



▲ Guests are dressed to impress (l to r): Erin Cassell and Kim Maddox, co-owners of Roll Up N Dye, with Angel Benson and friend.



▲ Once again, Roses n Rust was the headliner for Hoodstock XX.

Hoodstock Celebrates 20 Years and Raises \$106,000

What an exciting evening as more than 350 people celebrated Hoodstock XX and Russ Causey, Hoodstock's founder and mastermind. Guests enjoyed good food, great music and a silent auction at Unified's one-of-a-kind fundraiser held again this year at The Winslow in Baltimore, raising \$106,000.

Russ was recognized for his contributions to Unified and unprecedented 20 years as chair of the Hoodstock Committee. Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 2023 Samuel A. Tucker Memorial Can Do Award to Ann Ernst by O.J. Brigance, former Unified board member and Baltimore Ravens senior advisor for player development.

"Raising more than a million dollars over 20 years has made a significant difference in the programs and services Unified has been able to offer, helping to ensure the individuals we serve have more independent and meaningful lives," says Amy Kreitz, president and CEO of Unified. "I am so proud of the hard work of the many people who, under Russ' leadership, have sustained Hoodstock for the past 20 years. Thank you to our committee members, volunteers, generous sponsors and everyone who has attended and supported Hoodstock over the years."

Kudos to Hoodstock committee members Russ Causey (chair), Kathy Bradley, Lauren Bussard, Julie Carper, Blake Curry, Migena Dilolli, Jonathan Horton, Angela Lane, Nick Richardson and Emily Sutorius for making Hoodstock XX such a huge success.

A very special thank you to the musicians who donated their time and talent and performed for free. The musical lineup featured Russ' band Roses n Rust and performances by Gumboot Reboot, Jonathan Horton and The Wafflers. The bands pulled out all the stops, showcasing the rock/folk music scene of the late '60s and '70s mixed with today's music. Roses n Rust also performed original songs written by band member Drum Dr. Dot from her new album titled "Unboxed."

See List of Sponsors on page 2 >

Mark Your Calenders!

Join us for Hoodstock XXI on Friday, October 18, 2024, featuring Roses n Rust at a new venue, the Baltimore Museum of Industry. We're excited to return to a museum vibe and try a new location with ample free on-site parking.



▲ Unified President and CEO Amy Kreitz (l) and Rebecca Tucker (r) present the Can Do Award to Ann Ernst (c).

Congratulations Ann Ernst

Hoodstock XX guests were moved by Ann Ernst's story and cheered when she was awarded the 2023 Samuel A. Tucker Memorial Can Do Award. Ann has received services from Unified for many years and recently moved into one of Unified's single-occupancy apartments. She is a cancer survivor and has overcome major health challenges. She embodies Unified's mission to support people with disabilities in achieving independence, productivity and the quality of life they seek.

Ann has participated in Unified's Day Program in Hagerstown and lived in two of Unified's community living group homes. She has held several community- and program-based jobs and developed many skills and community connections. Her favorite activities are decorating for the holidays, shopping and watching movies – the scarier the better.

She dealt with her illness by sticking to her treatment plan and being an active participant in her daily medical care. As she regained her health, Ann became interested in living on her own. When an apartment opened in Cumberland, she toured the facility, met with the staff, and talked with her care team before making the decision to move. Ann is one of the first individuals to live on their own in a Unified apartment.

Ann has also chosen to leave the traditional, facility-based day program and now participates in Community Development Services, where she has greater influence over her choices and how she spends her time. As a result, Ann has become more independent and is enjoying the experiences that come with having more freedom and control over one's life.

Thank You to Our Hoodstock XX Sponsors

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Development News

Unified was awarded \$30,000 from the Maryland Department of Health Developmental Disabilities Administration's American Rescue Plan Act 2023-2024 Grant Project Plan.

Unified is transferring to a new timekeeping and payroll system that is more compatible with our new billing system. The new system is set to go live in early 2024. Funds will be used to purchase five laptops to help manage the new system and provide bonuses to our staff upon completion of the required trainings.

