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For Immediate Release

### **Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House Hosts Community Health Fair**

On Wednesday July 21, Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House, located at 116 N. Paca Street Baltimore, MD hosted its second-annual Health Fair for Paca House residents and members of the local community.

More than 50 people attended the fair, taking advantage of the free all-in-one experience providing free HIV testing, Vision and Glaucoma screenings, links to area medical, dental and mental health services, and even helpful healthy hints like nutrition and tips for green cleaning.

"I needed this health fair because I don't have any health insurance," said 25-year-old Monica Holley. Up until three weeks ago Holley had spent the last two years living on the streets of Baltimore, unable to find employment. A new resident at Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House, a 106-unit housing program for formerly homeless men and women, she was eager to take advantage of the Health Fair. "I really appreciate the information and the free screenings, like having my vision tested," she said.

Half-a-dozen community health organizations and businesses participated in the fair including Women Accepting Responsibility, a Baltimore-based non-profit providing free HIV testing, counseling and referrals; Total Healthcare – a full service federally qualified health center offering adult and pediatric primary care, dental, vision, pharmacy and supportive services; the Maryland Society for Sight; Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Community Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program – a state approved program to provide psychiatric rehabilitation services to mentally ill adults in Maryland and Kool Smiles – a general dentist office with four locations in Baltimore.

"I think this was a very very informative fair," said Lae Cole, a community living assistant for Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House who came in on her day off to man the non-profit's Community Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program booth. "I think the turnout was great and a lot of people were very impressed and took advantage of all of the services being offered. I look forward to doing this again next year."

Nancy Staten, Program Director for Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Supportive Housing Programs, says the non-profit is definitely planning future fairs. "These free services are invaluable to our clients. While residents are at Paca House we try to provide every tool possible to foster a successful transition from homelessness to self-reliant living. We are so thankful to the community partners and vendors who participate to make these fairs a success."

In addition to the Health Fair, Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House offers support services to residents on site or through referrals to outside agencies. Services are tailored to meet the varied needs of residents and include case management, assistance with obtaining entitlements, independent living skills training, GED preparation, career development, employment training, budgeting and finance, substance abuse counseling, and mental health services. Various workshops are also held at the center, which include health topics, nutrition, stress management and socialization.

For more information on Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House call 410-837-7222 or visit [www.voaches.org](http://www.voaches.org)

### **VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA CHESAPEAKE**

*Volunteers of America Chesapeake, founded in 1896 in Baltimore, is the locally chartered affiliate of Volunteers of America, Inc., one of the nation's largest and most comprehensive human services organizations. They accomplish their spiritually based mission by serving over 8,000 people annually through programs spread geographically from Baltimore, Maryland to Virginia Beach, Virginia.*

*Volunteers of America Chesapeake operates 26 programs that serve the homeless, mentally ill, intellectually disabled, ex-offenders, substance abusers, the elderly and children. The professional staff of more than 600 employees, partner with dedicated volunteers, local government officials, businesses, civic organizations and the faith community to provide high quality human services.*

### **Photos:**

**\* photos are courtesy of Courtney Dunn/Volunteers of America Chesapeake**

- 1. Monica Holley receives a free vision screening at the Health Fair, after being homeless for two years before entering Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House.**
- 2. Lae Cole, a Community Living Assistant for Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Paca House, poses with information on the non-profit's Community Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program health fair booth.**

