

Celebrating Compassion in Action

Volunteering is a cornerstone of Gene DeSantis's life. Every Monday and Wednesday at 7:30 a.m., he arrives at Our Daily Bread Employment Center (ODBEC) to begin preparing lunch for more than 700 guests. This has been his routine for nearly 37 years.

"I've experienced much adversity in my life – particularly as a child and as a young man," said Mr. DeSantis. "I want to be sure that others don't experience the same thing. Volunteering is a bit like therapy."

His life is dedicated to giving to others. In addition to his work with ODBEC, Gene cooks, bakes and serves with a myriad of meal programs in Baltimore. On Tuesdays, he bakes cookies for a shelter serving women and children experiencing homelessness. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, he cooks and performs chores for



Volunteers **Gene DeSantis (l)** and **Marti Meyd**.

April is National Volunteer Month

setting. The volunteers operate with swift efficiency to prepare salads, heat the casseroles, pour the iced tea and open the doors to greet the guests.

The generous spirit of all volunteers transforms lives and is the foundation of our ability to do the work we do. Thank you.

his elderly employer. On Fridays and Sundays, he volunteers with another Baltimore meal program and on Saturdays, he plants trees – 15,062 trees as of late March – with Blue Water Baltimore.

Because of Gene and thousands of other volunteers, ODBEC has never missed a day serving those experiencing hunger in Baltimore, despite blizzards, hurricanes or any other occurrence, since June 1, 1981.

Every day, 40-50 volunteers serve hundreds of individuals in need in a restaurant style



"It's important to give back. If you are retired, why shouldn't you help? I just couldn't imagine sitting at home and not doing something to help," said **Marti Meyd**, a former Head of Maryvale Preparatory's Middle School and the Principal for The Catholic High School of Baltimore.

A vibrant group from **St. Matthew's Catholic Church** come the fourth Monday of every month. They enjoy the camaraderie as well as the satisfaction of helping others.



Barry Brown, Mt. Vernon resident and **Old St. Paul Episcopal Church** parishioner: "I see a lot of homelessness in the neighborhood. I am not comfortable giving money, but I know that this is a better way of helping others."

Nick's Story: Volunteer Manager

I come from a family of people committed to creating change.

My great-grandfather immigrated with nothing in his pocket, becoming a union organizer in Brooklyn; my grandfather lied about his age to fight in WWII; and my father faithfully protested Vietnam, eventually joining the Peace Corps. I am very proud of what my last name stands for. When I followed my girlfriend to Baltimore where she is a student at Johns Hopkins University, I knew I wanted to continue doing something for those most in need.

I am from the Boston area, born and raised (Go Sox). I graduated from Bridgewater State University with intentions of being the next great American writer. But then I started volunteering with kids in gangs, and that inspired me daily. I don't have my novel written (yet), but I sold all of my belongings and moved to Austin, TX for AmeriCorps to continue working with those in need. AmeriCorps is recognized as the domestic Peace Corps, and I took that very seriously. In AmeriCorps, you're asked to live



Nicholas Rudomin (c), ODBEC Volunteer Manager with volunteers Roxana Gomez (l) and Marian Romans (r).

on modest means, food stamps, and not take another job. I know how hard it is to live on \$5 a day, and some people do it with less.

For the past 5 years, I've been concerned with doing something where I can say, "together we can make a difference." Baltimore is changing, and perhaps I'm a part of it. The people here at Our Daily Bread lead with their hearts and are committed to creating a future for anyone who asks. My job is to supervise the volunteer program, but I don't even consider it a "job." It's a calling that I've answered because of my last name. From the person pouring iced tea every week to the program directors: We all have a hand in making somebody's tomorrow a little better. When I call my 90-year old grandpa and tell him I'm doing something that has helped keep these doors open since 1981, I feel like I can hear my great-grandpa Louie tell me, "Keep it up." I intend to, not necessarily just because I want to, but because I was born to.

“The people here at Our Daily Bread lead with their hearts and are committed to creating a future for anyone who asks.”

Call to schedule your volunteer shift at 667-600-3438 or visit cc-md.org/VolunteerODBEC.

BLESSINGS!



FROM THE DESK OF
Penny Lewis,
Director of ODBEC

A witness to persistent hope

At Our Daily Bread Employment Center, our clients possess this audacious belief that what they hope for – despite all odds – will actually come true.

Our guests arrive at ODBEC for a nutritious meal and leave with much more. All guests are welcome to make their way 20 feet down the hallway to access life skills workshops, employment training, mental health services and dental care.

We help all in need to address matters big and small – from handling an eviction notice or restoring gas and electric to obtaining food

stamps or having their mail safely delivered to ODBEC.

Most of all, our clients visit ODBEC because they know they'll be encouraged and loved unconditionally. Our staff and volunteers are grateful for the opportunity to be part of their journey.

Overcoming unplanned obstacles takes strength and determination. Our clients consistently demonstrate a bold belief that "tomorrow will be better."

Come to ODBEC to be inspired by our guests and be a witness to their persistent hope for a positive future.



