



## Strong Start to a Busy Season

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### Mission Moment - McKenna Academy Impacts

The second session of the Academy is off to a strong start. Members are absorbing what they have learned in the classroom and applying these lessons to their daily lives. Ronald is enrolled in a grammar and writing course in the Academy, and he wrote about a significant moment he experienced on one of the "Fun Friday" excursion trips! He explained:

"Going to the beach made me realize how I forgot how to have a good time. On a Friday morning, my classmates and I went to the beach for a day of fun. First, we prepared for the trip that we would be enjoying. When I got to the beach, I forgot how good the water could be. This was a significant moment. It was relaxing. Also, I felt free, good and relaxed. It was like I was a kid again. It was so good to be in the water and feel the sand. The water was nice and warm, and the sky was really blue. Also, we played and joked a lot. I forgot what a fun place this was for me. It was a nice experience. My life since is that I feel good when I think about it. For example, I think about how good it was to feel the water on my body. Now, I would like to go back. All in all, I had a good time."



Gerald, an Academy member taking Financial Stability Network (FSN) classes, used the budgeting skills taught in the classroom to buy a new bike. After saving up his money from working at the Center and other employment, he was finally able to replace his stolen bike. Our Case Manager, Michael, bought a U-lock for the Center to make sure the bike is safe. Gerald consistently attends FSN classes, and his hard work has certainly paid off!

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### Upcoming Events



Save the Date: Mark your calendar for Lessons and Carols. It will be held on Thursday, December 8th at 7:00 pm at St. Aloysius Church, 900 North Capitol Street, NW Washington, DC 20001. We hope you can join us in person for this beautiful event. A reminder will be sent later in the fall.

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## Updates

### Uber Grant

In addition to the grant from the Knights and Dames of Malta for computers announced earlier, we also recently received support from Uber for the migrant population we serve. Through this partnership, we can give Uber ride and Uber Eats vouchers to help with transportation and supplemental meals.

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## Program Updates

In September, we saw a significant increase in demand for our programs with overall numbers up 47% in August as compared with May attendance. Numbers trending upward is a “good news, bad news” situation as we are grateful men are utilizing the resources of the Center, but it is unfortunate that more people are in need.

We had 1,133 total Day Program sign-ins, with an average of 54 sign-ins per day. These statistics are similar to pre pandemic numbers. In comparison to August, we had 11 more average daily sign-ins (43 to 54), and 144 more total monthly sign-ins (9,890 to 1,133).

With our Hypothermia/Transition program starting November 1st and colder weather settling in, we anticipate the need for our services continuing to trend upward.

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## Message from Dan

Friends,

To serve the needs of migrants seeking asylum, we have hired Chris Zaragoza, a fluent Spanish speaker. Chris was awarded an internship/scholarship by Catholic Charities to continue his studies in social work, and while not in class he works at the Center as a part-time bilingual Case Manager. Chris was with us last year as a Franciscan Volunteer, so he brings familiarity with our mission and is well-known among our guests, making his onboarding and orientation minimal. We are also welcoming an Ignatian Volunteer Service Corps member (IVC) who is fluent in several languages and has psychiatric training. IVC Service Corps members are retired professionals who offer their services for one or two days a week and must not only have a commitment to service but professional experience and skills relevant to our work.

As you read earlier, the second session of the McKenna Academy is off to a strong start. Eight men are receiving stipends from Catholic Charities as part of our Financial Stability Network (FSN) partnership. These men have committed to certain levels of participation and engagement and have consistently adhered to the expectations set by our Case Managers. We are trying to incentivize other men not involved in FSN with opportunities to work around the

Center. These incentives have increased overall Academy participation.

We are entering our busy (or more appropriately BUSIER) season. The Hypothermia/Transition Program starts on November 1st and the following weeks will be especially busy as we get closer to the holiday season. We are preparing to distribute Thanksgiving turkeys, Christmas presents, and we are planning our annual Lessons and Carols event, held on Thursday, December 8th in the Church. We hope you join us for a wonderful night of song and inspiring readings as we celebrate Advent and begin our Christmas preparations.

Thank you,



Dan Kerns  
Executive Director  
The Father McKenna Center

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## Assistance Needed

### Food

- Chunky soups, baked beans and other canned/dried beans (no black beans), and corn muffin mix

### Clothing

- Sweaters
  - Sizes S, M, L, XL, 1XL, and 2XL
- Sweatshirts/Hoodies
  - Size S, M, L, XL, 1XL, and 2XL
- Sweatpants
  - Sizes S, M, L, and XL
- Jeans, Khakis, Cords
  - Sizes 30, 32, 34, and 36

### Hygiene Products (travel AND regular sizes)

- Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap

### Other

- Backpacks

To donate, please call FMC (202-842-1112) to alert us that you are coming. We will help you bring your contributions into the Center.

[Donate](#)

### Calling all Spanish speakers!

- We need volunteers who are fluent in Spanish to help us with translating documents and communicating with the migrants from the buses that arrive at Union Station each day. If you are interested in helping these asylum seekers, please contact us!

### Alexandria, we still need your help!

- Each Sunday evening, the Panera Bread on Dulaney St in Alexandria generously provides the Center with overstock bread, cookies and pastries. This is a vital component to the food pantry and for the meals we serve. We need help with the pick up.
- If you are interested in picking up on Sunday night, especially after the New Year and dropping off at the Center on Monday morning please email Arianna (Director of Operations) at [acicchinelli@fathermckennacenter.org](mailto:acicchinelli@fathermckennacenter.org).

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Contact Us | 202-842-1112 | 19 Eye St. NW Washington DC 20001 | [fathermckennacenter.org](http://fathermckennacenter.org)