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*Maximizing community resources to reduce poverty*

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## 14th Annual CCMC Chocolate Festival a Success!



The 14th Annual CCMC Chocolate Festival was held Sunday, February 4, 2018, at the Embassy Suites. There were over 700 people at this event bidding, visiting...and eating a LOT of chocolate.

The chocolatiers this year were:

Angel's in the Park, The Arlington, Bistro 400, Bleu Monkey, Brick House Grill, CHI-St. Vincent, Dolce Gelato, Embassy Suites, Evil-O, Fat Bottomed Girl's Cupcakes, First Baptist Church, Hotel Hot Springs, Kilwin's, Malvern National Bank, NPC Hospitality and Tourism, Pour Some Sugar on Me, and Red Light Roastery Coffee.

And the 2018 winners were:



**Best Taste** - National Park College  
Hospitality & Tourism

- 2nd place-CHI-St. Vincent
- 3rd Place-Angel's in the Park

**Best of Show** - Malvern National Bank

- 2nd Place-Fat Bottomed Girls
- 3rd Place-Pour Some Sugar on Me

**People's Choice** - Dolce Gelato

- 2nd place-National Park College
- 3rd Place-Malvern National Bank

Congratulations to all...and a big thank you to all the chocolatiers who participated! Not only was the chocolate delicious, but this was a very good year for booth displays!

Also, a huge thank you to all our wonderful volunteers in all capacities. We couldn't do it without you!

All in all...it was a GREAT day for chocolate...and for CCMC!!



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## 2018 CCMC Board of Directors

Seven new members were added to the Cooperative Christian Ministries and Clinic Board of Directors at the January meeting. They are Mark Allen, Brent Atkins, Stuart Fleischner, Minnie Lenox, Linda Ragsdale, Jordan Steinhaus, and Vikki Tankersley. Gary Beckwith, who is returning as a CCMC Board member, was also elected.

Those continuing on the board from 2017 are Ana Argueta, Dr. John Crenshaw, Morgan Golden, Brenda Hughes, Jill Johnson, Dr. Jack Porter, Jim Smith, Dr. John Wayne Smith, Dr. Jack Sternberg, Christi Whatley, and Rick Williams.

CCMC is proud to welcome the new board members as it looks forward to a productive 2018...with over 20 years of service to the Hot Springs/Garland County community.

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# Community Discussions Continue in 2018

The Community Discussion meetings held at the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce on the third Wednesday of each month, 8:00-9:00 a.m., will continue in 2018.

These meetings provide an opportunity to share information about Bridge to Hope and how this initiative can help individuals, businesses, students, and communities build resources for a more successful, sustainable future. Everyone in the community is invited and encouraged to attend.

The next meeting will be held on **March 21**.

Due to limited seating, an RSVP is requested to [awilson@ccmchs.com](mailto:awilson@ccmchs.com) or 501.318.1153, ext. 303.

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## BRIDGE TO HOPE

Poverty can be defined as *“the extent to which an individual does without resources.”*

The resources have been identified as...

**Financial** - Being able to purchase the goods and services of that class and sustain it.

**Emotional** - Being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. Shows itself through choices.

**Mental** - Having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life.

**Spiritual** - Believing in (divine) purpose and guidance.

**Physical** - Having physical health and mobility.

**Support Systems** - Having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources.

**Relationships/Role Models** - Having frequent access to adult(s) who are appropriate, *nurturing*, and who do not engage in destructive behavior.

**Knowledge of Hidden Rules** - Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group.

**Integrity and trust** - Your word is good, you do what you say you will do, and you are safe.

**Motivation and persistence** - You have the energy and drive to prepare for, plan, and complete projects, jobs, and personal changes.

**Formal register** - You have the emotional control, vocabulary, language ability, and negotiation skills to succeed in school and/or work settings.

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## Christ of the Hills Church in Hot Springs Village Makes Donation to CCMC

Christ of the Hills United Methodist Church in Hot Springs Village recently donated \$1,000 to CCMC. Petra Block (left) came by CCMC and presented the check to Starla Bleifus (right), Program Coordinator for Getting Ahead.

Thank you, Christ of the Hills Church, for your generosity!

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## Staying Ahead in February

The regular monthly meeting of Staying Ahead was held on Thursday, February 8, at the YMCA...first time at our new location!

The food was wonderful, as usual...prepared by Ms. Marilyn. Each month we think it can't get any better, but she always seems to raise the bar! Thank you, Ms. Marilyn!



Graduate updates, games, and fellowship are always on the agenda for these meetings. February's game involved connecting short phrases with popular candy names. Much fun was generated by guesses to clues, such as linking a "short laugh" to a Snickers bar.

