



THE HIGHLIGHTER

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter

WOMEN'S HOUSING COALITION

CONVERSATIONS - A QUARTERLY VIRTUAL SPEAKER SERIES

Baltimoreans discuss this city's impact on their lives -
Kevin Shird will be the first speaker in the series



The Women's Housing Coalition invites you to support our first virtual fundraising event - **CONVERSATIONS – The Lived Baltimore Experience.**

The year-long virtual speaker series spotlighting guests with deep connections to Baltimore. These conversations give voice to personal accounts of successful Baltimore natives, and how their successes are rooted in their lived Baltimore experiences. Please join us to be part of this candid, real-time, live-streaming talk [on March 25th at 7:00 p.m.](#) with our first speaker, **Kevin Shird**.



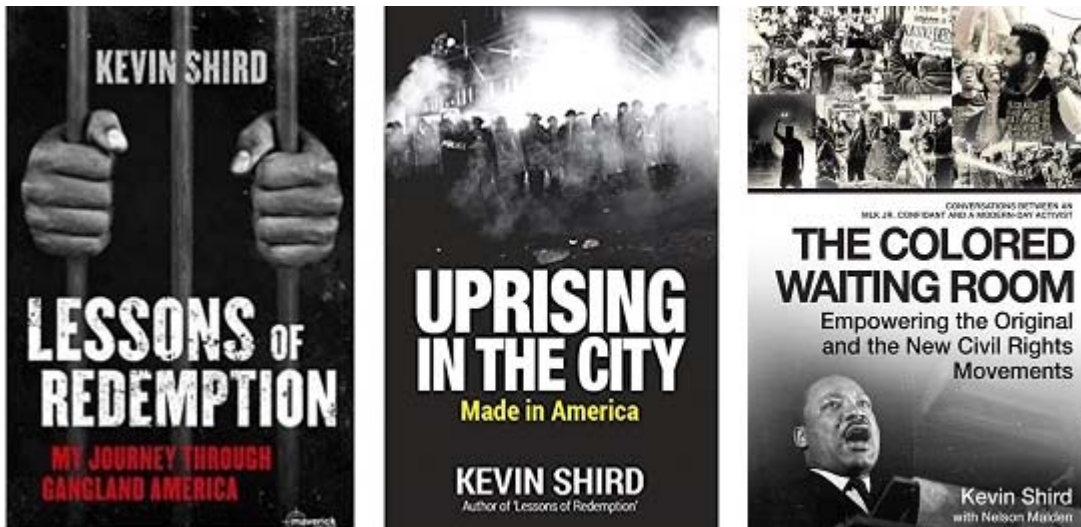
Kevin is an inspiring internationally recognized author and dynamic advocate with lived Baltimore experience. Kevin began selling drugs at the age of 16, and he eventually spent nearly 12 years in federal prison and California state prison for trafficking. Upon his release, he returned to Baltimore, partnered with local

organizations and reached out to young people, sharing stories of his experiences and speaking about issues like substance abuse prevention. His three books are “*Lessons Of Redemption*”, a memoir about his experiences, “*Uprising In The City: Made In America*” about the Freddie Gray uprising, and “*The Colored Waiting Room*”, a commentary on the modern-day civil rights movement through the eyes of 60s era civil rights activist Nelson Malden, who was Martin Luther King's confidant and barber. Currently Kevin lives on the West Coast, where he runs **Shird Productions**. This venture is in the midst of developing several projects.

This event, moderated by Women’s Housing Coalition’s Director of Development, Petula Caesar, will feature straightforward questions, honest responses, and thoughtful commentary. Tickets are \$50, and a ticket is required to participate.

[Click on the Eventbrite page](#) to purchase tickets.

You can check out Kevin’s books by purchasing them at [Greedy Reads](#), which offers curbside pick-up from their Fells Point and Remington locations.



Many thanks to [Whiting Turner](#) for supporting this event as lead sponsor.



FEEDING RESIDENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC AND BEYOND
Local partnerships help WHC fight food insecurity



Actual contents of one of our bi-weekly produce boxes.

The work WHC normally does to support our residents changed dramatically in 2020 because of COVID-19. When the pandemic first hit, food was scarce in many stores as much of the general public engaged in bulk purchasing. This put our residents in a tough spot, because they typically are not able to purchase or store large quantities of anything. Many of our employed residents lost their employment during the pandemic, and access to markets has always been an issue in Baltimore as grocery stores leave neighborhoods and create food deserts.

Starting in April 2020, WHC partnered with **J.C. Faulk** from [Bmore Community Foods](#), a project spearheaded by Faulk that "rescues" food from restaurants, retail outlets, farms, etc., and distributes it for free to those in need. Faulk's work with food insecurity has been especially important during this time, and through this partnership, we have been able provide our residents with 20-25 pound boxes of fresh produce, food staples, frozen food items and fresh meat twice a month. While helping our residents stretch their food budgets, residents have also had the opportunity to try new foods, depending on what is in the boxes they received.

