



Newborn Holistic Ministries is Winner of Henrietta Lacks Memorial Award

“I’d like to first give thanks to the Lacks family. We are deeply honored and deeply humbled for this award and we ask that you pray for us that we continue to do the work. . . Through this award we have found new friends to help us rid our community of poverty.”

Newborn Holistic Ministries Founder Elder C.W. Harris graciously and eloquently accepted the Henrietta Lacks Memorial Award in front of a packed house at the Annual Henrietta Lacks Memorial Lecture at Johns Hopkins University on October 1, 2011. Named in honor of Henrietta Lacks, the award recognizes and supports Baltimore community organizations that are collaborating with Johns Hopkins University to improve the health and

well-being of the city of Baltimore.

Newborn Holistic Ministries is one of nearly two dozen established community-university collaborations from across the city nominated for the inaugural award of \$15,000. The organization was selected by leaders from community and city organizations and Johns Hopkins as a model collaboration for creating and sustaining healthier communities.

When Harris founded Newborn Holistic Ministries, his vision was to restore vibrancy and pride in the West Baltimore community that has been his life-long home. Harris says it had been heartbreaking to watch his neighborhood struggle with poverty and deteriorate year after year.



Todd Marcus (left) and Elder C.W. Harris (middle) were presented with the inaugural Henrietta Lacks Memorial Award by UHI Director Robert Blum on October 1, 2011. Photo by Joshua Franzos

“When we first started, the neighborhood was like a war-torn area. . . The things that really made the community strong were being taken away,” says Harris.

Continued on page 2

Meet the UHI’s Community-University Collaborating Committee

by Kristina Rolfes



Rev. Debra Hickman

“Be forward focused, not past possessed,” Rev. Debra Hickman can be heard telling women at Sisters Together and Reaching, Inc. (STAR), a Baltimore non-

profit she co-founded in 1991 to help address the needs of HIV-infected and at-risk African American women. “Today is a new day. The past is in the past.”

It is a message of hope, something many of these women have long since abandoned. But the women believe in Rev. Hickman—known to many as “Rev. Debbie”—because she reached out to them when no one else would.

“They’re in pain, and they need someone

to listen,” says Rev. Hickman. “We make them understand that they can overcome their pain. We offer love, a listening ear, and an open heart.”

Through her work at STAR, Rev. Hickman has seen women who were once homeless, drug-addicted, and without hope now living meaningful, productive lives. Because of STAR, they have jobs, families, and positive attitudes. They take care of themselves and make healthy decisions. The change is not sudden, but it is profound, and sometimes unbelievable, says Rev. Hickman.

Others are not as fortunate—Rev. Hickman has seen far too many women succumb to AIDS over the years.

The first time Rev. Hickman met a mother with AIDS, she was working as a research nurse at the University of

Maryland, helping to identify and care for babies born to HIV-positive women.

“I watched the tears roll down her face, wanting so much to care for another

Continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>News and Updates</i>	1-5
<i>Staff News</i>	6
<i>Dates to Remember</i>	7

HIGHLIGHTS

- Community Health Initiative to hire first employees in 2012 (see page 3)
- UHI Small Grants recipient looks for best ways to implement Baltimore’s *Safe Streets* program (see page 4)
- UHI Associate Director receives award from Maryland faith leaders (see page 6)

NEWS AND UPDATES

Newborn Holistic Ministries is Winner of Henrietta Lacks Memorial Award

Continued from page 1

Harris called on trusted friends and colleagues and formed Newborn Holistic Ministries in 1996. Their mission was to preserve and enrich life in Baltimore's Sandtown-Winchester, Upton, and Druid Heights communities by providing services to enable residents to meet their material, social, and spiritual needs.

Their first major accomplishment came just four years later, with the opening of Martha's Place, a recovery program for women overcoming drug addiction. Harris and his Johns Hopkins collaborator, Lee Bone, found that many women who went through short-term drug programs quickly relapsed. Martha's Place picks up where these programs stop through a structured transitional recovery program with a certified six-month residential facility and optional permanent housing for graduates. Martha's Place Director Angela Long is a graduate of the program and says that an important part of the program is helping the women face the underlying causes of their addiction.

