

FRIEND,

EACH OF US IS ON A UNIQUE JOURNEY. While the journey towards independence might look different for each of us, there is a shared experience that is common for all of us. No matter our paths, we have all experienced excitement, challenges, lessons in responsibility, exposure to freedoms, head-on encounters with

fears, realizations of self-pride, risk-taking opportunities, triumphs, and milestones. Each of our journeys requires hard work and support. Yet, our experiences help us gain resilience, a better understanding of ourselves, and independence. In this issue of Blessings, we are humbled to share stories of how our partnerships within the Maryland community allow us

to support our neighbors in fulfilling their dreams and achieving independence.

Bill McCarthy

William J. McCarthy, Jr.,
Executive Director



SUMMER 2022

BLESSINGS

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

SUPPORTING CHILDREN & FAMILIES

VISIT TO CHERRY HILL TOWN CENTER HIGHLIGHTED NEW MODELS OF COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

On a sunny afternoon in May, a diverse group of 66 people filed off busses into the community space at the Cherry Hill Town Center. They came from as far away as California and Boston to see new models of community collaboration across the city, with seven stops to learn about different organizations bringing equity to underserved communities.

The city-wide tour was hosted by Baltimore Homecoming, a nonprofit that connects far-flung Baltimore natives with organizations that are building a new vision for Baltimore's future.

During the event, two Cherry Hill community partners, Eric Jackson of the Black Yield Institute, and Sidney Wilson of the South Baltimore Learning Center (SBLC), briefed visitors on their work in Cherry Hill. Jackson, whose organization runs the Cherry Hill Urban Garden spoke about its plans for a food co-op. He addressed a community member's question regarding the need for a grocery store in the longtime food desert, reporting progress towards opening a store by early 2024. Sidney Wilson and two SBLC students shared



Catholic Charities' Community Services Director Amy Collier speaks at the Cherry Hill Town Center Homecoming event.

Photo courtesy of Brian O'Doherty/Baltimore Homecoming

that organization's focus on building self-sufficiency of educationally disadvantaged adults through functional literacy, life skills, and career pathways.

Tour visitors were eager to learn more about the unique collaborative model represented by the Town Center project, which Catholic Charities has owned since 1997. The organization has been working in Cherry Hill for more than 55 years, operating seven Head Start classrooms and supporting a range of community initiatives, in addition to bringing new life to the Town Center. "This project is the culmination of four years of listening

and on-the-ground work with engaged community leaders," said Amy Collier Catholic Charities' Division Director of Community Services. She explained how residents shaped plans for the space including the desire for a farmer's market and space for community gatherings and meetings which will be sponsored by the Cherry Hill Community Association.

The recently renovated Town Center lives up to its role as the "life pulse" of Cherry Hill. Residents are able to shop, visit the library, gather with neighbors, and bank in their neighborhood for the first time in the Cherry Hill's 75 year history – thanks to the arrival of Chase Bank.

Other organizations represented at the event included Cherry Hill Head Start, the Youth Resiliency Initiative, the Cherry Hill WIC Center, Cherry Hill Strong, an arm of Purpose Built Communities, RICH (Restoring Inner City Hope), which connects experienced entrepreneurs with young people in the community, and the Enoch Pratt Free Library at Cherry Hill.

For more information on programs and events, visit cc-md.org

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

— JEREMIAH 29:11

Expanding the experience at Gallagher Services

AFTER 45 YEARS of day services at Gallagher’s Pot Spring Road location in Timonium, a relocation is underway.

“We are very excited about our upcoming move to our new community center in neighboring Dulaney Valley,” said Kathy Clemente administrator for Gallagher Services. “Although we are redesigning the vacant space at Catholic Charities’ Villa Maria building about a mile away, the location will allow us to reimagine the experience of a traditional day program and serve as a vibrant hub of activity and community engagement. This change will allow us to joyfully welcome the people we support, volunteers, and community members to a large open space while giving every person’s journey the support it needs.”

