

Langley's Latest



Keeping you *informed* about how we're making a *difference* in people's lives . . .

Fall 2022

Giving Thanks to All Who Keep Langley's Mission Going

A note from the Executive Director

The season of giving thanks is upon us, and the first thing that comes to mind is how thankful I am for my family—my own family at home and my LRSS family. Our residents, program participants, work and board of directors colleagues, families of our loved ones, volunteers, I am thankful for each and every one of you who pours so much into making this organization the best it can be.

More thanks are in order to everyone who made Langley's flagship fall event the best one yet, including:

- 100 in-person guests and livestream participants
- 19 sponsors
- 54 donors to the live, silent, and dessert auctions and mystery pin items
- 27 contributors to our cause auctions

You were part of raising more than \$50,000 that keeps this essential mission strong and reliable for our friends most in need.

I am thankful to our champions who have been there for us in the past and will continue to support us again. We are facing some challenging headwinds in our recovery from COVID and industry-wide issues that impact our operations. Watch the mail for my longer letter about these concerns, but in the meantime know that we are eternally grateful to this community for supporting LRSS.

Thank you for all you do to ensure everyone has the opportunity to live rich, full lives. Happiest Thanksgiving wishes from our LRSS family to yours!

Maureen K Gum

maureen@lrss.org

LRSS Fall Event Supporters Fill the Hearts of People We Serve – Thank You for Epic Return of Tastings & Auction Benefit!

What a magnificent LRSS Fall Tastings & Auction Benefit comeback event for our community on October 1! The aftermath of Hurricane Ian was no match for our sponsors, guests, volunteers, staff, and special speakers who showed up to make the gathering a lovely event. We are immensely grateful to the 75 supporters who joined us in person, and several dozen more who participated in the livestream, to celebrate our community and the supporters who make this work possible. Watch the recording of the



livestream here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCM2dT9XnYc&t=344s.

The evening kicked off with the perfect selection of Italian wines, beers, and a specialty cocktail courtesy of our friends at **The Wine Attic** and **Impero Wine Distributors**. This paired nicely with the variety of scrumptious and seasonally flavored hors d'oeuvres prepared from scratch by Chef

Christine Gloninger.

Returning for the third year as our

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Junior League of Washington Book Club Is Back... and LRSS Residents Excited for In-person Meetings Again!

In October, the LRSS family had the pleasure of returning to book club with volunteers from Junior League of Washington. The most exciting part was bringing everyone together in person! Residents had a chance to be with familiar JLW friends and meet ones as well.



vide engaging content for our residents to practice literacy skills in a fun environment. This year's group has started off with two great reads – *We Dream of Space* and *Hidden Figures* – and plans to read five other books by the time the program wraps up in May 2023.

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Book club with Junior League of Washington and Langley has been happening for more than 25 years. LRSS is deeply grateful to the 30 volunteers each year who pro-



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Because everyone *deserves*

the chance to live a *rich, full life.*

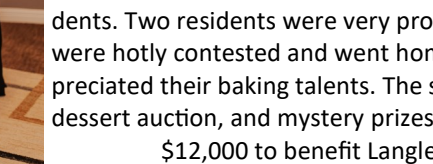
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emcee was **Kristen Berset-Harris** of WUSA's Great Day Washington. Berset-Harris was a sensation and made our program come to life. She willingly took on the hat of auctioneer and did an exceptional job creating excitement around bidding on the two exclusive live auction items.

We were thrilled to have remarks from several local, state, and national elected officials who represent our service area. Longtime LRSS supporter Fairfax County **Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust** was an advisory sponsor and shared wonderful personal stories about the 10 years he and his wife hosted this event at their home. We deeply appreciate Foust being there as well as remarks from Fairfax County **Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay**, **Delegate Marcus Simon**, and **US Congressman Gerry Connolly**, all of whom serve in legislative districts where LRSS homes are located. We also were joined by other elected officials' staff, including **Joe Mondoro**, chief of staff for **Supervisor Dalia Palchik** and **Max Shatzen**, legislative director for **Senator Dave Marsden**. It was important to hear from these officials why LRSS matters to them!

One of the most touching moments of the night came when Berset-Harris interviewed a LRSS resident. Chris had been included in an interview conducted in April 2021 as well as featured in a "Kristen's Kudos" segment in June 2022, but he had never met Berset-Harris in person until the fall event. Berset-Harris asked Chris to join her on stage to get an update on how he's been doing—Chris' responses to her questions stole the show, as his passion for the weather and local sports combined with his sharp public speaking skills brought big applause from the crowd.

It wasn't easy to follow Chris, but **LRSS Executive Director Maureen Gum** and **LRSS Board Chair Ken Cahoon** did their best. Gum gave an update on the organization and what she's been hearing from the people we work with. Many residents and program participants call her with exciting news, like about their



first vacation they've taken in many years or that they've lost weight or a dental procedure that has improved their lives. Gum also recognized LRSS Residential Services Director Stephanie Davidson for her 30 years of service to our community, as well as thanked our event hosts, Mrs Vootukuru and Mr Medicherla, for graciously opening their home and providing a stunning space for our gathering. LRSS Board Chair Cahoon also made some special recognitions by thanking our generous sponsoring companies and families, all the board volunteers who worked long and hard to make the event a memorable experience, and called out the 16 years of board service that just ended for Carly Coho who stepped off the board in September.

