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Spring overhaul



{Submitted photo}

Volunteers of America National chapter employee Vincent Bryant sorts through items at the clothes closet.

By KIPP HANLEY jhanley@insidenova.com

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Woodbridge, Va.—The Volunteers of America celebrated its 114th birthday last week by doing a service project at the Hilda Barg Homeless Prevention Center in Woodbridge.

Volunteers of America's national office joined forces with the center staff to overhaul the center's community closet just in time for spring.

This effort brought some spring cleaning to a closet flooded with community donations and allowed families residing at the shelter the opportunity to shop and select new spring clothes at no cost.

According to Center Director Gayle Sanders, there were 33 bags of clothes and 54 pairs of shoes taken out of the

clothing closet for this winter-to-spring switch. The clothes and shoes will be distributed to our outreach and prevention clients on Sundays along with the usual excess donated items.

Dubbed "Macy's," the clothing room has an interesting history. It's been called "Macy's" for more than a decade, said Sanders.

Kids started it by putting a sign on the door in the "old" shelter location, so that when other kids asked where they got something, they could say "Macy's," Sanders said.

The center is run by Volunteers of America Chesapeake, founded in 1896 in Baltimore. The Chesapeake branch serves more than 8,000 people annually through 26 programs spread geographically from Baltimore to Virginia Beach.

The programs serve the homeless, mentally ill, intellectually disabled, ex-offenders, substance abusers, the elderly and children. The staff of more than 600 employees partner with volunteers, local government officials, businesses, civic organizations and the faith community to provide high quality human services.

Staff writer Kipp Hanley can be reached at 703-878-8062.

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