

EPIC TIMES- FALL 2017

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AN EVENING WITH THE EDGEWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

On the evening of Thursday, September 28, The EPICENTER hosted a free dinner between Edgewood Middle School's new administrators and Edgewood Middle families. Nineteen families came to meet the new administrators, hear their plans for the school, ask questions, and learn about the many resources in the school and community for young people.

During the event, Principal Melissa Mickey and Assistant Principals Joanne Frailer, James Fulton, Peter Jurovich, and Wendy Steo spoke on several topics, such as upcoming school events, student clubs, how parents can monitor their children's grades through Edline, and the importance of parental involvement in student education. In addition, the team discussed their hopes to impact students for the better.

"Mrs. Mickey had been offered a job at another school last year, but she specifically asked to work at Edgewood Middle," Fulton said. "She strongly believes in the school, in the students, and in the Edgewood community, and she wants to make a difference."

The event featured a free dinner for all attendees of pasta, salad, and garlic knots from Pat's Pizza as well as pizza from Little Caesar's. In addition, seven community organizations set up tables and shared information and resources with guests: Empowering Minds Resource Center, Channel of Grace Worship Center, Harford County Mediation Program, Seedco, Harford Community Action Agency, Mountain Christian Church Student Ministries, and Jobs for Life.

"It was very exciting to hear what's going on at Edgewood Middle," said a parent who attended the dinner. "And it was also great to see so many resources at The EPICENTER."

***Empowering Edgewood.** The EPICENTER at Edgewood operates with a mission to empower people, strengthen families, and build a sense of community and trust in Edgewood. As you will see in our latest newsletter, we have been doing just that in many ways.*



Assistant Principal James Fulton (left) and Principal Melissa Mickey (right) share their visions for Edgewood Middle School.

TRUNK OR TREAT!

On Saturday, October 28, Mountain Christian Church held its annual Trunk or Treat event at its four campuses. Here at The EPICENTER, which serves as the weekly host site for Mountain's Edgewood campus, 53 trunk hosts gave approximately 2,500 pounds of candy to 1,613 people.

Several EPICENTER team members hosted trunks, including Laura Donovan, who dressed up with two of her four children and shared sweets from the back of their van-turned-bamboo-rainforest.

"Trunk or Treat is a great outreach," Donovan said. "It helps us show the community that we love them and helps families enjoy a fun and safe Halloween."



The EPICENTER's Laura Donovan (left) and her son Caiden (top right) greet "trunk"-or-treaters.

IN-THE-KNOW: PREPARING TO HELP THOSE FACING HOMELESSNESS

As winter quickly approaches, The EPICENTER team wanted to ensure that our staff would be fully prepared should someone come to us facing homelessness in the coming months. We invited Renee Duzan from the Harford County Department of Housing and Community Development to explain how to best help during our October staff meeting.

According to Duzan, the best first step for Harford County organizations to take when helping someone facing homelessness or serious housing-related issues like eviction is to refer them to the Harford Community Action Agency (HCAA) Supportive Services location on 1010 Gateway Road here in Edgewood.

"Harford Community Action Agency serves as the central portal of anyone experiencing homelessness or a housing crisis in Harford County," said Duzan. "HCAA is open Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and one does not need an appointment to meet with them if he or she is homeless or could become homeless."

If organizations meet someone in need outside of HCAA's hours of operation, Housing and Community Development advises having those in need call United Way's 211 hotline, which is available 24/7 to help connect people with help finding shelter, paying rent or utilities, and other services. Duzan also notes that the Harford County Hope for the Homeless will operate its Emergency Rotating Shelter from December 19 through March 20.

MAKING THE QUIT

Harford County Health Department's Tobacco Cessation Program began offering Smoking Cessation classes here at The EPICENTER on Tuesday, November 7. Classes will run each Tuesday night from 7-8:30 p.m. until December 12 and are free for anyone in the community who desires to quit smoking.

To learn more about Harford County Health Department's Smoking Cessation Classes, please contact Linda Pegram at linda.peggram@maryland.gov. "We would love to help anyone who wishes to come," says Pegram.



We are grateful to Renee Duzan for preparing us to serve those facing homelessness this winter!



Harford County Health Department will offer free smoking cessation classes at The EPICENTER until mid-December.

NOVEMBER SUCCESS

On Wednesday, November 8, The EPICENTER hosted its monthly Health Fair and Food Giveaway along with the Maryland Food Bank and Tabitha's House. This month, we provided more than 7,000 pounds of food for 154 families in need—an increase from last month's 144 families in spite of the fact that we had to move the Fair to Wednesday due to the Veteran's Day holiday.

Numerous volunteers teamed up to package the food, including people from Mountain Christian Church, Tabitha's House, Kia's Korner, and the Free State Challenge Academy. In addition, ten different community organizations shared meaningful information and services with guests, including Empowering Minds Resource Center.

"Today we were able to provide services to an individual who is in need and who is battling depression," said Amber Spearman, who works as Empowering Minds' Community Outreach Coordinator. "I was so happy to be here and to be able to help."

Some of the other resources that our participating organizations shared this month included flu shots and blood pressure screenings from ShopRite's Festival Pharmacy, diaper packs from Chesapeake Diaper Bank, oral care items from Main Street Children's Dentistry and Orthodontics' Edgewood office, and the opportunity to sign up for Harford County Health Department's free Smoking Cessation classes here at The EPICENTER.

"One lady commented that she had wanted to quit smoking for a long time but could never afford to do so," said Dottie Ruff from the Harford County Health Department's Smoking Cessation program. "She was very grateful to learn about an opportunity quit at no cost."



Representatives from 10 organizations shared resources at our November Resource Fair.

NOVEMBER RESOURCE FAIR HIGHLIGHTS:

7,000 pounds of food given to **154 families** in need.

Ten organizations shared information and resources.

One thousand free diapers given by Chesapeake Diaper Bank.

Thirty-nine oral care items given by Main Street Children's Dentistry and Orthodontics' Edgewood office.

Sixteen flu shots and **15 blood pressure screenings** provided by ShopRite Festival Pharmacy.

Five appointments made with The EPICENTER's employment readiness program.