

DEAR FRIENDS,

Cherishing the Divine within, we are committed to a Maryland where each person has the opportunity to reach his or her God-given potential.

THIS IS OUR VISION statement at Catholic Charities, and I think it is particularly important for us to focus on this vision during this Year of Mercy, as declared by Pope Francis. A vision statement is what we imagine in the future and aspire to and is a beacon that guides us and our work. At Catholic Charities, we are working towards the creation of a just society in which our sisters and brothers can recognize and develop their God-given gifts and achieve their fullest potential.

Our vision statement is not only about a hoped-for future far off in the distance. It is also what we are called to see in the present when we encounter those we serve. In order to cherish the Divine within others and help them reach their potential, we must first see them in terms of that potential, not in terms of their circumstances or condition.

During this Year of Mercy, we are asked to examine and celebrate mercy and deepen our practice of mercy. Mercy is a concept that is often misunderstood. It is a way of seeing and

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MARCH 2016

BLESSINGS

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

Inspired by the Gospel mandates to LOVE, SERVE and TEACH, Catholic Charities provides care and services to IMPROVE the LIVES of Marylanders in need.

Safe Streets Baltimore puts outreach workers in communities to stop gun violence

CATHOLIC CHARITIES, in partnership with the Baltimore City Health Department, the No Boundaries Coalition and St. Peter Claver Parish, launched a new initiative in February to curb violence on the streets of the Sandtown-Winchester community. **Safe Streets Baltimore** will be a visible presence in this neighborhood that has been disproportionately affected by gun violence. Staff members will interact with residents to identify potential perpetrators and victims of violence and to implement interceptive measures.

"After the unrest last April, I took time to reflect, listen and pray, and my colleagues did the same," said **Bill McCarthy**, executive director of Catholic Charities. "We concluded that in order to bring about sustainable change in our community and in people's lives, we needed to step up and take a proactive role in reducing the epidemic violence and trauma that is plaguing many Baltimore neighborhoods. We believe Safe Streets is one way to help address this crisis."



Increasing the peace in Sandtown-Winchester is the goal of Imhotep Fatiu, the new program site director of Safe Streets Baltimore. He and five other staff members will help prevent violent confrontations and mediate disputes for peaceful resolutions.

(PHOTO BY RENÉE JOHNSON)

The evidence-based public health program works to mediate disputes and change the perception that violence is a normal or expected outcome of altercations. Funding is provided through a grant from the Baltimore City Health

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Head Start is alive with The Sound of Music

Cast member **Jeanvene Hester** of *The Sound of Music* choreographed a performance of "Do-Re-Me" with Head Start students during a visit to the early childhood education program on December 9. The "I Like to Sing and Move It" program brings off-Broadway touring cast members into the classroom to teach students Curwen hand signs, songs and how to play notes on a chime bar. (PHOTO BY BOB KEENAN)

To learn more about Catholic Charities' Head Start, visit cc-md.org/HeadStart.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES' DRAGON BOAT RACES RETURNS ON SEPTEMBER 10

Catholic Charities' 10th biennial **Dragon Boat Races** will take place on September 10 in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. This year's competition promises to be the most exciting one to date with over 30 teams from the Baltimore area vying for the coveted Dragon Cup.



PHOTO BY REBECCA ROTHEY

For more information or to sponsor a team or volunteer on race day, please visit www.returnofthedragons.org.

HAPPY EASTER

With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessings on them all. —ACTS 4:33

General mechanics training program gives participants revved-up skills



Classmates watch as **Kim Cooper** uses a tire-changing machine to remove a tire from its rim. The 12-week general mechanics training program is sponsored by **Catholic Charities**, the **Mayor's Office of Employment Development's One Baltimore for Jobs** and the **National Center on Institutions and Alternatives**. Of the 15 enrolled participants, five are women.

(PHOTO BY RENÉE JOHNSON)

THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS for the 15 participants in the 12-week **general mechanics training program** began with getting hands-on experience.

"I removed rotors and installed brakes," said **Tenyo Kinchen**. The next day when she and classmates operated a tire-changing machine, Kinchen realized that she'd made the right decision to enroll. "I'm loving it," she says.

Self-employed mover **Larry Green**, who worked for a short time at a tire store, wants to pick up learning where he left off. "This is my chance at landing a stable job."

The recruitment of men and women, which began in November, was expanded to include all ages and residents throughout the city. Applicants must reside in underserved neighborhoods and be either underemployed, jobless, homeless, minimally educated or an ex-offender.

A \$250,000 grant from the **Mayor's Office of Employment Development's One Baltimore Jobs** funds the program through April 2017. Catholic Charities employee **Talmadge Ellerbe** serves as placement manager/training specialist/job-readiness instructor. **Tony Jones** of the **National Center on Institutions and Alternatives (NCIA)** teaches automotive skills at the agency's on-site garage.

Immersing participants in their future work environment is a strategic measure. "I can see who has leadership skills, understand their individual learning styles and keep the class in a learning mode," says Jones. At the end of each session, participants are asked to explain and demonstrate what they've learned to build their competency. Classroom instruction includes learning best practices for employees, résumé writing and interviewing skills.

As participants progress through the program, a transformation occurs. Ellerbe says, "It's rewarding and humbling to see people learn skills that will better their position in getting a good job and also improve life for their families. It's really wonderful to see." ■

For more information, call **443-885-0990**.

Safe Streets Baltimore puts outreach workers in communities to stop gun violence

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Department, with additional support from the Abell Foundation and the U.S. Department of Justice.

In Cherry Hill and parts of East Baltimore where Safe Streets has been in operation, there has been a more than 50 percent reduction in non-lethal gun violence. Residents have also credited outreach workers with helping them find jobs, improve job interviewing skills, obtain job training and enroll in school and GED programs.

The program is located in the convent at St. Peter Claver Church on North Fremont Avenue. Staff members include the program site director, a violence prevention coordinator and four outreach workers/violence interrupters. ■

To learn more about Safe Streets, visit cc-md.org/safestreets



DEAR FRIENDS, *continued from page 1*

being with other people. Mercy expresses itself when we open our eyes and hearts to see others, especially those who are most vulnerable, as God sees them. Mercy is seeing people in terms of their possibilities and potential rather than the circumstances of their lives. Mercy has a lot to do with how we see one another!

And so our Catholic Charities' vision statement calls us to open ourselves and encounter others with eyes and hearts of mercy! Because mercy is central to the work of Catholic Charities, this special year gives us an opportunity to examine and celebrate the many works of mercy that occur throughout Catholic Charities each day—and to deepen our ability to see our guests and each other with mercy. In a new series called **Open the Doors of Mercy**, we will focus on many of those works and also on the significance of the physical doors of our programs, which are symbols of mercy through which our sisters and brothers enter to find love, compassion and hope. I hope that this series is thought-provoking for all of you.

In our Catholic Charities programs and in all the places we dwell in our daily lives, may we practice mercy by opening our eyes and our hearts—so that those we encounter may learn to believe in their great promise as we do and then find the hope and help needed to realize it. Let us open our doors of mercy!

Peace,

Bill McCarthy, Executive Director

Work4Success graduate lands a job with the United Way

WHEN ROBIN ZAMINI attended Project Homeless Connect in August, she walked away with more than she had expected. The United Way-hosted event for people who are homeless provided medical exams and screenings, legal advice, haircuts, food and other essential resources.

Zamini, who completed Catholic Charities' **Work4Success** job-readiness program, had come to pick up an item that she had gone without for 10 years: prescription eyeglasses. As she tried them on, she became emotional.

A man who observed her reaction approached her and asked if there was anything else that she needed. "I could have used a laundry basket, but I thought this was my chance to ask for something bigger," she says, "So I said that I wanted a job." Who she asked was someone who would grant her wish: United Way CEO Mark Furst.

Zamini says that the morale boost she received from staff members at Work4Success gave her the chutzpah to seize the opportunity.

Furst called over Assistant Director Gail Obrecht to talk to Zamini about her work experience. "I wasn't dressed for an interview and I didn't have a résumé, but she gave me her business card and told me to send it to her," says Zamini. Within 45 minutes after leaving the event, Zamini had emailed her résumé.



Working at the United Way call center gives **Robin Zamini** the opportunity to give assistance to callers in need. (PHOTO BY RENÉE JOHNSON)

Although there were no available positions, a part-time temporary position as a call center representative was created for her that will last through April 2016.

"I love it!" Zamini says of her job that uses her 33 years of experience as a customer service representative. Her duties include screening callers who requested holiday food baskets through the Harvest of Plenty for eligibility. "We fed 4,000 families for Thanksgiving," she proudly says. Currently, she is directing qualified callers to community sites for free tax filing assistance.

