

Tidbits



Governor's Volunteer Service Award

Sharon Black, a volunteer in the Foster Grandparent Program, has won the 2013 Governor's Volunteer Service Award. She will receive her award at the Governor's Mansion in Springfield later this spring.

Mediation Services

Did you know that Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet provides court-appointed mediation services? These services include parenting agreements, marital settlement agreements (divorce), and family or business mediations.

Mediation is a way for two parties to come together with a neutral mediator to ensure everyone's needs are met, especially those of any children who may be impacted by these life events. Divorce mediation may be the most peaceful way for families to process an extremely stressful event. If divorce is inevitable, Catholic Charities is here to support both the parents and the children throughout the transition in order to help neutralize the relationship. Couples are able to move forward as co-parents providing the best possible future for each family member.

To learn more about this cost-effective option, please call 815-724-1227 or email bhoward@cc-doj.org.

A New Life in the U.S.

Becoming homecoming queen is a big deal for any teenager, but it was especially significant for Kumba O. Queewa. Kumba and her mother have endured devastating trauma in their lives and have not only survived; they are thriving.

Five years ago, Kumba never would have dreamed that she would be a popular and successful high school student in the United States. Back then, Kumba and her family were living in their native country, Sierra Leone (in West Africa) where they faced an eleven year civil war and continued to live in danger and turmoil. During the war, Kumba's mother was tortured and her father was killed. This loving mother knew that the family needed to leave Sierra Leon to seek a better life.

When Kumba's family arrived in the United States, they initially stayed at DuPage PADS until they could secure more permanent housing. They became connected with World Relief DuPage and Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet. The family now lives in Wheaton and participates in Catholic Charities' SHIFT program, which provides housing for homeless families (who have one or more disabilities) with the goal of assisting them toward self-sufficiency.

Although Kumba wasn't receiving an education in Sierra Leone, she has done a fantastic job catching up in school and will attend college in the fall to study nursing. Despite growing up in very difficult circumstances, Kumba's similar to her classmates in most ways. She has an after school job at a smoothie shop and participates in various extracurricular activities, including Ecology Club and managing the school's soccer team.

Today, Kumba and her mother are focused on receiving citizenship. They are studying hard and they are enthusiastic about this new opportunity. When Kumba isn't busy with her schoolwork and job, she spends time with her many friends. Clearly, she is extremely well-liked by her peers and is proud of her status as homecoming queen. "I decided that I wanted to be homecoming queen during my junior year," she said, "and I just focused on making it happen." This extraordinary young woman knows how to work hard and make her dreams come true. This family is grateful to Catholic Charities for helping provide stable and comfortable housing. Their dreams are coming true!



Catholic Charities' SHIFT Program

Catholic Charities' SHIFT (Supportive Housing Initiative for Families in Transition) Program provides housing for homeless families with the goal of independence. Families live in rental apartments/townhouses in various locations throughout DuPage County. The leases for the SHIFT apartments are in Catholic Charities' name and the Agency pays fair market rate rent to the landlords. Families in the program are required to pay a portion of their adjusted gross income to Catholic Charities, which goes toward the rent.

Dear Friends

At Catholic Charities, we are constantly evaluating the needs that exist within the Diocese of Joliet. Oftentimes programs are created or expanded when we become aware of troubling trends or concerns of individuals living within the Diocese. Accordingly, statistics have shown that veteran homelessness within our community is high. Also, homelessness among female veterans is on the rise.



Last year, we received the Supportive Services for Veteran's Families grant, which is a program of the Veterans Administration (VA) to assist veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Along with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago, we received \$1 million to jointly provide services to the veteran population. Today, we are proudly providing case management, employment services, housing support, assistance with rent arrearages and security deposits to low-income veterans and their families.

Additionally, we connect our veterans with the VA in order to assist in obtaining benefits that will lead our veterans to achieving independence and earning a living wage. Because our newly created program has exceeded our estimates, we have hired additional staff and have expanded into DuPage County.

Catholic Charities is committed to finding veterans a safe and affordable place to live. Our veterans have sacrificed so much to serve our country. They truly deserve the help needed to fully reintegrate back into their communities. We thank all of you whose support has made our work possible.

Blessings,

Glenn Van Cura
Executive Director



Helping our Heroes

Thank You!

Dear Catholic Charities,

I just wanted to take a minute to thank you. My granddaughter is a preschool student at one of your Head Start sites. She enjoys going there very much and has learned so much.

Your child advocate is just totally awesome in the job that she does for you. She has very much helped me through a period of depression. She has helped me with services, classes, and just being there. All of the teachers are just wonderful and a joy to work with. I really don't know what I'd do without them.

My daughter is a drug addict and has not been there for my granddaughter and this has been a very tiring struggle for me. I have not been gainfully employed for three years. I have lived in many different homes during this time and have had to move often due to having no income. You and your staff (along with my church and the love and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ) have been the constants in our lives.

May you and your organization have a blessed year for all you do year long. The Lord Jesus Christ is truly glorified by your work in the community for those who cannot always help themselves.

Sincerely,

A Grateful Grandmother



Daddy and Me Dinner



The Good Shepherd Head Start site in Bolingbrook recently hosted a "Daddy and Me Dinner" as part of their monthly male involvement activity. The participating fathers/male role models enjoyed making and eating not-so-sloppy-joe sandwiches with their children! Thanks for a fun evening, dads!



First Look for Charity 2014

Catholic Charities participated in the 2014 First Look for Charity event at McCormick Place in Chicago on the evening of Friday, February 7th.

