

PLASE & POINT

Winter 2009-2010

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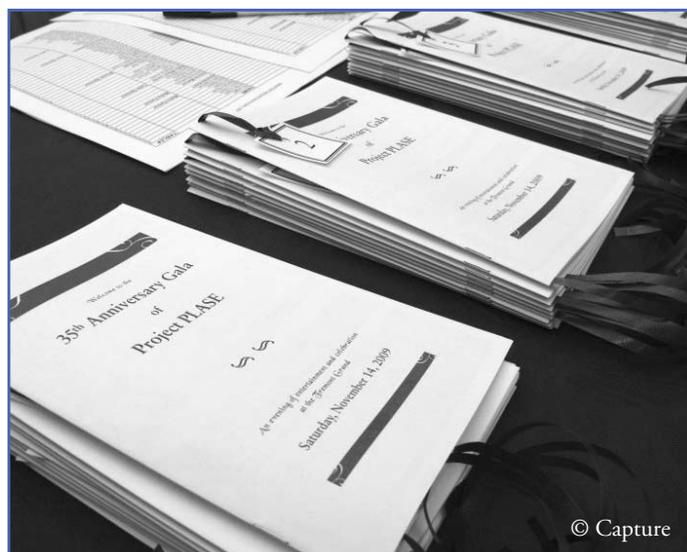
PLASE TURNS 35!

On November 14th, 2009, after months of planning and anticipation, over 100 guests and volunteers joined us in celebrating Project PLASE's rich history and abundant accomplishments at our 35th Anniversary Gala. Long time supporters, staff members, founders and community representatives arrived in style at the Tremont Grand, eager to partake in this significant milestone for homeless services in Baltimore. Greeted by the smooth jazz of the **Drew Davidzen Quartet**, they eased into the evening with hors d'oeuvres and cocktails while perusing the 40+ silent auction items on display.

Dr. Branch, PLASE's Board President and emcee for the evening, welcomed PLASE supporters. Before guests dived into dinner, **Commissioner Mel Hotz**, a representative from the Governor's Office, presented Executive Director and founder **Mary C. Slicher** with a citation in recognition of the "passion, dedication and leadership she has demonstrated in the field of housing and homeless services." In accepting the governor's citation, Ms. Slicher recommitted herself and Project PLASE to achieving the founders' 35 year old dream of a Baltimore where every single citizen has access to community resources and a decent place to live.

Guest speaker and national literacy advocate **John Corcoran** echoed these sentiments as he touched on the connection between illiteracy, education and homelessness. A genuine, endearing and inspiring speaker, Mr. Corcoran not only shared his experience as an

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© Capture



Founders Greg Hunter and Mary C. Slicher at the Gala

Guest speaker, John Corcoran



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Our Mission

Project PLASE, Inc. addresses homelessness by providing transitional housing, permanent housing and supportive services to homeless adults. We serve the most vulnerable and underserved, including persons with mental illness, HIV/AIDS, addiction, developmental disabilities and ex-offenders.

We treat, restore and rehabilitate the whole person. We empower each individual to function at the highest level possible.

Our Vision

To eliminate homelessness.



Use **Designation Code 8141** for the Combined Federal Campaign and Maryland Charity Campaign. Use **Designation Code 141** for United Way of Central Maryland Campaign.

SHELTER + CARE = SUCCESS

This winter, 35 individuals, including families with children, moved into affordable, long-term housing through Project PLASE's Shelter Plus Care Program (S+C). S+C provides rental assistance for homeless persons with disabilities in connection with supportive case management. **Erica Stanley**, the S+C Manager, is a passionate advocate for the homeless and has worked around the clock since October 2009 to get folks moved into their new homes. "I love my job," she says, "it's a tough job but it's worth it when someone who is homeless gets their own place—you can see

their joy." One of the happiest S+C stories was the successful move into permanent housing for a family with two young children who had become homeless due to a house fire. S+C is effective in part because it offers a variety of housing choices through partnerships with private businesses and individual landlords. In particular, Project PLASE wants to thank **Eric Chapman Enterprises, Beverly Gordon, Samester Apartments, Park Raven Apartments, and Robert Paul** for helping to make our clients' dreams of stable housing come true!