Our educational piece this month was shared by Paul Jacob, a Getting Ahead graduate. His focus was on emotional stability, happiness, and gratitude. He illustrated his talk with "Jacob's" ladder. The rungs on the ladder illustrated that success should be measured, on an individual basis, as one climbs toward stability.



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## Getting Ahead Graduate Update

The GA graduate update for February is **Veronica Blair**. Veronica graduated in Spring 2017 and served as a co-facilitator in one of the Fall 2017 classes.





She was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and has two children, a son, Aaron, and a daughter, Adrienne; and three grandchildren.

Veronica is a certified nursing assistant and is involved with the community, her church, and Getting Ahead.

She said the most valuable thing she learned in Getting Ahead was the need to work hard to achieve your goals. She said she also knows that you can do all things through Christ.

We are so glad to know Veronica! We wish her well and hope she continues to be a part of volunteering with Getting Ahead and taking part in Staying Ahead activities!

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## Interested in Being a Mentor for a Getting Ahead Graduate?

If you are interested in getting more information about mentoring a Getting Ahead graduate, please contact:

Michelle Ratcliff  
501.318.1153, ext. 102  
[mratcliff@ccmchs.com](mailto:mratcliff@ccmchs.com)

We are always looking for volunteers to fill this vital role...to walk alongside a GA graduate as they continue to work to improve and stabilize their lives and their families lives!



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## Our Spotlight on CCMC Volunteer

Our spotlight for the month of February is on a volunteer:

**Mike Davidson**

**Born:** Maryville, TN

**Lived in Hot Springs:** Since July 2006

**Family:** He is married and has a daughter and a son, three grandchildren...and two great-grandchildren!

**What do you do at CCMC:** Mike started volunteering at CCMC in 2007. He worked with admissions for three years, was a board member for six years, was chairman of the Chocolate Festival for three years, and, currently, is a transportation coordinator and Chocolate Festival volunteer.

**Favorite thing about CCMC:** The help it provides to the community, the great staff and volunteers, and the leadership provided by the Executive Director, Lynn Blankenship.

**Hobbies:** Reading, basketball, Senior Olympics, and volunteer work.

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## Monthly Information Meetings for Prospective Getting Ahead Participants

Please remember that we hold monthly information meetings for prospective participants for Getting Ahead on the second Thursday of each month, from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Starla Bleifus, Getting Ahead Coordinator, reviews the process and answers questions that attendees might have about the program.

The GA process is a sixteen-week self discovery process for participants...to learn about themselves, the eleven resources the material outlines, and the journey from poverty to sustainability.

If you know anyone who would be interested in learning more about Getting Ahead, please encourage them to attend one of these important meetings.

Upcoming information meeting dates are:

- **March 8, 2018**
- **April 12, 2018**
- **May 10, 2018**

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## Important Meeting Times in March

### **Information Meeting for Prospective Getting Ahead Participants**

Thursday, March 8      10:00-11:00 a.m.  
CCMC  
133 Arbor St.

### **Staying Ahead Monthly Meeting (Graduates/Mentors)**

Thursday, March 8      6:00-7:00 p.m.  
YMCA  
130 Werner St.

### **CCMC Community Discussion**

Wednesday, March 21      8:00-9:00 a.m.  
Chamber of Commerce  
659 Ouachita Ave.

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## CCMC Speakers Always Ready to Share the Bridge to Hope and Getting Ahead Stories

If you would like to have a CCMC representative come to your business or organization to talk about Bridge to Hope in Hot Springs and the Getting Ahead stories, please contact Lynn Blankenship at [lynn@ccmchs.com](mailto:lynn@ccmchs.com) or call 501.318.1153, ext. 103.

The Getting Ahead story is about building resources, removing barriers, and supporting the journey from poverty to sustainability for those in our community who want to benefit from this process. The results...a better workforce, a new group of people to contribute to the community...and stronger families.

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## New and Ongoing Needs at CCMC

CCMC also has ongoing needs. In addition to volunteer help, which is always needed and appreciated, other needs are:

- Prayer support
- Financial support for overhead costs (utilities, medication, etc.)
- Office supplies (paper, pens, notepads, etc.)
- Paper towels, napkins
- Paper plates, cups
- Disinfectant wipes

Costs involved with Getting Ahead include:

- Classroom supplies for an entire class (16 participants) - \$200
- Workbooks for a full class - \$300
- Food for a 16-member class session - \$150
- Price per class participant - \$600

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See what's happening on Facebook:

