

# Clay Pits



A Place To Grow

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## ANNUAL REPORT

2013

## Dear partner in change:

The 2013 Annual Report of Clay Pots...A Place to Grow paints a picture of its mission, founding, and ongoing purpose—to provide a safe space that fosters the spiritual and personal growth of those living in Southwest Baltimore and beyond.

Our work which began with five members wanting to make a positive impact on the future of the community where they live and work—is now a thriving community center, a ten-member board, more than 50 volunteers; and a budding number of partners, donors and community residents. Each is a vital part of being a change agent for good in the communities we serve, with a hope greater than revitalizing the places we live, but more importantly, the people who live within them.



To gain a real feel of Clay Pots, we invite you to stop by for Coffeehouse or schedule a tour.

We are always looking for opportunities of partnership and impactful programs. If you would like to become a partner, suggest or launch a program, or support the mission of Clay Pots in other ways, please contact us. We would love to hear from you.

Sincerely,

### Clay Pots's 2013 Board Members

*Varria Braxton*

*Stanley Dorr*

*John D. Harris*

*Karter Jaymes*

*Linda Loubert, Ph.D.*

*Charles Loubert, Board Chair*

*Youssef Mahmoud*

*Karen McNamara*

*Maurice Stokes*

*David Williams, Vice Chair*

*Diana Zimmerman, Treasurer*

### Clay Pots' Staff

*Dwayne Hess, Director*



## MISSION

The mission of Clay Pots...A Place to Grow is to provide a safe place for people in the neighborhoods of Southwest Baltimore and beyond to explore their inner selves in a holistic manner. The goal of the center is to provide a wide range of opportunities for people to find inner nourishment, whether by attending classes, learning to use a computer, read a book, or sharing their thoughts over a cup of coffee. The founding belief is that inner harmony brings health and wholeness to individuals and to the community.

## VISION

Working in unison with community residents and partners, Clay Pots envisions a community that is economically secure, free from urban social ills, and where every resident and neighbor has access to a well balanced life—mind, body, and soul.

## HISTORY

Clay Pots, originally named A New Faith Community was born in 2000 out of a desire to see and be the positive change in the neighborhood and in the world.

At the heart of a zip code known for low high school retention rates, gun violence, and drug abuse, creating a space for everyone in the neighborhoods of Southwest Baltimore to find peace and growth has been a unifying and driving force in the establishment of the community center.

In 2002, Clay Pots' founding members responded to their call to be the change they wanted to see, and pulled together their resources to purchase an old corner store and the adjacent vacant house at 1633 and 1635 West Pratt Street. Founders ranging in age, ethnicities, and backgrounds did not drive in from out of town; they live and still reside here. Their mission is not to simply provide services for others, but create space for mutual sharing—a place where everyone, from all walks of life, has a chance to share, heal, and grow.

The community center has progressed through volunteer hours in renovating the property and developing programs that give life and energy to the neighborhoods of Southwest Baltimore. In 2005, Clay Pots opened its Tutoring Center offering GED and ESOL instruction. In 2007, the Coffeehouse was born. In 2010, Community Supported Wellness was born. Also in 2010, the Board of Directors named the building, Clay Pots... A Place to Grow.



*“I’ve learned so much in the past two years that I have been here.  
[Clay Pots is] an awesome place to learn.”*

**-Tammy**

## PROGRAMS

Education, art, emotional well-being, and physiological needs are all parts of the inner growth that helps to sustain life and a neighborhood. The programs offered at Clay Pots supports this philosophy and our mission to provide a safe space that fosters spiritual and personal growth for the community.

### EDUCATION CENTER

GED classes are offered on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, morning and evening, in the fall, spring, and summer to accommodate the schedules of those we serve. Students can enter the program on any level.

