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CITY OF BALTIMORE

Shantay Jackson  
*Executive Director*

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MAYOR'S OFFICE OF  
NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY & ENGAGEMENT  
100 Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
[monse.baltimorecity.gov](http://monse.baltimorecity.gov)

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## **Mayor Scott Provides One-Year Comprehensive Update on Cultivation of Baltimore's Community Violence Intervention Ecosystem**

*Update Comes One Year After the Release of "Establishing the Ecosystem: A Vision for Community Violence Intervention (CVI) in Baltimore"*

**BALTIMORE, MD** (Tuesday, April 25, 2023) – Today, Mayor Brandon M. Scott was joined by the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE), Safe Streets Baltimore, Challenge2Change, community-based partners, Baltimore-area hospital systems, Baltimore City Public Schools, and city leaders to provide a comprehensive public update on his strategy to expand Baltimore's Community Violence Intervention (CVI) ecosystem. This update follows the release of [Scott's vision and commitment to CVI](#) in Baltimore one year ago.

"Building a CVI ecosystem is about understanding that an act of violence does not start or end when someone pulls a trigger," **said Mayor Brandon M. Scott.** "By bringing together and supporting public safety partners across our city, we can step in and address the root causes to prevent violence from occurring in the first place."

In the April 2022 report, Mayor Scott outlined his charge to cultivate the ecosystem. MONSE was tasked with the implementation of hospital-violence intervention programming across major medical systems that treat gunshot victims, piloting school-based violence intervention programming, and investing in existing community-based organizations to grow the number of service providers, wraparound supports, and referral partners integrated into Baltimore's CVI ecosystem. MONSE also committed to establishing a CVI Advisory Board, and strengthening the City's flagship violence intervention program, Safe Streets Baltimore. One year after announcing this vision, Baltimore has made significant progress laying this new foundation and coordinating CVI ecosystem partners as one key component of Baltimore's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan.

## **Growing the CVI Ecosystem**

### Integrating Baltimore-Area Hospital Systems into City's Violence Prevention Strategy

As committed, in Mayor Scott's CVI vision, MONSE will provide FY23 funding for the operations of Baltimore's hospital-based violence intervention program, or HVIP. HVIP partners include University of Maryland Medical System, LifeBridge Health, Medstar Health, Ascension St. Agnes, and Johns Hopkins Medicine. MONSE will submit finalized contracts to the Board of Estimates in the coming weeks.

"Violence is a matter of public health and MedStar Health is proud to be part of this ecosystem to interrupt the cycle of violence and support the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve," **said Lucas C. Carlson, MD, MPH, Regional Medical Director, Care Transformation, MedStar Health.**

### Piloting School-Based Violence Intervention at MERVU, Carver, and Digital Harbor

First announced in September 2022, MONSE has been leading efforts to establish school-based violence intervention pilot programs in three Baltimore City public schools — Mergenthaler Vocational Technical High School, Carver Vocational Technical High School, and Digital Harbor High School — and is currently in the implementation phase, with operations slated to begin in the fall. The program is currently in the implementation phase with a focus on hiring school-based intervention specialists and program supervisors. The program is slated for a full launch in time for the start of the 2023-2024 school year.

School-based specialists will work with youth, school administrators, and families to shift community norms about the acceptability of violence, create a positive school climate, and strengthen students' problem-solving and conflict management skills. MONSE will partner with Catholic Charities, who will serve as the operator of the pilot program.

"Increased violence impacts every level of our society – both nationally and locally. City Schools is pleased to partner with Mayor Scott, MONSE, and community partners in a citywide effort to mitigate the effects of this problem on our schools, our staff, our young people, and their families," **said Dr. Sonja Santelises, CEO, Baltimore City Public Schools.**

### Investing in Baltimore's Community-Based Organizations

The Scott administration committed to investing \$10,025,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) between FY22 and FY25 with partner organizations at the institutional and grassroots levels that provide community outreach and conflict mediation, violence intervention, hospital-based violence intervention, school-based violence intervention, intensive case management and life coaching, victim services, and other wraparound supports.

To date, MONSE has invested \$7.3 million in competitive and directly selected grants to organizations playing a role in Baltimore's CVI ecosystem including:

- CVI Ecosystem Partners (CVI practitioners): 8 contracts totaling \$2.55 million;
- Coordinated Neighborhood Stabilization Response (CNSR) service providers (CVI community outreach): 3 contracts totaling \$225,000;
- Victim Services: 8 contracts totaling \$3.025 million;
- Youth and Trauma : 19 contracts totaling \$1.5 million.

The agency has also awarded \$1,545,752 to support hospital-based violence intervention programming in eight hospitals across Baltimore in FY23.

Following Mayor Scott's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan commitment to execute at least 30 CVI-related contracts, MONSE has awarded 44 CVI-related contracts to date.

