GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR STAIR STUDENTS

BISHOP CHARLES CARROLL OF NEW CREATIONS COMMUNITY CHURCH



Bishop Charles Carroll is Senior Pastor and Founder of New Creations Community Church in Annapolis. Over the past three years, he has stepped up to help address a challenging aspect of STAIR's programming: how to ensure that students whose parents are unable to pick them up at the end of their sessions get home safely. He describes this transportation partnership as a wonderful opportunity for New Creations to join STAIR in enabling these Anne Arundel County students to be able to take advantage of what STAIR offers. An introduction by Erin Snell, Executive Director of Charting Careers, who also has a contract to use New Creations' vans, set the stage for Jo Ann Mattson to work out an arrangement to transport STAIR students who otherwise wouldn't be able to participate in the program.

This year marks the third year of STAIR's partnership with New Creations. Three vans pick up STAIR students at Germantown, Mills Parole, Eastport, Hillsmere, and Georgetown East Elementary Schools after each STAIR session. Bishop Carroll and his son are substitute bus drivers and he loves it when he gets a chance to drive. He always makes sure to have snacks on his run and remembers with a smile a Germantown student from last year who always asked for very specific kinds of snacks and other treats on each ride! He relishes the opportunity to spend time with the kids and remembers a lot of fun conversation and banter that flows back and forth each time he drives.

"Awesome" is the word he uses to describe a STAIR graduation he attended last year. He was able to witness first hand the excitement and pride in the room as STAIR students read to their families, tutors, and fellow students. He was deeply inspired by the fact that these students were below grade level in reading at the beginning of the year and had made the kind of progress that enabled them to stand up and show what they had learned during the year. He says he didn't really understand STAIR's amazing impact until that experience.

Bishop Carroll is, of course, well known in the community. In addition to his leadership of New Creations, he works with elementary, middle, high school, and older youth in Annapolis and West County. He partners with Newtown Community Development Corporation on the Black Wall Street Mentoring Program, an AA County-funded initiative that pairs youth 11-24 years of age with one-on-one mentors to provide academic support, life skills trainings and workforce development. He also is program manager for the West County Plug Mentoring Program supported by Kingdom Kare, Inc., which provides mentoring to students from elementary school through high school and a variety of after school programs that support their growth and development.

Bishop Carroll has been very eager for the STAIR program to start this year. He sees it as a key opportunity to fulfill his and the Church's mission to be in mutually beneficial relationship with other initiatives that serve the community he is so dedicated to.

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