Happy New Year!

Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas (VOACC) would like to officially welcome you to the new year and decade with the relaunch of Caring Chronicles! Caring Chronicles is our bi-annual newsletter where we share about our community impact, latest happenings, inspiring stories and ways to get involved at our organization with our donors, staff, volunteers and partners. We hope you enjoy this issue of Caring Chronicles and look forward to connecting with you in 2020!

We’ve Merged with VOA Carolinas!

On July 1, 2019, we officially merged our organization with Volunteers of America Carolinas to become Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas. Combining forces will enable us to help nearly 9,600 individuals in need of supportive housing, workforce development and health care each year across Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and North and South Carolina.

“By combining the strengths of our organizations, we are now better positioned for regional growth, to enhance the quality of our direct support and clinical services to the populations we serve and invest in our most valuable asset – our employees.” – Russ Snyder, President & CEO

Since 1987, VOA Carolinas has been providing veteran services, supportive housing and disaster relief to individuals and families. Our staff will continue to be a beacon of hope to those in need in more than 61 counties across the Carolinas.
**Who We Are**

We are a faith-based, nonprofit organization whose mission is to **inspire self-reliance, dignity and hope** through health and human services.

Founded in 1896 in Baltimore, MD, we were one of the first branches of Volunteers of America — one of the nation’s largest and most comprehensive human services organizations.

Through a dedicated and committed team of management, staff and volunteers we provide critical care, support services and hope to thousands of people each year throughout Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the Carolinas.

As a church without walls, we answer the Call to Care for America’s most vulnerable individuals through our more than 49 programs focused on addressing seven key areas:

- Homeless Services
- Supportive Housing
- Veterans Services
- Behavioral Health
- Community Re-entry
- Substance Use Recovery
- Intellectual/Developmental Disability Services

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Madison Tate (right) and her baby sister Morgan pose at our Pratt House Supportive Housing Program in Baltimore.

- **4,800** homeless individuals & families assisted each year
- **650** individuals & families housed and loved each year
- **1,700** adults & youth with mental health challenges supported each year
- **110** individuals with disabilities empowered for independence each year
- **570** adults struggling with a substance use disorder put on a path to recovery
- **1,170** veterans & their families provided the support they deserve each year
- **630** returning men & women put on a path to success each year
Happy New Year to you and your family! 2019 was an exciting year for Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas. Our affiliate grew significantly with the addition of Volunteers of America Carolinas to our footprint in July. This merger will allow us to leverage our organizational presence and programmatic outcomes to help even more people in need across the Mid-Atlantic region.

In December, we launched our brand-new Volunteers of America Resource Center in partnership with Good360 in Linthicum, MD. The first of its kind, our Resource Center will help to enhance the collective impact of nonprofits and service organizations across the region through the redistribution of high-quality products from major retailers.

In October, we partnered with AmeriHealth Caritas to launch our Hope Has A Home medical respite program in the District of Columbia. This program is designed to provide adults experiencing homelessness and chronic health conditions temporary housing and support while they recover. The idea behind this program is to help individuals heal and provide them other supportive services while reducing costs on the health care system.

These are just some of the highlights from the second half of 2019. I hope you enjoy this edition of Caring Chronicles, which is designed to bring you real-life stories about how we are enhancing the lives of the more than 9,600 individuals. Our faith-based mission is to lead those in our care to self-reliance, independence and healing. In a word, our organization gives people in our care hope for a better life. We are extremely honored to offer this gift to our clients who would otherwise be without care.

Thank you for continuing to support the human service programs we provide in your community. It is through committed supporters like you that we are able to provide high-quality services to the populations we serve. May you and your family be merry and cozy this winter!

Blessings,

Russell K. Snyder
President & CEO
Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas

Want to help ensure that the critical work we do is available today, tomorrow and in the future?

Give the gift of hope by visiting us at [www.voaches.org/donate](http://www.voaches.org/donate) to make a donation or contact us at (301) 955-9470.
We distributed backpacks & supplies to over 2,000 children during Operation Backpack!

Thanks to the support of our staff, volunteers and corporate partners, Operation Backpack provided 1,600 backpacks and school supplies to homeless and underprivileged children living in Virginia, Maryland and DC in time for the new school year.

The families we serve were so grateful for the community support. Mother of three Ashley Tate said the program really makes a difference in preparing her daughters for success at school.

“I’m a single mom and sometimes it’s hard to get them everything they need for school,” she said. “So it’s a very great thing that they help us out with backpacks and uniforms.”

We want to especially thank US Concrete, F.H. Furr, and ABC 7 News for sponsoring our 2019 Operation Backpack. Since it first launched in 2010, Operation Backpack has outfitted more than 30,000 girls and boys with new, fully-stocked, grade-specific backpacks.

A Dream Come True

When Faith Kennedy, 55, came to our Pratt House Supportive Housing Program three years ago with her grandson, she was looking for a home and stability. In addition to housing, our staff provided her the counseling and psychiatric rehabilitation services she needed to manage her bipolar disorder. We also helped Faith identify and join a job training program for individuals with disabilities under the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) through the Maryland Department of Education.

In December 2019, Faith participated in the pilot of our Ready.Set.Live! workplace and social etiquette program at Pratt House to compliment the hard skills training she was receiving through DORS. Through the six-week program, Faith received training in self-confidence, effective communication, job interviewing, conflict resolution, and how to dress for success.

“I have learned to respect myself more and take pride in what I do,” said Faith. “I have gotten two jobs in less than two weeks since I took the class. I am so proud of myself.” - Faith Kennedy
We raised $110,000 at Harvest for Hope!

