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INTERFAITH WORKS

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Monthly Bulletin from Interfaith Works

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Smiles, and Relief

This is one of my favorite times of year at Interfaith Works. Fridays at the IW Clothing Center have been busy this month. With your generous support, IW will be able to provide 3,000 Montgomery County students with brand-new backpacks filled with school supplies.

Helping children shop for their own backpacks and seeing the joyful smiles on their faces is a moving experience. But perhaps even more moving is seeing the **sense of relief** on the faces of parents. Thanks to you, these children will have the supplies they need for school and their families can save their limited resources for essentials like food, rent and medicine.

With the multiple services we now offer at the [IW Clothing Center](#), including free clothing, vocational services, English classes (provided by our great partner [Community Ministries of Rockville](#)) and access to a soon-to-come computer lab, our goal is that these parents no longer will just get by. They will acquire the **tools they need to reach a pathway to a better life for themselves and their families.**

Thanks to [your support](#), a better life will become more than just a dream. We could not do our essential work without you.

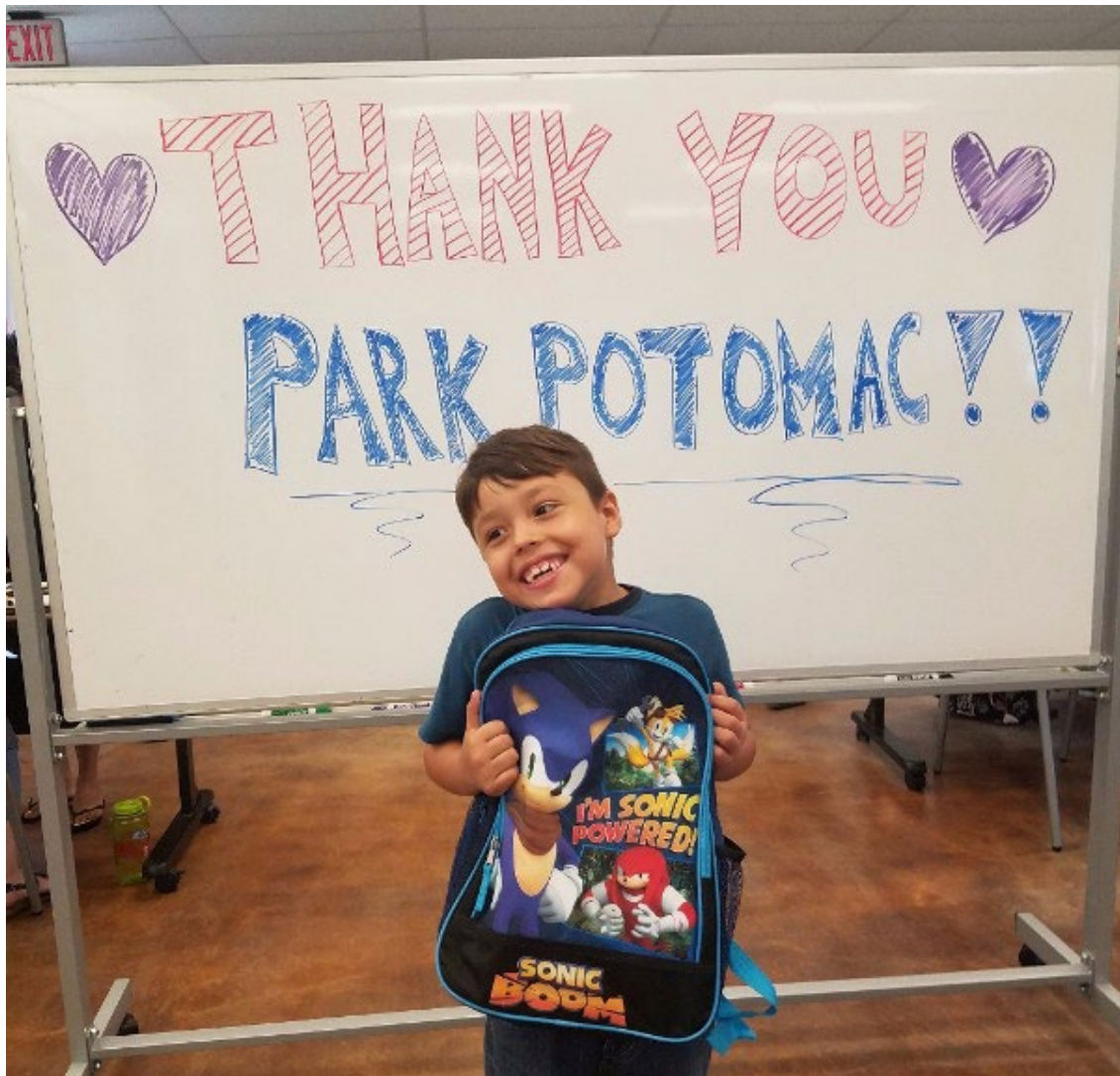
Shane Rock
CEO

PS: You'll find more backpack photos and a short video [here](#); learn



about the great results of the Park Potomac Ice Cream Social to benefit the backpack campaign below.

