

THE GOOD NEWS

FALL 2015

A QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER



Catholic Charities of Wayne County Awarded Major Federal Grant

Catholic Charities of Wayne County has been awarded a grant of \$1,650,429 in Federal funding through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy Marriage and Education Grant Program. The grant was announced jointly by U.S. Senators Charles E. Schumer and Kristen Gillibrand and U.S. Representative John Katko. In expressing appreciation to these government officials, Peter S. Dohr, Executive Director, and Inga Rojas, Director of Clinical Services, indicated that the Thriving Family Program will provide services to help families, at-risk youth and unemployed and underemployed individuals in the region.

Catholic Charities of Wayne County will work in partnership with six agencies to bring new resources for case management assistance and family education services to county residents. CCWC will work in collaboration with Family Counseling Services of the Finger Lakes, Literacy Volunteers, Victim's Resource Center, Wayne County Action Program and

the Ad Council to use educational programs to foster increased economic stability and mobility. There will be special focus on 18-24 year olds, at risk youth, the unemployed and underemployed and migrant farm workers. Case managers and educators will be embedded in Head Start sites, schools, one-stop Career Centers, the county jail and libraries. In addition, outreach efforts will be extended more generally in the county. It is anticipated that 640 families will be reached in the program which is being ramped up and will be formally initiated in 2016.

The ability of one of our smaller agencies to administer this large program is an excellent example of the strength of our decentralized governance structure. While program decisions and implementation are carried out at the local level, the local agency can count on the back-office infrastructure support of the \$70 million Diocesan Catholic Charities organization.

Catholic Courier Christmas Appeal



ASSISTING PEOPLE IN SHORT-TERM FINANCIAL CRISIS.

Catholic Charities urges support of the Catholic Courier Christmas Appeal through which much needed funds are made available for emergency assistance at Catholic Charities agencies.

Send your Contribution to:

Christmas Appeal
P.O. Box 24379
Rochester, NY 14624-0379

Catholic Family Center CEO Named Executive of the Year



Catholic Family Center's President and CEO, Marlene Bessette, was named Executive of the Year in the 2015 Greater Rochester Awards program, sponsored by the Rochester Business Journal and the United Way of Greater Rochester. The Greater Rochester Awards program recognizes and honors non-profit staff, executives, volunteers and programs that make our community a better place to live. The award was given in recognition of Marlene's strategic

leadership of CFC through some challenging times, combined with the leadership role she played in the creation and launch of the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative. Marlene was honored at a luncheon that took place on October 27th at the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center. In commenting on the award, Marlene expressed appreciation to Bishop Matano and Diocesan Director Jack Balinsky for their leadership and support.



"To love God and neighbor is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete: it means seeing in every person the face of the Lord to be served, to serve him concretely. And you are, dear brothers and sisters, the face of Jesus."

— Pope Francis



Catholic Charities Community Services

NOAH GALLOWAY— BREAKFAST WITH FRIENDS

Catholic Charities Community Services will close out the celebration of our 35th Year of Service at Breakfast with Friends on Friday, March 4, 2016 at the Rochester Hyatt Hotel. We are excited to announce that our keynote speaker will be Noah Galloway, former United States Army soldier, personal trainer and motivational speaker. Noah was injured during the Iraq War, losing his left arm above the elbow and left leg above the knee. Fans of the ABC television show *Dancing with the Stars* will remember his performance in season 20. "I'll talk about how I had to go through depression and how I got out of it. It took a lot of determination, and family and friends by my side. As a guy who's physically fit and has all these challenges, maybe I didn't want to admit that there were times when I was crying like a baby, says Galloway, but I'm going to share the highs and the lows. I'm going to be brutally honest. I'm hoping that other people can benefit from hearing my story." Tickets for the Breakfast with Friends event will go on sale January 15, 2016. For more information including sponsorship opportunities, visit our web site at www.ccsrochester.org or call Joan Brandenburg (585) 339-9800 ext. 305.