To help with food distribution, [The Junior League of Baltimore](#) has been an essential partner; they coordinate and execute the delivery of these boxes to our residents. We greatly appreciate both The Junior League of Baltimore and Bmore Community Foods for helping us help our residents stay healthy and fed during such a stressful time. And as food insecurity continues to be an issue for our residents as markets leave neighborhoods and the economy continues to struggle to recover from the effects of the pandemic, WHC will be continuing these partnerships for the foreseeable future.

**\$25K ABELL FOUNDATION GRANT
HELPS WHC BEGIN BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE**

ABELL FOUNDATION

Baltimore City lags behind other cities when it comes to digital access for its low income citizens. The Abell Foundation's report, [Baltimore's Digital Divide: Gaps in Internet Connectivity and the Impact on Low-Income City](#)

[Residents](#) by John B. Horrigan, Ph.D., offers a detailed look at where Baltimore is on digital equity. Just 33.8% of low-income Baltimoreans (those whose annual household incomes are less than \$25,000) have home wireline service compared with 83% for households whose annual incomes exceed \$75,000. Additionally, only 42.8% of low-income Baltimore homes have a desktop or laptop compared with 90% of households with annual incomes above \$75,000. As online learning became the norm and more and more organizations began conducting their day to day operations exclusively online, our residents, who do not have access to wifi in our buildings, found managing their lives increasingly difficult.

As the pandemic made it clear just how much of a disadvantage a lack of WiFi can be, WHC began to take steps to address the issue. One of our buildings, The Linden House, is home for several families with students who found themselves in need of wifi to participate in distance learning. WHC wired this building for high-speed Internet access to support the students living there and the parents who could more easily handle various tasks by using the Internet. One of our case managers also worked diligently with Baltimore City Public Schools to secure tablets for all our students. After the success of this project, we received **a \$25,000 grant from the Abell Foundation** to wire our other three buildings, and by March all of our buildings will have high-speed Internet access. We have asked a few other organizations for funding to obtain devices for all of our residents as well as to develop programming around proper use and care of the devices. We plan to offer instruction to our residents on how to use the Internet to do everything from online banking to applying for jobs. We thank the Abell Foundation for this vitally important contribution!

MANY THANKS TO OUR 2020 PARTNERS, SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS!

Virginia T. Campbell Charitable Gift Fund
\$1,000

SAMS Ministry of Manifested Glory Worship
Center
\$200

Margaret J. Bennett House Board of Directors
\$10,000

Christ Child Society of Baltimore
Food, household items, bookcase, reusable
cotton adult masks, reusable cotton children

The Duker/McArdle Family Charitable Fund
\$25,000

Baltimore Community Foundation \$1,000	masks, disposable adult masks, disposable children masks
James S. and Gail P. Riepe Family Foundation \$2,500	St. Francis Neighborhood Center Home lighting kits Celebration Church Yellow Roses Gifts bags with snacks and toiletries
Morris Weinman Memorial Foundation, Inc. \$2,500	St. Andrews Christian Community Church \$3,000
The Beth & Harry Lebow Charitable Trust \$250	First & Franklin Presbyterian Church \$270
The Andrew S. Busch Family Foundation \$500	Miracles N More toiletries, beauty, clothing, shoes
William F. and Caroline Hilgenberg Foundation \$10,000	AGM Financial Services, Inc. \$2,500
Hugh and Katharine Stierhoff Charitable Fund \$300	Kaiser Permanente \$2,500
T. Rowe Price Foundation, Inc. \$10,000	Carney, Kelehan, Bresler, Bennett & Scherr LLP \$1,000
David and Barbara B. Hirschhorn Foundation, Inc. \$10,000	Brightview Senior Living \$2,500
Tom and Michele Rackey Charitable Fund \$200	Humphrey Management \$1,000
Judy Family Foundation \$10,500	Whiting-Turner Contracting Company \$40,000
PNC Foundation \$5,000	Cohn Reznick \$1,000
Claude A. and Blanche McCubbin Abbott Charitable Trust \$800	Eastern Savings Bank \$2,000
Pledgeling Foundation \$48.50	Cornerstone Advisory, LLP \$1,000
Merritt Properties, LLC \$10,000	CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield 36 boxes of N95 masks (25 per box). 10 boxes gloves (medium & large 200 per box).
Fidelity Charitable \$250	Southway Builders, Inc. \$1,000
Berkshire Associates Inc. \$5,000 and holiday gifts for children	Ikea Furniture/Homes For America \$10,170
Cashmere Interior LLC \$8,000	Legg Mason \$537.50
Snappy Operations \$25	New Horizons of Men and Women \$100



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