

## DEAR FRIEND,

**PERHAPS SECOND ONLY TO CHRISTMAS**, summer is a time when we think about what makes life enjoyable. Many of us carve out a little time for travel or leisure. We do it because we know that it makes our lives better, brightens our outlook, soothes our soul and reconnects us with the people, places and activities we love.

If you are among our 17,000 dedicated volunteers, you likely treat your service the same way. Erma Bombeck once said, "Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another." That is why I and all of my colleagues, as well as the

neighbors we serve, are so tremendously grateful for our volunteers. In providing a meal, guiding a child, befriending a senior,

*"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another."*

~Erma Bombeck

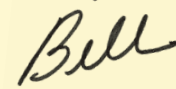
maintaining a place, engaging a differently-abled individual, or serving in any way from the kindness and compassion of your heart, you are part of our movement to improve lives. There is nothing so valuable.

Why? Because when you volunteer, you are improving at least two lives: your own and the one you touch.

Summer often means we have fewer volunteers to brighten the outlooks of our neighbors in need. As you find ways to reflect and relax, I hope you also take the opportunity to serve with us. You can find ways to volunteer at [cc-md.org/volunteer](http://cc-md.org/volunteer).

We cannot serve others without you. Please make us part of your wonderful summer.

Blessings,



William J. McCarthy, Jr.,  
Executive Director



SUMMER 2018

# 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.

## Working toward a better life

On June 22, St. Edward's Workforce Development Center graduated another class of eager men and women trained there to work as automotive technicians.

Nearly 100 individuals have graduated since the workforce program opened in December 2015, spurred by the recognition that West Baltimore needed greater opportunities for workforce development. The program provides classroom and hands-on training and secures automotive technician job placement for city residents.

Of the graduates, about 80 work in the automotive industry. Prior to enrolling in the program, these individuals struggled to find work due to employment gaps, homelessness, incarceration, lack of opportunity, lack of education, or lack of training.

"We saw an opportunity and a need to do more in the areas of sustenance, employment, violence reduction, and programming for young children and families," said Catholic Charities Executive Director Bill McCarthy. "Since its inception, it has proven to be a winning addition to the Catholic Charities' programs and the neighborhood."

In addition to the workforce development program, St. Edward's Parish provides assistance for those who are hungry and food-insecure with meal and pantry programs. ■

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/sewdc](http://cc-md.org/sewdc)

### SUCCESS STORY: CLINTON RUFFIN



St. Edward's Workforce Development Center Director Anita Donaldson with Clinton Ruffin.

Graduate Clinton Ruffin majored in psychology for two years before costs and a change of professional direction made a college degree challenging to obtain. His life in West Baltimore didn't always include the right choices. He had work, but he couldn't keep up with expenses, including \$40,000 in student loans.

He recently spoke to a room full of leaders about how St. Edward's programs helped. The following are excerpts of his remarks.

*I was hired and started working at Heritage Volkswagen in Catonsville in February [2017]. I love it. I love working full-time. I have health benefits. I have the best manager I've ever had. I am working with a good, energetic and fun bunch of guys.*

*Let me tell you, for me, and the rest of my St. Edward's class, this training program was a golden opportunity.*

*Jobs are few and usually part-time with no benefits. It is really hard to get ahead. And even if you are doing all that you can, lack of opportunities can still hold you back.*

*St. Edward's automotive technician training program, and all of you who support Catholic Charities' work, have given me a jetpack on my back and moved my life forward. ■*

## My Brother's Keeper: Welcome to the family

**GREAT NEWS!** On July 1, we'll welcome My Brother's Keeper into our family of community services!

For more than 30 years, the people of My Brother's Keeper have been deeply committed to the Irvington community of West Baltimore, growing from a modest meal provider to a robust center of support.

We are excited to continue that mission and expand on the wonderful work of so many passionate staff, supporters and friends. ■

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/my-brothers-keeper](http://cc-md.org/my-brothers-keeper)



And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. — GALATIANS 6:9



# Special friendship, remembered and honored

## 28th annual scholarships in memory of cherished Gallagher volunteer



Peggy Otenasek (in blue) with award recipients (l-r) Felix Kwakwa, Garrick Gottlieb, Emma Page and James Holt.

Two staff members and two volunteers from Gallagher Services can now start or continue their education thanks to scholarships named in memory of a former young volunteer.

When she was in high school, Anne Lindsey Otenasek was a Special Friend for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities at Gallagher Services. When Lindsey was killed in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, her family established scholarships through Catholic Charities in her memory. They are awarded each year to Gallagher staffers and volunteers who, like Lindsey, exude joy and dedication in their service.

The staff honorees included Felix Kwakwa, a residential counselor at the Gallagher group home in Sparks. He recently worked with residents to plant a vegetable garden at the home. His scholarship will help him pursue his degree in special education at Towson University.

