

# **DORS Volunteer Services Annual Newsletter 2015**

July 2016

Dear Friends of DORS Volunteer Services,

I am most pleased to present the second Volunteer Services Annual Newsletter! This is an opportunity to update folks far and wide about what is going on in the world of Volunteer Services! The Office of Volunteer Services has made forging connections to the community a priority this year. Volunteer Services has built bridges with external organizations such as Youthworks, the Space Telescope Science Institute, and local theatre groups for mutual benefit and partnership. Volunteer Services also continues to support our own internal community by working with the WTC Work Readiness program to provide both seasonal and year-round volunteer opportunities.

I want to thank our DORS staff for their generosity this year. Whether it was a monetary donation to the Maryland Charity Campaign or Lee National Denim Day, the gift of life at one of our blood drives, or just giving time and attention to help a new volunteer get acclimated, DORS staff continue to impress with their compassion and kindness.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank all of the volunteers across the state for giving their time, energy, and passion into helping this agency achieve its mission.

2015 was great. Here's looking at you 2016!

Lucas Gerace  
DORS Volunteer Services Director

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### **Fiscal Observations**

Region 1: Western Maryland

- Volunteer Hours: 1,252
- Dollar amount contributed: \$33,065.32

Region 2: Southern Maryland & Lower Eastern Shore

- Volunteer Hours: 522
- Dollar amount contributed: \$13,786.02

Region 3: Baltimore City

- Volunteer Hours: 1,872
- Dollar amount contributed: \$49,439.52

Region 5: Central Maryland & Upper Eastern Shore

- Volunteer Hours: 787
- Dollar amount contributed: \$20,784.67

Region 6: Washington Metro

- Volunteer Hours: 1,792
- Dollar amount contributed: \$47,326.72

WTC & Headquarters

- Volunteer Hours: 3,625

- Dollar amount contributed: \$95,736.25

Total Volunteer Hours: 9,850

Valued at \$26.41 per hour (This calculated rate of pay is taken from [https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer\\_time](https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time) and adjusted individually for each state based upon data collected in 2014. Site was accessed on 2/13/16.)

Total dollars contributed for 2015: \$260,138.50

## **Charitable Projects**

The Office of Volunteer Services coordinates with various charities and organizations throughout the year to offer DORS employees a chance to give back to the community!

Lee National Denim Day: This year DORS, including DDS, raised \$1,413 for the American Cancer Society through Lee National Denim Day! This is more than \$400 above what was raised last year and we couldn't be more proud of all our giving staff who stepped up to make a donation!

American Red Cross: Volunteer Services hosted the Red Cross for onsite blood drives in January and July of 2015 during which we had 41 viable donors who were able to donate blood. According to the Red Cross website, each blood donation can save up to 3 lives! That means last summer DORS employees saved up to 123 lives!

Maryland Charity Campaign: DORS participated in the annual Maryland Charity Campaign. DORS raised \$22,272.50 of MSDE's total 2015 contribution of \$88,004. This money goes toward a myriad of charities and non-profits that help people in Maryland and throughout the world!

## **Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon**

The Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held in the fall this year and our delicious menu reflected that. Our guest speakers taught the volunteers about various communication styles and everyone got to have some fun with games, prizes, and good times with good friends!

Photo: Volunteers from Towson, Owings Mills, MD TAP, Baltimore City and beyond!

Photo: Scott Dennis, DORS Director of Business Support Services, welcoming everyone to the 2015 Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.

Photo: Learning about communication techniques with Improv games from guest speakers TallSmall Productions!

## **Youthworks**

Youthworks is an initiative of the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development. DORS partners with OED to provide Baltimore city youth with positive workplace experience so that they can try out a variety of careers to make more informed decisions when planning their futures.

The youth pictured above all completed their Youthworks jobs with aplomb and were awarded a Certificate of Achievement from MSDE to use as part of an application/reference when they apply to jobs in the future!

Jasmine Johnson worked in the mailroom over the summer. She learned all about sorting, processing and delivering the mail for a large building like the WTC!

Justin Green learned to process and fill requests for items from the supply room. He also learned valuable customer service skills that will help him out at all kinds of different jobs!

Shiaishea Wilfong worked in one of DORS field offices. She learned all kinds of valuable office skills like filing and organizing office space. She was described by the counselors as “invaluable”!

