

RIVERDALE PARK



Local Economies – SARVIS Café and Greater Riverdale Cares

The Town of Riverdale Park (Town) partners with the [Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation \(CKAR\)](#), a 501c(3) that forms and nurtures strategic business partnerships that strengthen and promote the social, environmental, and economic development of the Town and Greater Riverdale, including East Riverdale neighborhoods. The following describes two programs from this partnership that support both the local economy and addressing food security issues in the town and its contiguous neighbors.



Because of the recent need this year (2020) to address unexpected increases in unemployment, CKAR has quickly developed several key projects. [The Sarvis Cafe or Sarvis Empowerment Cafe](#), an ambitious and engaging workforce development initiative that began in 2018, remains the most complex endeavor ever undertaken and is quite relevant at this time. The Sarvis Cafe will serve as both a gathering place for the community and a training site for future workers and business leaders. The Sarvis Cafe will provide a 14-week certified culinary arts and customer service training program, in partnership

with Prince George's Community College. Under the guidance of consultant Chef Pedro Matamoros, the Café will provide breakfast and lunch to Greater Riverdale. The café will also serve as a gathering place for seniors, children, and community members to come together and learn from one another. Activities and programming are planned to enhance the health of Greater Riverdale, and community events and open meeting space will increase social bonds and advance the cultural and generational diversity of the area. While the Sarvis Cafe is still a work in progress, local businesses, such as Whole Foods and The Hotel, consider persons completing training through the Sarvis Cafe to be credentialed and valuable recruits in the areas of food safety, food handling, and customer service.

<https://ckarcdc.org/site/wp-content/uploads/Sarvis-Cafe-Trifold-English.pdf>

<https://ckarcdc.org/site/wp-content/uploads/Sarvis-Cafe-Espanol-.pdf>



Riverdale Park Town Councilmember David Lingua advertised the Sarvis Cafe in the [September 2019 Town Crier](#) newsletter and the Town Manager of Riverdale Park, John Lestitian, discussed the cafe's development in his [September 20, 2019 Status and Information Report](#). Additionally, the Town of Riverdale Park included two full-page advertisements in both English and Spanish

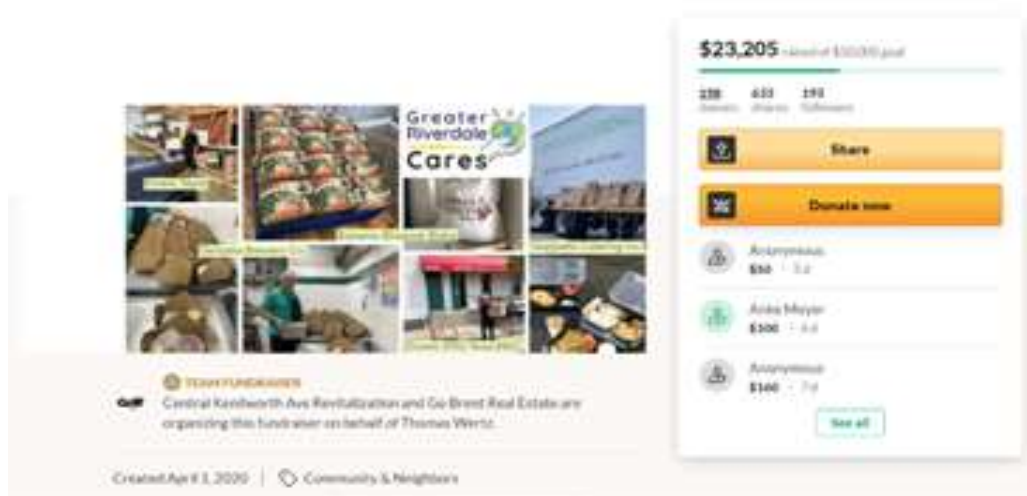
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soliciting applicants for the Sarvis Cafe training programs in the [April 2019 Town Crier](#). Sarvis Café is expected to serve about 800 employees in Jemal's Calvert Kenilworth buildings and nearby businesses. In the UMD Discovery District, 5,000 professionals and workers will be served by the café. Construction began in September 2019 with completion estimated for Summer 2020, contingent upon COVID-19 directives from the Prince George's County Executive.



In 2018, the Town of Riverdale Park passed a [resolution](#) which enabled waiving all permitting fees to build the facility. The permitting fees were provided as a \$2,000 grant by the Town of Riverdale Park to the Sarvis Cafe.

Greater Riverdale Cares



TRP residents further benefited from the Town's deep connection with CKAR. Thomas Wertz of CKAR created "Greater Riverdale Cares", a fundraising

platform which focuses on food security. In April 2020 alone, Riverdale Park residents donated more than \$9,000 to a GoFundMe page to purchase meals from Town restaurants for neighbors in need. This initiative helped keep local kitchens open and workers employed while feeding nutritious meals to residents within the 20737 zip code. Partner restaurants included [Banana Blossom](#), [Denizen's Brewing Company](#), [Dumm's Pizza and Subs](#), [2Fifty Texas BBQ](#) and [Riviera Tapas](#).