

DEAR FRIENDS,

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND for change and growth each day in the lives of those with whom we work and serve. We see opportunities in the eyes of the children at our Head Start centers, in the wisdom of the elders who share stories and time with college students who volunteer with us and in the relationships built between clients who are earning their GEDs and the volunteers who tutor them. As our work to improve lives happens one by one, over and over again throughout our 80 programs, our colleagues have also been diligently working in Annapolis during Maryland's legislative session for those we serve. From meeting basic needs to working to ensuring the fairness in our social system, Catholic Charities is

working to provide new opportunities to those in our state in new and innovative ways and through other tried and true methods of care. We all desire more opportunity for those who come after us—our children, our neighbors, our friends. May we welcome the springtime together with a renewed focus on our commonalities and a focused commitment to serve and advocate for those who are most vulnerable. Join us as we work to make our community better for all those living here!

Peace,



William J. McCarthy, Jr.
Executive Director



MARCH 2017

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.



Highlights from A Taste of Maryland

26th Annual A Taste of Maryland sets attendance record!

AN EXUBERANT CROWD of over 300 people attended this year's A Taste of Maryland at the B&O Railroad Museum, benefiting **Our Daily Bread Employment Center**. It was the first time in 26 years that the event was held at a venue other than Our Daily Bread, and it was also the first time that HYPED, Catholic Charities' networking group Helping Young Professionals Engage and Develop, held its After Party.

Nearly 40 restaurants and caterers donated food to the event, and 70 volunteers helped the night run smoothly. LaRon Monroe, a **Christopher Place Employment Academy** resident, shared his inspiring story with the audience. Archbishop William Lori attended and shared remarks with the audience as well.

The evening included a grand silent auction display, with live auction items including vacations in Steamboat Springs and Longboat Key, Florida, and a live mission auction to seek additional donations for Our Daily Bread. In addition, a 50/50 raffle and a wine pull with bottles valued at \$20, \$50 and \$100 were offered throughout the evening.

New corporate sponsors helped us exceed last year's sponsorship goals, as well as all previous years' goals. Thank you to the event chair, Ed Fortunato, and everyone who enthusiastically supported this amazing event! █

► **SAVE the DATE!** Next year's 27th Annual A Taste of Maryland will be held on **March 10, 2018** (to be confirmed) at the B&O Railroad Museum.

Thank you to all of our sponsors

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The Nickel Taphouse
Vaccaro's Italian Pastry Shop
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Woodberry Kitchen
Zeke's Coffee



Highlights from the HYPED After Party

“Accept the risen Jesus into your life. Even if you have been far away, take a small step towards him: he awaits you with open arms.” — POPE FRANCIS

A Foundation of Generosity

IT ALL STARTED with a conversation and a promise **Michael Brooks** made to his mom when he was 13. While driving to a sports camp at Calvert Hall (from which he would ultimately graduate in 1979), young Michael and his mom drove through an economically depressed neighborhood. Michael asked his mom why the area looked different from what he was used to seeing. His mom explained that not everyone was as fortunate as they were, but also shared with him the obligation of those who have been more fortunate. That obligation was to care and shepherd those in need. This conversation made a lasting impression on Michael, and it was at that point that he promised his mom that one day he would do something to help. "I am very lucky," said Michael. "I have the two greatest parents on the planet, and I learned from their example. My siblings and I learned to love, care and respect one another and those around us."

The BFG (Building for God) Community Foundation, an organization whose mission is to affect a positive and determined impact in our local community, has been officially partnering with Catholic Charities since 2004, though the Brooks' connection to Catholic Charities began much earlier in 1992. Michael, the chairman and CEO of Brooks Financial Group, Inc., and his wife Karen, have worked in varying capacities with several Catholic Charities' programs, including St. Vincent's Villa.

Brooks Financial Group, Inc., first made a gift to St. Vincent's Villa supporting its Illuminations Heavenly Ham boxed lunch campaign as well as other fundraising efforts. That relationship expanded and they began volunteering at the facility. The Brooks team helped decorate St. Vincent's during the holidays, which then evolved into participating in the Deck the Halls decorating project in the gym. During

the summers, they organized cookouts for the kids at SVV. The Brooks also recruited numerous volunteers through their family business to join them over the years.

In 2009, Michael wanted to expand his involvement and support into other programs. He partnered with Bill McCarthy, who had just recently joined Catholic Charities, and began contributing to Our Daily Bread Employment Center and Catholic Charities' Head Start of Baltimore City.



Soon after, through the BFG Community Foundation's Community Cup golf tournament, the BFG Community Foundation expanded its support of the agency by donating a portion of the proceeds of the tournament to Catholic Charities' programs. Today, through the support of the Foundation's efforts—which include the Community Cup and its annual Champions in Life Gala, the partnership is stronger than ever.