Jaelyn Sparrow assisted the Career Assessment Services department at WTC. She learned all sorts of administrative office skills such as copying and faxing, as well as how to keep an office organized and running properly!

Carroll Barnes IV did his job shadowing with maintenance. He followed several of DORS’ maintenance workers around and helped with moving classrooms, heavy lifting, and learned how to safely perform the job duties of a maintenance person in a large building!

### **McKenna’s Korner**

Photo: Newest volunteer, Ms. Marcia, always happy to greet staff and students with a smile and great customer service!

McKenna’s Korner has seen a lot of changes this year. We have brought on new volunteers to help keep the shop open for more hours so the students have more opportunity to buy small gifts, snacks, and necessities throughout the day! With the help of WTC’s Work Readiness program, McKenna’s Korner also continued the holiday gift wrapping service from last year. It is fast becoming a new tradition at WTC that everyone looks forward to!

Work Readiness 2 volunteers hard at work wrapping gifts!

Photo: Kai Lewis and Samantha Willey prepare a gift to be wrapped!

Photo: Christopher Bielut helps keep track of what’s wrapped and checks out the customers!

### **Nearly New Shop**

The Nearly New Shop had some exciting new projects this year! We received numerous donations and, with the help of Work Readiness 2 and some very enthusiastic DORS staff, the shop moved a lot of the older inventory to make room for new interview clothes!

We developed a great relationship with the Space Telescope Science Institute and received a plethora of new clothes perfect for interviews – jackets, suits, dress shirts and pants, shoes, belts, ties, and more!

Another exciting new venture was partnering with a local theatre group to donate some of the non-work-appropriate clothes to be used onstage as costumes!

Photo: Montrell Goodman, Jasmine Gray, Robert Holton, Michael Holt.

These students are very excited to look through the new clothes donated by the Space Telescope Science Institute! STSI hosted a clothing drive for the Nearly New Shop to encourage their employees to clean out their closets and bring us some really great dress clothes!

The theatre costumers have found a use for some of our less professional items, and who knows, perhaps they'll end up on the stage one day.

## **Volunteer Profile**

We spoke with Helen Mandriss and interviewed her about her experiences as DORS volunteer as well as asking her for insights and advice to future volunteers. Here's what she had to say...

Q. Good Afternoon, so how long have you been a volunteer with DORS?

A. Over 30 years!

Q. And how did you hear about the opportunity?

A. There was an ad on the radio. I then came in and interviewed with the chaplain.

Q. Did you always work at the gift shop?

A. No, I started at the library but then moved to the gift shop later. I like the gift shop better.

Q. What do you like about volunteering at McKenna's Korner and DORS?

A. The location, it's close to where I live. The people are great. I like being helpful and it's just a great thing to do.

Q. Do you have any advice for future volunteers?

A. You have to like the position you're volunteering at. You have to like what you do. The people here are great!

Q. Besides volunteering, what else do you like?

A. I like classical music. I used to go to the Lyric Opera House a lot when I was younger. I also enjoy mystery books now too.

## **Quotes**

"Volunteers have been extremely helpful in such a busy and high-paced office like Wheaton. The counselors have more than enough work to keep them busy. Wheaton was fortunate enough to be able to hire one of our volunteers to a contractual position – Support Service. It pays to have a good volunteer!!!"

– Patricia Simon, Wheaton

"Our volunteer is a wonderful asset to our unit. She is vivacious and is eager to help in any way possible. She is great with our consumers and staff. Because of her presence in our office, the staff is able to accomplish more in the way of providing services for our consumers."

– Akida Gopy, Baltimore

“[Our volunteer] is wonderful to work with. She always has a pleasant attitude, she is punctual, consistent and always ready to help in any way she can. We are fortunate to have her in the office.”

– Trina Ball, Eastern Baltimore County

## **Looking forward to seeing what 2016 will bring!**

### **Credits**

Larry Hogan, Governor

Guffrie M. Smith, Jr., President, Maryland State Board of Education

Jack R. Smith, Ph.D., Interim State Superintendent of Schools

Suzanne R. Page, Assistant State Superintendent in Rehabilitation Services

Maryland State Department of Education

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DORS Annual Report: [www.dors.maryland.gov/annualreport](http://www.dors.maryland.gov/annualreport)

DORS field and OBVS counselors are located in over 20 field offices throughout Maryland. To find the nearest one, contact DORS headquarters or visit [www.dors.maryland.gov](http://www.dors.maryland.gov)

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