On October 24, 2019, we celebrated our 10th Annual Harvest for Hope! The event significantly outpaced previous years, raising $110,000 in support of our Virginia- and DC-based health and human services programs.

We welcomed more than 220 of our donors, partners, staff, volunteers and supporters, including special guests Virginia State Senator Barbara Favola; Virginia State Senator Adam Ebbin; Virginia State Delegate Ibraheem Samirah; Virginia State Delegate Vivian Watts; Virginia State Delegate Patrick Hope; and Arlington County Board Members Matt De Ferranti and Katie Cristol.

This past year’s event stood out from the rest featuring a silent and live auction that our attendees truly enjoyed. If you attended and/or donated to Harvest for Hope, thank you so much for your support! We want to especially thank the following corporate sponsors and major donors for supporting this past year’s event. None of what we do in the community would be possible without the support of our donors and partners.

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LIVE! Casino & Hotel - MD
Our Maple Court Ribbon Cutting was a hit!

On Friday, October 25, 2019, we welcomed more than 60 people, including eight elected officials to a special ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the reopening of our Maple Court Veterans Transitional Housing Program in Durham, NC.

Thanks to a $180,000 grant from The Home Depot Foundation and the hardwork of local volunteers, we successfully renovated the apartments to the benefit of our veteran residents.

Thanks to the Home Depot Foundation, we can continue to be a beacon of hope for veterans like Dale Ogborn. Dale had been in the hospital for an injury and was moved to Maple Court so he could recuperate without having to pay for the high hospital fees and receive support locating permanent housing.

“Maple Court means that I have a safe place to live instead of being on the streets.”
- Dale Ogborn

North Carolina State Senator Michael Woodard speaks to the audience at our Maple Court ribbon cutting.
Introducing the VOA Resource Center, a new product redistribution center for nonprofits

As an organization, we are always looking for ways to make an even greater impact in the community. Our new Volunteers of America Resource Center in Linthicum, MD helps us do just that! A partnership between our organization and Good360, this 12,500 sq ft in-kind donation center is designed to redistribute high-quality household products from major retailers to help nonprofits support those in need.

On December 5, 2019, we welcomed over 30 nonprofits to our Resource Center grand opening where they learned more about how to become nonprofit members.

Know a nonprofit that could benefit from every day items for a fraction of the price?

Have them contact us at 1 (866) 982-1684 or visit our webpage at www.voaches.org/resource-center.

Do you enjoy volunteering?

We always need help unpackaging and organizing the regular shipments of products we receive. If you’re looking for a way to give back, get in touch with us at 1 (866) 982-1684. Our center is perfect for individual and group volunteers alike!
Our new ‘Hope Has A Home’ program is working to alleviate homelessness in DC

On any given night in the District of Columbia, there are nearly 7,000 people who are homeless and without shelter. Homelessness increases the risk for serious illnesses. When DC’s homeless experience chronic substance use disorders, mental illness, HIV/AIDS and other chronic health conditions, they are five times more likely to end up in a hospital emergency room. Because they have no where else to go, they often remain hospitalized longer than necessary at a cost of approximately $3,000 per night.

We have been working to both alleviate homelessness and reduce costs on the health care system in the District using a relatively new model of care known as Medical Respite. Medical Respite is a care strategy that provides short-term medical care in a safe and supported environment for individuals with conditions that are not severe enough to warrant hospitalization and where return to a shelter or the streets would impede the recovery process.

Using this approach, we launched our ‘Hope Has A Home’ program in partnership with AmeriHealth Caritas in October 2019. This innovative program provides temporary housing, behavioral health and social support services for homeless individuals. Located at Edson Place NE and Congress Street NE in DC, Hope Has A Home is designed to improve the health status of those in need while simultaneously reducing the total health care spending for the participating Medicaid population.

“We are very fortunate to provide services and address the unmet need for respite care with this program. Despite the growing use of medical respite nationwide, Washington, DC has fewer than 50 designated medical respite beds for a homeless population of over 7,000.”
– Jana Berhow, VP of DC Programs

Thanks to Hope Has A Home, we have already begun to make a substantial impact on the lives of those in need like Michael Hawkins.

“I want to thank Volunteers of America and the Medical Respite program in particular for giving me the opportunity to get control of my life again and to help me with my housing, my health and my stability. Not sure where I would be without them.” - Michael Hawkins

Got an idea to make our newsletter even better?

Share your ideas by emailing us at communications@voaches.org.
GET INVOLVED

Is your business or organization looking for a way to make a difference in your community? Are you or your children looking for a summer volunteer project? With our 49 programs across Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia and the Carolinas, we’re certain to have an activity that meets your needs!

Go to www.voaches.org and click on “Get Involved” or call us at (240) 764-2654.

UPCOMING EVENTS

From galas to talent shows, we always have fun ways for you to give back and engage with our staff, board members, clients and partners. Below are just some of the key events we have coming up this year.

Learn more about our events at www.voaches.org.

VOICE of Faith

This is our annual fundraiser and networking reception in support of our Maryland human services programs. Help those in need while enjoying heavy hors d’oeuvres, an open bar, live music by the Kelly Bell Band, a silent auction, and inspiring stories at The Center Club, in Baltimore.

To learn more and purchase tickets, visit www.voaches.org/2020voiceoffaith.

Spiritual Development Colloquium

Join leaders from the faith and philanthropic community for this unique opportunity to learn more about and discuss ways to mitigate the impact of Moral Injury on individuals and communities.

To learn more and register, visit www.voaches.org/spiritual-colloquium.
Thank You to Our 5 Weeks of Giving Donors!

Thanks to the generous support of our supporters, we raised over $30,000 to provide shelter, a warm meal and care to the individuals and families in need extra of support this winter.

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