



VITA Tax Assistance Has Another Successful Season

Our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program will continue to run through October for those who filed for an extension, but as of the April 18 deadline, we have processed most of the returns we received for this tax season. We are happy to report that the program has exceeded its goal of serving 1550 households with tax preparation. As of June 1, we have served 1762 households, and we're still going!

VITA helped these households claim \$600,899 in Earned Income Tax Credit and **\$1,631,713** in tax refunds without having to pay anyone to do their taxes!

Since this program is mostly staffed by volunteers, we held a luncheon in appreciation for their dedication and hard work. Not pictured here is VITA program director, Odetta Evans.



Weatherization Expansion: Contractors Needed

SHORE UP's Weatherization Assistance Program is expanding to cover all nine counties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and as a result, we are seeking contractors to assist in completing the work. Information sessions are held monthly for contractors who are interested in working with the program.

The Weatherization Assistance Program provides energy efficiency solutions to help lower utility costs and make homes more comfortable. Interested parties should contact Dorrence Reid at dreid@shoreup.org or call 410-749-1142, ext. 1004.

Our New Board Chair

Rev. Dr. Craig Mathies is the new Chairman of the Board of Directors at SHORE UP! He has lived on the Shore for over 60 years, and has served on our Board for approximately 12 years. Rev. Dr. Mathies is an active community advocate, serving as a Somerset County Commissioner and as a Board member for Choptank Electric Cooperative, Somerset County's Local Management Board, and the Watchmen with Once Voice Ministerial Alliance. He is also the pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Cambridge.



Rev. Dr. Mathies is a staunch advocate of social justice, protecting vulnerable people from being taken advantage of, making sure individuals can get the services they need, and fighting discrimination.

We welcome Rev. Dr. Mathies in his new Board position and look forward to his leadership!

Rental Assistance Officially Over

Last month, SHORE UP's participation in the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) for Wicomico County came to an end as the county informed us that all funds designated for rental assistance have been expended. From the time that SHORE UP began as an ERAP provider in June 2021 until the end of the program, we served 1545 households and provided them with \$11,223,253 in assistance for rent payments, security deposits, and utility payments.

When ERAP reopened for three weeks in December 2022, SHORE UP received nearly 1000 applications in that short time. Unfortunately, there were not enough funds to provide all who applied with assistance, and approximately 250 households were not able to receive assistance.



The need for affordable housing and/or a permanent rental assistance program have been made very evident as a result of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. SHORE UP will continue to advocate for these much-needed services on behalf of low- to moderate- income households on the Eastern Shore.

Senior Prom at Shady Pines

Our Shady Pines Adult Day Services staff recently held a Senior Prom for their program participants. Both staff and participants got dressed up and enjoyed some wonderful socialization opportunities. Participants even got to select a Prom King & Queen!



Head Start & Early Head Start Need Your Help!

The pandemic, changing workforce dynamics, and Maryland's expansion of public schools' Pre-K programs have taken a toll on SHORE UP's Head Start & Early Head Start enrollment numbers. We need your help to boost them.

- **If you know anyone with a child under the age of five**, invite them to apply for the appropriate Head Start program.
- **If you know anyone who is currently expecting a child**, invite them to apply for Early Head Start services.
- **If you know anyone who might be interested in a career in early childhood education**, invite them to apply for a position in our Head Start programs. We are hiring for all positions!

Head Start & Early Head Start are the largest programs that SHORE UP operates. Let's help them out by assisting with their recruiting efforts!

It's Official!

SHORE UP recently received certification from the US Department of Housing & Urban Development as a Local Housing Counseling Agency. We have been approved to provide the following types of counseling:

- Financial Management/Budgeting
- Home Improvement and Rehabilitation
- Mortgage Delinquency and Default Resolution
- Pre-Purchase
- Rental Housing
- Services for Homeless



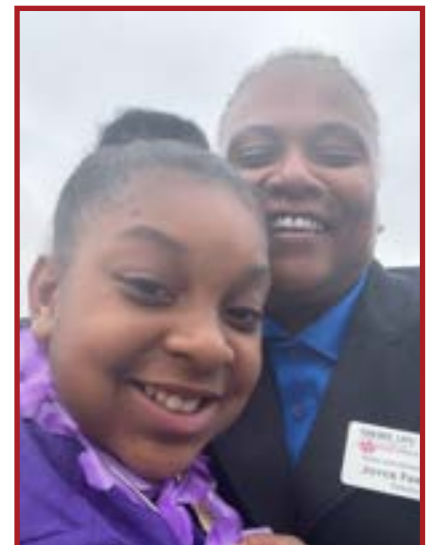
SHORE UP was also approved to provide workshops on the following topics:

- Financial/Budgeting/Credit
- Non-Delinquency Post-Purchase
- Pre-Purchase Homebuyer
- Rental Housing
- Resolving/Preventing Mortgage Delinquency

If you know someone who could benefit from these services, please have them contact Odetta Evans (ext 1056) or Denise White (ext 1061) at 410-749-1142.

Serendipity in Hurlock

When Foster Grandparents Director Joyce Farrare recently attended career day at Hurlock Elementary School, she had no idea that she would meet a student with whom she shared a link. This young lady is the great-granddaughter of a Foster Grandparent who has worked in our program for about ten years! What a lovely surprise!



Head Start Centers Honor Parents

Many of our Head Start and Early Head Start centers hosted events for their parents in May & June, as those are the months in which Mother's Day and Father's Day are celebrated. Here are some of our favorite pictures from our "Muffins for Moms" and "Donuts with Dads" celebrations.



"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents."

- Jane D. Hull

