

Day Center Reopening After COVID 19 Restrictions



When COVID 19 restrictions began in the spring of 2020, the Day Center at Mission of Love Charities (MOLC) was closed to the public. Since COVID restrictions are lifting, MOLC is reopening Day Center facilities to help the homeless bring order to their lives.

The Day Center offers much needed services to the homeless. Two of the main facilities that the homeless may access at Mission of Love Charities are showers and a washer and dryer for dirty clothing.

Now, in addition to obtaining a hot meal for lunch, families and individuals can make use of the Day Center. It is open two days per week. The Day Center is open for families each Tuesday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. The Day Center is open for men on Thursday, from 10 a.m.– 2 p.m. Children must be accompanied by an adult and must not be separated from adults while using the Day Center.

Day Center Hours:

Open for Families: Tuesdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Open for Men: Thursday, 10 a.m.– 2 p.m.

People who use the Day Center can expect to be given towels and face cloths for showering as well as bath soap and shampoo. ThreeE Consulting Group is the towel sponsor for the Day Center. Participants can bring dirty clothing and do a wash while showering or eating.

Access to a shower and washer and dryer is a valuable convenience for the homeless that already visit the Food Pantry. There is no cost to utilize the Day Center. It will be open now and in the future to any homeless person or families in need of these facilities.

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Intensive Outpatient Treatment For Drug Rehabilitation to Start at Mission of Love Charities

A special program to get drug addicted adults off the streets began in mid-March at Mission of Love Charities. The Intensive Outpatient Treatment for Drug Rehabilitation (IOP) involves a necessary community partner: Integrated Behavioral Health Services. The program also depends upon the hard work of staff members Greg Torrence, Director of Outreach and Yessica Molina, Senior Director of Case Management, whose work behind the scenes of the class makes a difference in improving the lives of those who participate.

The IOP program requires a commitment from participants of 16 weeks and meets every Monday and Friday from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. for a total of 64 hours of work. Eight adults have signed up for the program, which treats drug and alcohol addiction and addresses housing issues for the homeless. The participants visit the Food Pantry on a regular basis and are homeless. They are motivated to take the IOP program with the promise of housing and treating their addictions. Participants are permitted to miss up to two classes. If they miss three classes, they must begin the program again.

Dr. Kaur, from Integrated Behavioral Health Services, will be the facilitator of the program. Most participants are addicted to PCP, heroin and alcohol. At the beginning of every class, a breathalyzer test must be taken by each participant, to make sure they are showing up without alcohol present. Every other week, a urinalysis test will be taken to gauge the amount of drugs that are in their systems. Testing is designed to make participants accountable, not to deter them from participation in the program. Any participants that use needles will also be given an HIV test.

Participants take part in group therapy sessions and other activities during the program. Group therapy is effective because, "They come together to drink so they can come in together to take the program. They hold each other accountable," says Greg Torrence. He believes group therapy is more effective than individual therapy. "One person says something and they all chime in" says Torrence. When the same group of adults must show up for individual therapy, there are no shows, and sometimes therapists are met with silence.

In the group context, they find others in a similar situation that they relate to easily. This sparks real conversations. Torrence says, "They can look around and see people who look like them and talk like them. They work better in a group."

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While group therapy and drug treatment goes on behind closed doors to respect privacy, Mission of Love Charities' employees are working to create change and address real issues in the lives of the homeless and drug addicted. One of the primary issues that must be worked on is providing this population with proper documentation. Torrence works to obtain birth certificates for those in the class. Then a document that verifies they are homeless is created, so each can go to the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and obtain an ID for \$1. This ID enables each person to apply for SNAP benefits, Medicaid and housing.

Sixteen weeks is a long commitment. However, they must complete the program in order to be eligible for housing. Yessica Molina is busy working

on documentation, SNAP and housing issues, while many are in the program. "Yessica's work is effective and makes a difference in these adults' lives. She works quietly all day long to make things happen," said Torrence.

