

# RAISING UP

THE GOOD NEWS OF HELPING UP MISSION

## A Recipe for Redemption

When K’wuan (pictured left) was six years old, he stood in the kitchen with his grandmother preparing the Thanksgiving feast. He made the macaroni and cheese. From that day on, he wanted to become a chef like his father, his paternal grandmother and his maternal grandfather.

At age nine, K’wuan became a big brother and was no longer the center of his family’s attention. At fourteen, he had his first drink. At sixteen, he got his first job.

“Growing up, I felt socially awkward. I was always considered mature for my age and since my father moved out when I was three, I was technically the man of the house. If I wanted to buy anything, my mom said I would have to get a job.

“At first, I drank only on weekends. I was responsible and not in trouble with the law. I just did typical teenage things. I graduated from high school and focused on working. When I was twenty, I was in my first serious relationship and became engaged. After two years, I realized I could not provide for her the way I felt I should and asked for time. She responded by breaking up with me. That is when my drinking escalated.

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**MORE  
THAN**  
*a shelter.*



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“At first, I would drink myself to sleep and became a functioning alcoholic. Then I started missing shifts because of drinking. For the next ten years, I was caught in a cycle of moving in and out of jobs and places to live. Eventually, I was living with a friend who was evicted and soon found myself sleeping in a park or on chairs in a dark office at work.

## “I wanted to drink until I died”

“Over the years, I had multiple periods of sobriety followed by relapse. I finally reached the point where I wanted to drink until I died. I lost passion for everything. I had no job, no place to stay, just the streets. I searched online for homeless shelters near me, called Helping Up Mission and two days later walked through the doors.

“HUM is a safe haven filled with brotherhood. During the year, there were times when I wanted to leave, but I knew my family, who supported me, would be hurt. At first, I was happy to be working in the kitchen, hoping to cook, but I was moved to the treatment office. Working on the fourth floor taught me patience, helped me loosen up, and reminded me how to laugh.

“While at HUM, I attended a mentor retreat called The Heart of Man, where I learned how to shoot a bow and I finally felt grounded. Thanks to Tim Engers, Life Preparation Coordinator, I achieved a major milestone when I enrolled in FoodWorks and became ServSafe certified in food handling and management. This was my first formal experience in the culinary field and it unlocked my childhood dream. To my recently passed grandmother, my biggest cheerleader, I promise to make her proud. Every time I cook, I feel like that six-year-old boy in the kitchen dreaming of becoming a chef.”



## Hope Restored. Lives Rebuilt.

Daniel's Monthly Update

### Dear HUM Family,

On a weekly basis, I am asked by a supporter or visitor to Helping Up Mission, what makes us unique among so many recovery programs for those suffering from addiction? I'll spare you the long answer and just say—it's the intersection of faith and clinical support in the context of a *community of hope*.

K'wuan's story in this month's newsletter demonstrates the power and value of this *community of hope* we call the Helping Up Mission when he shares, "HUM is a safe haven filled with brotherhood." The community is powered by the majority of our staff, who have lived experience with addiction and recovery. They share their journey willingly with those we serve. Our mission is strengthened by dedicated volunteers, supporters and community partners who share their resources with open hands to those in need.

When you stand with HUM you make hope possible for K'wuan and the hundreds of men, women and families we serve daily. Thank you for standing with us to make hope a reality.

Serving with you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Daniel Stoltzfus". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

**K. Daniel Stoltzfus, CEO**  
Helping Up Mission

## “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another”.

Proverbs 27:17

# Focus on Recovery

Mike Rallo – Director of Spiritual Life

It is hard to picture the men in their addiction when I know them in recovery. K'wuan, now sober, is thoughtful, intelligent and deeply committed to doing a job well.

“I had to grow up so fast and become responsible,” he said. When he was 9 and became a big brother, the pressure came early, and in time one drink became too many.

“It was weird to be the ‘man of the house’ while still being a child. But I also loved it.”

Sometimes substance abuse becomes a way to stay lost. At the Mission he found sobriety and space to grow. “I knew I had grown a lot when my grandmother died, my biggest cheerleader, and I allowed myself to feel it and not drink.”



He now hopes to become a chef “with freedom and patience. The joy in the journey is wonderful.”

# The Impact of Outreach

Through our 2025 Mobile Street Outreach program, we provided support to 1,307 unique individuals across Baltimore City, serving 11,197 people with food, hygiene kits and case management. We also celebrate 72 people who entered our Spiritual Recovery Programs through the Mobile Outreach Unit, showing the life-changing impact of outreach and the power of community.





## Mindful Giving

Family, at Helping Up Mission, hope is made real every day. Thanks to volunteers who serve on campus and to you who respond through Mindful Giving, urgent needs are met in real time, placing essential items directly into the hands of the men and women we serve.

Since launch, 304 items have been donated, each one a quiet expression of care that reminds someone they are seen, valued and loved.

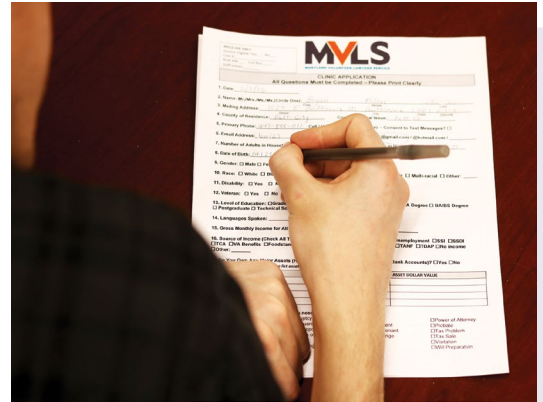
**To Donate  
Urgent Needs**

[helpingupmission.org/mindfulgiving.org](http://helpingupmission.org/mindfulgiving.org)



# Partners in Restoration

Since October 2023, our partnership with Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) has opened new doors for the men we serve. Through expungement clinics provided for our residents, 90 men have received the opportunity to clear their records. Today, 58 of them are gainfully employed and 48 have moved into their own homes, with several graduates continuing to build stability in our graduate housing.



The chance to leave the past behind is life changing. Because of dedicated community partners like MVLS, barriers fall and futures open. We offer our sincere thanks to the attorneys, staff and volunteers who generously give their time and expertise. Our partnership restores dignity, strengthens recovery and creates real pathways to work, stable housing and lasting hope for Baltimore's most vulnerable neighbors.

## Time to Grow – Recovery Park

Family, you're invited to join us for the Recovery Park Groundbreaking Ceremony on Thursday, March 26 at 10 a.m. The event will take place at 1100 E. Baltimore Street, Baltimore 21202. Come celebrate this exciting step forward with us. For questions, contact Jennifer Bedon at [jbedon@helpingup.org](mailto:jbedon@helpingup.org).



 **Helping Up Mission**  
Hope Restored. Lives Rebuilt.

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## Our Mission


To transform the lives of and restore hope to those suffering from addiction and poverty by harnessing the power of faith, science and community.

### Donate now

Mail us your gift or give online at [helpingupmission.org/donate](http://helpingupmission.org/donate).

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