### **Strengthening Safe Streets, Baltimore's Flagship Violence Intervention Program**

#### Transition to New Integrated, Coordinated Operations Model

Following the release of an internal evaluation of operations across Baltimore's ten current Safe Streets installations, MONSE has worked to implement a new operating model for the program. In January 2023, administration of the program's 10 sites transitioned to LifeBridge Health's Center for Hope and Catholic Charities. LifeBride Center for Hope serves as the operator of the Belvedere, Park Heights, Woodbourne-McCabe, Belair-Edison, McElderry Park, and Franklin Square sites; Catholic Charities serves as the operator for the Sandtown-Winchester, Brooklyn, Penn North and Cherry Hill sites.

"Over the last year, this administration has demonstrated its commitment to cultivating a CVI network that is intentional about establishing support for those experiencing violence, and for those working on the ground to prevent it from occurring," **said MONSE Executive Director Shantay Jackson.** "The diversity of resources represented by our ecosystem truly reflects the residents that it serves and we look forward to the continued partnership and shared commitment to supporting Baltimoreans across the city."

Over the last year, the agency has also implemented changes to strengthen the program including developing the first-ever CVI operations manual to unify operations across all ten sites; increasing support from MONSE to oversight partners and site staff through technical assistance and training opportunities; increasing the salary floor for site staff and instituted cost of living adjustments; developed a new Apricot case-management system, tailored to needs of Baltimore and allowing for more detailed reporting of program results, outcomes,

and impacts; and prioritizing the identification of new spaces for the Franklin Square, McElderry Park, Park Heights, Cherry Hill and Penn North sites.

In partnership with the site administrators, MONSE has developed a robust training track for the frontline community violence intervention workforce, including but not limited to Stop the Bleed, Trauma-Informed Care, Financial Literacy and Leadership training, and conflict mediation certification through a partnership with the University of Baltimore.

### Delivery of External Academic Evaluation on Safe Streets

In March 2023, Dr. Daniel Webster of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health released the second-ever evaluation examining the efficacy of the Safe Streets program from its inception in 2007. The evaluation found that the weighted average of program effects across all sites estimated a statistically significant 23% reduction in shootings associated with program implementation and that the estimated three shootings prevented (one fatal and two nonfatal) per Safe Streets site per year suggests social and economic benefits of \$7.2 to \$19.2 per every dollar spent on the program, depending on the method used to estimate the costs of shootings.

### CVI Frontline Staff Mental Health Provider

MONSE will partner with Catholic Charities for the provision of mental health supports to frontline CVI staff.

### Program Funding Update

Following the positive findings of this evidence-based approach since its inception, ARPA funds will be invested in Safe Streets Baltimore - for the first time - over the FY23-FY25 period in the amount of \$5.1 million. These dollars will be joined with City General Funds dollars and legislatively-mandated State grant dollars from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, which have historically funded Safe Streets.

### Quarterly and Annual Safe Streets Reporting

Aligned with Mayor Scott's commitment to transparency and accessibility, MONSE announced the first-ever Safe Streets annual report, which covers operations of Baltimore's flagship violence intervention program during the 2022 calendar year. Additionally, MONSE will publish quarterly reports highlighting metrics tracked, public safety outcomes, and mediations conducted within the ten site posts. These reports can be found on [MONSE's website](#).

## **Naming the Inaugural Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Advisory Board**

In October 2022, the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement called on residents to apply to serve on the City's Community Violence Intervention Advisory Board. Today, Mayor Scott announced the members of Baltimore's inaugural CVI Advisory Board to replace the former Safe Streets Advisory Board and provide guidance to the Scott Administration on how to continue to grow and sustain the CVI ecosystem.

Founding members are: Carlita Brown, Aisha Burgess, John Cammack, Robert Embry, Simon Fitzgerald, Sarah Hemminger, Donald Manekin, Jayne Miller, William Moore, Sean Robinson, and Larry Simmons.

## **Continuing to Grow the Ecosystem**

Mayor Scott committed to the utilization of a landscape analysis, violent crime data, and BPD top 30 posts for violent crime to identify where additional CVI partner organizations are needed to strategically build the ecosystem. MONSE has partnered with the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, which is surveying community-based and grassroots organizations across Baltimore to identify strengths and gaps. Participation in the survey will allow MONSE and BNIA to develop a capacity-building plan to strengthen community-based efforts and the overall violence prevention landscape citywide.

Organizations are encouraged to contribute to the analysis by [completing the online survey by May 5, 2023](#). Findings of the analysis will be published by Summer 2023.

As Baltimore continues into the Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan Securing Year starting in FY '24, MONSE will continue to carry out Mayor Scott's vision for a public health approach to safety by evaluating performance metrics to scale up existing programs, cultivate Baltimore's CVI ecosystem, and further integrate the Scott Administration's dual public safety strategies – community violence intervention and the Group Violence Reduction Strategy – to deliver improved outcomes for all Baltimoreans.

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