



Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center ChesNOTES

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Dear Wonderful ChesMRC Supporters,

As we look back on 2025—a year filled with challenges and change for our immigrant community—one word comes to mind: **Hopeful.**

This word takes me back to the pandemic five years ago, when the Dockstreet Foundation launched a campaign to focus on bright spots during a time when so many felt hopeless, scared, and uncertain. In 2025, we've faced our own share of uncertainty, and I know many of our clients have felt the same. That's why I'm stepping into 2026 with Hopeful as our guiding word.

In the pages ahead, you'll see how this theme shines through: how local stars came together to create the largest fundraising event in our history, how our youth and families continue to engage with the community, and how our dedicated staff stands ready to lead us into whatever the future holds.

I invite you to take a few moments to read these highlights—made possible by YOU—and celebrate the hope you've helped create in 2025!



Matthew R Peters
Executive Director





AN INCREDIBLE EVENT: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE COME TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE THE GOOD IN OUR COMMUNITY

In September, the Avalon Theatre came alive for the second annual "Bailando con las Estrellas", where local stars danced their hearts out to support the Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center.

This vibrant dance competition—modeled after the popular TV show Dancing with the Stars—is a cornerstone of our Hispanic Heritage Month programming. It celebrates Hispanic culture while raising vital funds to help us meet our yearly goals. This year's event was a resounding success, raising nearly \$70,000 for ChesMRC programs!

At ChesMRC, we balance uplifting success stories with the difficult challenges our clients face every day. Events like this offer a joyful pause to focus on the good—and this year's performances did not disappoint.

Our incredible pairs included:

- Victoria Gomez Lozano with Tori Gomez
- Joe Petro with Maya Robinson
- John Marrah with Rebecca Wales
- Brenda Fike with Samantha Martinez
- James Redmen with Christine Redmen
- Angel Perez with Maddie Megahan
- Milton Orellana with Berenice Orellana

Under the guidance of choreographer Erinne Lewis, the dancers trained for two weeks—but when they hit the stage, it looked like they had been practicing for months! Each duo brought their own unique flair: some playful, some passionate, and some downright impressive.

The evening's top honors went to:

- Angel Perez & Maddie Megahan – Dancing Stars (Estrellas de Baile) Award
- James & Christine Redmen – Heart (Corazón) Award
- Victoria Gomez Lozano & Tori Gomez – Make It Rain (Lluvia de Dinero) Award

Thank you to everyone who made this unforgettable night possible. Together, we proved what's possible when a community comes together to celebrate culture, joy, and hope.





CHESMRC YOUTH PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

Our youth programs are designed to provide elementary school students with engaging enrichment activities, connect families to community partners and events, and offer scholarships and mentoring to support students throughout their educational journey.

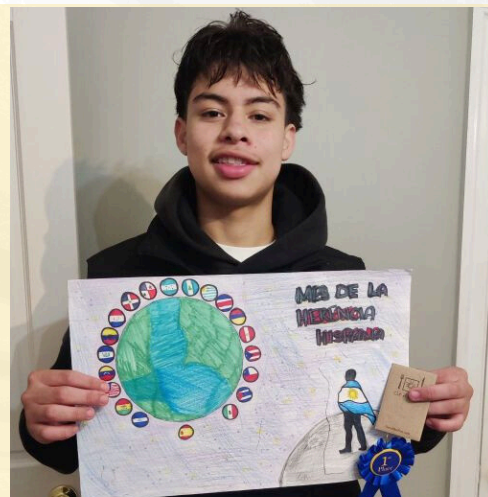


Currently, 75 students in Grades 1–5 enjoy a hot dinner followed by activities such as Cub Scouts, Healthy Habits, arts and crafts, STEM projects, and physical fitness. Through partnerships, students also experience regular field trips to places like the YMCA, Pickering Creek, HERO Academy, and Easton Airport. For many of these children, this program is their only extracurricular activity—so we work hard to make every moment count and connect them and their families to all the amazing opportunities in our community.

CHESMRC'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND EVENTS

One of the most rewarding parts of our youth program is staying connected with students after they leave elementary school. Many in high school return to complete their service-learning requirements and participate in community events such as Hispanic Heritage Month.

Our scholarship program goes beyond financial assistance. Each recipient is paired with a mentor who provides guidance, helps navigate challenges, and celebrates academic milestones. This support ensures students not only access higher education but thrive throughout their academic careers.



OUR AMAZING AND TALENTED STAFF!

Since 2012, ChesMRC has delivered more than 40,000 unique services to over 9,500 clients from 68 different countries—and it's all thanks to our incredible team. Your support empowers our staff to receive the training, certifications, and accreditations needed to provide essential services to the community. Beyond their expertise, our team reflects the diversity we celebrate, with members hailing from Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, Haiti, El Salvador, Colombia, Pakistan, and the United States.



UNIQUE AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES IN 2025

In 2025 alone, ChesMRC provided 6,370 services to 2,223 clients, including:

- Immigration Services — ChesMRC is a Recognized Accredited Organization authorized to provide immigration legal assistance.
- Health Insurance Support — Certified health counselors help clients enroll in coverage and manage medical bills.
- SNAP Benefits Assistance
- Interpreting and Translation Services
- Help with Essential Documents — Including housing and employment applications, plus referrals to partner agencies.

WE ARE HOPEFUL - AND THANKFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Are we ready for 2026? YES! Thanks to your generosity in 2025, we enter the new year with optimism and determination.

Our immigrant community stood strong this year:

- A record number of new U.S. citizens
- A vibrant Hispanic Heritage Month celebration
- High participation in afterschool programs and scholarship applications
- And countless contributions to our local economy and community every single day.

Together, we are building a future filled with hope. Thank you for being part of this journey!