The BFG Community Foundation's commitment to sheltering the homeless, feeding and caring for families, fostering the educational needs of our youth and supporting those who protect our community complements Catholic Charities' mission to love, serve, teach and provide care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. What started in 1992 as a way to tithe profits to local organizations, including Catholic Charities, has grown into a nonprofit fundraising organization serving those in need in central Maryland.

This foundation, like all of Catholic Charities' volunteers and donors, is an integral part of our agency. "One of my favorite quotes," said Michael, "is 'it is only with the heart that one sees rightly, what is essential to life therefore is invisible to the eye.'" ■

To learn more about the BFG Community Foundation, visit www.bfgcommunityfoundation.org.

Supporting Our Immigrants

CATHOLIC CHARITIES'

Esperanza Center has been providing comprehensive services to immigrants in the Baltimore region for over 50 years. Recent events have left members of the immigrant community frightened and worried about how changes in immigration policy will impact them and their families, yet violence and life-threatening conditions in Central America continue to push children and family members to make the dangerous journey here. Esperanza's mission is to welcome immigrants by offering hope, compassionate services and the power to improve their lives.

We provide the following services, for immigrant adults and children, either free or at low cost:

- Immigration Legal Services, including consultations and representation by qualified immigration attorneys
- Primary health and dental care for any immigrant who doesn't qualify for insurance
- English as a Second Language classes, computer literacy and citizenship classes
- Fingerprinting and family reunification services for sponsors and unaccompanied children
- Information and referrals, including translation of documents, income and other letters, passport photos, help with school enrollment and driver's license appointments and information about housing, employment, transportation and other resources
- Assistance for foreign-born victims of human labor and sex trafficking

We will continue to be a place where all immigrants can obtain services, learn about their rights and about how to prepare for changes that may come involving immigration. ■

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/esperanza.

SARAH'S HOUSE TURNS THE BIG 3-0!

SARAH'S HOUSE, an emergency shelter and project-based supportive housing program, is marking its 30th anniversary in 2017. Originally established in 1987 as a result of the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Sarah's House strives daily to help move Anne Arundel County residents toward self-sufficiency. The unique partnership between Catholic Charities, the U.S. Army and Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services allows our staff the opportunity to provide a multitude of resources for our clients. Serving upwards of 125 people daily, Sarah's House offers services including mental health and substance abuse counseling, employment, financial empowerment and basic living skills in addition to providing shelter, meals and licensed child care.

To help celebrate this milestone anniversary, Sarah's House will host several events throughout the year. From "30s" fundraising drives to awareness events to a grand celebration (date to be determined), there is a way for everyone to get involved. ■

If you or your group would be interested in supporting Sarah's House, please contact Kelly Anderson at kanderson@cc-md.org or **667-600-3561**.



Sarah's House Bull Roast

Saturday, April 22
6:30-10:30 p.m.

Our Lady of the Fields Parish Hall
Millersville, MD

Pit beef, steamed shrimp, sides, dessert, with wine and beer included for \$50. Cash bar available. Silent auction, raffles, door prizes, deejay and more!

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/sh-bullroast.



MY SISTER'S PLACE WOMEN'S CENTER GRADUATES

Last January 6, our colleagues at **My Sister's Place Women's Center** celebrated the graduates of the Culinary and Clerical Internship programs. Congratulations to **Nicole, Jade, Jessica** and **Octavia!** ■

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

APRIL IS VOLUNTEER MONTH Celebrating Our Volunteers

IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE Catholic Charities without our 23,000 volunteers who compassionately work alongside staff members each day to give of their time, talent and resources. Our dedicated volunteers make the work of Catholic Charities to improve lives and meet critical human service needs in Baltimore and across Maryland complete and possible.

As we celebrate National Volunteer Month this April, we give thanks to all of our generous volunteers.

We also invite individuals, families, businesses and groups of all faiths and ages to make a difference in someone's life by exploring the variety of volunteer opportunities available within programs across Catholic Charities. ■

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/volunteer.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES DAY 2017: Advocacy in Action

MORE THAN 90 Catholic Charities colleagues and clients came to Annapolis on February 3—clad in purple Catholic Charities scarves—to learn about the agency's three main legislative priorities for the 2017 session, discuss its role in Annapolis and to advocate for its priorities to legislators. It is Catholic Charities' 42nd year of advocating in Annapolis.



Throughout the morning, the legislative sponsors of our three priority bills—Sen. Rich Madaleno (EITC Expansion), Sen. Guy Guzzone (Keep the Door Open Act) and Del. Luke Clippinger (Healthy Working Families Act)—joined the group to talk about their bills and how Catholic Charities can advocate for the passage of these vital pieces of legislation.