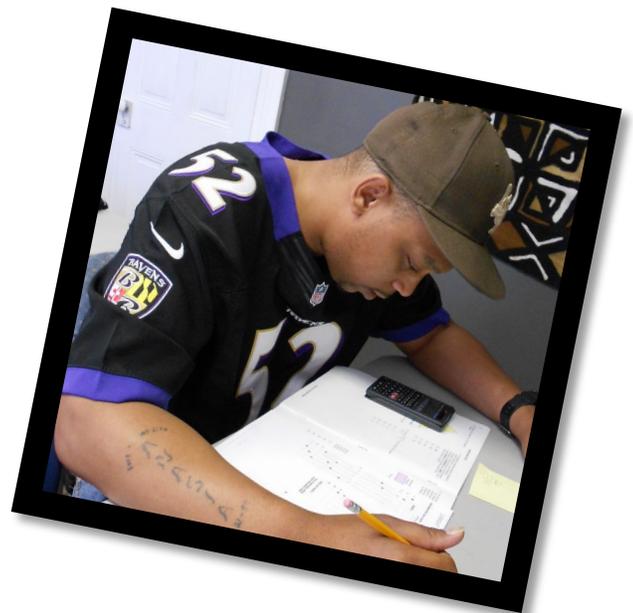
The GED Fast Track is for students who are nearly ready to take the state GED exam. In conjunction with South Baltimore Learning Center (SBLC) and Baltimore City Community College, we offer a Pre-GED class, as well as one-on-one tutoring, pre-testing services, and assistance with sitting for the final GED exam.

Currently, we have over 50 students enrolled in our GED program with new students calling to register each week. We held our third graduation in December for the six students who received their high school diplomas through our GED program. A total of 19 students have graduated to date. Students who have successfully completed the program have gone on to attend community college, trade school, or gained employment.

SBLC, reports:

- 88% average student retention rate.
- 80% of students who were post-tested with the Official Practice Test show gains in at least two subjects.
- Students show a high level of satisfaction with the Clay Pots’ GED program.
- 32% of graduating students have gone on to further education.

Starting January 2014, the GED exam will be computerized. In anticipation of this change we have begun raising funds to expand our education center in both space and scope to help students acquire the technical skills to prepare for the exam and succeed in passing.



Clay Pots offers an adult literacy class for beginning readers and a computer literacy class every Thursday. The computer class is maxed out at five participants every week due to capacity.

There are also a variety of continuing education classes available that include photography, painting, Spanish and more.

Courses offered through the Education Center are evaluated on an on-going basis and are designed to meet the needs of the community.

*“Thank you for helping the neighborhood.”*

= **A n o n y m o u s**

## COMMUNITY COFFEEHOUSE

Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Clay Pots opens its doors for a community coffeehouse. Patrons enjoy complimentary warm and cold beverage as well as snacks. A library of books and arts and crafts activities are readily available for the community to enjoy while at coffeehouse, or to take with them for personal or family learning opportunities.

At any given coffeehouse, Clay Pots is lively with conversations. On special occasions, local artists perform and share their works and talents with the community. Every four months, Coffeehouse features the work of visual artists in Baltimore.

Coffeehouse has on average more than 100 patrons a week.



## ART AND WELLNESS

Working with community partners and volunteers, Clay Pots offers a range of wellness programs that includes self-help groups, such as drug and alcohol rehabilitation, hands-on art programs that range from pottery to drumming, nutrition classes, conflict resolution, and more.

Attendance in these programs varied from groups of five to upwards of 30.



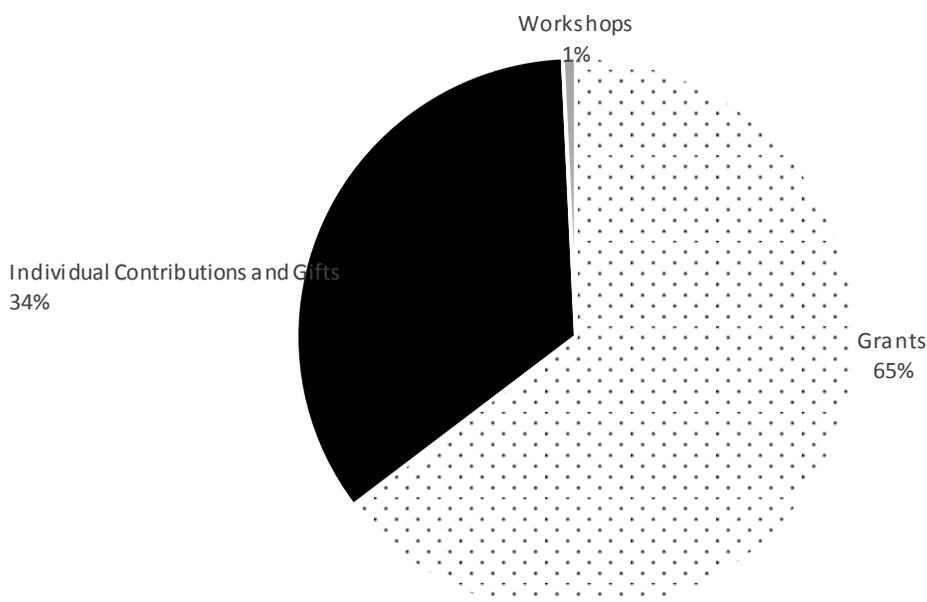
*“I started Clay Pots in the fall... The things that make me stay are my teacher...He pushes us to achieve our goals...”*



