

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE >



**S**HORE UP! wishes you a Happy New Year! Our agency, along with other non-profits, faced unprecedented challenges in 2020. These challenges, however, increased the need for our services. Now, it is paramount that we continue more than ever in our mission of **"helping people and changing lives."**

In 2021, you will see additional initiatives that will build the necessary foundation for our clients' economic stability. For example, residents with a GED or high school diploma have an opportunity to "earn while they learn." Become a SHORE UP! employee while earning a Child Development Associate Credential. After successful completion of the program, you could become a SHORE UP! Early Head Start teacher.

SHORE UP! is also reviving our General Educational Development (GED) initiative, offered by our Two Generation/Whole Family approach program. A hybrid of in-person and online classes will take place to prepare individuals to take the GED test. The class will be instructed by Denean Jones-Ward of Wor-Wic Community College. To enroll, please contact Program Director, Kaleel Neal, at 410-749-1142 ext. 360, or e-mail [ktneal@shoreup.org](mailto:ktneal@shoreup.org).

These are just two initiatives.. Please visit our website at [www.shoreup.org](http://www.shoreup.org) to find out about the myriad of other services that we offer.

Sincerely,

**Freddy L. Mitchell,**  
Executive Director

## CHANGING LIVES >



Devon Neal completed her CDA and is now an Early Head Start teacher for SHORE UP! Inc.

## EARN WHILE YOU LEARN

**T**he "earn while you learn" slogan is now appropriate for SHORE UP! Inc. The Community Action Agency recently received a \$35,000 refunding grant from the PNC Foundation to help continue its Child Development Associate (CDA) Credentialing program. The CDA program is a professional development opportunity for individuals interested in the field of Early Childhood Education, and will help participants develop their knowledge, skills and abilities as they earn their credentials.

According to Michelle Kogon, Educational and Professional Development supervisor for SHORE UP!'s Early Head Start and Head Start programs, a high school diploma or GED is required for admission into the CDA program.

"The four-to-six-month process to attain the CDA credential begins with an interview by SHORE UP! staff. Once approved for admission, employees enter the Early Head Start classroom as a CDA trainee or Head Start as a teacher's aide. Employees work full-time and earn benefits. They must complete 120 hours of online coursework in collaboration with area colleges. Participants must also work in the physical classroom for a total of 480 hours, or 12 to 14 weeks. Home daycare and other daycare settings are considered classrooms, and volunteer hours will also suffice.

The CDA process requires an observation, a portfolio of activities, and participants must pass an exam administered by the Council for Professional Recognition. The Council makes the final determination regarding who receives the CDA credential, which must be renewed every three years.

"We take care of all the costs-books, application fees, coursework. There is no cost to the candidate," says Kogon. However, the agency expects trainees who receive their CDA credentials to work as an Early Head Start teacher or Head Start teacher's aide at SHORE UP! for three years. Incentives for successful completion include a pay increase and one-time bonus.

"The CDA helped me to become a better teacher. It taught me how to keep the children safe, and I learned how to make sure each child is getting the best nutrition," says Devon Neal, current Early Head Start teacher and 2014 CDA recipient. "The program really gave me insight on what it would be like to be an Early Head Start teacher."

Kogon says the CDA program can also serve as a stepping stone for individuals who would like to further their career in education. It was just the catalyst Neal, who started work with the agency as a bus aide, needed to progress.

"After my CDA, I wanted more," says Neal. "So, I went to college and graduated in 2018 with my bachelor's degree in Human Ecology and Family Consumer Science."

If you would like to apply for the CDA program, complete an application at <https://shoreup.org/employment/join-our-team/>.

PROMOTIONS>

## SHORE UP! APPOINTS CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



**S**HORE UP! Inc. has announced the appointment of Elmira Whittington-Brown to serve as chief financial officer for the Community Action Agency. A native of Crisfield, Md., Brown has worked over 30 years in the field, with all of her experience gained at SHORE UP! She replaces former administrator of Fiscal Management, Bruce Wharton, who passed away July 2020 after a 41-year tenure with the agency. Brown worked in an interim capacity until her official appointment.

"After 34 years at SHORE UP!, Elmira has demonstrated her knowledge of Fiscal Management, as well as her fervor for the agency and the community we serve," stated Executive Director Freddy L. Mitchell. "She learned from a seasoned professional, and I have no doubt she will continue her diligent work ethic in this new capacity."

The Norfolk State University graduate began working with SHORE UP! in 1986 as a Fiscal office manager and has assumed every position in the Fiscal office since that time, including Fiscal specialist and assistant Fiscal administrator.

Brown received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education and Business Administration, along with extensive training in non-profit accounting.



SHORE UP! staff and the Angel tree organizer recently picked up gifts and presented them to children in the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Big thanks to all for making the holidays brighter for kids in SHORE UP!'s seven-county service area.

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EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS.  
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