"We live in a society where we are ranked by our jobs and all the things that come with it: the school we attend, the car we drive and the neighborhood we live in," says Zamini. "Having a job brings so much hope, and I'm really grateful." ■

To learn more about Work4Success, visit cc-md.org/work4success

Internships give women the edge in finding jobs

A sign in the lobby of **My Sister's Place Women's Center (MSPWC)** is placed within sight range of women as they wait for services. The advertisement encourages women who visit or frequent the center to select from two, 12-week internship programs that offer free training as a receptionist or a commercial kitchen worker.

Women who were interested in either internship were directed to register with their case manager to reserve a place in the eight-member class that began on December 14.

In addition to hands-on training in the MSPWC's kitchen, interns receive classroom instruction that prepares them to take the state-certified **ServSafe** test on safe food-handling practices. The test fee is paid for by MSPWC.

The curriculum for both internships includes resume writing, professional decorum and a one-on-one job-readiness assessment.

A grant from the **Knott Foundation** allowed Catholic Charities to create an employment case manager's position to help find job placements for program graduates. To date, since joining MSPWC in August, **Elizabeth Kraus** has found 14 job placements that include Amazon, Goodwill Industries, the United Way and 12 other outside agencies.

"The internships at My Sister's Place Women's Center provide a unique opportunity for women to strengthen their skills in order to re-enter the workforce," says Kraus. "The training fosters confidence so the women can successfully market themselves to potential employers and learn the discipline to find careers that match their interests." ■



Interns in the commercial kitchen internship are visited by **Valerie Tarantino**, director of My Sister's Place Women's Center. (PHOTO BY RENÉE JOHNSON)

To learn more about My Sister's Place Women's Center, visit cc-md.org/mspwc

Alexis' Story Sarah's House

NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD ALEXIS came to **Sarah's House** with her young daughter after an argument with her mother ended with her moving out. Unfortunately, the separation from her mother was familiar to Alexis after having spent most of her childhood in foster care.

Initially, Alexis thought that her stay at the emergency and transitional housing program would be brief.

"I was just going to stay here awhile until I could go somewhere else," she says, "but I also wanted to prove to myself, my daughter and even my mom that I could do it on my own—but I just didn't know if I could."

It took a few weeks for Alexis to adjust, but soon she recognized the benefits of the program. "Slowly, I saw myself changing, and I was getting things done that I didn't think were possible before," she says. Milestones included securing two jobs, attending weekly GED classes and maintaining a stable home for her daughter. "The hardest part was learning to save my money and to budget, but I'm glad I did," she says.

Now in transitional housing, Alexis continues to work toward her goal of securing permanent housing for her and her daughter. ■

To learn more about Sarah's House visit cc-md.org/sarahs-house



Legislature salutes *Our Daily Bread* for 35 years of service

The Maryland House of Delegates presents a resolution in honor of **Our Daily Bread's** 35 years of uninterrupted service to the people of Baltimore. The Maryland Senate conferred a separate resolution. Catholic Charities' supporters, volunteers and program staff members gathered at the state capitol on February 2 for **Catholic Charities Day in Annapolis** to discuss key issues with legislators. (PHOTO BY ROBERT KEENAN)

Bingo!

MY SISTER'S PLACE
WOMEN'S CENTER
CATHOLIC CHARITIES IN ACTION

Bridesmaids' BINGO

Wednesday, May 11, 2016 • 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. • RSVP by May 8
Boumi Shriners Temple • 5050 King Avenue • White Marsh, MD 21237
For tickets, visit: cc-md.org/bingo

CATHOLIC CHARITIES BALTIMORE



HELPING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ENGAGE AND DEVELOP

Get HYPED and play trivia!

Join your fellow young professionals to network, have fun and learn more about Catholic Charities and how you can get involved!

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

6:00 p.m.

Charles Village Pub

19 West Pennsylvania Avenue

Towson, MD 21204

www.cvptowson.com

Featuring Adam Schneider, Trivia Master

Discounted food and drink will be available for purchase.

Prizes awarded to winning teams.

Please RSVP by **Wednesday, March 16**, by visiting

www.HYPED-Baltimore.org

From our roots in the late 1700s to today, Catholic Charities is Maryland's leading nonprofit provider of human services, serving over 160,000 individuals and families every year. We also provided more than 482,619 meals to people who were hungry. With compassion and respect for people of all faiths, races and circumstances, we improve the lives of children and families, seniors, people living in poverty, immigrants and people who are intellectually disabled. As part of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, we cherish the Divine within all whom we serve in 80 programs throughout Baltimore City and nine counties.

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CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

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