jobs back to the "Gem City." Part of that effort is due to the large influx of immigrants. Dayton has a reputation for welcoming immigrants to the U.S. The city's Immigrant Friendly City Task Force has received national and international attention for its role in encouraging immigration and providing supports that help new residents succeed in their new homes and lives.

Community Solutions Action Plan

Montgomery County and the City of Dayton have created a partnership and developed a comprehensive strategy targeted to improve school readiness, attendance and summer learning with these objectives:

- Increase scores on Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (state assessment)
- Develop awareness efforts to encourage parents to read with their children before kindergarten
- Train attendance clerks to engage chronically absent students
- Develop a central database of summer programs
- Initiate a drive to get books to students in primary grades at the end of the school year

Partnerships

Montgomery County and the City of Dayton have partnered with local libraries and school districts, the YMCA of Dayton, United Way of the Greater Dayton Area and various other organizations and nonprofits in this effort.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 535,000 residents (141,500 in Dayton)
- Approximately 72,000 students
- 50 percent of Montgomery County, 92.5 percent of Dayton and 78 percent of Northridge students qualify for free or reduced-priced meals
- 78 percent of third graders read at grade level (state test)
- 83 percent of Montgomery County students graduate from high school
- Lack of district-supported summer enrichment programs

GOALS

- Birth to K – children will be ready to learn when entering kindergarten
- K to ninth grade – students will be proficient in reading and math
- Increase the number of state Star-Rated preschool programs
- Develop summer reading programs district and city-wide

"Helping each child reach his/her potential is critical for the long range success of our community, region and nation."