Maintenance staffer James Holt includes Gallagher resident Chuck Jones in his work caring for the Timonium campus. Holt will use the scholarship to continue his education at Anne Arundel Community College.

Institute of Notre Dame student Emma Page, one of the volunteer honorees, spends her time with the medically fragile and older individuals at Gallagher Services. She started coming to Gallagher with her aunt, Joanna Leuschner, who works as a spiritual development coordinator there. Leuschner herself once won an Otenasek award.

DeLeon Catholic High School (PA) senior Garrick Gottlieb volunteers at the group home on Middletown Road and will attend American University in Washington, DC, in the fall. He

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



Peggy Otenasek and attendees applaud Catholic Charities Chaplain Fr. Ray Chase for 40 years of friendship with her family.

Gallagher Services' Brian Trees (l) with an individual who accepts support from Gallagher Services and award recipient James Holt.



Peggy Otenasek with honoree Felix Kwakwa.



It runs in the family! Award recipient and Institute of Notre Dame Senior Emma Page with her aunt, previous winner and Catholic Charities' Coordinator of Spiritual Development Joanna Leuschner.

# Breakfast for better

## Anna's House and Early Head Start of Harford County Annual Breakfast

Harford County rallied around Anna's House and Early Head Start of Harford County at the 26th Annual Benefit Breakfast at the Bel Air Maryland Golf and Country Club on April 20, 2018. Anna's House offers emergency shelter, transitional housing for families fleeing domestic violence or seeking permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing. ■



L-R: Anna's House Program Director Cynthia Wood, breakfast guest speaker Kim Vargas Morales, and Early Head Start of Harford County Director Kay Richardson.

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/annas-house](http://cc-md.org/annas-house) and [cc-md.org/hcehs](http://cc-md.org/hcehs)

# BINGO!

A celebration of the women of My Sister's Place Women's Center

**HUNDREDS OF WOMEN**, many donning their old bridesmaid's dresses, gathered at the Boumi Shrine Temple in White Marsh on May 16, 2018 to celebrate the 16th Annual Bridesmaids' Bingo, benefiting My Sister's Place Women's Center.

The evening was filled with fun, games, laughter, dancing and, of course, cake! But most importantly, it honored the remarkable transformations that occur each day at My Sister's Place Women's Center.

Della "Keysha" Powell once received services from My Sister's Place, and participated in the on-site Learn to Earn Kitchen Internship Program. She says the program changed her life, and that the staff and volunteers have hearts for every woman who enters the doors. Keysha is now a full-time kitchen coordinator at My Sister's Place.

"I never knew my life would have changed in this way if I didn't walk through the doors of Catholic Charities as a homeless, helpless woman," she said. "I give special thanks to Catholic Charities for providing opportunities for me and other women every day."

The evening also honored Laura Skowronski Bouyea, chair of the My Sister's Place Women's Center Leadership Council and an attorney with Venable LLP, as the 2018 My Sister's Place Woman of the Year for her longtime dedication and support.

"Tonight," she said, "we recommit ourselves to My Sister's Place and we celebrate our accomplishments in guiding women to self-sufficiency and stability." ■

A happy hotel staff from Hotel Indigo Baltimore Downtown with their director of sales, Kathleen Dombrowski. Dombrowski was the 2018 Bridesmaids' Bingo co-chair.



BGE HOME President and CEO Tamla Olivier and former My Sister's Place client Della Keysha Powell. Keysha, who participated in our Learn to Earn program, now works as a full-time kitchen coordinator at My Sister's Place Women's Center.

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/mspwc](http://cc-md.org/mspwc)



# ED BLOCK COURAGE AWARDS



## Children of St. Vincent's Villa show NFL athletes true courage

**DEMONSTRATING THAT COURAGE COMES IN MANY SHAPES AND SIZES**, children from St. Vincent's Villa shared an awe-inspiring breakfast with a group of NFL players at the St. Vincent's Villa gym. The gathering was part of the 40th Annual Ed Block Courage Awards celebrations.

"This breakfast is the Super Bowl of fun for the children," said St. Vincent's Villa Administrator Ezra Buchdahl.

Created by former Baltimore Colts trainer Ed Block, the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation partners with the NFL to cultivate awareness and raise funds to support the well-being of abused, neglected and at-risk children.

Courage Houses provide support and quality care for abused children and their families. In 1978, St. Vincent's Villa became the first Courage House. Since then, the foundation has dedicated houses in 25 NFL cities, forming the Courage House National Support Network for Kids.

The Ed Block Courage Awards celebration is one of the most prestigious in the NFL, recognizing one player from each of the 32 NFL teams, nominated by their teammates for exemplifying professionalism and courage to overcome adversity in returning to the field.

"These children need affirmation that courage is real and overcoming adversity is not a fantasy," Catholic Charities Chaplain Fr. Ray Chase told the players. "Tell the children about the award you're receiving and how you found courage. Assure them that they, too, will find courage."