Catholic Charities' guests got the "first look" at the Chicago Auto Show and also enjoyed amenities of the Agency's private hospitality suite that featured hors d'oeuvres, live music, and a professional portrait photographer.

This was Catholic Charities' ninth year participating in the elite black-tie fundraiser.



*(l-r) Jack and Debyjo Ericksen,
Sue and Terry D'Arcy*

(l-r) Rev. John Balluff and Dave Pezza

*(l-r) Ann and Dave Nelson, Sue and Paul
Siegel, Kaity Siegel, Dave Grimmenga*

Thank You to our Sponsors!

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- Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Churney

Ebay Giving Works in Full Swing!

Catholic Charities' eBay Giving Works program is off to a great start! THANK YOU to everyone who has already donated to help this exciting new program. It's easy...

- **Donate:** Donation items are accepted at Catholic Charities' Daybreak Center (611 E. Cass St. in Joliet) Monday through Friday between 8:30am and 4:30pm.
- **Shop:** Visit the Catholic Charities Giving Works page on eBay. When you purchase an item from our shop, a portion (or the entire amount) will be donated to Catholic Charities.
- **Sell:** If you're selling an item on eBay, please consider donating some (or all) of the proceeds to Catholic Charities.

Questions? Contact **Lori Vitullo**, our eBay coordinator at 815-723-3405 or lvitullo@cc-doj.org.



Creative Giving

When Jade Baker of Bourbonnais turned 11 years-old in January, she had an idea. She decided to share her blessings with people in need. So, instead of receiving gifts at her birthday party, she asked her guests to bring items for a low-income family receiving services from Catholic Charities. Her mother, Lourdes, explained, "Jade chose Catholic Charities because she knows that people in need go there for help. We've also taught her that, as a Catholic, you help others."

Jade's friends were very generous! The donations included general household and hygiene products, new shoes, clothing, toys, and over \$160 in gift cards. The family who received the donations, a single mom with three children, was extremely thankful. Great job, Jade!



Angel Fund is Heaven-sent!



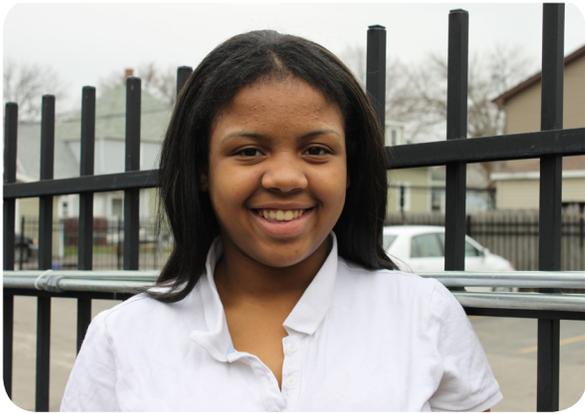
People in our community are in crisis in record numbers. At Catholic Charities the requests for food and rental assistance are never-ending. For many, unemployment benefits have been exhausted and the underemployed, who were once working in professional jobs, are now earning minimum wage and are unable to make ends meet. Seniors who have worked all of their lives now have to choose between paying their utility bills and prescription drugs.

These people need your help now. Will you be an angel to someone in need? **For every dollar that you donate to the Angel Fund at Catholic Charities, an anonymous "angel" will match it – dollar for dollar – up to \$50,000!** Be an angel to someone who will have nowhere else to turn if Catholic Charities doesn't answer their cries, and their prayers. Please mail your donation today or make a gift using a credit card online at catholiccharitiesjoliet.org.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please fill out this form and send it along with your donation to: Angel Fund 203 N. Ottawa Street, Joliet, IL 60432
For more information or to make a donation over the phone, call 815-723-3405, ext. 1140.



BOMSOM Award Recipient

LaFaye Vaden, a client at Daybreak Center, won the prestigious BOMSOM award from the Rotary Club of Shorewood which is given to “outstanding individuals demonstrating service above self.” Vaden is an eighth grader at Troy Middle School.

Good News!

Catholic Charities recently received the Allstate Agency Hands in the Community \$1,000 grant! Thank you to Allstate Agent Thomas Clark! Community involvement is an extension of what their agents do every day — protecting people and preparing them for the future. We appreciate the support!



New Kitchen Items Donated to Daybreak Center

Joliet Township Government recently made a generous donation to Daybreak Center, which will provide much-needed new kitchen items including a convection oven, gas griddle, coffee-maker and four steam tables.



Easter Baskets Brighten Holiday for Clients

Parishioners from St. Mary of Gostyn Church in Downers Grove generously donated 75 Easter baskets (and made an additional cash donation) to Catholic Charities. Karen Hader organized this fantastic project and delivered the baskets. Clients at Daybreak Center, Head Start sites, and counseling were delighted to receive the beautiful Easter baskets.



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Working to Reduce Poverty in America.



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If you have any questions about this publication, please call Maggie Snow at 815.724.1165.

Our Mission

We are a faith-based organization providing service to people in need and calling others of good will to do the same.

**DAYBREAK CENTER
 TAILGATE FOR
 HUNGER!**

JULY 11, 2014

TAILGATE FOR HUNGER!

July 11, 2014 | 5pm-11pm
JOLIET MOOSE | 25 Springfield Avenue | Joliet
 21 yrs & older

ANY QUESTIONS? Contact Marianne Holzhauser
mholzhauser@cc-doj.org or 815.774.4663 ext 3137

SPORTS MEMORABILIA!
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 50/50 RAFFLES!
 GOOD TIMES!
 LIVE BANDS!