

**MORE
THAN**
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RAISING UP

THE GOOD NEWS OF HELPING UP MISSION



Becoming the Dad He Never Had

“Before I came to Helping Up Mission (HUM), I was in and out of jail, living a reckless life,” says Donte, 47 (pictured left), honestly. “I was born and raised in Baltimore City. As a child, my dad wasn’t in my life except for bits and pieces. With no real father figure in my life, I ended up in prison at age 16 – as an adult.”

“After spending 15 years in prison, I had to grow up quick.” Donte’s struggles continued until 2011, when the birth of his son, Daelyn, sparked something new. “I started looking at my life differently. I had so many demons that I felt like I was going through a second childhood, becoming an adult all over again. I wanted our relationship to be better than my relationship with my dad. My dad was never there for my birthday. Daelyn was born the week after Christmas – I made sure that there was a difference between celebrating Christmas and celebrating his birthday.”

While not always physically present, Donte made his son a priority. “Throughout the years, when I was not able to be with my son physically, I made

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communicating with him my top priority. Every chance I get, I spoil him. I jump hoops to make things happen for Daelyn as much as I can. If that means getting a side hustle (part-time job), all I need to do is call my cousin and he's got something for me lined up. I don't fault my dad for the way he lived. He did what he did."

"Most importantly, I hope to move back to Maryland's Eastern Shore so I can be the dad my son deserves."

In 2024, after returning from another sentence in prison, Donte moved in with his sister, working and helping around the house. "I was smoking marijuana and drinking heavily with my cousin. One thing led to another and I ended up trying "Molly" (MDMA). At first, it was casual use, but then I got greedy and bought a lot of it. Turns out it was laced with fentanyl. At one point, I could control my high, but this was different – I lost control." That's when his cousin stepped in. "Knowing how hard I was working, my cousin Travis came up to me and said, 'Look man, you don't have to keep doing things you don't want to do. Come to Helping Up Mission (HUM) with me!' It took me a few weeks to make the decision, but I walked through HUM's doors."

"Since coming to HUM, my mind has cleared. I have had a lifetime of charges expunged. I got a job giving back by helping someone else. I am finally healthy, and I am back to being myself. Most importantly, one day I hope to move back to Maryland's Eastern Shore so I can be the dad my son deserves."

"Thank you to everyone who has made my journey possible. I appreciate all that you do. Thank you!!"



Hope Restored. Lives Rebuilt.

Daniel's Monthly Update

Dear HUM Family,

As we celebrate Father's Day, it is a joy to share Donte's story with you and his goal to "be the Dad his son deserves." That kind of love inspires change, and Donte is truly taking the steps to be that change at Helping Up Mission (HUM). It is a story we often see at HUM—a man or women stepping out to change the cycle of absentee parenthood due to addiction.

Thanks to your support, service and prayers, HUM is here to be a place of recovery and transformation. A place where parents can turn their focus to their children rather than addiction, and to work to rebuild relationships.

At HUM, we believe God is working as our Higher Power to turn the focus of fathers back to their children and families are being restored as a result.

Serving with you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Daniel Stoltzfus". The signature is fluid and cursive.

K. Daniel Stoltzfus, CEO
Helping Up Mission

"He will turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers..."

Malachi 4:5a

Focus on Recovery

Mike Rallo – Director of Spiritual Life

In the Old Testament book of Exodus, scripture says the sins of the father are passed down through generations—a pattern that continues until someone chooses to break it.

Donte, our feature story this month, is breaking the pattern.

“It was sad for me to not have a father in my life,” Donte recalled. “I understand my father had his own issues and made his decisions, but I was determined not to make the same mistakes with my son.”

This Father’s Day is extra-special for Donte. While he hasn’t always been present, he’s made



it a point to keep the connection with his son, Daelyn, strong.

“The pattern is hard to break—I spent years doing unhealthy things. But now I’m focused on being present. I enjoy it. I’m blessed to be the father I know I can be.

Stillness at the Summit

A crisp morning greeted the Helping UP Mission Trail Team on Sugarloaf Mountain. The views stretched for miles—panoramic landscapes, bright blue skies, and quiet moments of reflection. Arnel, who had never been outdoors, enjoyed the quiet time which changed his perspective on life and recovery. Sometimes the most meaningful journeys require no footsteps at all—just presence. Sugarloaf reminded us that stillness can be its own kind of summit.





Urgently Needed

Our Mission urgently needs donations of hygiene items and toiletries to support those in our care! Simple items like deodorant, foot powder, shampoo, conditioner and lotion can have a profound impact on someone's dignity and well-being. Together, we can ensure that everyone has access to basic hygiene necessities. Please consider donating today and help us spread hope and care in our community!

To Donate Urgent Needs
[helpingupmission.org/
ways-to-give/donate-goods](https://helpingupmission.org/ways-to-give/donate-goods)



Where Are They Now: Jeremy D., Class of 2015

In 2014, Jeremy was trapped in addiction, struggling with heroin and despair. "I found sobriety first, then hope," he recalls. While in recovery at HUM, Jeremy completed the JARC program and earned his CNC machinist license—landing a job immediately.



That opportunity reignited a long-buried passion for engineering. "I always had an engineer heart inside me," he said. With growing experience and a desire to stay close to family, Jeremy launched his own business: **CRITICAL DIMENSIONS**, a CNC machine parts manufacturer.

Now married with children, he juggles part-time jobs and business development. "HUM gave me my life back," he says. "Now I want to make the most of it—and help as many people as possible."

Happy Fathers Day

 **Helping Up
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helpingupmission.org

Our Mission

To transform the lives of and restore hope to those suffering from addiction and poverty by harnessing the power of faith, science, and community.


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