The children also presented their own personalized awards to the athletes – handmade clay medallions – as a symbol of shared resilience. The NFL players, in turn, presented letters of encouragement and prayers of hope and love to the children. ■

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/svv](http://cc-md.org/svv)



*Ed Block, a compassionate humanitarian who stood for courage and tirelessly championed those who displayed that characteristic through the foundation that bears his name.*

*NFL player William Gholston of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers receives a hand-crafted medallion from a St. Vincent's Villa child.*



*NFL players and St. Vincent's Villa's participants on the field.*

## CAPTAIN OF THE CAUSE:

The dragon boats are back

and so is Al Chesnavage

**IT TAKES A CERTAIN KIND OF PERSON** to want to swelter on a boat with 21 coworkers, racing from one side of the Inner Harbor to the other, over and over and over again.

**AL CHESNAVAGE IS THAT KIND OF PERSON.**

The lifelong athlete and principal business analyst for BGE can't wait to dive in on his 11th biennial Catholic Charities Dragon Boat Races. He hasn't missed one since the first outing in 1998.

"I didn't even know what a dragon boat was back then," Chesnavage recalled. "But our culture at BGE is to support the community as best we can. Plus, it looked like it was going to be fun."

He started as a paddler but is now in a recurring role as BGE's team captain. For him, it's about partnerships and relationships – with his crew, with other teams, and with the people of Catholic Charities.



*Al Chesnavage (r) and team members at the 2016 Dragon Boat Races.*

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/dragonboats](http://cc-md.org/dragonboats)

The teams are comprised of leading businesses in the community. Each team pairs with a Catholic Charities program. The funds raised through a team's corporate sponsorship and individual donations benefit that program.

"Getting involved in different [programs] is really exciting," Chesnavage said. "It's important to see all the good work they do. And sponsorships like BGE's actually help change lives."

It's changed his own life a bit, too. Chesnavage and others have volunteered at My Sister's Place, Sarah's House, Anna's House and other programs.

"Catholic Charities touches so many lives," he said. "We're excited to do it again."

The Dragon Boat Races take over the Inner Harbor on Saturday, Sept. 8. It's free to the public. **Come watch and cheer!** ■



# NONSTOP OUTREACH

Summer means more at Esperanza Center

**SUMMER IS HERE**, and that means young people don't always have enrichment opportunities outside of school. Fortunately, the Esperanza Center provides a popular way to stay engaged: a five-week program for middle and high school ESOL students in Baltimore City and County.

ESOL stands for English for Speakers of Other Languages.

The highly respected Esperanza Center summer program includes field trips and academic counseling. After having to turn many people away last year, Youth ESOL Coordinator Brianna Melgar said the program is expanding its capacity from 60 to 80 students.

While continued education is part of the program, students will spend two days a week devoted to fun and field trips, including swimming at St. Vincent's Villa's pool in Timonium, working with a music therapist, and visiting Fort McHenry, the Walters Art Museum and Washington, DC.

High schoolers will participate in team-building and trust exercises designed to foster communication and understanding between police and young adults. Through a partnership between the Baltimore Police Department and the Baltimore Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound School in Leakin Park, the students meet officers and work with them to complete a range of challenges, including a high ropes course and climbing rock walls. ■



Students practicing skills to increase trust and communication.



OTENASEK AWARDS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

said he has made friendships there that will last a lifetime.

"I am proud to say that these guys [at the home] have

impacted my life

substantially," Gottleib said. "There is nothing I would rather do every Thursday than head up to the house and hang out with Mark, Nate, Brian, James and Kevin."

The evening itself marked significant anniversaries for the Otenasek family and for Catholic Charities.

"It has been 40 years since the founding of Gallagher Services," said Lindsey's brother, Frank Otenasek. "[It has been] 40 years since Father Ray joined Gallagher Services and met my family, and 30 years since Lindsey's death. Tonight, we gather to celebrate her spirit and how it has given new life." ■



Honoree Garrick Gottleib (r) and his family.

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/esperanza](http://cc-md.org/esperanza)

To learn more, visit [cc-md.org/gallagher](http://cc-md.org/gallagher)

Join us to provide care and services to children and families, seniors, immigrants, individuals with intellectual disabilities and people living in poverty throughout Maryland.

Make your gift to Catholic Charities today.

[cc-md.org/blessings](http://cc-md.org/blessings)

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

Together, we improve lives



CATHOLIC CHARITIES

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

Catholic Charities is the largest multi-service charitable organization in Maryland. Serving all, we provide innovative programming to accompany people on life's journey including assistance to those living in poverty, individuals with developmental disabilities, immigrants, older adults, families and children in crisis.

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For more information: [cc-md.org/events](http://cc-md.org/events)

■ October 30, 2018: Annual Catholic Charities of Baltimore Celebration

■ September 8, 2018: 11th Biennial Dragon Boat Races at Rash Field

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