Gallagher Services, which started in 1977, supports adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in living the life of their choice. Adults are supported in living, working, and being involved in the community as independently as possible. The Cornerstones of the program are Person-Centered Planning and the mission and values of Catholic Charities.

Those with significant medical challenges will get the services they need and a chance to see their friends, while others may come and go individually or in small groups, based on their individualized plans for the day.

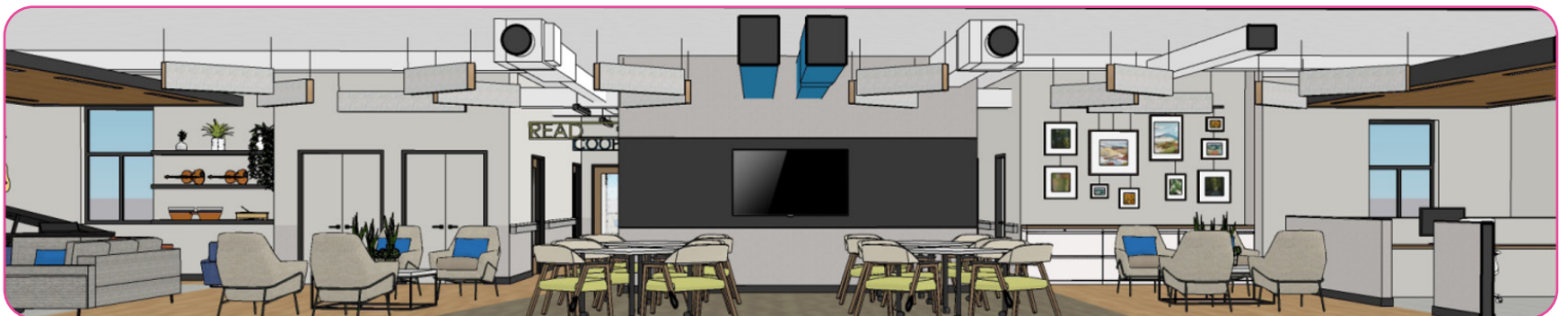
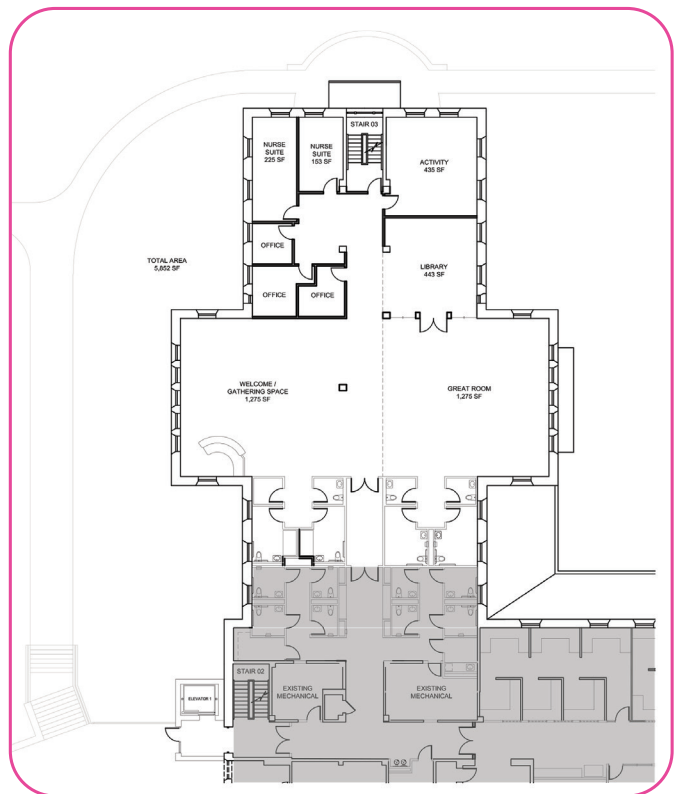
The \$1.5M renovated facility will allow more people with extensive needs to receive high-quality services at the community center day program, in addition to participating in activities consisting of arts and entertainment, self-advocacy opportunities, and socializing.