Camp Stella Maris

YEAR ROUND ACTIVITIES

Camp Stella Maris offers a wide variety of summer programming for children ages 7-15. Each year, over 3,000 children come to the shores of Conesus Lake to grow in their faith and have fun. However, many in the community may be unaware that Camp Stella Maris also offers fantastic programming during the fall, winter, and spring. While summer camp may be our longest running program, our off-season programming has continued to grow year after year. These programs help us to share our mission with many more members of our community.

During the fall, Camp Stella Maris offers weekend camps for children, adults, and families alike. We offer Daddy & Me and Mommy & Me weekends that help families grow closer together. This year, over 40 families joined us for nature hikes, arts and crafts, rock climbing, campfires, and more! We truly believe that these weekends help families in our communities to grow closer in faith and understanding.

During the winter, CSM welcomes young campers to celebrate the season with us! Our Christmas at CSM weekend camp offers campers an opportunity to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas while they laugh, play, and grow with friends. Campers build gingerbread houses, make Christmas ornaments, and go on silly scavenger hunts.

Catholic Family Center

INCREASE IN REFUGEES EXPECTED IN 2016

In September, 2015, President Obama confirmed the United States' intention to increase its refugee admission ceiling from 70,000 to 85,000 in 2016, and to 100,000 in 2017. The increase will likely include individuals and families fleeing conflicts from the Great Lakes region of sub-Saharan Africa, and also possibly some carefully screened and vetted Syrian refugees from the Middle East. Catholic Family Center has traditionally resettled 700-750 refugees in Rochester each year. If the Administration's plans go forward, next year CFC expects to resettle 800-840 refugees, with the total growing to about 1,000 in 2017. The refugees resettled by CFC come through the US Conference of Catholic Bishops as well as Church World Services, part of the long-term commitment of the Catholic church and other faith communities to welcome those that need to flee their countries and start a new life.

In his address to Congress this September, Pope Francis said "Our world is facing a refugee crisis of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War... We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just, and fraternal. We need to avoid a common temptation nowadays: to discard whatever proves troublesome."

CFC is committed to giving life to these words of Pope Francis by working with our community partners to overcome the challenges posed by the increase in the number of refugees and warmly welcoming the new arrivals to the Rochester community.

Providence Housing

NEW SUPPORTIVE APARTMENTS IN PENN YAN

One of the major focuses of the mission of Providence Housing is to develop safe, affordable housing for vulnerable persons who are also receiving services. A partnership between Providence and Catholic Charities Community Services has led to the creation of such a facility—a three unit supported housing opportunity in Penn Yan. The opening of this facility has enabled three clients of Catholic Charities Community Services to take a giant step toward a more independent self-directed life. While Providence will be responsible for maintenance of the physical facility, staff from Community Services will continue to tutor and encourage growth in the residents. In the rapidly changing world of services to developmentally disabled persons and other vulnerable populations, and in the context of the initiatives of the State's Medicaid Redesign Team, this new opportunity is an important example of the key role that Providence can play.

Food Bank of the Southern Tier

SAM JONES – FOOD BANK VOLUNTEER

The transformation of Sam Jones, a 32-year-old resident of ABLE 2 in Elmira, started with something simple: a birthday card.

Sam began volunteering two days a week at the Food Bank, but mostly remained silent. He was slowly getting to know Production Manager Earl Leonard and other staff, when he learned it was Earl's birthday.

Sam surprised everyone by creating a homemade card for Earl, using labels from some of Earl's favorite foods to decorate the card, said Elaine Whipple, an ABLE2 Community Support Professional who works with Sam.

"I saw a complete turnaround in Sam after he gave Earl the card. The Food Bank employees make this a special place," Elaine said. "They sit and talk with Sam. If he has a question, they answer it. He loves it there and won't volunteer anywhere else."

Sam has touched the lives of the staff. "It was really amazing to receive a personalized birthday card from Sam—and a hug, which Elaine said he never does," Earl said.

"Sam has really come out of his shell and puts a smile on everybody's face."

Since the birthday card, Sam increased his volunteering to 15 hours a week. "I was afraid he might be trying to do too much, but he said they like him and he likes them, so he's eager to go every day," Elaine said. "He told me, 'I make a difference,' and he really does."

Earl's time with Sam has been transformational for both of them. "He's made my days much brighter," says Earl Leonard of Sam.



