



RAISING UP

The good news at Helping Up Mission



Peer Recovery Academy
see page 2 for more

“Before I came to HUM, I was homeless and begging for help.”



Opiew Heard the Music

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Dan Stoltzfus' Monthly Update **2**
- Photo Story **2**
- Focus on Recovery **3**
- Key Accomplishments **4**

Opiew, who goes by Opiew, does not know how old he is. “I was born in the woods in a village in the African country of Sudan. We did not get born into a hospital with official records,” recalls Opiew. “I had six brothers, three of whom have passed, and my twin was eaten by a crocodile at age 3. Sudan was amid a civil war and my family moved us to Ethiopia. I was then sent to Kenya to go to school we were refugees. In 2014, I came to the United States to further my education. The United Nations wanted me to go to a good school and I wanted to help my parents by being the first family member to become educated.”

“I finally got a job that I liked working in, which was landscaping. Things were going pretty well. People in my neighborhood noticed that I was doing good. At first, they became my friends, but soon they had stolen everything that I worked so hard for. It was during this time that they first introduced me to alcohol and drugs. There were a lot of parties at my house. I felt a part of the community and then they turned on me and got me into trouble. When they stopped coming around, I knew that I was now useless to them. I lost my landscaping job when I was too drunk to call in and three months later, I was evicted from my apartment.”

“I flew to New York, and then immediately continued to Baltimore. The government set me up with a one-bedroom apartment, a green card, and helped me collect food benefits. I enrolled at Baltimore Community College to study English because the language barrier was a hindrance to my job seeking. Unfortunately, college did not work out, so I dropped out and got a job at the local Amazon supply center. My coworkers bullied me for my dialect and my desire to work hard, which was too much to manage, so I quit. I got another job working part time at Maryland Live Casino, but I could not pay my bills.”

“From 2018 until 2023 I was homeless. I lived under a bridge in Dundalk. It was a mess. There were so many other people dealing with homelessness and addiction there. Eventually, I discovered a church in Dundalk that I could sleep behind. I hid there for safety. One night it was so cold, that the pastor of the church provided me with four blankets. I put two on the ground and pulled the other two over me. Even though the temperatures were freezing, the alcohol warmed me up. During the hot days of summer, the mosquitoes would get really bad. I still had my food stamps, so I was

> continued on page 3



NOW IT'S UP TO US

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NOW IT'S UP TO US Daniel's Monthly Update

Dear HUM Family,

The complexity of need and difficult life circumstances coming through the doors every day at Helping Up Mission (HUM) never ceases to amaze me. Stories like Opie's who spent nearly five years on the street and experienced years of trauma. But those complexities of need are truly matched by something greater—the hope, compassionate care, and creative problem-solving efforts of our HUM team.

Opie's story, which continues today, and the interaction of our dedicated, compassionate staff with Darrell that I experienced first-hand, demonstrates how our entire HUM community works proactively to remove barriers to recovery. These simple acts of compassionate care confer dignity and hope on those we serve.

When you support Helping Up Mission, you empower this creative, compassionate problem solving on behalf of those we serve. But it is even so much more than problem solving...one of my lifelong mentors has often noted that those battling addiction and poverty are not just a problem to be solved—they are a portal to the heart of God.

You see, we believe at HUM that when we serve those in need, we are changed in the process. That reality is consistent with Scripture in both the Old and New Testaments (Isaiah 58:6-12 and Matthew 25:34-40). It is the reason HUM exists—to offer hope and transformation, we serve those in need and it is an opportunity for transformation for all involved.

If you choose to support HUM with your time, talents, and resources—you join this circle of hope and transformation. Thanks for standing with us and I truly hope and pray that these stories inspire you to see the power of an investment in help for our community of need to become a community of hope.

Serving with you,

Follow @helpingup on TikTok to see our women's choir Voices of Praise!

Peer Recovery Academy

Shawn Colvin, Treatment Services Manager, has been down this road before. A 2012 graduate of HUM's Spiritual Recovery Program, Shawn has experienced and excelled in providing the knowledge and leadership to help other men transform their lives. The fourteen members of this week's class are working to accrue enough credits to qualify for the Maryland Certified Peer Recovery Specialist Exam. "This program has been the catalyst to set a solid foundation for self-discovery and growth and prosperity in my career and my way of living," explained Shawn. Thank you, Maryland Office of Overdose Response, for making this training possible!



not hungry, but it could not get worse... until it did. My wallet was stolen while I was sleeping, and I did not know where to go to be safe. I did not know how I was going to get a job without my identification."

"Begging people for help was the worst, and the people out there were abusive. One day, I was sitting at a bus stop, and I heard music. I would later find out that the people playing the music were members of Helping Up Mission's (HUM) Mobile Street Outreach team. They were out on the streets talking to people and trying to help others like me. I met Ramon Croussett Jr., Outreach Case Manager, and he said, "We are here to help ALL people that need to change their lives." To do that, we needed to be clean in the program. It was a choice that we needed to make."

"Over the next month, I would visit the Outreach team at the bus every Saturday, sometimes on Friday. One day, I was sleeping on a bench in the park, and they woke me up with water and food. At midnight, the day before I said "yes", I was talking to myself about what I was going to do. I knew that I had to stop drinking alcohol. In the morning, I called Ramon at 10am and he asked me if I was serious about changing my life and I said yes. Ten minutes later, an Uber driver showed up to drive me to HUM."

