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DMV PAL CHAPTERS



Annapolis, MD
Baltimore, MD
Cambridge, MD
Cecil County, MD
Hagerstown, MD
Salisbury, MD
Washington, DC

Reflecting on an Impactful 2018 for DMV PAL

This year has been exciting in many ways and has reminded us of what can be accomplished when individuals come together behind an important cause. Seeing DMV PAL transform from a dream into reality has been a rewarding experience, to say the least. As we approach the new year, we sit in humble reflection of what has unfolded in 2018.



Chief of Salisbury Police Department, Chief Duncan, Cpl. Thompsen, Officer Carroll, Mayor Day, the Salisbury Rhinos and DMV PAL staff participate in Community Funday.

We spent time with students from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County for the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation's Day of Play, only to be surprised with an impromptu performance by a few future gymnasts. We were inspired by the bright smile of the young lady from Hagerstown making an important commitment to herself to live drug and alcohol free.

DMV PAL Chief Executive Officer Cherelle Hill brought out her sneakers and played an energizing game of flag football with the Salisbury Rhinos at their inaugural Community Funday. We remember the giggles of students from Mace's Lane Middle School, as they welcomed *Black-ish* star and PAL Kid, Miles Brown, to their school for the Cambridge PAL kickoff event. We saw the hope of this program, when over 20 deputies volunteered to support the Cecil County PAL program. We beamed with joy from photos of an officer and students from Baltimore happily playing with one another. We were motivated by the stories of site coordinators pouring their own resources into their programs to ensure their students had the opportunity to not only survive, but to thrive.

We are so pleased that change is happening. We are witnessing change that has the power to transform entire communities and mindsets. There is still so much work to be done, but we are thankful that we have strong partners to help. We are excited to see what can be accomplished in 2019 with the support of those who believe in DMV PAL's mission, as much as we do.

Joseph Lee Recreation Center Hosts First Program with an Officer

The regularly scheduled Wednesday PAL meeting from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, was quite different on November 7th as Officer Ronald Cromer of the Baltimore City Police Department was able to attend his first PAL meeting at the Joseph Lee Recreation Center. Cromer, also the School Resource Officer at a local high school, is a familiar face to the kids in the PAL program as he visited and worked with the children during summer camps hosted at the center.

The program had been searching for a police officer who could bond with the children and show them that they can connect on a personal level, as well as provide safe opportunities for them in their community. Once the Joseph Lee Recreation Center became an official PAL program, Site Coordinator Israel Nunez knew that Officer Cromer would be a perfect fit based on his previous interactions with the children at the center. Nunez stated that "Joseph Lee Rec Center has one of the most diverse student bases in the city and having Officer Cromer in attendance will help alleviate some of the tension that the youth have seen in their community."

The program cycles through different sports as a part of program implementation and they are currently playing kickball. During each meeting, the kids are taught fundamentals of the game and learn how they can tie these fundamentals into their everyday lives. Officer Cromer is looking forward to helping make this connection by showing the youth how teamwork and leadership skills can make a positive impact in their community. Nunez and his staff hope that Officer Cromer's presence encourages more officers to participate in the program.



Officer Ronald Cromer of the Baltimore City Police Department preparing kids from the Joseph Lee Recreation Center for a game of kickball.

Cecil County PAL Holds First Official Meeting



Members of the Cecil County Sheriff's Office get to know youth from Cecil County PAL.

The Cecil County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) is proud to announce the establishment of Cecil County's first Police Athletic League (PAL). Cecil County PAL, an affiliate of DMV PAL, announced in a press release on November 14th that they successfully conducted their first official meeting, held on November 13th at Gilpin Manor Elementary School in Elkton, MD. In attendance were 24 youth from the community, Captain Steve Brownhill, Lieutenant Joe Wilson and many other deputies from the CCSO. The majority of the meeting was spent allowing Sheriff's deputies and youth to get to know each other and discussing upcoming PAL activities for the remainder of the year.

A key motivator in bringing PAL to Cecil County was the ability for the CCSO to partner with Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS). By doing so, CCSO Sheriff's Deputies are able to volunteer their time while implementing curricula that will help youth in the Cecil County community grow as individuals, as well as provide opportunities for kids to interact and build relationships with local law enforcement agencies in a safe environment.

Cecil County PAL will continue to meet every other Tuesday at Gilpin Manor Elementary School. As the program grows, the Cecil County Sheriff's Office hopes to branch out and extend the program throughout Cecil County, in effort to have PAL meetings in schools all across the county.