Catholic Charities of Chemung/Schuyler Counties

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

It's hard to imagine the direction Sheila's life has taken. Meeting Sheila, a beautiful introspective woman with a warm, humble personality, it is hard to believe she has spent most of her adult life in prison. What an amazing contradiction to the belief that people cannot change. Sheila is living proof that change is possible and honestly, quite humbling.

Sheila spent her 20s and 30s in and out of jail, using drugs and alcohol, and stealing to get by. In 2000, Sheila went to prison for the first time. Over the course of the next 12 years, Sheila experienced freedom only twice: once for 7 1/2 months and a second time for 11 months. She admits, "I had five children and just lived off welfare. I just kept having babies by men thinking they loved me. I was searching for something."

But what was she searching for? Sheila's answer came to her while serving her last prison sentence—the reason it all kept happening—"I was lying on my bunk and it was like a light bulb went off in my head... the drugs and alcohol are the problem. That's why you keep coming back." Finally acknowledging her substance abuse issue was a huge turning point for Sheila, but there was more. Her need to self-medicate came from a traumatic incident she experienced when she was just 14 years old. Sheila had spent her entire adult life burying this traumatic experience and had been suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). "That's the number one key, once you understand what's going on with you then you're able to change it around. Because I didn't understand about PTSD, I didn't understand why I kept using drugs and drinking. I didn't know anything about recovery. I just knew that I was very hopeless. I felt like my life wouldn't go anywhere."

Armed with her realization, Sheila began digging, asking questions and reaching out for help while serving her final sentence. "I started going to the library there and pulling books out about anxiety and depression. It's hard when you're in prison; you have to carry this personality like you're down with everybody. But I knew in my heart what I was trying to do. I was so relieved the day I got out of there."

Sheila has spent the last two years since her release rebuilding her life, first utilizing Catholic Charities' Second Place East Homeless Shelter and then finding permanent housing through Catholic Charities' Gateways Community Living Program. "I remember walking down the street and I kept calling Gateways, I kept calling Sharon, to show her I had motivation and that I wanted to change my life. Sharon said, 'we're going to have a meeting and there's no opening yet.' So, I said a prayer. It was probably two hours later, she called me back and she said 'you're accepted.' And I remember standing there and saying 'thank you, God.'"

Now stably housed, Sheila's made amazing strides from her sobriety to her relationship with her children. She has been off Public Assistance for over a year, she continues to

work through her PTSD and has sought and won joint custody of her youngest son, who will be ten years old very soon. "He's just my little guy," Sheila says brightly and smiles warmly. "I teach him a lot of things, he teaches me stuff too. I love him, I love him so much." Sheila hopes to rebuild her relationships with her older children who are now teens and adults.

Sheila is truly a changed woman on a whole new path in life; one where she can finally love herself and the people around her. "I think the main thing is to recondition your mind. I guess when you grow up in an environment that's not healthy and then you go on to start using drugs and alcohol, it's like ingrained in you. I had to turn things around—my belief system, my morals, and my values." Change is possible and honestly, quite humbling.

Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes

FOCUS ON HUNGER AND POVERTY

Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes has recently been focusing efforts around awareness of hunger and poverty and generating support for its programs and services that help people in need. The annual Hoedown for Hunger, held in September provided a fun and exciting way to raise awareness and financial support for the Geneva Community Lunch Program. Held at the prestigious Geneva on the Lake, guests were treated to a traditional back yard bbq served up in true Geneva on the Lake Fashion! In between square dances, attendees learned about the growing prevalence of hunger in Geneva and the surrounding community, and how the Geneva Community Lunch Program is playing a significant role in addressing hunger and food insecurity.

A few short weeks later, folks from across our four counties joined Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes staff at the annual Empty Bowls event. Held in both Geneva and Auburn, and tied to World Hunger Day, the event provided the opportunity to elevate participants' understanding of the impact of poverty in our own communities, across the State and around the world. Perhaps the highlight of the event was the ceramic bowls artfully created by students from area high schools and colleges, local artisans and members of the Rochester Folk Art Guild. As participants in the event picked out a bowl to take home, they were reminded that the bowl was not only a symbol of hunger and poverty, but also a call to action to partner with Catholic Charities to help end poverty for the 45 million Americans who are living in poverty.



