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INTERFAITH WORKS

connection

Monthly Bulletin from Interfaith Works

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## Side By Side

Earlier this month, I took part in a community service to honor the memory of 61 local homeless men and women who passed away this past year. The event was sponsored by the [Interagency Commission on Homelessness](#), which has launched a campaign -- "[Inside \(Not Outside\)](#)" -- dedicated to ending chronic homelessness in our community. It was a privilege to sit side by side with our community partners who work together every day to provide critical services to those in need, and to listen to the heartfelt remembrances about those we have lost. I drew some comfort from the fact that nearly all were sheltered, no longer living on the streets.



**They didn't have to go it alone, and neither do we.**

Many of those remembered were individuals who had passed through the doors of IW and

of one or more of our partners, as we worked collectively to provide housing and other help so desperately needed.

As I listened, I looked around at the people surrounding me. They represented the full breadth of our community: government, nonprofit, business, individuals and faith leaders. It was inspiring. It was hopeful. Together, **we are stronger**.

And once again, this strength in partnership came shining through just a few days ago, when a plumbing failure flooded a residential dorm room at the Interfaith Works Women's Center in Rockville. The impact of the leak made the facility uninhabitable for several days, and some of our residents lost nearly all of their personal effects due to damage from sewage.

So many in our community sprang into action to help, including [Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless](#) with cots, [Shepherd's Table](#) with many meals, Montgomery County DOT with buses to take the residents to our Silver Spring-based **IW Empowerment Center** for shelter, and many supporters who are [making financial donations](#) to ensure the IW Women's Center quickly can get back to normal with bedding and belongings restored. And of course, our staff worked long, hard hours to ensure our residents were sheltered and felt safe. **Interfaith Works Clothing Center** opened its doors after hours to provide clothing, including providing for residents heading to jobs and to job interviews.

As the climate we find ourselves in becomes more uncertain, we draw strength from our partnerships. This year more than ever, those partnerships have been crucial to our success as we opened three new centers, collaborating with [Montgomery County government](#), [Cornerstone Montgomery](#), [CCI Health & Wellness Services](#), [Community Ministries of Rockville](#), [MobileMed](#), [Hope Restored](#) and many more, including **you**. Our success so clearly depends upon the shared **support** of our faithful, committed community.

Thank you for being our dedicated partner. You are our strength.



**Shane Rock, CEO**

*PS: If you'd like to support the Interfaith Works Women's Center and other IW programs that prevent, stabilize and empower, you can do so [here](#).*

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**You Helped Us Do More!**



Interfaith Works' Do More 24 campaign was a big success, thanks to you! Your support coupled with the generous matching grant from The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation helped us raise **\$8,324** to support the life-changing work done by our Vocational Services Program. This investment will equip hundreds of Montgomery County residents with the tools they need to lift themselves out of poverty and make their dreams a reality.

If you wanted to donate but didn't get a chance to, you can do so [here](#).

## Interfaith Works By The Numbers



**213**

### Men & Women

have engaged with the IW Vocational Services Program so far this year;

**126**

have found new jobs with estimated annual earnings of more than

**\$2.1 million**



**2,500+**

### Families with Children

will receive free backpacks and school supplies this summer from the [Interfaith Works Clothing Center](#) so they can start the school year right

## Heroes Every Day



Earlier this month, IW vocational services counselor Daisy Garcete thought she was having a fairly normal day, but suddenly, it was anything but. After leaving the Interfaith Works vocational services office in Gaithersburg, she saw a crowd surrounding an elderly man lying unconscious in the street. He had no discernible pulse.

Calling on her CPR training and with guidance from 911 staff, Daisy provided life-saving chest compressions until emergency personnel arrived. Later, Daisy heard from an EMT friend that the man ultimately was revived, underwent heart surgery and is now on a long road to recovery.

We are proud of Daisy's quick action to save someone's life. Our staff are heroes every single day! You can learn about what an average day is like for Daisy [here](#).

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## Introducing: Interfaith Network of Montgomery County

Interfaith Works and the [Montgomery County Faith Community Advisory Council](#) are forming a new, public-private partnership, creating a new entity to assist Montgomery County faith communities in meeting residents' needs.

The new initiative is known as the Interfaith Network of Montgomery County and is a membership

organization. Learn [more here](#).



## Success Stories

Interfaith Works' programs work together to ensure that people facing complex challenges can find avenues to stability and empowerment.

Learn more from some of IW programs' recent success stories:

[James, who battled addiction for years and now has turned his life around;](#)  
and  
[Frances, who dreamed of a better life for herself and for her children.](#)

## Transitions

The transition of summer brings departures and some exciting arrivals at Interfaith Works.

We say farewell to Development Director Mary Jo Bean, who is moving on to work closer to home in Virginia. We wish Mary Jo all the best and thank her for her outstanding commitment and contributions to IW. We also bid farewell to departing board members **Gerard Etienne, Anna Gemolas and Joan Greenbaum**. Thank you for your dedicated service.



We are excited to announce that our new Development Director is **Suzanne Lofhjelm**, previously constituent services and community outreach specialist for US Sen. Chris Van Hollen. She brings a wealth of experience in community engagement, and also has supported IW for many years as a volunteer at several IW programs and as an elder with her congregation, St. Mark Presbyterian. You can reach her via email at: [slofhjelm@iworksmc.org](mailto:slofhjelm@iworksmc.org).

We also are excited to announce two additions to the Interfaith Works Board of Directors:

**Graciela ("Grace") Rivera-Oven** is a respected community activist

and marketing expert with extensive experience in advocacy. She is a member of the board of Strathmore Music Center.



**Brad Colton** manages Marriott International's Strategic Projects and Global Procurement. He has served on several boards and is a former board chair of Leadership Montgomery. Brad is active in his congregation, the Washington, DC, stake of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints.

## Gratitude Corner



Volunteers from [Montgomery County's Housing Opportunities Commission](#) and from [GlaxoSmithKline](#) (*above*) each dedicated a day of service to helping out at the Interfaith Works Clothing Center. Thank you!

Thank you to [BRAWS: Bringing Resources to Aid Women's Shelters](#), a group that assists women in the DC metro area, for donating hygiene items and other essentials to benefit women served at the Interfaith Works Empowerment Center.

### CLOTHING CENTER CLOSED FOURTH OF JULY

The IW Clothing Center, 751 Twinbrook Pkwy. in Rockville, will be closed on Tuesday, July 4, in celebration of the Independence Day holiday.

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