"I met George Enriquez, Program Intake Coordinator, and I smelled so bad that he sprayed deodorant on me. They said, "Don't worry, be quiet, and don't be scared." They took me to the Tuerk House for a 28-day detox. I was dirty, it was the

first shower that I had in almost half a year. When the 28 days were over, I knew that I had to go to HUM."

"I do not want to lose the hope that HUM has given me. I am starting to trust myself and I know that I do not want to keep repeating what got me here. When I leave HUM, I will still be connected to this place. Before I came to HUM, I was homeless and begging for help. I never would have made it here without God putting me on that plane from Africa. I am blessed; without Him, I would not have survived on the streets. I lost a lot of friends on the streets. Since coming to HUM, I have hope that I can change my life, and my battles are not a permanent condition. Thank You.

To read more recovery stories, visit helpingupmission.org/opie

Focus on Recovery – George Enriquez Program Coordinator Intake



Hope is Here

Opie was brought to intake, and I first noticed the sadness in his face. Even though I wasn't sure that he could speak English, he answered my questions honestly. He was just off of the Baltimore streets and unclean. I reached into my drawer and pulled out some Brut 33, and he asked me if he could have some. I told him that it was for him! At first, he wouldn't look me in the eyes, and he kept his head down. I told him "there is a new life here for him and that God had a plan. He sent you to HUM for a reason." His eyes watered, and that's when he looked at me. I told Opie to stop worrying about the outside and let us focus on the inside and your new beginnings called home.

We serve between 10 to 12 men per week in intake. Most of the men we serve come to us in bad shape. On one cold November day, our Mobile Street Outreach team brought in a gentleman in a wheelchair. He was given a bed in Overnight Guest Services, and three hours

later, I went downstairs to check on our guest.

Oh my god, I was sad. He could not walk. He could not get up. I asked him if he was hungry, and he said yes. I asked him if he wanted to shower, and I realized the only way to do this was if I got in the shower with him. I got into the shower with my clothes and bathed him. The shower lasted an hour and a half. I asked him what his first name was so I would know who he really was. He whispered, "Darrell." I cleaned his wounds, washed his hair, dried him off, got him fully clothed, and fed him hot food.

I felt that I needed to do this, which in return made me feel closer to God, His Spirit leading me. The next morning, we fed Darrell breakfast, let him rest, and then decided that he needed more medical care than HUM could provide and took him to the hospital. Yet, we could provide hope.

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matt. 25:40)

DOUBLE your impact today!

Don't wait to make 2X the difference for people battling homelessness and despair thanks to a generous \$190,272 Matching Challenge!

Today you can make your impact go even further for those in desperate need here in Greater Baltimore.

We've received a generous **\$190,272 Matching Challenge** from a small group of people who share your compassion for hurting people in our community. And now, they're challenging YOU and our entire family of supporters to help match it.

By giving now, your gift will DOUBLE in impact!

That means you'll bring 2X the help to men and women longing to recover from homelessness and addiction.

\$100 becomes \$200 in impact

This opportunity is truly a blessing! More importantly, it couldn't have come at a better time...

Right now, we're serving 20 expectant and new moms at our Center for Women & Children and 14 moms with babies. And our men's facility is completely full, every night. But we must continue to do more – especially through our Street Outreach rescue services.

Any amount you can give is greatly appreciated and will double in impact to offer:

2X the nourishing meals

2X the nights of shelter

2X the counseling, education, and spiritual recovery

The Matching Gift Challenge ends Feb. 29.

Friend, please take a moment to give now: <http://www.helpingupmission.org/challenge>.



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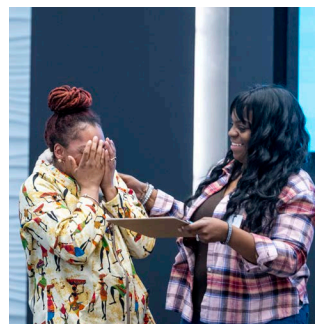
Key Accomplishments



You have helped so many people during 2023. Our gratitude runs deep as we share the measurables in your compassion and impact in helping others who are experiencing homelessness, addiction, and poverty.

Because of you:

- 118 men and women graduated our Spiritual Recovery Programs.
- 2,598 men, women, and children were served across all our programs.
- 17 infants and toddlers were served with love thanks to our CAP program.
- 1,823 men and women were able to receive medical assistance at our On-Site Greater Baltimore Medical Center clinic.
- 41 clients were given the ability to see clearly with new eyeglasses.
- 4 students worked hard and earned their Maryland High School Diploma.
- 17 people have passed Basic Computer Literacy
- 104 clients entered the workforce.
- The average placement wage earned is \$17.58, with 61% earning benefits.
- 7,478 men and women were served food, hygiene kits, and provided case management through our Mobile Street Outreach program.
- 7,599 hours of assistance were provided by you and fellow outstanding volunteers.



Our Mission

Helping Up Mission provides hope to people experiencing homelessness, poverty or addiction by meeting their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs.

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