Ice Cream Social!



Park Potomac Ice Cream Social to benefit Interfaith Works' backpack campaign was a **huge success**. Donors broke previous donation records, filling Interfaith Works bins with 1,245 backpacks, 1,386 pencils, 61 scissors, 188 erasers, 119 composition notebooks, 140 spiral notebooks, 94 packs of crayons, 582 pens and much more! Many thanks to Park Potomac residents **Bruce and Margo Fonoroff** for organizing the event with the support of many Park Potomac residents and businesses.

A New Start with a New Job

Reuben had started over many times in his life, due to legal, health and addiction challenges. He had experienced homelessness over several decades.

When he came to Interfaith Works, he found the resources he needed for a fresh start. He worked with his IW case manager at **Carroll House men's shelter** to address his housing and other issues. Reuben also connected to the **IW Vocational Services Program** to try

to find work with the help of one-on-one counseling from IW vocational counselor Sammy Conteh.

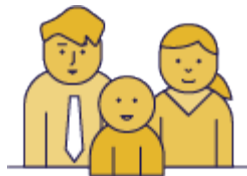
While working with Sammy, Reuben took IW's job-readiness course series to prepare for the job hunt. When he didn't find a job right away, he decided to take the class series again. "I put more into it the second time," he says. "Three weeks later, **I had a job.**"

Now, Reuben is a respected team member at **LA Fitness in Wheaton**, where he is a janitor. He has worked for LA Fitness for over a year. Site manager Andrea Medrano (*in photo*) says Reuben is a valued, reliable employee with a great work ethic. LA Fitness sales marketing director Ingrid Corrales says it seems fitting that Reuben found a home at a fitness center. "A gym is a place you can better yourself and reinvent yourself," she says. "You can't blame someone for what life has thrown at them. **Everybody has a story.**"



With help from Interfaith Works and LA Fitness, Reuben now has found stability. He has moved into an apartment and loves going to work each day. "It's great, man." He adds, "Thanks to everyone who helped."

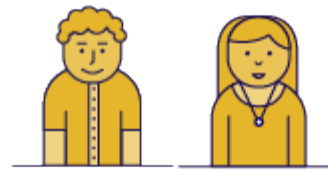
Interfaith Works By The Numbers



4,676

Families

received free clothing, backpacks, homegoods and essentials last year from the **IW Clothing**



156

Men & Women

found jobs last year after engaging with **IW's Vocational Services Program** for one-on-one

Center.

**counseling, coaching and
job-readiness classes.**

Get Ready for the Make Your Mark 5K/1K Run/Walk on Oct. 28



Sign up for our 2nd annual Make Your Mark Montgomery 5K/1K fun run/walk on Saturday, Oct. 28. Have fun -- dress up in a costume on race day! Or register as a "virtual runner" and support IW without even getting out of bed.

WHEN: Saturday, Oct. 28;
5K starts at 8:30AM
and 1K immediately after

WHERE: **IW Clothing Center**
751 Twinbrook Pkwy., Rockville

To sign up, go **here**

Sponsorships are available at many levels. For information, contact IW Development Director Suzanne Lofhjelm, 301.315.1096, slofhjelm@iworksmc.org.

Update on IW Women's Center

Thank you so much for supporting the residents of the Interfaith Works Women's Center and helping them get through a very difficult time during their temporary relocation to our Silver Spring facility at 8106 Georgia Avenue, due to a water system failure at their usual residence at 2 Taft Court in Rockville.

There is great news: Your donations to the Women's Center Rose Room **have provided us with sufficient resources** to meet our residents' needs during their relocation. Thank you for your tremendous generosity.

We look forward to repairs being completed, and will alert you when the residents have moved back to their home at the IW Women's Center so we can resume our regular meals

donation and activities schedule. We plan to hold a "Welcome Back" party to celebrate the women's return to their home at 2 Taft Court and will provide details on that as they become available. In the meantime, questions can be directed to Sabina Rai, srai@iworksmc.org.

Thank you to **Church of the Nazarene youth group** in Gaithersburg for dedicating a day of service to beautifying the Women's Center. Their hard work included painting, cleaning, organizing, decorating and beautifying the space with art and plants. You made a huge impact!



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