Issues of self-esteem are also addressed in this program. N' Style Hair Grooming provides free haircuts every other Monday, to prepare participants for job searching. MOLC has shower and laundry facilities for the homeless, too. When it comes time to search for a job, participants are given clothing appropriate for an interview and a job. All of this contributes to the self-esteem of the individual and helps them to live their lives with dignity.

Torrence says that all of the activities of the IOP program help to consume their time. "We eat up their time so they don't have as much time to go out and get high or to look for money to get high. Most will see improvement. We want to fill up their days, give them something to do besides getting high all day" commented Torrence.

Overall, the IOP program is expected to be a success. Most will obtain housing upon graduation from the program. Since many of those in the program already come to Mission of Love Charities for food and to take a shower and do laundry, it's easier to reach them and keep them entrained in the 16-week program.

"We want to fill up their days, give them something to do besides getting high all day."



DXT becomes a Community Partner with Mission of Love Charities

DXT Therapeutic Services is a trusted community partner with Mission of Love Charities. This organization offers complementary services to MOLC's members that are vital.

DXT Therapeutic Services offers behavioral and mental health services that help to assess members under various life stresses for mental health challenges. DXT works with children, adolescents and adults who have mental health and/or substance abuse issues and they do it on an outpatient basis. DXT assesses and evaluates these issues on an individual basis, providing experienced counselors on site at MOLC to perform these evaluations. Having no insurance or little money for counseling has been a barrier to proper evaluation in the past for many members. This service is no charge to members. Often counseling can lead to life changing outcomes for members, so it is essential that they receive it. MOLC provides this service to members with the hope of changing life direction for the individual in need of counseling.

DXT's counselors are trained to identify a host of issues. These include: trauma victims, anxiety disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity, mood disorders, conduct disorders, personality disorders and substance abuse. Left untreated, these conditions can be a barrier to performing a job and/or maintaining a healthy, balanced lifestyle. When addressed by counseling, these mental health issues are less of a threat to everyday living and behaviors can be modified to make adjustments for a healthier lifestyle. **Counseling empowers the individual to lead a more productive life.** DXT is an excellent community partner. Offering these services to MOLC members is life changing for many.

For those faced with employment, housing and education inequality, services are needed to create change. This solid community partnership with DXT Therapeutic works to help expand the services MOLC offers. By giving members assistance in mental and behavioral health they are enriched and empowered to change their lives for the better.

*This service is
FREE to MOLC
members*

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- trauma victims
- anxiety disorders
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- mood disorders
- conduct disorders
- personality disorders
- substance abuse



In Person Learning Begins at Mission of Love Charities

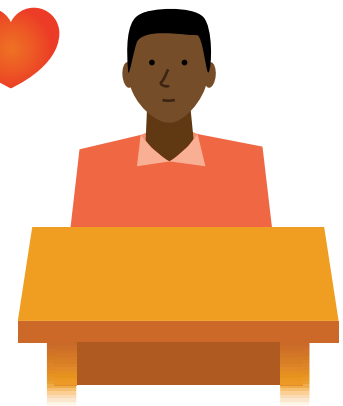
Since the COVID 19 Pandemic began, Mission of Love Charities (MOLC) has been hosting educational programming geared towards workforce readiness.

Up until now, these classes have been taught remotely and students took the class online, from the comfort of their own homes. Programs have been on a variety of topics including Events and Meeting Planning Boot Camp, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Training and Certification, Financial Literacy, Life Skills classes and more. Now that COVID restrictions are being lifted, MOLC is offering in person class meetings, taught on site.

According to a study conducted by the Nature Public Health Emergency Collection, 60% of students preferred in person

learning to remote learning. In person learning is preferred over remote learning by a majority of students for a variety of reasons. "Students prefer in person teaching and reported higher engagement, learning, and understanding during classroom teaching," reported the study by Nature Public Health Emergency Coalition. The natural connection between teachers and students is highlighted when both are present in the classroom.

In response to this need for in person learning Mission of Love Charities has created a new Learning Center for class participants who want to come and learn in person. This dedicated classroom has seating for up to 16 participants and a podium for the teacher. It's a room within the warehouse that has been specifically set up for in person learning with 15 square feet of space. The Learning



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Center is a semi-walled off room that will serve as a hub for learning of all kinds.