“Those attending the day program will be able to go out into the community and participate in local activities,” said Alyscia Smith Gallagher Services director of day programs. “Our new building will be located in the heart of Baltimore County where Timonium Fairgrounds is right around the corner and known to hold different events throughout the year that those who attend the program can enjoy.”

“This space shows our commitment to person-centered planning and community integration,” said Clemente. “We envision this center as the start of something bigger in the journey of how we serve those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

Gallagher Services plans to partner with area colleges, universities, churches, and businesses to inquire about ways to work together to enrich the lives of those they support while also doing its part to support the community.

The new Gallagher community center is expected to open early 2023.



OFFERING MORE THAN A MEAL



Our Daily Bread Employment Center welcomes financial literacy on wheels thanks to PNC Bank's mobile branch

AN ESTIMATED 7.1 MILLION U.S. households were “unbanked” in 2019, meaning that no one in the household had a checking or savings account at a bank or credit union. This statistic launched a partnership between Catholic Charities and PNC Bank – and the debut of its mobile bank branch outside Catholic Charities’ Our Daily Bread Employment Center.

“PNC is a national Main Street Bank, which means we understand and work to address the needs of our communities, because we are part of them,” said Laura Gamble, PNC regional president for Greater Maryland. “The Mobile Branch reflects this mindset and helps us meet customers where they are. We want to provide easily accessible, secure access to banking solutions for our local community, especially for those who may not have easy access to a traditional branch. We’re proud to work with local organizations such as Catholic Charities because their strong community connections help us understand where the community needs us most.”

“This partnership with PNC Bank is critical for the clients we serve — the impact of the mobile branch could be really huge, said Lee Martin, program director for Our Daily Bread Employment Center. “Not only is this great for the convenience but also for clients’ opportunity to learn about fiscal responsibility and helping them move forward in their journeys. Having a bank account opens doors to a lot of economic opportunities.”

The 30-foot branch on wheels makes banking easier and more accessible in areas where traditional brick-and-mortar branches may not be available. The unit allows existing and prospective PNC customers to conduct banking transactions, such as opening and applying for accounts, receiving or replacing a PNC debit card, and a deposit-taking ATM. The Mobile Branch also includes onsite assistance in English and Spanish.

The Mobile Branch will rotate throughout the city and other Catholic Charities’ locations including; My Sister’s Place Women’s Center (Downtown), My Brother’s Keeper (Irvington neighborhood of West Baltimore), and Jenkins Senior Living Community (Oaklee neighborhood of Southwest Baltimore).



Pictured left to right: Austin Merritt, Vice President, Community Consultant, Community Development Banking; Laura Gamble, Regional President, Greater Maryland; Terri Winebrenner, Senior Branch Manager, Baltimore Mobile Chanel; Franklin N. McNeil, Vice President, Community Consultant, Community Development Banking; Amy Collier, Catholic Charities Director of Community Services, Niky Garcia, Mobile Branch Assistant Manager, Baltimore Mobile Chanel; Sue DeSantis, Catholic Charities Our Daily Bread Employment Center Administrator, Pete Howe, Mobile Branch Banker, Baltimore Mobile Chanel; Gedeon Seddoh, Mobile Branch Banker, Baltimore Mobile Chanel; Lee Martin, Catholic Charities Christopher Place Employment Academy Program Director; and Ramsey L. Harris, Senior Vice President Market Manager, Community Development Banking.

Catholic Charities and Comcast partner to promote workforce development opportunities for Baltimore area families

INDIVIDUALS IN THE BALTIMORE AREA who need work and computer literacy training are benefitting from a donation Comcast has made to Catholic Charities.

In April, Comcast donated 50 new laptops and \$15,000 to the organization’s ongoing work of empowering careers. Neighbors are able to use the computers as they build résumés, search for job opportunities, conduct virtual interviews, work virtually, develop stronger computer literacy skills, and more.

“Catholic Charities meets neighbors where they are to accompany them in any way we can in their journey towards meaningful work and financial stability,” said Catholic Charities Executive Director Bill McCarthy. “We are thankful to have a partner like Comcast in the community. Donations like this allow us to extend our reach and impact for our neighbors.”

Catholic Charities provides a sequence of workforce development programming, beginning with helping individuals with skills assessment, job placement, and job retention. The organization also assists individuals with earning a good wage and growing in their employment.

“We are proud to partner with Catholic Charities to help members of the Baltimore community get online, access skills development courses, and jumpstart career opportunities,” said Misty Allen, vice president of government and regulatory affairs for Comcast’s beltway region.

Comcast has committed \$1 billion to reach 50 million people through its Project Up initiative to advance digital equity through programs and community partnerships that connect people to the Internet, advance economic mobility, and open doors for innovators, entrepreneurs, storytellers, and creators.

Catholic Charities’ workforce development programming promotes the dignity of work and positively impacts long-term economic stability and the well-being of individuals and communities. In fiscal year 2021, despite the limitations of COVID-19, 203 individuals received job training, and 110 found work through Catholic Charities programs.

Baltimore native and new COO is operating in her personal passion

Catholic Charities of Baltimore announces the hiring of Ashley Valis as the agency's first chief operating officer. The newly created role will be responsible for strategic oversight, operational excellence of programs and services, human resources, and leadership of our strategic planning process and initiatives.

Valis has an extensive background in human services and brings strong knowledge and experience in community engagement, government & public policy, strategic planning, and goal achievement. She joins the organization after eight years at the University of Maryland Baltimore's office of community engagement where she most recently served as executive director. Prior to UMB, Valis held various positions in former Governor Martin O'Malley's administration most notably as assistant chief of staff, where she had direct oversight of four state agencies, and deputy director of intergovernmental affairs where among other responsibilities, she advised the Governor on county and municipal legislative and budget priorities. Valis says she looks forward to blending her career experiences into her new role.



ASHLEY VALIS

"I've always admired the work of Catholic Charities throughout the state of Maryland," said Valis. "There have been numerous points in my career where I've noticed overlap in my personal passions and the key causes of the agency. Now I have the opportunity of gaining a better understanding of the direct impact the programs have on the communities we serve on an individual bases. I appreciate the passion everyone has for the work we do, understanding the dynamic between service provider and neighbor, and how to come together to consistently strengthen that relationship."

Valis holds a Bachelor of Science degree in family and community services from the University of Delaware, and a Master of Social Work from the University of Maryland - School of Social Work. The Baltimore native lives in the Hollins Market neighborhood with her husband and three children.

Valis began May 9, and directly reports to Catholic Charities Executive Director Bill McCarthy.

New CFO excited to serve new purpose

Sarah Beckwith has joined Catholic Charities as its new chief financial officer. She comes from the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, where she served as vice president and CFO for the last nine years.

Beckwith has an extensive background in senior finance leadership roles. Prior to the BSO, she held the controller role for a worldwide credit insurance company in the risk industry and started her career as audit supervisor for Deloitte in the United Kingdom. Beckwith says she is eager to start this next chapter of her life.

"I often share with my children that we are all born with a purpose to serve and help others," Beckwith said. "This role feels like I am able to use what I've learned throughout my career to give back. I was drawn to the mission of Catholic Charities, the communities served,

and the opportunity to make meaningful professional and personal contributions."



SARAH BECKWITH

Beckwith holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK and received her chartered accountant certification through the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

The United Kingdom native lives in Jacksonville, Maryland, where she and her family attend Ashland Presbyterian Church. The self-described "English lady" enjoys having tea, gardening, singing, and watching soccer—commonly known as football in the UK—with her family.

Beckwith began February 7, and reports directly to Catholic Charities Executive Director Bill McCarthy.



In December, we called our friends together to offer a month of music, crafts, games, trivia and more through Comfort & Joy. The outpouring of support was heartwarming.

With help from volunteers, we raised \$160,000 and received \$200,000 in gifts from program wish lists.

Thank you to all of you who participated in this annual event!

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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