We had the largest silent auction in the history of the event, with 46 curated packages—all auction items had bids! A new element part of this year's festivities was a dessert auction, which was a huge hit with our guests. Most of the baked treats were handmade by board members, sponsors, and residents. Two residents were very proud that their goodies were hotly contested and went home with winners who appreciated their baking talents. The silent and live auctions, dessert auction, and mystery prizes resulted in more than \$12,000 to benefit Langley's operations.

If you didn't get a chance to donate during this important fall event season, please consider doing so now to keep our mission and work strong during the end-of-year push. Donate online at lrss.org or mail a check to the office at 2070 Chain Bridge Rd Suite G55, Vienna, VA 22182. Thank you, and we'll see you again in fall 2023!

All event photos in this story by *Laura Cheng Photo*.



LRSS Needs Your Support on #GivingTuesday November 29

Join the global generosity movement by making a difference right here in your own Fairfax County backyard when you make a contribution to Langley on #GivingTuesday! Each year doing this campaign brings renewed excitement to hear from more supporters who want to help us jumpstart the holiday giving season.

In 2022, we're asking you to be part of our general operations goals to keep the organization reliable for the residents and program participants who count on us to help them live as independently as possible. The more champions who join us on Tuesday, Nov 29, the better LRSS can serve our community. The easiest way to give is online at lrss.org. Thank you!



Together we give.

Nov 29, 2022

GIVING TUESDAY



"I spent 16 years directing a summer volunteer program between our local McLean area youth and our LRSS buddies. Through sharing, socializing and laughing, these special LRSS friends taught us about rising above difficulties, compassion, empathy, and friendship. I encourage others to consider contributing to this very special organization, whether through regular financial donations and/or your estate planning. The more I do, the more joy I feel in my heart and I know my contributions are appreciated and helpful." -Rose Bates

Together we give.

Welcome

LRSS Board Welcomes Newest Member, Meg Medicherla

Langley Residential Support Services is thrilled to share the news that Meg Medicherla has been elected to the LRSS board of directors. Medicherla is a local business owner and believes in contributing in whatever ways she can to the community. She found LRSS to be an organization that is changing lives of so many people in a tangible way.

"Being on the board of LRSS is truly an honor and humbling experience," said Medicherla. "I hope to use my skills and experience to further the LRSS mission and goals. I hope that I will be able to add value to the LRSS family."



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Reading isn't the only focus of the program. JLW volunteers host many social activities around holidays and different themed events throughout the year. Most recently, the group met to celebrate Halloween. How great does everyone look in their



costumes?! The annual Kids in the Kitchen partnership will host another awesome holiday bingo party in December, and March will

feature a St Patrick's Day scavenger hunt.

Our LRSS residents get excited about each book club meeting. We treasure this special partnership with Junior League of Washington that has been such a strong supporter of LRSS and has impacted hundreds of lives of local adults with developmental disabilities. Kudos to JLW for all the joy they bring to the LRSS family!

LRSS Among Northern Virginia Employers Committed to Diverse Workforce

Langley Residential has earned the Northern Virginia Champions for Accountability badge for its commitment to catalyzing more inclusive systems of economic growth throughout the region. The program grew out of an effort to ensure more equitable distribution of economic power across the region amidst the tremendous diverse communities in Northern Virginia.

A joint report from the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia and Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce released in September 2022 names LRSS among the organizations taking the first step toward workplace diversity. Out of 103 applicants to the Northern Virginia Champions for Accountability program, 53 employers have been recognized with the badge.

To earn the badge, participating organizations agreed to collect, share, and act on data about the demographic composition of their owners, senior staff, and boards. LRSS will be accountable to:

- Provide a voluntary, safe way for staff, senior leadership, and board members to provide self-identified demographics and share findings regularly with staff;

- Regularly review and update position descriptions/ requirements to widen the pool of potentially qualified candidates (skills-based hiring);
- Identify and recruit from candidate pools that represent a more diverse cross-section of talent; and
- Develop clear, attainable pathways for staff to move into management and leadership positions.

The report finds a mismatch between the overall diversity of our region's leaders and the diversity of our population. Program

Champions reported a higher percentage of white employees than the region's overall workforce (59 percent, versus 48 percent) and a much higher percentage of female employees (68 percent, versus 47 percent). A little more than half of the 2022 Champions (61 percent) reported actively working to diversify their C-suite; those that are not engaged in diversification cited a sufficiently diverse executive team or a current lack of vacancies in leadership positions. A much higher percent of Champions (74 percent) were engaged in diversifying their overall workforce. Read the full report at: https://langleyresidential.org/CFNV_Champions_Report_FINAL-2_Digital.pdf.



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