PAL – YES Hosts 3rd Cohort Graduation

On November 5, 2018, PAL-YES of Baltimore, MD hosted their 3rd Cohort Graduation, which recognized the young people in the PAL program for their dedication and hard work developing their own businesses. The 3rd Cohort provides PAL members the opportunity to build their own businesses by combining their passions with leadership and entrepreneurship skills that were taught throughout the program. During the program, middle and high school aged youth worked with PAL staff members Yojinde Paxton and Star Campbell, peer mentor Jerome Waters, and local business owners to develop and promote start-ups in the Baltimore community.

Over 200 people were in attendance at the PAL – YES site reception with guests including family, friends, community business owners and city council member Isaac “Yitzy” Schleifer. Program Lead, Joni Holifield, recognized Yitzy as a huge supporter of the program, as he has worked with the youth in their business development from start to finish and continues to interact with them on a regular basis. Also in attendance was City of Baltimore Mayor, Catherine Pugh, who spoke to the audience and presented individualized certificates to all 18 graduates of the program, personally congratulating each youth on their accomplishments.

The themes of the businesses focused on music and clothing. Cash prizes were awarded to top finishers: **Hyly Secured** received a \$500 prize, **Amaya Murillo** \$300, **Rise & Lead** \$200 and **Young Elder** \$100. However, Holifield indicated that each participant created their business with a bigger picture in mind than just making a profit. The 18 graduates used their platforms to shift focus away from violence and crime, by providing youth in the community with the opportunity to find a healthy outlet, in an effort to make Baltimore a safer place. Site Coordinator, Mike Schaffer, and his staff hope this will create a chain reaction in order to draw more kids to the PAL program and provide safe, positive alternatives for youth in Baltimore.

Hagerstown PAL Hits Play Hard, Live Clean Milestone

Hagerstown PAL has invited middle school youth at E. Russel Hicks, Western Heights, and Northern Middle schools to participate in a new program designed to combat risky behaviors among youth, including the use of drugs, tobacco and alcohol. Play Hard, Live Clean (PHLC) allows middle school aged youth to pledge against drug use and provide them with opportunities to make safe, healthy choices. At different intervals throughout the program, youth are asked to re-commit to their original pledge in order to take on different levels of commitment to a drug-free lifestyle. Pledge card holders are also invited to exclusive events and eligible for members-only rewards.

Recently, Hagerstown PAL passed the 200 participant milestone as they now have 215 participants and counting in their Play Hard, Live Clean program. Registrations were kicked off at a local community block party and the Hagerstown PAL staff has since been working closely with middle schools in the Hagerstown community to encourage more youth to take the pledge to Play Hard, Live Clean. The Hagerstown PHLC team is gearing up to begin their first in a series of Youth Leadership Committee meetings with youth who want to take on a larger role in the leadership of the program.



Hagerstown PAL encouraging middle school youth to Play Hard, Live Clean.

Black-ish Star Speaks at Cambridge PAL Kickoff

The Mace's Lane Middle School gymnasium was filled with students, teachers, administrators, parents and other members of the community, eagerly anticipating the arrival of celebrity guest speaker, Miles Brown. Brown, who plays Jack Johnson on ABC's TV Show *Black-ish* and is a contestant on *Dancing with the Stars: Junior*, was invited to speak at the Cambridge PAL Kickoff event on October 12th.

Cambridge PAL, a DMV PAL affiliate, hosted their kickoff event as an opportunity for students, staff and other members of the Cambridge community to come out and learn more about the Cambridge PAL Program. Brown, a former PAL kid, spoke to the Mace's Lane students about his experiences with PAL. His message to students was one of encouragement, and inspiration as he told them they can do anything they want as long as they believe in themselves and put their minds to it. Brown told the audience that he would not be where he is today without PAL, as it was at PAL where he started acting and dancing. In addition to speaking to the audience, Brown entertained questions from students about his life as a child TV star, competed against other students in dance battles and basketball contests and even signed autographs and took pictures with attendees.



Law Enforcement from the Cambridge Police Department and students meet Black-ish star Miles Brown.

Officers Kason Washington and John Foster, organizers of the Cambridge PAL program, saw this as an opportunity to spread the word to youth in the community about a safe environment for kids to learn, grow and play all while interacting and building relationships with local police officers. At the conclusion of the event, applications were made available for students and parents to take home and fill out to register youth for Cambridge PAL. The Cambridge PAL program is continually looking for more volunteers and participants. The program will be implemented on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Mace's Lane Middle School.

LOOKING TO START A DMV PAL CHAPTER IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Send an e-mail to info@dmvpal.org to learn more!

CONTACT US



DMV PAL

1200 18th St. NW, Suite #700
Washington, DC 20036

Email: info@dmvpal.org

Website: <http://www.dmvpal.org>

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