"We teach them how to quiet down the mind and begin [thinking about] how they got here," says Long.

Martha's Place works with more than 25 local agencies and service providers—including Johns Hopkins—to provide clients with health care and employment and social services. The program has served over 300 women with about a 50 percent success rate, which is impressive compared to the national recovery rates of 30 percent.

In 2008, Newborn Holistic Ministries created a second major community program called Jubilee Arts. In partnership with local artists, Baltimore Clayworks, and the Maryland Institute College of Art, Jubilee Arts offers classes in visual arts, ceramics, dance, and writing to children and adults as an alternative to the dangers of drugs and violence in the community. The program enrolls over 1,000 participants each year and features three floors of studio space in the beautifully renovated Harris-Marcus Center. Jubilee Arts Director Mariska Jordan says that the program is part of the revival of the rich arts and cultural legacy of historic Pennsylvania Avenue, which was once the hub of African American arts and entertainment in Baltimore. She also says that involving the community in the arts helps build a sense of pride in areas that, not long ago, seemed to be forgotten.

Being able to have public art programs that bring beauty to the neighborhood . . . [shows that] we can do something together to make it better," says Jordan.

Over the past 15 years, Newborn Holistic Ministries has not

only transformed lives; the programs have also transformed the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Presstman Street. In addition to the complete renovation of six vacant and dilapidated buildings that now house graduates of Martha's Place, Newborn has created 8,500 square feet of community green spaces with meditative gardens and murals.

Lee Bone, who is faculty at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and has served on the organization's board since its founding, says that Newborn Holistic Ministries is an example of how a small, grassroots community group can build something remarkable.

"This is transforming people's lives; it's transforming the corner; it's transforming the way [universities] develop and sustain partnerships with the community," says Bone.

Newborn Holistic Ministries President Todd Marcus says that receiving the Henrietta Lacks Memorial Award provides a tremendous opportunity to grow their work and to form even more collaborations across the city. Perhaps his words best sum up the determination of their skilled and dedicated staff.

"We address the unmet needs of our community. We do it because if we don't, it's not going to get done," says Marcus.

The UHI also congratulates two outstanding Henrietta Lacks Memorial Award finalists, the Incentive Mentoring Program and Catholic Charities' Esperanza Center Health Services Program.

A video of the winning organization is available at <http://urbanhealth.jhu.edu>.



Students learn screen printing in one of the studio spaces at Jubilee Arts during summer term 2011.

Meet the CUCC

Continued from page 1

human being—her baby—but knowing she couldn't because she had AIDS.”

Rev. Hickman couldn't offer the mother promises of getting better, so instead she offered her compassion. In turn, the woman introduced Rev. Hickman to her physician—Dr. Dorothy Brewster Lee—whose work focused on HIV-positive women. And with that introduction, her life's work of helping women with HIV began.

Under Dr. Lee's tutelage, Rev. Hickman began writing grants to help address HIV-related issues faced by African American women in low income, urban areas. Rev. Hickman joined with Dr. Lee to organize a Saturday spiritual support group. She went to churches and trained women to be “buddies” for other HIV-positive women, offering to shuttle them to appointments, clean their houses, and help with anything else they needed. Before long, the number of women they had helped reached 500, and the organization known as STAR was born.

Since STAR's inception, Rev. Hickman's work has been locally and nationally recognized. She was appointed to serve as a commissioner for the Baltimore City HIV Commission, and the White House appointed her as an advisor to the CDC and the Health Resources Services Administration Advisory Committee on HIV and STD prevention.

STAR has helped over 40,000 women, men and youth in the past twenty years through direct care and prevention services

utilizing mobile unit and in-house services. An estimated 1,200 women and men are serviced in-house and another 700 or more are reached through community outreach venues.

For Rev. Hickman, who has a Master's of Divinity and became ordained in 2004, spirituality is the key to STAR's success. She begins every morning at STAR with a circle of prayer, and she encourages prayer whenever it is needed. “Someone might say, 'I need you to pray for me now' and we stop everything and pray.”

