

# Housing Matters

United Ministries, Inc. Newsletter



## THE JOURNEY TO BECOMING— *HOW YOU ARE CHANGING LIVES*

*“Maybe the journey isn’t so much about becoming anything. Maybe it’s about un-becoming everything that isn’t really you, so you can be who you were meant to be in the first place.” — Paul Coelho*

**You** are giving HOPE. **You** are giving HELP. **You** are giving a HOME.

Recently two different people, one a resident and one a donor, asked me “How do you find such good people for Earl’s Place?”

Truthfully, there is no secret. If a man applies, is experiencing homelessness, is in recovery from substance use, and is willing to follow the rules, when a space becomes available we welcome him in.

So, either good people find us. Or, more likely, people are inherently good and given the opportunity they thrive.

A former resident of Earl's Place from more than 15 years ago stopped by to tell me he had some good news. He is getting married.

But that is not all the good news.

He is housed. He is sober. He works as the head cook at a D.C. public school. His children, who were toddlers when he lived here, are both doing well. His daughter is in Texas and his son graduated from high school this spring. He says, "It took me a long time to catch on. Now there is no looking back."

Thanks to you, men have the opportunity to un-become who they are not and become who they were meant to be.

With gratitude,

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**Earl's Place**  
1400 E. Lombard St.  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Prospect Place**  
8720 Philadelphia Road  
Baltimore, MD 21237

United Ministries is a housing & social justice organization dedicated to assisting homeless men who want to change their lives & to changing community attitudes toward the homeless.

Sheila Helgerson,  
Executive Director

### Board of Directors

Nathan Barbo, Chair  
Eric Miller, Vice Chair  
Rebecca Woods,  
Secretary

Andrew Frank  
Nancy Gardner  
Erika McClammy  
Eric Miller

# “Not Just A Normal House”

“My husband and I frequently drive, walk and run by Earl’s Place. The building from the outside appears to be a normal house which is in contrast to what is happening inside. Earl’s Place changes lives for the better of the men who reside there, in order to get their feet back on solid ground after being homeless.” - Kathy Miller, neighbor, volunteer, donor

One of the best things about Earl’s Place is the opportunities to meet so many wonderful people and have new experiences.

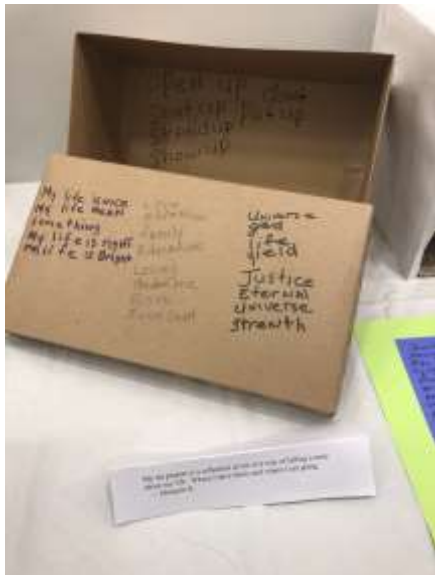


Our awesome friends from Center Stage Mobile Unit joined us again this year and presented Antigone. For many of the men this is the first play they have seen and experiencing it up close is truly a wonderful experience.

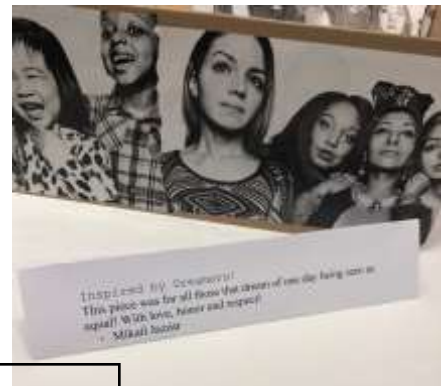


This year we celebrated the 5th anniversary of our partnership with Goucher College. The men and students worked on a number of art projects. In April, we concluded the year with an art show, “Self Love/Self Care” at Goucher College.

The projects included decorating shoeboxes to indicate our inside and outside selves. As one of the men said, “Who knew I could get so much joy out of a little box”.



**My art project is a reflection of me in a way, telling a story about my life. Where I have been, and where I am going.—Dwayne S.**



**Inspired by Dreamers. This piece is for all those that dream of one day being seen as equal! With love, honor and respect.—Mikail J.**

# Board Member Spotlight



Nancy Gardner

Photo Credit: Marina Blandino

**How did you first hear about United Ministries? What motivated you to help out?** As a member of Grace UCC in South Baltimore, I was introduced

to the Resolution Run as a mission opportunity. I was “groomed” to become a Board member. I was asked to be the Grace UCC team captain for the Resolution Run. In my role, I asked questions and learned a few things about the Run and the organization. When Rev. Jenn’s term on the Board was coming to an end, she asked if I would replace her. I wasn’t sure just what serving on this board would mean, but the gratitude I saw and heard from those most closely connected to the organization swayed my decision – for the better.

**Why is United Ministries’ mission to help men experiencing homelessness important to you?** Our culture seems to thrive on the belief that we can pull ourselves up by the bootstraps and become successful. And sometimes, we find ourselves lost in or barred from entering a system that can help us succeed. The United Ministries model works because it is built on the best of both ideas: the strength of an individual to succeed and a need for support in finding and accessing the systems that will facilitate independence. This is a model I want to support because it continues to work for most of the residents.

**Are there goals you hope to attain before you leave the board?** In my perfect fantasy, we would be fully funded and with sufficient reserves to embark on a capital improvement campaign to upgrade the facilities on Lombard Street. Additional staff could be hired to meet the ongoing office, case management and development needs of a vibrant organization dedicated to individual and community development. I am excited about rebranding and developing a new concept for our website. By growing our Board and expanding committee participation, perhaps we can find a way to profitably use social media to engage others and support development.

**Being on the board of directors, you get a perspective on that other people don’t have.** If there is one thing that is enormously evident it’s the gratitude of every resident. Each man recognizes an opportunity to succeed and has made a commitment to becoming self-sufficient and independent. I was surprised by the sincerity with which residents share their experiences and the sense of ease they have in talking with a stranger (me). They have been honest about themselves and their journey, and reasonable about their hopes and desires for the future. They really are working intentionally to get to a better place.

**Why should someone consider serving on the board?** Are you a curious person? Would you like an adventure in trying something new that will also allow you to invest in your wider community? Do you believe in self-efficacy, especially when there’s a support team? Serving on the board is a way to go beyond being an observer. Interested, committed individuals who enjoy working as a team get to experience organizational success as well as celebrating the successes of residents who have a wider vision of their own future.

## Meet our Intern



I'm Rana and I'm going into my junior year at Barnard College in NYC. I'm from Silver Spring and am home for the summer, interning for Earl's Place as part of the Sondheim Nonprofit Leadership Program through UMBC.

I've written grants, designed flyers, interviewed residents, and more. The office is a fun place to work because while I sit at my desk and work, the residents are always coming in to say hi.

Earl's Place is so clearly client centered and built from a place of love. It's been a pleasure to be a small part of this tremendous place.



## Opening Doors Dinner & Auction

**Thursday, October 10, 2019**  
**6 p.m.—10 p.m.**

**Shriner's Boumi Temple**  
**5050 King Avenue**  
**Baltimore, MD 21237**

**Keynote Speaker: Dr. Karsonya Wise Whitehead**  
**Author, Associate Professor Loyola University,**  
**WEAA Radio Host**

**More information at:**  
**<https://charityauction.bid/OpeningDoors2019>**

**Tickets available at:**  
**<https://openingdoors19.eventbrite.com/>**