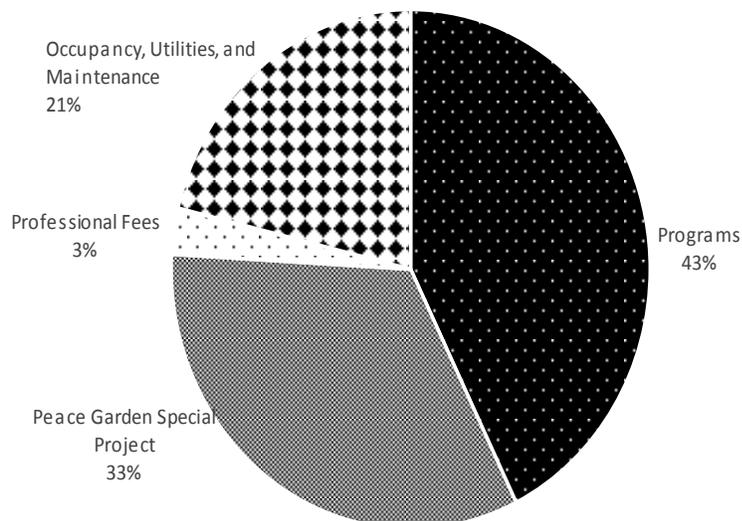
## FINANCIALS

As part of our mission and our philosophy, Clay Pots operates fiducially in being good stewards of the resources entrusted to the wellbeing of the organization, its mission, and those we serve.

### 2013 Revenues



### 2013 Expenses





## DONORS AND PARTNERS

Clay Pots is run by volunteers and donors whose interests and passions are in strengthening communities and transforming lives.

Donors and partners have contributed in a variety of ways throughout the year to advance the mission of Clay Pots by supporting one or more of its programs and initiatives:

- Education Center
- GED Scholarship Fund
- Coffeehouse
- Peace Garden
- Neighborhood Beautification
- General Operating
- Capital Campaign

Our work would not be possible without the support and encouragement of our donors, partners, and volunteers. And we thank them immensely.

### DONORS

The Abell Foundation

The Miles White Beneficial Society

The Baltimore Quaker Peace and Justice Committee

United Service Foundation

Plus our 181 individual donors and 90% donation support by the members of the Clay Pots' Board.

### PARTNERS

Just Haiti

Baltimore City Community College

South Baltimore Learning Center

The Mount Clare Community Council

Union Square Association

Baltimore Urban Project

Community Mediation



## VOLUNTEERS

Tarek Abuata

Fadaka Adebayo

Selvin Amezquita

Teaira Buchanon

Kassin Carney

John Collins

Tiffany Cummingham

Corey Dunning

Nathalia Gordon

Vicki Grossman

Jackie Harris

William Haynes

Al Holsopple

Modonna Holsopple

Pamela Johnson

Tony Joyner

Paul Kane

Bre Lengel

Gary Lockett

Melissa Lomar

Charles Loubert

Youssef Mahmoud

Tracy Mahmoud

Bill McNamara

Karen McNamara

Mary Miles

Hayley Normile

Ben Sekus

Pete Sheldon

Peter Slehah

Maurice Stokes

Angela Turner

Benjamin Turner

Leslie Waters

Andrea Wenger

David Williams

Jeremy Williams

Anita Zimmerman

Diana Zimmerman

And students of the Baltimore  
Spring Break Urban Plunge



## 2014 GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The future is bright and the need is clear for Clay Pots in the community.

As we continue to expand and grow, one of our immediate goals is to build capacity by hiring a part-time Assistant Director. This position will focus on programs and fundraising.

In 2014 our other goals include the completion and opening of the Peace Garden an outdoor sanctuary space, launching a campaign drive for a new computer lab to help in meeting the demands of the new GED test format as well as building capacity to meet the demands of the community.

Increasing our volunteer and donor base are also key components of our plans for 2014 as well as expanding our program offerings and building new partnerships with the business community and other important stakeholders needed for community revitalization.

We look forward to your continued support in 2014 and beyond and invite you to visit our website for the latest information and updates, join our community on Facebook, or schedule a site visit to see our works in action.