A MILLION THANKS

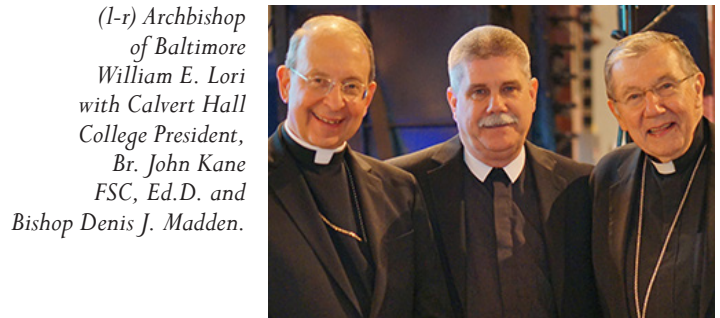
to everyone who contributed to the 27th Annual Taste of Maryland, Our Daily Bread Employment Center's premier fundraising event. More than 300 guests, 25 sponsors and 30 restaurants participated in the event which netted more than \$150,000 to support the life-changing services at ODBEC. Guests enjoyed a performance by the acclaimed Cardinal Shehan Catholic School choir, bid on auction items, sampled Maryland-inspired cuisine and danced the night away at the Catholic Charities' Young Professionals After Party! **Please join us for next year's event on March 9, 2019.**



(l-r) Presenting sponsors of the event, Brenda Ashworth with husband Donald Welch, Dominic and Concetta Corriere.



Catholic Charities Board Member, Pamela Gray (l), a Partner with Business Consulting and Emerging Entities with her husband Paul Sean Gray.



(l-r) Archbishop of Baltimore William E. Lori with Calvert Hall College President, Br. John Kane FSC, Ed.D. and Bishop Denis J. Madden.



Ed Fortunato, Managing Director at Constellation, an Exelon Company, with his wife Sarah Walsh Fortunato. Ed served as the Chairman of the Taste of Maryland Committee.

Moving from adversity to self-sufficiency with Christopher Place Employment Academy

Dignity comes with empowerment which is often found through work. Many of the men at Christopher Place Employment Academy (CPEA) have spent years struggling with substance abuse, poverty or homelessness. Once they join CPEA, they embark on a journey to change their lives.

"Christopher Place gave me the time to get myself together. It was so valuable — no distractions. It gave me a safety net and a chance to network.

Since graduating from CP, I've worked full-time as a cook for the CP men. I'm also a full-time overnight porter for Premium Parking in downtown Baltimore."



Michael Holland, Full-Time Cook and Premium Parking Porter, CPEA 2014

"After I capstoned and started looking for jobs, I got hired by Premium Parking with the aid of graduates from a previous class," said Brendan Bodensteiner.

"I learned everything I could about the parking industry, and I am now Director of Operations for Premium Parking where I can employ other guys who are in this program. It's a great base for open positions."



Brendan Bodensteiner (l), Director of Operations for Premium Parking, with **Rohan Reid**, a Premium Parking Porter, both CPEA Graduates

SAVE THE DATES:

- April 29: Catholic Charities Head Start of Baltimore City 24th Annual Bull Roast
- May 7: 29th Annual Gallagher Services Golf Tournament
- May 16: Bridesmaid's Bingo Benefitting My Sister's Place Women's Center
- June 18: Blase Cooke Classic Golf Tournament
- July 9: Catholic Charities Golf Open
- September 8: 11th Biennial Dragon Boats Races at Rash Field, Inner Harbor

cc-md.org/events

YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THOSE IN NEED!



MANY THANKS TO COASTAL SUNBELT PRODUCE

in Laurel, Maryland, for its financial support and weekly donation of fruit and vegetables to ODBEC.

Please consider volunteering, offering financial support or making in-kind donations.

OR MAKE A CASSEROLE!
Try this crowd-pleasing recipe.

DELIVERIES:

Donations are accepted seven days a week from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Enter through ODBEC's rear parking lot to access delivery entrance. Push call button to enter gated parking. Unload donations at delivery door on the left. For assistance, press intercom button at delivery entrance door. There's no need to call ahead unless you need assistance or if you have questions. Our number is 667-600-3400.

Macaroni & Cheese (vegetarian) Serves 8 - 10

Ingredients:

- 2 cups elbow macaroni, uncooked
- ½ cup margarine
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper
- ½ cup flour
- 2 cups milk
- 10 oz. shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup bread crumbs

Cook macaroni according to directions on box. (Don't overcook the pasta.) Drain and set aside.

Sauté onions in margarine, and add salt and pepper. Slowly stir in flour. Cook over low heat until mixture is smooth and bubbly. Stir in milk. Add in cheese and continue stirring until melted. Remove from heat. Stir in cooked macaroni and pour into a foil casserole pan. Top with bread crumbs. Bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool completely, cover with aluminum foil. Label with casserole name and date. Freeze.

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

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Baltimore, MD 21202
cc-md.org/give-ODBEC
cc-md.org/ODBEC
667-600-3400