Community of HOPE

HOPE in ACTION

Fall 2026 Newsletter



Care with Heart: Darian's Journey

Darian Carr has one big goal: getting healthy enough for a heart transplant. His Community of Hope care team is helping him get there.

Read his story on Page 6.

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Letter from Kelly

Dear Friends,



In my 25 years at Community of Hope, I have never felt more rooted in community, filled with love, and committed to action. At Night of Hope, I told our guests the times ahead will be tough, but I remain hopeful.

Some of the things I worry about include that, starting in January, new Medicaid rules mean a lot of people could lose their health insurance. Family homelessness is up 16% this year. Food insecurity in Greater Washington region is at a five-year high. Families are already facing impossible choices. Do I see a doctor? How do I feed my children? Do I pay the rent?

But our roots run deep. We will keep helping families stay enrolled in Medicaid and SNAP and keep providing health care whether or not someone has insurance.

With each policy and budget change, we speak up and adjust. I hope you enjoy reading about our wins and approach on page 7 to see how you can join us.

Our community is strong, and you are the reason I remain hopeful.

Kelly

President and CEO

Caring for Families. Improving Lives. Leading Change.

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TOP WORK PLACES 2026 wtop news

SPUR LOCAL 26 CRITICAL NONPROFIT

Celebrating Our 2026 Tom Nees Awardees

Given in memory of our founder, the Tom Nees Award for Exceptional Service honors people whose long-standing service has changed lives at Community of Hope. This year, we celebrate two.



Melissa McGuire

Melissa's involvement with Community of Hope became a years-long partnership. Melissa McGuire served in many roles, from Night of Hope Chair (2x) to committee leader, board member, Vice Chair, and Board Chair. Each gave her a new perspective and a deeper appreciation for the people who make our work possible.

On the board, she helped develop our five-year strategic plan and grow the Resource Development Committee. She chaired Night of Hope twice, joining countless venue tours in search of the right rooftop. When the COVID-19 pandemic made gathering in person impossible, she helped find new ways to engage supporters. She saw the expanded Family Health and Birth Center open in its new home, and dove into how our approach improves maternal health and how closely housing, health care, and family stability are woven together.

Melissa came to us after a 25-year career at Freddie Mac, leading efforts to expand affordable homeownership and rental housing. Community of Hope introduced her to the human stories behind that work. Shortly before Christmas, she met a father preparing to move into permanent housing with his two children. "What struck me most was his hopefulness," she recalls.

Melissa brought her family along, too. She and her then-teenage children baked cookies, wrapped toys, and made Valentine's Day cards at Girard Street Apartments and The Triumph. Her husband helped build corporate support.

For Melissa, hope is never passive. It is the belief that things can be better, combined with a willingness to help make them better.



Monique Diop

Monique Diop has shaped Community of Hope and its neighborhood impact through many ways. She arrived in Ward 8's Bellevue neighborhood in 2014 during a season of change, newly settled in an affordable home and soon after, out of work. Our workforce development program at the Conway Health and Resource Center first brought her through our doors. What she found was bigger than a job program. She found a community.

Over the years, Monique came to know Community of Hope in nearly every way a person can: as a patient, a participant, an advocate, and a board member.

Board service was new to her. “The other members understood that I had a learning curve,” she remembers, “and created space for me and other community members to have our voices heard.”

As an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, she helped plan the back-to-school event with the DC Public Library, learning about permits, street closures, and coordinating with MPD. When her commission lost its meeting space during COVID-19, Community of Hope opened its doors and kept the lights on until 9:00 at night so neighbors could gather and be heard. “They did not have to do that,” she says.

Today, as Director of Community Affairs for the Office of the Chairman of the DC Council, she listens first. “Even when I cannot provide the exact outcome someone wants, I can make sure that person feels heard.”

Her mantra is simple: “Meet people where they are, but don’t leave them there.” As she puts it, “Once you become part of a community of hope, that hope doesn’t stop.”

Read Melissa and Monique’s full stories on our website.



Hope Happenings

Ward 8 Shows Up for Its Students

More than 1,850 neighbors came out for the 14th Annual Bellevue Back to School Bash, co-hosted with DC Public Library, DC Fire and EMS, and our Bellevue Family Success Center. In total, over 2,400 children entering Pre-K3 through 12th grade from our event guests and families in our housing and other programs received backpacks stuffed with supplies from our generous partners. Thank you to AmeriHealth Caritas DC, Bloomberg Industry Group, CoStar, GCS-SIGAL, Health Services for Children with Special Needs (HSCSN), Miller & Chevalier, National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), Passion City Church, Pebblebrook Hotel Trust, Wegmans, and Whole Foods for all the school supplies, food donations, and funds fueling the day’s successes.



Volunteers were all smiles at the14th Annual Bellevue Back to School Bash!



Corporate Spotlight: Freddie Mac

Thank you to Freddie Mac where three teams assembled and donated 1,000 kits with critical personal care and clean home supplies this year. The kits from the Multifamily Division, Talent Management, and Enterprise Risk teams allow families to care for themselves and their homes, prioritizing their food and shelter needs. Next up: over 250 children’s books have been donated for our children and families at Bookfest.

Want to organize a drive at your workplace? Email development@cohdc.org.

Welcome, Dr. Danielle Dooley

Dr. Danielle Dooley joined Community of Hope as our new Chief Medical Officer in August. A DMV native, she has over 20 years of experience as a community pediatrician and is nationally recognized for launching DC’s first program sharing school attendance data between schools and pediatric practices to address chronic absenteeism. She has trained over 100 pediatric residents in legislative advocacy around family health. She is passionate about language and culture access and health equity.



Night of Hope: Rooted in Community, Love, and Action



L. Dijon Anderson board member and Giving Moment Leader brought the energy.



Current and past board members pose with our awardees: Ann McAllister, Dr. Khandra Y Tyler-Beynum, Monique Diop, Toya McCoy, Cathy Austin, Melissa McGuire, Kelly Sweeney McShane, L. Dijon Anderson, Lisa Madden, Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard, Chris Kerns, and Kessia Cruz.



Chris and Carole Kerns, Erin Henderson Moore, and Desi and Nicole Battle were excited to connect!



Dr. Stan Drake, Dr. Andreas and Dr. Liza Lindenberg, and Dr. Brad Boekeloo Smiles all around posed at the "Rooted in Community" engagement station.



Kelly posed with this year's host committee chairs, Dr. Khandra Y Tyler- Beynum and Lisa Madden.



Host committee members Dr. Faith Gibson Hubbard pose with KeShawn Harris and Yemi Geteye of sponsor CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield.



Donnatela Douglas, Night of Hope speaker, moved the crowd. Read her story at the QR code to the left.



Shraddha Anup sharing a joyful smile with Night of Hope attendees.



Lesli Foster, our Director of Ceremonies, encouraged the guest to remain rooted in our mission.

Night of Hope was full of memorable moments. View more here!

On October 1, 332 guests filled The National Press Club and raised over $530,000 for a healthy, housed, and hopeful Washington, DC. WUSA9 anchor Lesli Foster directed the evening. Donnatela Douglas, a client and mother, shared how Community of Hope has supported her family for now three generations. Board member L. Dijon Anderson led the guests to meet a match challenge of $125,000 including a surprise extra match for every $100 donation. “Together, we can keep turning hope into action,” said Kelly Sweeney McShane.

Thank you to our committee!

Lisa and David Madden; *co-chairs*
Khandra Tyler- Beynum MD, and Harold Beynum *co-chairs*
L. Dijon Anderson and Dr. Paula Anderson
Frank Boyd and Kathleen Montgomery Boyd
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Maria and Lee Weber
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Thank you to our sponsors!

Activators: CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield; Kirkland & Ellis LLP; Labcorp; Latham & Watkins; McAllister & Quinn; PricewaterhouseCoopers; Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP; VytlOne

Energizers: City First Bank; Lockton Companies; MedStar Family Choice; Sibley Memorial Hospital; Simpson Thacher & Bartlett

Mobilizers: AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia; BBP & CL Associates; Raj and Ariel De; Health Services for Children with Special Needs; National Cooperative Bank; SB and Company; UnitedHealthcare Community Plan; USI Insurance; Verizon Business

Influencers: Commercial Real Estate Advisors; DC Primary Care Association; Melanie Folstad and Rick McUmber; Collette and Allan Goodman; Horning Management; Hunton Andrews Kurth; Annabelle and Cecil Lockhart; Tom and Sandy McCarthy; Nauticon Office Solutions; Sara and Peter O’Keefe; Pontius Tax Law PLLC; Red River Technology; Virginia Brooks, Visionary Eye Doctors; WC Smith

Care with Heart: Darian's Journey

Darian Carr is focused on one of his biggest goals: improving his health enough to become eligible for a heart transplant.

"I just keep going," he said. "You have to stay on top of things."

For more than a decade, Darian has trusted Community of Hope with his health care. He learned to manage serious health conditions, made changes along the way, and counted on his care team.

A lifelong DC resident, Darian, now 54, first came to Community of Hope because it was one of the few health centers serving his neighborhood. What started as a routine checkup turned into a long-term relationship with his medical provider and care team that is helping him through some hard years.

Darian lives with congestive heart failure and diabetes, conditions that forced him to stop working. Taking his medications, keeping up with appointments, and paying attention to his symptoms are part of his daily routine. It hasn't always been easy.

"When my insurance changed, there was a point when I couldn't get my medicine," he said. "But they worked through it. They found a way. They helped out big time."

When Darian became eligible for Medicare, he moved from our My Health GPS program, which Medicare doesn't cover, into long-term care management so his care could continue.

A nurse navigator works closely with Darian, coordinating care with specialists, reviewing medications, following up after hospital stays, and helping with transportation and identification.

"They've been awesome," Darian said. "The entire team is so solid."



Darian Carr and Lamia Smith, medical case manager

When challenges come up, he knows who to call. He jokingly refers to his medical case manager at Community of Hope, as his "go-to". His team also connected him to a program that delivers fresh vegetables and other healthy food to his home.

"I'm more conscious of what I eat now," he said. "Before, it was just whatever I wanted to eat. Now I pick up the package and look at how much sugar or sodium is in it."

He says he's seen improvements in managing his diabetes and better understands how his daily choices affect his health.

"They always check in," Darian said. "They encourage you. They make sure you're doing what you need to do."

As Darian works toward a heart transplant, he's focused on taking care of himself, staying consistent, and moving forward. And with his Community of Hope care team by his side, he has people he can count on every step of the way.

You Inspire Hope In Action!

Sign up to volunteer at our weekly Fam-Club to give back to families in our family shelters.



Volunteer at Fam-Club or host a birthday party!

How We Speak Up for Change



Leading change to protect people and programs, and to advance system improvements is a community effort – staff, volunteers, donors, clients, and patients all have a role. We speak together and celebrate wins together. Here's a few wins through our key strategies:

1. Working in coalition

Kelly Sweeney McShane, our President and CEO, is appointed to the DC Interagency Council on Homelessness and serves as the co-chair of the strategic planning committee. This year, she facilitated the planning process for Homeward 3.0, involving over 300 people. The plan calls for more ways out of homelessness, year-round shelter that treats people with dignity, investment in prevention, and agencies that work together. Also, in May, we rallied at the Wilson Building with our federally qualified health center partners and the DC Primary Care Association to advance health equity.

2. Testifying

At performance and budget hearings, our organizational and program leaders share testimonials before the DC Council and committees—about 16x in the last 12 months. We detail system approaches that work and their impacts across our health centers, housing programs, and Family Success Center. We ask Council for key funding to be sustained.

3. Lifting up community voice

When funding for every DC Family Success Center was cut from the Mayor's proposed budget this spring, so many spoke up, including our Bellevue neighbors. Alongside our Community Advisory Council and staff, they told decision makers what the center means to them. Our Bellevue success center was one of five to be funded in 2026-2027.

4. Inviting you in

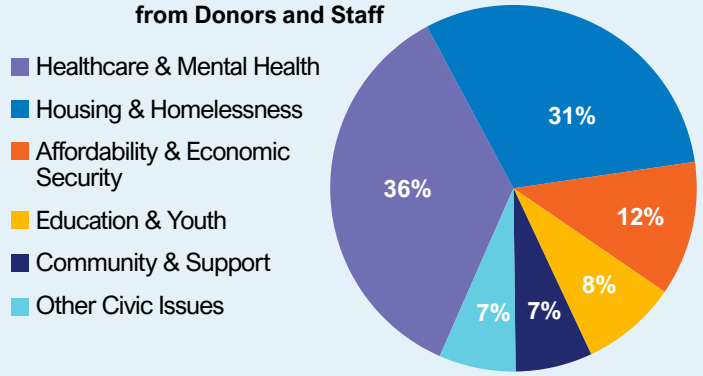
When our approaches need more momentum, we ask you to send emails, make phone calls, or join us on the Wilson Building steps. Thank you! At Night of Hope, guests filled out postcards telling our next mayor and Council what they hope to see. Every voice counts.



"Being in Ward 8, you don't have a sense that people care, but I meet people that genuinely care... It's a sense of belonging. A lot of us want to make a difference and don't know how, but that gives us a space."

Darene Barnett, Bellevue Family Success Center Community Advisory Committee member, featured in the Washington Informer
Read the article here.

Key Themes for DC's Next Mayor and Council from Donors and Staff



2

Sign up to host a birthday party for children experiencing homelessness and help create joyful moments during their family's housing journey.



3

Become a Sustainer of Hope! Monthly donors create consistent support for our programs to innovate and thrive. Sign up online or check the "Donate monthly" box on your enclosed remit envelope.

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Our Health Centers Recognized for Excellence

*Community of Hope has once again earned a Silver Quality Award from HRSA. This recognition places us among the **top 11–20% of health centers nationwide** for quality of care.*



SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER



Give the gift of choice to families by donating funds or gift cards!

You can help families celebrate a joyful holiday season by providing parents gift cards to choose gifts or food for their families. Make a Holiday Cheer gift or organize a drive with your workplace or faith community. Email Development@cohdc.org or visit www.communityofhopedc.org/holidaycheer.

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