PLASE TURNS 35! (CONTINUED FROM COVER PAGE)

individual struggling to overcome illiteracy and discrimination, but also took the time to meet and exchange stories with our GED Class earlier that day.

As the evening came to a close, laughter, music and generosity flowed throughout the Tremont's exquisite Marble Room. PLASE supporters enjoyed an evening of celebration, reflection back over the past three and a half decades and actively helped PLASE reach our stated goals of raising \$10,000 and attracting new volunteers, sponsors and donors. We particularly thank our Gala Sponsors for making our 35th Anniversary Gala such a success: **KCI Technologies as our Gold Sponsor, DEX Imaging and AFN&W as our Silver Sponsors and RJP and Bon Secours as our Bronze Sponsors.**

The overarching sentiments at the gala can be summed up by the comments of two of our guests: "Wonderful people doing a great work" and "Here's to another 35 years!"

To see pictures from the event, visit our website at www.projectplase.org.



Executive Director, Mary Slicher speaking at PLASE's 35th Anniversary Gala

CLIENT ADVOCACY AND ACTIVITIES



Project PLASE Clients Engaged in Advocacy

The Client Advisory Board (CAB) at Project PLASE is a group dedicated to giving clients a greater representation within our organization. The CAB has been in existence here since the 1990s in many forms. Currently two of Project PLASE's year long volunteers are helping to facilitate the group. With volunteers' help and the clients' enthusiasm, the CAB is working on a variety of events within Project PLASE and on advocacy for the homeless outside of Project PLASE. Look for CAB members at the Homeless Persons Lobby Day in Annapolis on February 25th!

Left Photograph: CAB member Carlton, volunteering at the 2009 client holiday party

In Their Own Voice

On the evening of December 4, **Dorothy**, a Project PLASE client and member of the GED Class, stood bravely in front of a crowd of university students from the Towson Hillel Student Organization and shared her experience with overcoming homelessness after being on the streets for 17 years. "Anybody can become homeless," she said as she addressed the room, "and it is important that you all know about it." Speaking events like this one have given current and former Project PLASE clients the opportunity to educate the community about homelessness in their own voice. Project PLASE is working to raise greater awareness of the plight of the homeless by engaging people with real life success stories. If you are a current or former client and would like to speak at a community event or are connected to a group that is interested in having someone come out to speak, please contact the Community Project Coordinator at 410-837-1400 x 36.

Right Photograph: Speaking at events engages our clients and the community



PLASE EVENT UPDATES

Brunching Out

Rapidly becoming a fixture on the New Year's calendar, **Dr Branch's New Year's Day Brunch** is a fabulous and festive occasion, drawing a wide cross section of people from across Baltimore. For the last several years, Dr Branch, Chairman of the Board at Project PLASE has hosted a sumptuous brunch at his home and invited donations to PLASE. This year, a continuous stream of generous (and hungry!) visitors attended, donating over \$3,500 for PLASE. Mary Slicher said about Dr Branch: "He is such a good soul and a wonderful cook!" Unfortunately, you will have to wait until January 1st, 2011 to participate in this event again!

Check our website
for upcoming events...

SUPER BOWL RAFFLE

PURSES FOR PLASE
AT THE FLOWER MART

AND MORE!

www.projectplase.org

OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS

Food Fridays with the Swensens

For over 10 years, **Hilma and Bob Swensen** have been delivering produce, breads, desserts and other goods to Project PLASE's men's and women's facilities on North Avenue. Each Friday afternoon they pull up in a white van to drop off the donated or reduced sale items that they've collected at Safeway, 7-11 or the Food Lion in Cockeysville. Hilma and Bob have never missed a Friday "Food Run" except for the rare occasion that extremely icy conditions locked their van in the driveway, and staff members say they always show up with the same sunny dispositions. By taking otherwise thrown out food and delivering it to organizations, communities and individuals in need, the Swensens have truly improved the lives of many Baltimore residents. Project PLASE would like to extend a special thank you to Hilma and Bob for their dedication and for the charitable services they have provided to our clients for all these years.



