

Bethlehem House Adapts PCR Model for New Social Programs

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A popular social program from Potomac Community Resources for teens and adults with disabilities is expanding into Northeast Washington this month. Bethlehem House will begin offering Brookland Community Resources (BCR), a new program for adults in the Brookland neighborhood near Catholic University. The monthly evening events are designed to be creative, social occasions. They will include photography, poetry, baking, jewelry and crafts. Initially, each program will be based at Bethlehem House in Brookland and later at St. Anthony of Padua Parish Hall. New sessions will be offered in the spring, including gardening and music.

Bethlehem House is a Christian residential program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with homes in Brookland and Riverdale, Maryland. This spring Bethlehem House will celebrate its 25th anniversary. Dolores Wilson, BAH Director, said "We are grateful to PCR for help as a model and mentor. Now their successful program can be available in other parts of our city. The beauty of these programs is that they give talented individuals the opportunity to give back and to share their skills." David Hayes will teach arts and crafts, Sr. Barbara Bartlett, SHCJ will lead the baking, Dolores Wilson will facilitate poetry jams. Mimi Fittig will teach jewelry making and Julian McKnight will teach photography.

Steve Riley, Executive Director of PCR, said, "We're excited about this new program at Bethlehem House. With the vision of Rev.

John Enzler and the full support of our Board, this fits our growth model. We are a small, focused community. We want to help other communities and put our lessons to good use." As part of their growth model, PCR has helped train volunteers, set up housing and provided social program with other parishes. Riley added, "We are excited about new community resources with Bethlehem House and St. Anthony's in the center. It is a pleasure professionally and an honor personally to work with Dolores Wilson and Bethlehem House."

"Dolores Wilson and Bethlehem House are an integral part of this Little Rome community," said Rev. Frederick J. Close, Pastor of St. Anthony of Padua. He added, "We are happy to join this BCR initiative and excited about the pos-

sibilities. We support the PCR model for persons with disabilities and their families."

Riley added, "In 2009, Archbishop Wuerl challenged PCR, initially a parish-based organization, to find innovative new ways to include persons with disabilities into the life of the church. He urged PCR to continue their efforts elsewhere in the archdiocese."

Riley said, "We are not prescriptive, we help with the how. We've learned lessons from our own development. This is how we want to contribute." In 2008, Archbishop Wuerl became the first and only Honorary Life Member of PCR. Riley said, "We are honored to have his patronage and a public statement of the significance of our efforts."

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