As you begin making plans for charitable contributions in the new year, please remember Unified. Every dollar we receive helps the individuals we serve live more independent and fulfilling lives. To make a donation, visit unified.org/donate.



▲ Russ Causey performs with his band Roses n Rust.



▲ Kevin and Gwen Poole with Jen and Russ Causey.



Unified's Director of Development Lauren Bussard presents award to Hoodstock Committee Chair Russ Causey.

Thank You Russ Causey

Twenty-one years ago, Hoodstock founder Russ Causey asked his wife Jennifer for a guitar for Christmas. Russ had never played an instrument and didn't have much time to practice, but a few months later, he performed at a small backyard party he hosted with his neighbors. He named the party "Hoodstock" in honor of his passion for music from the Woodstock era. From these humble beginnings, Hoodstock has evolved into a signature fundraiser for Unified.

A special presentation during Hoodstock XX celebrated Russ for his contributions to Unified and leadership as chair of the Hoodstock Committee for the past 20 years. Unified's President and CEO Amy Kreitz and Director of Development Lauren Bussard showered Russ with praise and presented him with an award shaped in the number 20 with the inscription, "Presented to Russ Causey for your creation of and dedication to Hoodstock."

"You have raised more than \$1 million for Unified, benefitting hundreds of people with disabilities. You've made their days brighter and their lives better," said Lauren. "You've gone above and beyond the call of any volunteer, and we can never thank you enough."

Russ' Roses n Rust bandmate Drum Dr. Dot led the audience to chant Russ' name, creating an interactive tribute, as she performed a rap song she wrote for him about his 20-year history with Hoodstock.

When accepting the award, Russ said, "Hoodstock has been one of the most rewarding things I have ever been a part of. I can't believe it's been 20 years and that so much money has been raised. Our village is the best. Doing good while having fun is what we do."

A few weeks after Hoodstock XX, Russ was recognized by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Maryland Chapter for his creation of the Hoodstock event and awarded the 2023 Creative Campaign of the Year award. Congratulations to Russ on this much deserved honor and for being an inspiration to all of us.

Welcome New Board Member Lisa Badie

Welcome to **Lisa Badie**, the newest member of Unified's board of directors. She will be serving on the Audit and Finance Committee. Lisa is an experienced professional in the health care industry. She brings strong problem solving, analytical and mathematical skills and is well-versed on Maryland Medicaid, physician relations, the U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and medical billing. Lisa has been with the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore since 1998, holding positions as

a financial analyst, administrator for patient accounting and administrator for Epic system implementation. She currently serves as associate vice president for application support to include responsibility for coordinating the design, build, implementation and ongoing support for the Epic system as well as other applications as needed. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the University of Maryland, College Park and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Baltimore.

Around the Agency



▲ Unified President and CEO Amy Kreitz celebrates 25 years with our organization.



▲ Congratulations to the Cumberland Day Program's Prom King and Queen, Robert Myers and Priscilla Wolfe.



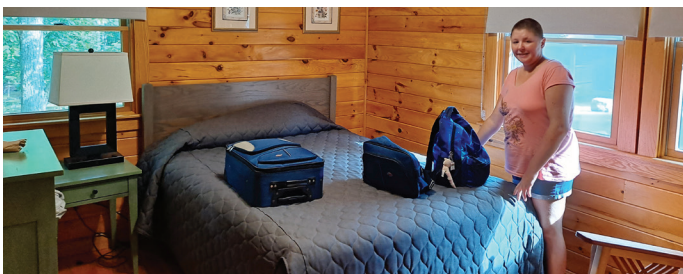
▲ Nikki Aldridge went camping at Blackwater Falls State Park in West Virginia with individuals who receive services from Unified.



▲ Participants in the Cumberland Day Program shine bright at prom.



▲ John Maffley enjoys a crisp fall day on the porch of his community living group home.



▲ Annie Moeller from Hagerstown in her cabin at Blackwater Falls State Park in West Virginia.



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Save the Date!

Hit the links for Unified's 18th Annual Golf Classic on Monday, May 6, 2024, at the Elkridge Country Club.

OUR MISSION:

To support individuals with disabilities in achieving independence, productivity, and the quality of life they seek.