

Housing Matters

Cornerstone Community Housing, Inc. has a two-fold mission. We are dedicated to helping men experiencing homelessness rebuild their lives and to changing attitudes toward homelessness through outreach and education.

Investing in Hope: How Your Donations Helped Joe Rebuild His Life

After Joe moved, Tasia reached out to him, to catch up and see how he is doing in life.

In short, he said, “*Life is Great!*”

At Earl's Place, Joe found the support and guidance he needed to overcome homelessness, drug abuse and alcoholism. He found a new path, one free from the pain of addiction, and he hasn't looked back since. The transformation is remarkable, and Joe's determination to stay on this positive trajectory is truly inspiring.

Through his journey, Joe also discovered the power of unity. He realized that the road to recovery isn't meant to be walked alone – it's about finding strength in the community that surrounds you.

Most importantly, Joe was able to rebuild his family bonds, something he thought was lost forever. Before Earl's Place, he felt his family had given up on him, but things have changed, and now he cherishes every moment spent with his mother and sister.

For Joe, this reunion is a gift beyond measure, especially as he supports his mother's needs in her elder care.

Reflecting on his experience, Joe passionately shared that Earl's Place was the turning point in his life – the best decision he ever made.



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead

The Public Justice Center’s John P. Sarbanes Courage Awards honors clients and others who exhibit tremendous courage in the face of injustice. One of our former residents, Darryl Evans, was an honoree in 2023.

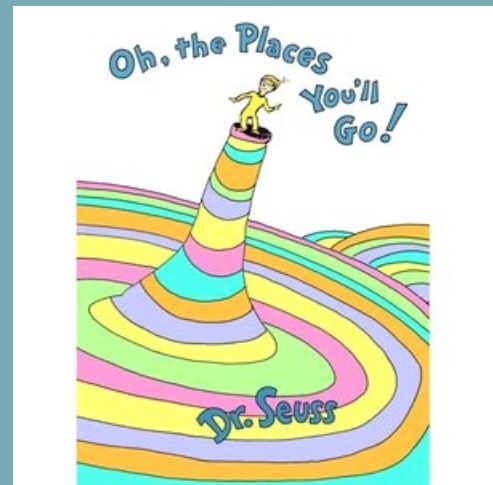
"Darryl Evans and Andre Simmons were shocked when their food and cash assistance benefits were stolen from their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card accounts by an unknown individual or group through skimming theft. Their trauma was compounded when they learned that the Department of Human Services (DHS) was not replacing stolen benefits for thousands of Marylanders like themselves who were the victims of theft.

This nationwide crisis has left the victims, including families with young children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, unable to afford food, rent, and utilities, driving them deeper into poverty.

Mr. Evans and Mr. Simmons showed immense courage in advocating for state legislation to require DHS to replace stolen food and cash assistance benefits for victims of EBT card theft and enhance security protections for the cards. Further, they overcame numerous obstacles to testify virtually at the bill hearing before the legislative committee. As a result of Mr. Evans’ and Mr. Simmons’ tireless advocacy for justice and of sharing their personal experiences with benefits theft, the legislation is now law. More than 26,000 households have been reimbursed for more than \$15 million in stolen benefits, and EBT cards now have new security features."

We are so proud of Darryl for using his voice to help raise awareness and make a change.

You can find more information and all honorees at publicjustice.org.



Charles, Greg, Jerome, Joe, Phil, Ricky, and Robert all have new homes.

At 71, and after 30 years, Jerome moved into his own apartment. Thanks to the awesome folks at Shark Ninja, he's now the proud owner of some nifty household gadgets. And a big shout-out to Mrs. Parks, who gifted him a comfy sofa and loveseat.


What's even nicer? He's got a former buddy living in the same senior housing complex, and they're ready to explore this new adventure together. Jerome's got a cozy home, sobriety on his side, and a bunch of new friends to meet.

Here's to his fantastic journey ahead!



Joe finished by saying “Ms. Sheila is the BEST! She [and the rest of the staff] helped me every step of the way.”

Earl's Place is more than just a place; it's a beacon of hope and restoration, helping individuals like Joe find their way back to life, love, and family. If you or someone you know is seeking the path to recovery, take Joe's advice: head to Earl's Place and let resilience guide the way.

P.S. Joe asked that this be added - *I love and appreciate your love because it is nothing but love at Earl's Place and I miss being there but I know that I have to make room for the ones that are coming next so that they may be blessed as I have. Thank you, Miss Sheila* 

THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Recently the headline in a New York Times article read: *Amid a Housing Crunch, Religious Groups Unlock Land to Build Homes*. The subtitle read: Faith-based organizations are unlocking their real estate to develop affordable housing, but they face challenges from reluctant local residents, wary lenders and strict zoning laws.

Unfortunately, CCH faced a similar challenge. DHCD Secretary Jacob R. Day recently noted, we are facing a massive affordability crisis. CCH had an opportunity to present a project to a community that would have been a step toward addressing this issue.

With a generous offer from a local church to partner on a project, we proposed converting the vacant second and third floors of a building, once a boarding house for immigrants, into nine studio apartments. These apartments would provide affordable housing to employed, low-income individuals who completed Earl's Place.

Last August, we presented our proposal to the local community association, seeking their support. Unfortunately, due to a lack of quorum in subsequent meetings the vote was delayed and misinformation began to spread. We worked to clarify that this project is not a transition house for ex-convicts, as incorrectly suggested, but rather a permanent housing solution for individuals working to reintegrate into society after completing our program.

Despite our efforts to engage in transparent communication, there were challenges. Some community members misinformed about the screening process and the nature of the project, expressed unwarranted concerns. It's disheartening to see the vitriol directed at individuals who, will be drug and alcohol-free, working, and committed to being positive, productive citizens. Unfortunately in January the community voted against the project.

Without community support, there would be no state or city funding for the project. Regrettably, low-income constituents bear the brunt of such decisions. We will continue to work to address concerns, dispel misconceptions, and find common ground for the betterment of our city and the men.

SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT

JB had lots to smile about, but one thing was holding him back. His teeth.

He came to Earl's Place about a year ago with a plan. He wanted to return to school and get an office job to pursue an administrative career. He is enrolled in Baltimore County Community College working on a degree in computer technology.

Working with the University of Maryland Dental School he now has dentures and a big smile. Next, a job. No holding this young man back any more.

Thanks to a grant from the Baltimore Rotary Foundation two others are looking forward to new teeth as well.



We are looking for passionate people to join our Board of Directors. Maybe you?

Board members are actively involved in organizational governance, and are expected to attend board meetings, participate in at least one board committee, and make a personal financial contribution.

Based on our recent review of board skills, connections, and experiences among current Board members, we are seeking new board members who will help broaden our current board. We especially encourage applications from people with human resource, legal, marketing/ media expertise, and strategic planning.

The Nominating Committee is accepting applications and those interested in board service can find an application at <https://cchbaltimore.org/careers/volunteering-for-the-board/>

Just want to get your feet wet? We are also looking for individuals to work with Sheila on the annual Opening Doors planning committee.

For more information or if you have questions, contact Sheila at 410-522-0225 or Sheila@cchbaltimore.org.



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