Several staff members from **Gallagher Services** and **My Sister's Place Women's Center** went to the State House to be recognized by the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates for their 40th and 10th anniversaries, respectively. Bishop Madden offered the morning prayer on the Senate floor, accompanied by Bill McCarthy.

At the conclusion of the Senate and House floor sessions, legislators joined the attendees to talk about the work of Catholic Charities and its legislative priorities. During lunch, our room sponsor Sen. Edward Reilly offered greetings from the General Assembly, and Stephine—a former client and now staff member at My Sister's Place Women's Center—shared her poignant story with the room, which was truly a highlight of the day.

Throughout these 90 days of session, Catholic Charities will work to advance its three priority bills:

Earned Sick and Safe Leave: Would allow all workers in Maryland—including part-time workers—to earn paid sick and safe time. For every 30 hours worked, a worker would earn one hour of paid sick leave under this bill.



Keep The Door Open Act: Would increase access to behavioral health care by ensuring that community-based providers have reliable and stable support in Maryland's budget. The bill would link funding for community behavioral health treatment to medical inflation so that as the cost of doing business increases, Marylanders will not lose access to vital behavioral health services.

Earned Income Tax Credit Expansion: Would expand Maryland's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for workers not raising children by increasing the income threshold for eligibility to close to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, increasing the state benefit to 100% of the federal EITC and lowering the age of eligibility for the EITC from 25 years to 18. ■

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/public-policy.

The Strongest Link

DOLORES and **JOHN MALAT** have been married for nearly 70 years; they married in 1947 shortly after WWII. John is a resident at **St. Elizabeth's**, and Dolores is a resident at **Caritas House**. Dolores walks through the "link" between buildings each morning to spend the day with John. Just before dinner, Dolores walks back to her home at Caritas and has dinner with her neighbors there, watches the news and gets ready for bed.



John is the love of her life. Any day that Dolores is not able to be with him and tend to his needs, she is tearful—and he misses her terribly. Staff members of St. E's and Caritas, who know the love and devotion they have for each other, do everything they can to assist Dolores so she can be with John. Their beautiful marriage is a sight to behold. ■

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/seniors.

Gallagher Services Marks 40 Years of Changing Lives

In 1977, a building on Pot Spring Road in Timonium, previously called Villa Louise, was transformed into **Gallagher Services**, a program serving children with intellectual/developmental disabilities (ID/DD). Gallagher Services was named after Francis X. Gallagher, who founded Gallagher, Evelius & Jones and worked tirelessly on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised. Gallagher's mission—then and now—is to open doors to a fuller life for people with ID/DD. Read more about Gallagher Services' anniversary in the the next issue of *Blessings*. ■

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/gallagher.

ANNA'S HOUSE AND CATHOLIC CHARITIES' EARLY HEAD START OF HARFORD COUNTY

25TH ANNUAL BREAKFAST

Friday April 7, 2017 • 7:30–10 a.m.
Maryland Golf and Country Clubs
1335 East Macphail Road, Bel Air, MD

For tickets, contact chanley@cc-md.org, cc-md.org/ah-breakfast or 410-803-2103, ext. 203.

There will be a drawing for a \$2,500 shopping spree at Saxon's Diamond Center. Get your raffle tickets now!

Bingo!

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

Bridesmaids' BINGO

Wednesday, May 17, 2017
6-9 p.m.
RSVP by May 11, 2017

Boumi Shriners Temple
5050 King Avenue
White Marsh, MD 21237

Visit cc-md.org/bingo for tickets.
For information about sponsorships or gift donations, contact Jackie Reid, jreid@cc-md.org.

MEN ON A MISSION

THE MEN at Catholic Charities' **Safe Streets Baltimore** recently accepted a generous donation from RCM&D to help them continue their mission of interrupting violent situations in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood before they occur. Since the beginning of this year, Imhotep Fatiu, director of Safe Streets, reported that of the 60 homicides thus far, only one occurred in any of the four Safe Streets zones in the city.

Since Safe Streets began working in the Sandtown-Winchester zone on March 17, 2016, members initiated 353 successful mediations/interruptions that likely would have resulted in gun violence. ■

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



Safe Streets staff members along with (l to r) **Jeffrey (Jeff) Dietrich, Lee Schmelz, Mark Socoloski, Bill McCarthy** and **Bob Cawley**.



Imhotep Fatiu of Safe Streets (l) accepts a check from **Leroy (Lee) Schmelz** (c) of RCM&D along with **Bill McCarthy**.

With your spirit,
there is **HOPE**

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

– Matthew 25:40

Sharing your blessings provides hope and assistance to children and families, people living in poverty, individuals with intellectual disabilities, immigrants and seniors. Please consider making a new gift to Catholic Charities today.

cc-md.org/Blessings

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

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. Last year, we also provided more than 589,000 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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