

## **Candace Kattar and Identity, Inc.**

Candace Kattar is co-founder and Executive Director of Identity, Inc., a non profit community-based organization that works in Montgomery County, MD.

Candace received her BA in Spanish from the University of New Hampshire. She also received a JD from Antioch School of Law and a BS in Nursing from Catholic University. Prior to co-founding Identity, she had practiced immigration law for 13 years, providing services to clients from throughout the Washington, DC area. After obtaining her RN license, Candace worked as a Nurse Researcher in a collaborative project with the National Institutes of Health and then as HIV Program Director at a Washington, DC health clinic. She served on Montgomery County Executive Douglas Duncan's Gang Task Force Prevention Subcommittee. She co-chaired Montgomery County Public School's Latino Education Coalition and helped author its *Recommendations for Improving Latino Student Achievement* (March 2006). Candace is also a co-author of "*Family Involvement, Problem and Pro-social Behavior Outcomes of Latino Youth*" published in the American Journal of Health Behavior in 2003. Candace serves on Montgomery County Police Chief Tom Manger's Latino Liaison Committee and Montgomery County Public School's Deputy Superintendent's Minority Achievement Advisory Council. In September 2007, Candace co-presented at the regional Central American Forum on Violence Prevention in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Founded in September 1998, Identity's mission is to empower Latino youth to reach their full potential through culturally and linguistically competent youth and family-based initiatives. Identity is a 2004 recipient of a Montgomery County Distinguished Service to Public Education Award and the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs 2004 Exemplary Organization Award. Identity was also selected by the statewide Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students (AIMMS) Council to receive a 2005 Vanguard Award. In September 2006, Identity was honored by the Hispanic Democratic Club of Montgomery County with its Latino Youth Education & Empowerment Award. In addition, Identity received Leadership Greater Washington's 2006 Youth Award for "outstanding organizations that help support, develop and nurture area youth."

Identity is the lead agency for the bi-county Youth Opportunity Center, an initiative that grew out of the County Gang Task Force. The Center works with gang-involved youth and their family members and provides youth development programs, individual mental health counseling, case management and legal support as well as supervised recreational activities, in partnership with the County Police Department, Health and Human Services Department and Department of Recreation.