Hilma and Bob delivering bread and cheer to our men's facility

To find out how the Swensens got started and how you can help, see the full story online!

Smiley Eilee



Eilee working hard for PLASE

This fall, Project PLASE was fortunate to have **Ms. Eilee Boylan** on board as an experienced and dedicated fundraising volunteer. She single-handedly organized our Gala Silent Auction while bringing spunk and a drive for self improvement to our office environment. We can't wait to see her back at PLASE this year!

To find out more about volunteering at PLASE, write to volunteer@projectplase.org or visit us online www.projectplase.org.

ENGAGING COMMUNITY

PLASE Educates the Community about Homelessness in our City

Project PLASE's philosophy is to advocate with and for the homeless on many levels, ranging from direct service to state politics, which ultimately helps our clients access and develop resources in the community. To further this goal, PLASE hired **Andrea Sledd**, an AmeriCorps*VISTA, to focus on and expand our community engagement activities. Through Andrea's work, PLASE has participated in numerous community and advocacy events, including Transgender Day of Remembrance and Homeless Persons Memorial Day. Additionally, Project PLASE organized a small panel about legislative issues that affect access to housing for the Coalition for Homeless Children and Families and put out information to the media about the plight of homeless veterans in honor of Veterans' Day. Project PLASE will be taking part in Homeless Persons' Lobby Day, organized by Health Care for the Homeless, this February. These activities help connect PLASE to the work of other advocates in Baltimore. Through community engagement, PLASE is pursuing change on a larger scale.

Maryland, Can You Hear Me, Now?

On a chilly Saturday evening in December, Project PLASE staff and volunteers participated in the winter pledge drive at the MPT studios in Owings Mills. MPT rewarded PLASE by airing a live interview with **Mary Slicher** and displaying the PLASE logo to thousands of homes in Maryland. They liked us so much, they have invited us back! Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator at 410-837-1400 x 29 if you would like to join PLASE at MPT next time.

Right Photograph: Staff and volunteers at the MPT event



GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING

Consider making a recurring gift to PLASE. With one click of the mouse, your support will sustain both our work and mission to serve Baltimore's most vulnerable homeless citizens. Just visit our website and click **DONATE NOW!** Thank you.

KEY STAFF

Mary C. Slicher
Executive Director

Scott Wolgamuth
Controller

Bonita Rohr
Director of
Transitional Housing

Dr. Nancy Connor
Director of Programs

Andy Dubosky
Director of
Communications
and Development

BOARD OFFICERS

Gregory W. Branch, M.D.
President

Betty Wilson-Jones
Vice-President

Chuck Phillips
Secretary



Project PLASE is
a nonprofit you can trust



ONE DOOR CLOSES, ANOTHER ONE OPENS!

After a quarter century of service, Project PLASE closed the doors to 2031 St. Paul Street transitional housing facility/thrift store. The staff and 14 residents of the building were relocated to the newly renovated 1814 Maryland Avenue facility. While folks at Project PLASE felt nostalgic about the move, everyone was excited about the upgraded housing units. In 2001, the

Maryland Avenue facility opened to provide both transitional and permanent housing options. Through the renovations just completed, the facility will now offer transitional housing for 26 persons who are medically fragile and veterans as well as permanent housing for ten single adults.



Nakita Quinn, Laurence Chapman and Erica Stanley each received the Sojourner Douglass “Pillar of the Community” award in December, 2009. We at Project PLASE are honored to employ and pleased to recognize the dedication, expertise and passion for serving others that these three staff members exemplify both in their personal and professional lives.

In October 2009, Executive Director and founder **Mary C. Slicher** received the Enoch Pratt Community Award, established by the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, which honors ‘Beacons of hope in Baltimore and the World’. A number of PLASE staff attended the awards dinner to support Ms. Slicher as well as to enjoy the music of Tao Seeger, who accepted a lifetime achievement award on behalf his grandfather, social justice advocate & music legend Pete Seeger.

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