But spirituality is more than just prayer, explains Rev. Hickman. It's about people sharing their true selves with each other and forming a connection.

The idea that spirituality can be used to help HIV sparked an NIH-sponsored joint research project between STAR and the UHI known as You Gotta Have Faith! The project, which began over a year ago, now has a baseline of data that researchers and faith leaders will use to recommend strategies for pastors to engage with youth and encourage them to make healthy decisions about sex. Explains Rev. Hickman, “The church has an ongoing audience seeking guidance on how to live, so what better way to communicate this message?”

You Gotta Have Faith!, Rev. Hickman hopes, will go a long way toward protecting at-risk youth, so that the cycle of HIV—and women without hope—can be prevented.

The UHI is seeking a Program Coordinator to support and grow our work.

The full-time position will be involved in the coordination of UHI projects and activities, and will work to develop policies and systems to ensure the efficiency of daily operations and specific programs.

The complete position description is available at <http://jobs.jhu.edu> Requisition # 50593.

NEWS AND UPDATES

Highlight on 2009 Small Grants Recipients: From Promise to Practice—Keys to Successful Implementation of Street Outreach for Youth Violence Prevention

By Bobbi Nicotera

In 2007, the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) launched *Safe Streets* to curb gun violence in Baltimore neighborhoods. Modeled after Chicago's *CeaseFire* program (www.ceasefirechicago.org), which has reported encouraging results, *Safe Streets* uses community mediators to reach those at highest risk for gun violence—especially youth. The community mediators, who must be very familiar with the community and are often ex-offenders themselves, act as “violence interrupters,” canvassing neighborhoods to diffuse potentially violent situations and helping to find alternative ways to deal with disputes. The mediators even link individuals and their families with opportunities for education and training, employment, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and more. The mediators help to provide individuals with options besides a life of crime and violence.

The Living Classrooms Foundation received the first contract to implement *Safe Streets* in East Baltimore—known as *Safe Streets East*. They started in the McElderry Park neighborhood and soon expanded to include two adjacent neighborhoods. Eighteen months later, Family Health Centers of Baltimore launched the program in the Cherry Hill neighborhood of South Baltimore.



Safe Streets East staff. Left to right (standing): Gardnel Carter, Tard Carter, Dante Barksdale, Anthony Coleman; left to right (sitting): Corey Peterkin, photo of Leon Faruq, Corey Winfield. Photo courtesy of BCHD

Dr. Daniel Webster, a violence prevention researcher at Johns Hopkins, was asked by the BCHD to evaluate the impact of the program. In a report released in October 2011, Webster and his team of colleagues from the Johns Hopkins Center for

Prevention of Youth Violence found that, while the program effects varied from neighborhood to neighborhood, *Safe Streets* had a largely positive influence on the targeted areas. However, even with this promising information, it became clear in the early stages of the program that successful implementation was a complex and challenging task.

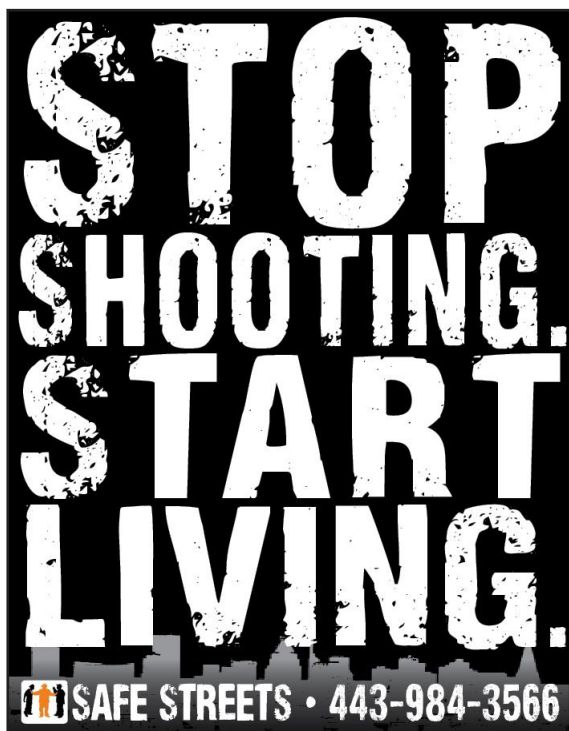
Webster's research assistant, PhD student Jennifer Mendel Whitehill, recognized the amazing potential of *Safe Streets*—and also the challenges. She decided to compare Baltimore's *Safe Streets* to Chicago's *CeaseFire* with the goal of finding the best ways to implement the program. By examining the specific activities of both programs, Whitehill suspected that the results might also help to explain some of the differences in outcomes between the two cities.

In order to gather data about which practices and polices the staff perceived to be most helpful in street outreach, Whitehill interviewed the neighborhood-level program managers and BCHD staff and conducted focus groups with the community mediators. Leon Faruq, then-director of *Safe Streets East*, worked closely with Whitehill to develop the project.

“Leon and I agreed that the study would complement Dr. Webster's outcome evaluation by learning from the outreach workers and translating the experiences from Baltimore into lessons for other communities implementing the program,” said Whitehill.

With funding from the UHI Small Grants Program, Whitehill was able to analyze data from the interviews and focus groups (additional funding for the larger study, which included data collection in Chicago, came from the CDC). She found similarities between the two cities. For example, outreach staff needed to have street credibility and the capability to work with high-risk individuals. One key difference however, was that Baltimore's program used an all-in-one approach for staff. Community mediators acted as violence interrupters as well as service navigators. In Chicago, even though staff members were trained in both, the duties were separated. Whitehill's analysis explored the perceived consequences of this difference and found that, among the study participants in both cities, the overall consensus was that it's better to have some dedicated violence interrupters.

Another finding from her research was the strong need for connecting clients with jobs. Many of the program staff felt



that helping the high-risk youth population with obtaining employment was a key to reducing their chances of participating in violent activities. Whitehill concluded that a renewed effort to partner with job development agencies would be helpful.

“The outcome evaluation shows that the program can be effective, but only when implemented carefully,” said Whitehill. “I hope that this study will help Baltimore make some changes that strengthen the program in existing areas and understand how it could best be implemented in other neighborhoods that greatly need a reduction in violence.”

Currently the *Safe Streets* initiative is operating in the McElderry Park and Cherry Hill neighborhoods. Gardnel Carter became the director of *Safe Streets East* in 2009 after Leon Faruq passed away. For more information about *Safe Streets*, go to www.baltimorehealth.org/safestreets.html.

Jennifer Mendel Whitehill is currently a postdoctoral fellow with the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center at the University of Washington.

Community Health Initiative to Hire First Employees in 2012

More than two dozen people will be hired next year to document neighborhood resources in East Baltimore. This work is phase one of the Community Health Initiative’s “asset mapping,” which is a process used to understand a community’s existing resources. The goal of community asset mapping in East Baltimore is to promote connections and relationships between individuals, between organizations, and between individuals and organizations, and to identify where outside resources are needed.

The asset mapping team will interview East Baltimore residents (living within 21202, 21205, 21213, 21224, and 21231) to learn what they like about living in their neighborhood, how they contribute to the community, and which relationships help get things done. The team will also help to identify other kinds of community assets like churches, neighborhood associations, parks, schools, businesses, and service providers. Each member of the asset mapping team will receive special training after they are hired. Preference will be given to applicants who live within the five zip codes of the Community Health Initiative.

For updates about the Community Health Initiative and for position postings, visit www.healthiereastbaltimore.org.

The Community Health Initiative has a new look!

The Community Health Initiative now has its own logo and website.



**COMMUNITY
HEALTH
INITIATIVE**

Visit www.healthiereastbaltimore.org for the latest information about the Initiative, upcoming meetings, job postings, and more.



Dear Friends of the Urban Health Institute,

This December, I will be leaving the UHI to pursue a new career opportunity. This will be a major transition for me because Johns Hopkins has been my home for the past 11 years, professionally that is. I've grown up

here in many respects, which makes the decision incredibly bittersweet.

For the past (nearly) four years, I have handled communications for the UHI. I have been both fortunate and challenged by the opportunity to establish strategies that effectively communicate the work of the UHI. I will take with me all that I've learned over the past decade, and especially the work and experiences I've had with the UHI. Specifically, working at the UHI has taught me much about collaboration and what it takes to build successful collaborations, whether small-scale or large-scale.

In the next phase of my career, I will remain in the non-profit sector. I have thought about jumping ship to the corporate world, especially because much of my traditional MBA education focused on turning a profit. However, I have spent my entire career in the non-profit world, and I have grown to love the passion that people have for their work. It's very inspiring.

I believe in hard work and that people should take responsibility for their own lives and the lives of their family. That said, I also believe that I live a very fortunate life compared to many in this world. Helping those who are not as fortunate is extremely rewarding and ultimately makes our society a better and healthier place.

I would like to thank my colleagues and partners for all of their support over the years. The work you do is so important.

Regards,

Lauren Bauer

UHI Associate Director Receives Award from Maryland Faith Leaders

On November 21, 2011, UHI Associate Director Philip Leaf was presented with the Agus-Shehan Interfaith Leadership Award from the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council (CMEC). The CMEC brings together Christian denominations and their member congregations in Maryland, as well as other faiths, in a united effort for human services and interfaith dialogue.

The award, which is presented at the Annual Interfaith ThanksGiving Breakfast, recognizes exceptional individuals who bring together people of different religious traditions to form new relationships and build constructive collaborations.



Dr. Philip Leaf (left) is presented with the Agus-Shehan Interfaith Leadership Award.

Dr. Leaf was honored for his tireless efforts to achieve interfaith understanding and for being one of the founders of the Baltimore Interfaith Coalition, a group of faith leaders working to prevent violence and promote healing among those who are affected by violence.

Dr. Leaf was introduced by Baltimore Interfaith Coalition Co-Chair Bishop Douglas Miles of Koinonia Baptist Church.

"You will find [Dr. Leaf] in every community in Baltimore. No where is he a stranger," said Miles. "There is no task of community importance that he has not been a part of."

Dr. Leaf says that interfaith collaborations are incredibly valuable because they provide a broader understanding of our diversity and our strengths.

"The strength of the ecumenical movement is that it reminds us that there is something greater than ourselves and we can do a lot of good in the time we are given when we work together," said Leaf.

Imam Yahya Hendi, Muslim chaplain at Georgetown University, was also recognized at the event.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Date	Event	
Thursday, December 8, 2011 3:30 pm – 5 pm	UHI Symposium featuring Howell S. Baum, author of <u><i>“Brown” in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism</i></u>	Sheldon Hall Bloomberg School of Public Health 615 N. Wolfe Street Co-sponsored by the Johns Hopkins School of Education and Baltimore City Public Schools
Tuesday, December 13, 2011 12 pm – 5 pm	All Partners Meeting Retreat Community Health Initiative <i>Creating a Healthier East Baltimore, Together</i>	Humanim at the American Brewery 1701 N. Gay Street Baltimore, MD 21213 For more information, contact Catonya Lester at clester@jhsph.edu or 410-502-6155.
Wednesday, February 8, 2012 9:00 am - 4:00 pm	UHI Capacity-Building Workshop <i>Policy and Media Training Workshop</i> For Johns Hopkins researchers and community leaders interested in affecting urban health policy	Location TBA For more information, contact Catonya Lester at clester@jhsph.edu or 410-502-6155.
Friday, April 27, 2012 9:00 am - 4:00 pm	UHI Capacity-Building Workshop <i>Writing for Success: Preparing Winning Grants</i> For community-based organizations	Location TBA For more information, contact Catonya Lester at clester@jhsph.edu or 410-502-6155.



Johns Hopkins

Urban Health
I N S T I T U T E

2013 E. Monument Street
Baltimore, MD 21205
(410) 502-6155



Johns Hopkins

Urban Health
I N S T I T U T E

The mission of the Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute is to serve as a catalyst that brings together the resources of Johns Hopkins Institutions with the city of Baltimore, and especially East Baltimore, to improve the community's health and well-being.

JOHNS HOPKINS