Episcopal Community Services of Maryland

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILDING LIVES

ANNUAL REPORT 2005–2006


Dear Friends,

The greatest honor associated with my job is bearing witness to the men, women, youth, and children in our programs who overcome the obstacles created by poverty, homelessness, the influence of drugs, and incarceration. Their success is no small accomplishment.

Our programs serve people faced with the daily struggles associated with unemployment, violence, and negative peer pressure. Any one of these struggles is difficult to overcome: imagine living with the complexities of several of these obstacles.

Despite these barriers, ECSM bears witness to the ability to change lives for the better. Each and every day, we provide the resources for people to move forward in their lives. Our programs offer real-life help: meals, tutoring, transportation, mentoring, and job skill development. Our approach is to meet each person where they are in their life, and move forward together. Our mission calls us to look into the hearts and not the labels attached to the people who are served through ECSM.

We have many people to thank for joining us on this journey. ECSM’s work is made possible by a dedicated Board of Directors, a nurturing staff, and caring volunteers. Parishes, individual donors, and foundations give generously in support of our mission to lift people out of desolation. Together, we work to break down the barriers of despair and isolation.

Please join me on this journey of faith, hope, and transformation. You will find that grace and compassion are lived in the daily works of Episcopal Community Services of Maryland.

Most Gratefully,

Jean Patterson Cushman
Executive Director
The children at The Ark have encountered many obstacles in their young lives: homelessness, poverty, and problems associated with their parent’s addictions. The Ark is Baltimore’s only preschool for homeless children. The Ark fills a critical void in the need for homeless children. There are an estimated 1,000–2,000 homeless preschool children in Baltimore. ECSM’s preschool often operates at its full capacity of 20 children. Like many other preschoolers, these children participate in a full day of enriching and fun activities geared to develop their language and social skills. They will have storytime, playground time, sing-along, lunch, and naptime. The Ark focuses on the individual needs of each child to help them achieve language and social skills. While the children are in preschool, their parents are helped by The Ark staff to obtain required information to register their children for kindergarten, to access vouchers for a community-based preschool when they leave the shelter, or to qualify for other funding assistance. At the end of the day, the children return to their homeless shelters. The next morning, they board the bus for another day at The Ark where they give us the gift of promise.
JERICHO PROGRAM

Annually, nearly 9,000 people are released from prisons into Maryland. For these people, reentering society can be an enormous challenge, because what happens in the fragile first year can literally make the difference between relapse and a bright, productive future. The challenge is so much greater than simply finding a steady job with a paycheck. During the past year, the Reentry and Cathedral House Reentry programs were redesigned and brought into The Jericho Program. ECSM’s Jericho prisoner reentry program helps its participants—200 non-violent men recently released from incarceration—build a firmer foundation for the life they have ahead of them. This might entail substance or alcohol abuse counseling, or a helping hand through the labyrinth of bureaucracy involved in a fresh start, job interview skills, resume writing techniques, or any number of the skills and services that Jericho’s experienced team offers its participants. Short-term solutions produce short-term results. Jericho clients are encouraged to train for the position that they want in life, to seek jobs that come with benefits packages, or even 401k plans, so that once their lives are back on
track, they stay on track. • In late 2005, the U.S. Department of Labor showed its belief in ECSM by awarding Jericho a generous grant that has allowed us to upscale our operation and help more men enroll and achieve successful reentry back into our society. • The success of The Jericho Program is based upon ECSM’s extensive community outreach and partnering with government and private agencies that can provide the best services to the men in our program. Providing life coaches is especially important to these men who lacked positive role models for much of their lives. An adult male coach serves as an important person in the life of a man reentering society. The coach is a confidant, friend, and person who can provide direction and encouragement in the areas of education, addiction recovery, family reunification, spiritual development, and job readiness. • Overcoming the barriers faced by men who were incarcerated helps them to reestablish themselves in life and reassume their role in the community, becoming better fathers, uncles, sons, friends, and role models. • Through Jericho, men learn to face the world head-on with appropriate work skills, a firm handshake, and a belief that they are responsible for their own well-being.

“Jericho didn’t just teach me that I could trust myself, and that I could look inside myself to start to make the right decisions. It also taught me that I could trust society—that there are people out there who are pulling for me and willing to give me a second chance.”
THE CLUB AT COLLINGTON SQUARE

Overlooking the green at Collington Square—just around the corner from the neighborhood school—is the “The Club” after-school program, summer camp, and safe haven for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The Club serves upwards of 100 youth a year, with a core group of 40 students who participate on a regular basis. *The youth at Collington Square are surrounded by challenges—some of them may have unstable home environments, they face peer pressure to try drugs or alcohol. The culture of violence and drug use that surrounds these bright young individuals is undeniable.* The Club at Collington Square is a place where these teenagers can apply themselves to their homework and pursue extracurricular activities under the guidance of our dedicated staff and volunteers. They are also able to keep fit and learn team skills by playing basketball and other sports on The Club’s indoor court. *But there’s more to The Club than this. There are field trips to the Maryland Science Center and Six Flags, and activities such as the Annual American History Bee. The kids at The Club prove time and time again that they will take the risks to overcome adversity, and ECSM is proud to help them do so.*
VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Volunteer involvement is critical to the success of ECSM’s programs. Volunteers serve as tutors, coaches, role models, advocates, and confidants. In 2005, there were 174 volunteers who generously gave 1,494 hours of their time to the children, youth, adults, and families who are part of ECSM.

ADOPTION SEARCH & REUNION

Sometimes, just picking up a phone can be the greatest challenge. Adoption Search & Reunion Director Carter Brigham receives telephone calls from adoptees, in all walks of life, looking for information about their birthparents. Sometimes finding this information can be a turnkey process, other times, it can be a quest that takes years of painstaking research. Brigham’s status as licensed Confidential Intermediary allows her to perform this invaluable task for people who were adopted through the Church Mission of Help program in the mid-twentieth century. And, like all the people we serve, everyone’s story is different. For some of the birthmothers, knowing that their child is alive and well is enough of a reassurance—but some may even want to take the tentative steps toward a reunion. ECSM’s Adoption Search & Reunion is a program with a goal of bringing healing and wholeness to its clients. We help overcome the hesitation and fears of uncertainty that people face when contacting us for the first time. We can connect people if and when they are finally ready to take the next step.
FISCAL YEAR 2006*

INCOME
Individuals $561,224
Foundations $194,033
Parishes $37,510
Special Events $33,991
Grants and Awards $310,442
Other Revenue $183,961
Total $1,321,161

EXPENSES
Programs $845,388
Fundraising $163,050
Management and Other $114,118
Total $1,122,556

*unaudited statement
$100,000 +
Department of Labor, PRI Initiative
Miss Dorothy McIlvain Scott

$50,000 – $99,999
The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

$15,000 – $49,999
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Miss Dorothy Scott, an ECSM benefactor and champion of The Club at Collington Square, and board member George S. Wills. Miss Scott is an ardent advocate for the children at The Club and passionate about education, history, and the arts.
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