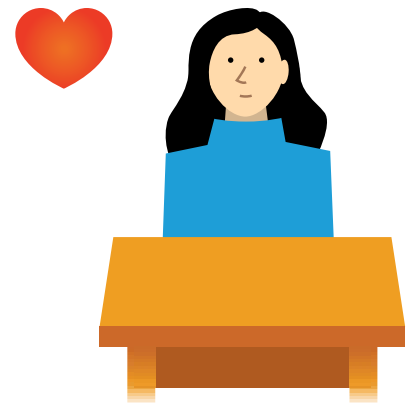
In late February and early March, the first in-house training was taught at the Learning Center when OSHA certification courses were offered by teacher Sheldon Primus. Primus had been teaching OSHA certification classes remotely. Now the certification for OSHA, a health and safety class for workers, is being taught in person at the new Learning Center. Primus said, "I actually truly enjoy teaching in person. It's my personality. I like to see the student's light turn on. It is harder to gauge what the student is thinking and feeling in a remote learning environment."

Compared to remote teaching, Primus said there are some advantages to teaching in person. He sets his classroom up in a U shape to allow for more interaction between students. When students cross talk, he tries to keep them on topic. "I allow them to use this ordered technique to let them work out the knowledge themselves," said Primus. Cross talk is not an option with remote teaching, as students must stay focused on one voice. It works well in the classroom, where multiple voices can be heard in conversation.

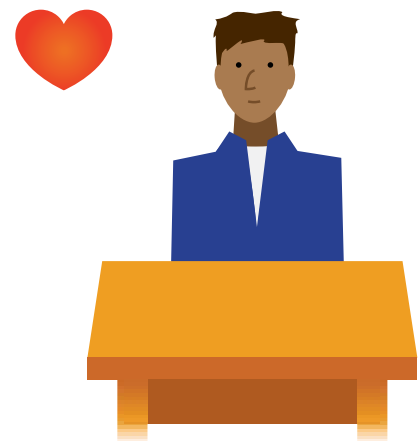
Another way of reaching students in Primus' classroom was experiential learning. Primus took the class outside to an empty construction site nearby. Here, he exposed them to scaffolding. They were able to examine the scaffolding more closely to identify what type it was. Primus did this, "to give them an idea of what scaffolds would look like in the field. They put their hands on the mud seals and different components of the scaffolds. I showed them safety features and we discussed some of the safety hazards on the scaffolding. Online I would show videos of this," said Primus. Viewing videos and physically touching things are totally different types of learning. Both methods teach the student about hazards in the field.

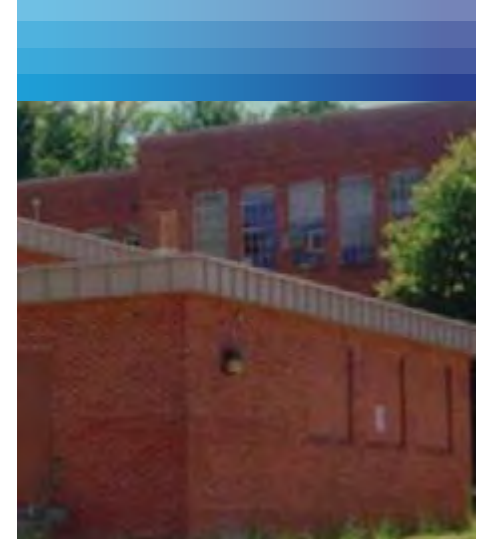
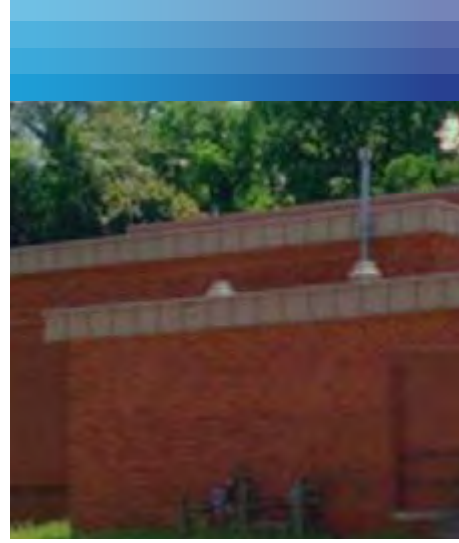
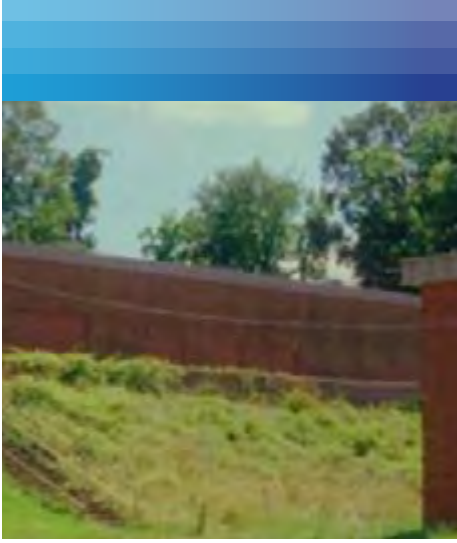
Teaching online and teaching in person, Primus utilizes the same material to reach his students. "The difference is in the delivery," said Primus, "this is what changes," he added.