Catholic Charities of Steuben County

CELEBRATING PROGRAM ANNIVERSARIES IN 2015

Catholic Charities of Steuben (CCS) is celebrating three program anniversaries this year. Bath Community Child Day Care Center will celebrate 25 years, while Healthy Families Steuben and the Community Residence each celebrated 20 years.

Bath Community Child Day Care Center first opened its doors 25 years ago in the former St. Mary's Catholic School in Bath to care for area preschool children. Plans for celebrating the 25th anniversary include an open house/reunion for Center families and staff, past and present, in conjunction with the annual holiday concert and dinner. The Center helps to prepare younger children

for school and provides a safe, structured, recreational program for school-age children. The Center also runs a full day summer program for children through 12 years of age. As the only licensed day care center in central Steuben County, the program currently serves 95 families with a daily attendance of about 75 children. The Day Care program is a vital service to working families and employers in and around Bath. For more information, please contact Bath Community Child Day Care Center Director Darcy M. Cherry at 607-776-7387 or DCherry@dc.org.

Healthy Families Steuben (HFS) joined the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and Healthy Families New York (HFNY) in celebrating their 20th anniversary as one of the original HFNY sites. HFS marked the occasion with a picnic held the afternoon of July 15, 2015 from Noon to 3 p.m. at Hickory Hill Campgrounds in Bath, NY with activities, food, and fun. Healthy Families is an evidence-based home visiting program that provides support and education to families with young children. Services begin prenatally and can continue until the child starts school or Head Start. Along with support and education focusing on health and child development, HFS connects families to community resources like WIC, health care providers, mental health counseling, domestic violence services, and substance abuse services. HFS serves more than 220 families annually in Steuben County through a partnership of Catholic Charities of Steuben County and the Institute for Human Services, with support from United Way of the Southern Tier. For more information, please contact Kinship Family & Youth Director Lisa Galatio at 607-324-6027 or visit www.healthyfamiliesnewyork.org.

The Community Residence (CR), which opened its doors on September 18, 1995, celebrated its 20th anniversary with an Open House on the afternoon of September 18, 2015 in the residence, located at 130 Rumsey Street, Bath, NY. During the celebration there was a surprise dedication in honor of a founding father and former Kinship Executive Director, Joseph Weider. The Weider House, as it is now known, provides housing for up to 18 men, along with educational services and support groups that encourage independent, substance-free living, and it has become a fixture over the last 20 years, serving the needs of the recovery community. Referrals have increased each year since the CR opened its doors, and it's not uncommon to have a waiting list. The program recently reached the 3,000 referral mark, with most coming from rural-based inpatient treatment programs. The average length of stay at the Weider House is three to six months. Residents graduate after completing all goals and objectives on their service (treatment) plans. Weider House residents stay longer and are more successful on discharge when compared to other residential programs in Upstate NY.

Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga

THE "YES CLUB"

"They're awesome kids," says Whitney Bauer, about the members of the Youth Engagement Services Club she coordinates at Spencer-Van Etten High School in rural Tioga County. Whitney, the newest member of the staff of Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga, is spearheading the inaugural year of the "YES Club" in that school district. Youth are starting to get involved in the program, which welcomes students who need encouragement to stay engaged in school. Most are from low income families and often face difficulties finding a nurturing friend group. The YES Club provides a safe, encouraging place for students to spend their study halls and after school hours.

The YES program in the Spencer-Van Etten school district is an expansion of the Catholic Charities YES program that has been running successfully since 2006 in the Newark Valley, another predominantly rural school district in Tioga County. Both youth programs involve tutoring in academic subjects, enrichment activities such as trips to attend local theater productions, and training in life skills. These skills cover a wide gamut of topics, from doing the laundry to relating to other people. YES Club members have the opportunity to give back to their communities through volunteer activities at local not-for-profits. All of these experiences provide the young people with opportunities they might not otherwise have.

