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INTERFAITH WORKS

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Monthly Bulletin from Interfaith Works

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## Seeing the Light

Sometimes in the work we do, it is hard to feel optimistic as we see our neighbors struggling to make it through difficult times. But spring is the season of new beginnings, and recent positive trends in our community are spurring feelings of hope and possibility.

Through the **"Inside/Not Outside" campaign**, in which Interfaith Works plays a significant role, more than 360 men and women who previously experienced extended periods of homelessness are now inside, safely housed. That is reason for good cheer.



In this same vein, the number of people experiencing homelessness, measured through a one-day snapshot census conducted in January 2018, dropped by 6 percent from 2017. The "Point In Time" survey counted 840 men, women and children, compared to 894 last year. This is a 14-percent drop over two years. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

Of course, undeniable challenges remain. The cost of housing in our expensive area continues to press down on individuals and families, forcing them to double and triple up, expend far too much of their incomes on housing, and sit on waiting lists to gain access to affordable housing. This will be an important issue in the coming years as we undergo transitions in elected leadership. How to respond to these challenges will be debated at the **County Executive candidate forum** on May 24, sponsored by Nonprofit Montgomery and hosted at the IW Clothing Center. See more details below; we hope to see you there.

As we work together to make our community better and stronger, let us look forward with a sense of positiveness. Make no mistake: you are an important reason why we are making progress. The support you provide through volunteering, donating and advocating

strengthens us every day. On behalf of those we serve, thank you!



Shane Rock  
CEO

*PS: You can find more details on the Point In Time report on homelessness in the DC metro area [here](#).*

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## Do More 24 Giving Campaign



Please help us provide brand-new backpacks filled with school supplies to 3,000 Montgomery County schoolchildren. IW is dedicating its Do More 24 fundraising campaign to this special effort. **Donations** are being accepted now through noon on May 18.

Your donation will help young students start the school year right, providing

more than just the physical tools necessary for learning and success. A new backpack will help instill the confidence young students need to face a new school year. For families living on the economic edge in Montgomery County, the cost of rent, food, and utilities precludes most from being able to purchase a backpack filled with school supplies for each child in the family. Your donation will help families preserve precious financial resources so they are able to afford life's essentials.

**Do More 24** is a 24-hour day of online giving, powered by United Way National Capital Area. Give to Interfaith Works' annual backpack campaign through Do More 24 and help drive the change we need, now more than ever. #DoMore24 #GiveWhereYouLive #GiveBack

**Give @ Do More 24**

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## Recognition



Interfaith Works' Rev. Dr. Rosetta Robinson, director of the Emergency Assistance Coalition, recently was recognized as a community "trailblazer" by the **Delta Sorority Alumnae Foundation**, who presented her with an Impact Award. Others recognized included Catherine Leggett, first lady of Montgomery County. "I am deeply humbled and honored to be recognized by the local African American sorority's foundation," Dr. Robinson said.

## On The Bus

*IW's Empowerment Center was the last stop on Leader Montgomery's "MoCo Insider" tour. The engaged group of visitors toured all IW programs at the Progress Place building in Silver Spring and saw the many partnerships at work in the building. Thank you for your visit!*



## Gratitude Corner

Many lives are enriched by our volunteers who give their time to make our community a caring place and we thank all of you for your service!

At the IW Women's Center, **Leslie Herrera** from **Journey's Crossing** coordinated a Zumba dance class taught by **Socrate Pierre**, which was a big hit with our residents. Brand-new sneakers, towels, and bottled water were provided to the participants.



A lot is happening at the IW Empowerment Center because of these terrific volunteers:

**Jamie Ferrugia** has been sharing an “Exploring the Power of Music” class every Monday for more than one year, showing his deep commitment to helping men and women experiencing homelessness find music that they enjoy;

- **Lane Tapley and Diane Martin** lead the Computer Skills class together, developing a structure that works for everyone interested in learning or practicing different skills;
- **Carlos Portillo and Nhan Ton** (*pictured above*) are Franciscan Friars who have been helping three days a week for almost an entire year of service; and
- **Mommy Matters** volunteer group led Bingo and also brought lunch to men and women living in IW Residences, a housing program for people who previously experienced homelessness.

We've been welcoming tremendously supportive volunteers at the IW Clothing Center, who help us inspect, pre-sort and sort gently-used donations, ensuring that people in need get access to free clothing and home goods. These include volunteers from: **Total Wine & More; Congregation Kehila Chadasha; students from Georgetown Visitation; the McLean School 8th and 11th graders; Zebra Technologies; and Ashton United Methodist Church.** We celebrated **Comcast Cares Day** at the Center with an enthusiastic crew of Comcast volunteers.

County Executive **Ike Leggett** stopped in to present a proclamation to the group (see *photo*).



**Noah Begines of Boy Scout Troop 447** in Rockville built two picnic tables and two seedling racks for his Eagle Scout project for the IWCC Community Garden! It took a collective 145 hours from him, the Troop and his family. A huge thank you to Noah!

## Coming Up

**JOIN US FOR A COUNTY EXECUTIVE CANDIDATES FORUM** sponsored by **Nonprofit Montgomery** forum at hosted at the Interfaith Works Clothing Center, 751 Twinbrook Pkwy. in Rockville on Thursday, May 24, 2018 from 6 - 8:30pm. County Executive candidates will share their vision for Montgomery County and address questions on jobs and workforce development, affordable housing, opportunity disparities, health and mental health care, safety net services, early care and education, and other topics relevant to the 500,000+ residents who receive services from nonprofit organizations. The event is open to the public, but seating is limited so registration is required. Contact [connect@nonprofitmoco.org](mailto:connect@nonprofitmoco.org) with questions. Get a flyer [here](#).

**SAVE THE DATE!** Join us for great Latin food and karaoke at **El Golfo Restaurant** in Silver Spring on Thursday, June 28, 6-9pm. Dine in or carry out to benefit IW programs - 20 percent of the proceeds will go to Interfaith Works. *(This is a rescheduled event originally scheduled for March 22).*



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