Students and instructors clearly benefit from in person teaching. "The Learning Center has been reinvigorated after a break for COVID-19 restrictions," said Richard Majuk. Other upcoming classes will be taught at the Learning Center this spring, summer and fall.



It is harder to gauge what the student is thinking and feeling in a remote learning environment.





A 2.5 Million HUD Grant Awarded in March to Renovate Old Lyndon Hill School Building

Mission of Love Charities is outgrowing the present facility at 6180 Old Central Avenue.

One of the main expansions that has developed over the past few years is the need for more classroom spaces to house the Educational and Workforce Development programs. The present warehouse space has limited capacity to house these expanding programs. Workforce development programs have grown in popularity and participation at MOLC and an expanded space is needed to house them.

In 2020, The Redevelopment Authority of Prince George’s County gave a long-term lease to MOLC for the Old Lyndon Hill school building, for \$1 per year. The school is located across the street from the present facility, at 6181 Old Central Avenue. The old Lyndon Hill school building will undergo renovations to the property to outfit it for Mission

of Love Charities’ operations. The new building will offer a drastic increase in space for MOLC’s operations with a special emphasis on classrooms and additional space for Workforce Development and Education courses.

In March 2023, a grant for \$2.5 million by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was awarded to renovate the old Lyndon Hill school building. This grant is from the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) and is Congressionally directed spending. It is a Community Project Funding (CPF) award designed to positively impact the whole community. Announcement of this federal grant is critical to beginning the construction phases of the building project. **This HUD grant will enable MOLC to begin the renovation project in 2023.**

Deborah Martinez, CEO of MOLC says, “We’re excited and can’t

wait for the new project to begin. This would be an absolute game changer for our clients in the Capitol Heights area as we are centrally located in the Blue Line Corridor. I would like to express our deepest appreciation to HUD and other funders. We look forward to the opening of the new building.”

An environmental study was conducted on the property and was essential research for HUD funding. The next phase of the project will include receiving bids from construction companies interested in working on the project. Electrical contractors will also be invited to bid on the project’s electrical component.

The old Lyndon Hill School Building will cost an estimated \$4 million to renovate. Sources for additional funding are being researched.

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MOLC Welcomes Spillman Truhart to the Team! ❤️

Spillman Truhart is the Grants Manager for Mission of Love Charities. In his role at Mission of Love Charities as the Grants Manager he performs many duties. He researches, writes and develops grant proposals for the organization. Truhart works on partnerships with other non-profit organizations to provide services to the client base. He assists the CEO, Deborah Martinez, with tasks associated with partnerships and grants to help the community. Mission of Love Charities welcomes Spillman Truhart to the team.



Mission of Love Charities
6180 Old Central Ave., Capitol Heights, MD 20743
(301) 333-4440
www.molcinc.org