YES puts a particular emphasis on teaching young people to set goals. Better grades, employment and improved relationships are among the goals the YES Club members strive for, with the encouragement of Catholic Charities

staff. The YES members also encourage each other; good attendance and good grades by everyone on one's "team" bring collective rewards like pizza parties and trips to the movies. With an eye to the future, YES Clubs also visit college campuses, helping to de-mystify higher education for students, most of whose parents did not attend college. The YES Club experience provides support, guidance and friendship that encourage kids to get to school each day and stay in school until graduation. The patience and compassion of Catholic Charities staff is empowering these so-called "at-risk" teens to say "YES" to bright and productive lives.

Catholic Charities of Livingston County



RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS

The Catholic Charities of Livingston County Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon took place on September 28th at Camp Stella Maris. We had 82 volunteers in attendance who serve in various capacities. Each volunteer received a goody bag filled with Monks Bread from the Abbey of the Genesee (a proud supporter of Catholic Charities) and a "SMORE" kit. Volunteers expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to serve others and fulfill the mission of Catholic Charities.

The staff of Catholic Charities made presentations on the importance of volunteers and how much of an impact they really do make each time they are with people who call upon us for help. While 82 attended the luncheon, all 165 volunteers are a vital part of the Catholic Charities Team, and we could not be more thankful! Their dedication and commitment to helping others throughout the communities of Livingston County is something to be very proud of! Together, as a TEAM, we are able to help nearly 10,000 people each year!



Catholic Charities Community Services

STAFF MEMBER STEPHANIE CLINTON RECOGNIZED

Our congratulations go out to Stephanie Clinton, Catholic Charities Community Services Medicaid Client Coordinator, Broker and Fiscal Intermediary Liaison who presented at the first annual Fiscal Intermediary and Self Direction summit. The conference was held by the New York State Association of Community and Residential Agencies and New York State Rehabilitation Association on October 8, in Troy, NY. Stephanie was part of a panel from Region I (Southern Tier) that discussed the roles and responsibilities of a new fiscal intermediary and the challenges they have encountered to educate both service providers and individuals along with their family members on what tools are available to them to successfully live a self-directed life. A Rochester family receiving fiscal intermediary services from Catholic Charities Community Services was also a participant on the panel. They have purchased a home for their son who is developmentally disabled and they are now revising his current self-directed budget to add 24/7 staffing to meet their son's needs. The family was able to bring forth the concerns they have in facing road blocks which challenge their objectives of providing the least restrictive environment for their son. Catholic Charities Community Services continues to be a leader in the ever changing future of self-directed services for persons with disabilities.

Life Support: Updates from Life Issues

Every Life is Worth Living

That is the theme of this year's USCCB Respect Life Program, highlighting the value of all human life, no matter what. On October 22, 2015, Governor Cuomo affirmed the value of women's lives by signing the bills into law that had made up the Women's Equality Agenda, with the notable exception of the abortion expansion bill. Women's lives in New York State now have more protection against human trafficking, domestic violence, and workplace discrimination or harassment. Women and their unborn children will also be protected against dangerous late term abortions that would have been legal in New York if that bill had passed.

Human life has just as much value at the end of life as anywhere else along its continuum. Every life is truly worth living, and this is why bills that would allow assisted suicide in New York State must be strongly opposed. The Consistent Life Ethic supports the dignity of all human life from the moment of conception to natural death. As-



sisted suicide is NOT natural death as it allows a terminally ill patient to get a prescription for a lethal dose of medication to end his or her life. California recently became the fourth state to allow assisted suicide and New York is now being targeted to be the next state to allow this. Assisted suicide puts vulnerable people, including the elderly, disabled, and seriously ill, at risk to lose support for end of life treatment and be offered this less expensive option instead. Rather than allowing assisted suicide, government should be consistent in its efforts to prevent suicide. New York's message that "Life Is Worth Living," is undermined by this legislation. The USCCB 2015-16 Respect Life Program, Every Life is Worth Living, has several resources on this issue, as does the NYS Catholic Conference, which launched a website addressing this at <http://www.catholicendoflife.org/>. Efforts are underway to educate Catholics on end of life issues to help plan for natural death and to oppose this legislation.



MARCH FOR LIFE 2016



JANUARY 22, 2016
WASHINGTON, D.C.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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THE GOOD NEWS

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

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