

OUR DAILY
BREAD
EMPLOYMENT
CENTER

CATHOLIC CHARITIES IN ACTION

NEWS

SPRING/SUMMER 2017

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 delicious Maryland-inspired dishes 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 (See his story on page 3). 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!

Highlights from A Taste of Maryland

Continued on page 2



THANK YOU!
TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS

ESPECIALLY OUR PRESENTING SPONSORS:

- Brenda K. Ashworth and Donald Welch
- Concetta Corriere with Remax 100 and Dominic Corriere

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Couples who volunteer together...

As Kim Kahl talked to some of the volunteers at Our Daily Bread on Valentine's Day, she noticed that there were several couples who volunteer on a regular basis. She started thinking about the many couples who volunteer together. When Kim asked them about how they began doing this, they all had a similar answer: Volunteering is something that they can do together that they not only enjoy, but allows them to "give back and help others."

We would like to thank these and the many other couples who give their time on a regular basis to Our Daily Bread.



Hank and Theresa Walter



Ted and Pat Buxton



Don and Evelyn Dailey



Dan and Jeanne McCarthy

These volunteers have been here from three to 35 years. Here are just a few:

Tim and Patricia Brennan, Mike and Jeanette Buckley, Ted and Pat Buxton, Don and Evelyn Dailey, John and Kathleen Garpstas, Usha and George George, Larie and Leslie Harper, John and Sally Heyn, Chip and Cathy Hiebler, Mary Agnes and Fred Lewis, Terry and Pat Liszewski, Mike and Geri Madden, Dan and Jeanne McCarthy, Mike and Marti Meyd, Paul and Jo Miller, John and Freda Rafferty, Bill and Carol Shea, Barry and Kathy Schech, Bob and Kathy Sodowski and Hank and Theresa Walter.

Thank you!

Continued from Page 1

A Taste of Maryland



Highlights from the HYPED After Party



SAVE THE DATE!

Next year's
**27TH ANNUAL
A TASTE OF
MARYLAND**
will be held on
March 10, 2018*
at the **B&O
Railroad Museum**

*Date to be confirmed

BLESSINGS!



By Penny Lewis,
Director of ODBEC

"It takes a village" "A community of unity"

These are just two approaches that ensure our gratitude to do God's work! The ODBEC staff is grateful to come to work every day and deliver its mission. The joy we receive keeps us inspired and constantly thinking of ways to improve and do more. Because of their commitment, we have increased the intake hours, added an evening Work4Success class, increased our Work4Success participant enrollment and shared more food donations with our neighbors in need. These are just

some of our highlights. The biggest joy still remains the smiles on our guests' faces when they receive a warm, delicious meal. This begins with our greeter at the door, saying hello to each individual client. The testimonies are abundant, and at the end of the day – it's truly THE BEST JOB IN THE WORLD! The ODBEC family wants to thank our volunteers, donors, partners and clients. Your partnership in this opportunity to assist is **our blessing!**

LaRon Monroe, Stargazer

The Christopher Place Employment Academy is the embodiment of the Catholic Charities' vision to help others reach "his or her God-given potential."



Every year, countless lives are transformed through the facilitation of its holistic programming and each participant's unwavering will to improve his own life. *LaRon Monroe (currently enrolled in the academy) is a testament that this mission works!*

LaRon has always felt compelled to make meaningful connections by sharing words of encouragement. Leading by example sometimes seemed impossible as he experienced a series of misfortunes and hardships through the years. At age 7, **LaRon** tragically lost his baby brother. Despite this experience, he struggled to find ways to serve as a surrogate "brother's keeper" to friends and loved ones, yet he was always torn between following the teachings of his mother and temptations of street life.

At private school in East Baltimore, he discovered his talent for basketball. His jump shot earned him the nickname "Money" among his peers, coaches and teachers. Unfortunately, a promising career as a semi-pro basketball player was stifled after he was severely injured in a motorcycle hit and run accident. Suddenly, the athletic, 6'3" tall, 21-year-old was confined to a breathing machine for six months with a punctured lung, and his chronic pain led the once-promising athlete down a road of depression, addiction to painkillers and homelessness.

LaRon learned about Christopher Place Employment Academy (CPEA) and took it as "a sign from the stars" to enroll, as his baby brother's name was also Christopher. Unfortunately, this opportunity was not fully realized, as he left the program after just one week. He did persevere, however, and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Coppin State.

After multiple setbacks, including job loss and another hit and run accident, he found his way back to CPEA.

LaRon developed a new hobby while he struggled with homelessness and addiction: astronomy. During his recovery, he began to study the vastness of the galaxy. These days, he can impressively spout 10-digit numbers, complex cosmic equations and facts about planetary bodies. He applies the sciences as a guide to study people, relationships and life experiences. **LaRon** credits his ability to make these connections through personal disciplines such as prayer, stargazing and program activities like yoga and life skills workshops.

Now gainfully employed, **LaRon** drives his own car to Mountain Manor Treatment Center where he works with youth. Excited about graduating from CPEA soon, he often journals about starting his own business and sustains optimism by "spreading the good word" and sharing cautionary tales of his life with his adolescent charges at work. **LaRon** humbly admits that continuing on his new path isn't easy, but he is adamant that everything happens for a reason and feels that his goal to live a "spiritually sound life" is rewarded each time he gazes at the stars.

WORK4SUCCESS2ADVANCE A New Career Development Program



Work4Success is an intensive job readiness program offered at ODBEC. The 10-day course includes mock interviews, resume writing assistance and other skill enhancement to get ready to go into the work force. Once the course is completed, the participant is assigned to a placement manager to concentrate on his or her job search. **Work4Success** has started off strong this year. The January class had 31 graduates, and the two February classes each had more than 20 participants. **More than 80% of the participants of those classes have found employment.**

This year, ODBEC offers a new program called **Work4Success2Advance** developed specifically for those who are currently employed but ready for the next step in their career development. This class will polish one's interview skills and assist with updating his or her resume. **Work4Success2Advance** classes are held for a total of five evenings from 6-8 p.m. every other month to accommodate those who work during the day. Once the class is completed, the participants are assigned to a placement manager so they can begin looking for that next step in their career.

ODBEC has held two open houses that included information, referrals and the opportunity for immediate interviews with employers and offers assistance with barriers like child support and expungement of criminal backgrounds.

**Seeking employment?
Call 667-600-3411!**



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CATHOLIC CHARITIES IN ACTION

Catholic Charities of Baltimore

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Baltimore, MD 21201-4421

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POLY CADETS IN ACTION



Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Air Force JROTC, MD-933 Cadets: (back row, left to right) Teiona Johnson, Cherokee Martin, Tanesha Blackledge, Alexander Torres-Navarro, Yazmine Cannon and Takiyah Venable. Long-time ODBEC volunteers: (front row, left to right) Don Shipley, Stan Mikal and Don Welch.

**Unity
in the
Community**

JOIN US FOR FOOD, MUSIC, GAMES,
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND MORE!

**Saturday, May 6
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

St. Edward's Workforce Development Center
2848 W. Lafayette Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21216

Rain Date: May 13

Inspired by the Gospel mandates to love, serve and teach, Catholic Charities provides care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need.

**Our Daily Bread
Employment Center**

725 Fallsway
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667-600-3000
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cc-md.org/give-odbec



**CATHOLIC
CHARITIES**

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL