

GOOD WORK

Caroline Center

Committed to Women • Committed to Work

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CAROLINE CENTER

Sponsored by the School Sisters of Notre Dame

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Caroline Center Receives Accreditation from the Maryland Higher Education Commission



In June, 2009, Caroline Center was invited to apply for accreditation as a private career school from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Previously, Caroline Center had been considered exempt from this accreditation as a non-profit, but MHEC issued a ruling that all career schools in Maryland should be accredited. The Maryland Higher Education Commission consists of 12 members appointed by the Governor and charged by statute to manage, strengthen, and supervise postsecondary education in the State and achieve a system of postsecondary education that promotes accessibility and affordability. MHEC serves the state as the regulator of private career schools. The application process and curricular documentation for MHEC accreditation were extensive and required several weeks to complete. This process served Caroline Center well in that it provided opportunities to scrutinize every detail of every program as well as to validate the exceptional and comprehensive career and life skills programs we offer women who come to our door. In September, 2009, Caroline Center received the official MHEC accreditation.

There are 5 private career schools for Pharmacy Technicians in Maryland and 21 private institutions that provide training for Certified and Geriatric Nursing Assistants. Of these 26 private career schools that provide training in the same fields as Caroline Center, Caroline Center is the only program that is tuition-free. All of the other schools charge tuition which ranges between \$750 - \$2500. The 26 private career schools which offer job training in fields comparable to Caroline Center generally do not provide the Employability Skills components that are a part of the comprehensive training offered at Caroline Center. Our Employability Skills include: Financial Literacy classes, professional counseling, social work support, speech classes, resumé writing, interviewing skills, application preparation as well as assistance with criminal background expungement and transportation cost subsidies where needed. In addition, Caroline Center has a full time Career Coach who assists our trainees while they are enrolled at Caroline Center as well as counsels our alumnae with job issues that may arise, the updating of resumes, continuing education opportunities, and new job searches. Caroline Center is proud to add the Maryland Higher Education Commission certification to its list of accomplishments.

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends of Caroline Center,

One of my favorite Christmas stories is O. Henry's "Gift of the Magi". You will recall how the young couple who have no money secretly decide to gift each other by selling what is most precious – he sells his grandfather's watch to buy combs for her hair; she sells her hair to buy him a watch chain. The gifts, the author concludes, were wise and precious because they were given out of surrendered treasures and loving hearts.

Daily, wise and precious gifts are given and received here at Caroline Center –

■ Recently, Octavia read the assembled group a poem she had written when her daughter died a few years ago. It was written and delivered with such pain and passion that we were all emotionally spent by the time she finished.

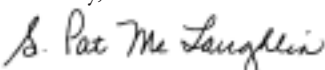
■ On more than one occasion when we've opened our annual appeal envelopes this fall a note is attached, "I'm sorry I can't give more this year." A gift, nonetheless.

■ When Kyra, one of our GNA trainees, was too sick to complete the clinical portion of her course, the nurse from her clinical site offered to supervise her independently when she recovered so that she could graduate.

■ An employer took the time to call to tell us how pleased he is with the graduates he has hired and how he hopes we continue to send more to his facility.

Whether they be material treasures or treasures of loving hearts expressed in kind words or pent up feelings and emotions that finally found a place to be shared, the gifts we experience daily from the women who attend and from those who support us, touch us deeply. Like ripples on a pond they move beyond us and remind us of the gifts and Gift of this season which give comfort and joy to our days. Thank you for your support, may you have a blessed Christmas and New Year!

Sincerely,


Patricia McLaughlin, SSND
Executive Director

Of Note

■ Caroline Center is pleased to welcome new members of the Board of Trustees: **Pamela Conover**, Vice President and Senior Legal Counsel with T. Rowe Price Associates, Inc., **Christopher Lonergo**, Associate Attorney with Ober, Kaler, Grimes & Shriver, **Norma Long, PhD**, retired Director of the Renaissance Program at the College of Notre Dame, and **Ann Lindsay Smyth Marsh**, Community Volunteer and Activist.

■ Caroline Center friends and supporters made a very blessed and Merry Christmas for our women. Caroline Center trainees are asked to submit their "wish list" for their children for Christmas. It was striking this year how many Santa's lists included pajamas, clothing, shoes, and coats rather than toys. These difficult times are very challenging indeed for our students. But our wonderful supporters managed



to answer the call and provide wonderful and much needed clothing AND toys for our families. Our sincere gratitude to: **College of Notre Dame Alumnae Association, College of Notre Dame Faculty, Loyola University Maryland Presents for Christmas Program, Notre Dame Preparatory Students, Employees of RCM&D, Janet and John Schmick, Lauryn Hutt who once again delivered toiletries and gift certificates for our women, Rene's Beauty Parlor and Dolores Lembach** who have been spreading their joy at Caroline Center for many years with their collections. Also, Twelve Trustees Leaping adopted Caroline Center families and a Partridge in a Pear Tree!



■ **Citi**, as part of their community outreach and support, once again invited Caroline Center to be the beneficiary of employee contributions toward



Wear Your Jeans to Work days in December.

Kathi O'Connor represented Caroline Center at this event. Our heartfelt thanks to Citi for inviting Caroline Center to become a beneficiary of employee contributions and for the opportunity to share our mission. Special thanks to **Faith Donerson**, Citi Maestro Administrative Support, **Linda Wells**, President of the Citi Volunteer Leadership Council and the team of volunteers who gave their time to help collect and process the donations. Caroline Center is so heartened by the wonderful Citi employees who generously donated \$1,530 to Caroline Center.

Community Connections

■ Sister Pat McLaughlin recently met with **Major Melvin Russell**, Commanding Officer of the Eastern District Baltimore City Police Department who was introduced to Caroline Center by trustee, Kim Ward. Major Russell is interested in connecting Caroline Center with some women's groups he has initiated in his district.

■ **Kim Ward**, Chair of the Development Committee, and Sister Pat met with Robin Haskins, in the State's Attorney Office of Baltimore City Victims' Services to update their staff on Caroline Center Programs and to learn more about how Caroline Center might assist in connecting our trainees to their services.

■ Trustee, **Suzanne Levin-Lapides** accompanied Sister Pat to the Weinberg Foundation reception in November where the president of the foundation, Shale Stiller, discussed the role of philanthropy among donors.

■ **The Women's Giving Circle**, a generous supporter of Caroline Center, extended an invitation to Sister Pat who attended a Grantee Connect Networking meeting in November. This was an opportunity for grantees of the Women's Giving Circle to share information and ideas on topics such as partnerships, use of social media, and board recruitment.

■ Trustee **Trish Feeley** and Sister Pat met with the **Bank of America LEAD Council** which is a group of bank employees interested in promoting women in leadership at the workplace and in the community. Several bank employees have since come to Caroline Center to give workshops and assist with mock interviews.

Where Are They Now?



Cynthia MacKinnon enrolled at Caroline Center in September, 2006 and graduated in December, 2006 with a certificate in Upholstery. She then moved on to Caroline Center Upholstery in January 2007 as an apprentice. Prior to enrolling at Caroline Center, Cynthia was employed at Office Depot. For some time, she says, "I had been looking for a different kind of work where I could use my hands and be a little creative." When she began an internet search, she narrowed it down to upholstery and Caroline Center popped up.

Cynthia worked very conscientiously at Caroline Center Upholstery for almost three years and was promoted to the position of Trainer and eventually Assistant Manager. In June, 2009, Caroline Center was faced with the most difficult decision of having to close the upholstery business. There had developed a loyal following of customers over the years, and where would they go now for their upholstery needs?

Cynthia decided she wanted to continue in the upholstery business and work on her own, so Caroline Center kept the same phone number active, but all calls are automatically transferred directly to Cynthia. Cynthia says, "After a few months, I am really learning to manage my time and the orders I accept. I am available 7 days a week and customers are appreciative that they can do business with me on Saturdays or Sundays. God has been working with me too and giving me strength and patience." She has been quite busy and has accepted approximately 50 orders this holiday season. Fortunately her son helps her from time to time with the heavy lifting and pick up and delivery and occasionally, Miss Dorothy Geathers, another Caroline Center alumna works with her. Congratulations to Cynthia for her determination and desire to continue on with the skills she learned at Caroline Center and her courage and strength to move forward in her career.

So, if you need quality upholstery work done, please think of Cynthia MacKinnon. She can be reached at 410-522-3588.

The Personalization of Giving from the Heart

Donations come to Caroline Center in many forms. Some are gifts of time, others are gifts of talent, several are in-kind donations, and then of course there is old fashioned money.



Some of our loyal donors respond to a letter from Sister Pat, and others are inspired by something written in a publication. We also have new friends who give because they have become acquainted with Caroline Center through another member of our family. Gifts of cash are usually made once a year, a few are received semi-annually and some via the United Way throughout the year. There is one donor to Caroline Center however, who gives on a more regular basis – like clockwork.

Charles R. Ritter, Ph.D., a professor of History at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland and the Director of the Morrissy Honors Program, was introduced to Caroline Center by Sister Kathleen Feeley, SSND, who enjoyed a long tenure as the president of the College of Notre Dame and was the foundress of Caroline Center. Dr. Ritter also works closely at the College with Sister Miriam Jansen, SSND, Caroline Center's Board Chair and has known Sister Pat McLaughlin, SSND, Caroline Center Executive Director for years and says "I have really admired her work at Caroline Center." But Dr. Ritter became a donor after visiting Caroline Center for the first time. He was in the company of visiting Japanese students who were guests of the College of Notre Dame. The trainees he met that day, inspired Dr. Ritter to become a donor. The unusual way in which Dr. Ritter makes his gifts is that every two weeks, he writes a check to Caroline Center – without fail. "That's how my budget works best," he says.

To know that Caroline Center is at the top of someone's "to do list" every two weeks is heartwarming and affirming for the staff and especially the trainees. Caroline Center is most grateful to Dr. Ritter for his thoughtful and generous support.



On Line Giving

Consider utilizing a safe, secure way to make a donation to Caroline Center. Visit our web page:

www.caroline-center.org

and click the button marked

On-line Giving

Save the Date **Green Food and Bands**

Caroline Center presents the 11th Annual Green Food and Bands on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at Notre Dame Prep 7:00 – 11:00 PM.

- Tickets remain a reasonable \$60.00 per person
- Delicious Food by Pepper's Catering
- Live and Silent Auctions
- Pots of Gold Raffles
- Grand Raffle - \$1,000 Cash

Sponsorships Available:

- \$1500 – 10 tickets
- \$2500 – 12 tickets
- \$5000 – 14 tickets
- \$10,000 – 16 tickets

If you won't be joining us for the fun, consider becoming a Patron – any donation is appreciated.

If you would like to become a Sponsor, Auction Donor or Volunteer, please contact Sheryl Piron at Caroline Center at 410-563-1303 or spiron@caroline-center.org

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