

Tidbits



Steve Gaydos

Live Holiday Music at Shepherd's Table

Steve Gaydos, our Fiscal Director, helped everyone "swing into Christmas" when he performed for clients at Shepherd's Table soup kitchen at lunchtime on December 21!

University of St. Francis Brings Christmas Joy

The University of St. Francis provided transportation for our Daybreak Center clients to their campus for a delicious holiday dinner AND provided a gym full of new and gently used donations of clothing, shoes, and toys for everyone to choose from! Santa also made a very special visit for our youngest guests!

eBay Giving Works

We need donations for our eBay Giving Works program!



Do you have new or gently used items to donate? Contact Mechelle at mhorvat@cc-doj.org or 815-723-3405.

Finding Stability at Hope House

"It's been a long and bumpy road with a lot of wrong turns," Damien said of his struggles with homelessness and poverty. This 38 year-old husband and father of three boys recalled the chain of events which led to his family losing their home. Now Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet is helping Damien and his family re-build.

A few years ago, Damien and his family were sharing a home with another family in order to share expenses. What began as a good situation quickly deteriorated as Damien's housemates stopped paying their share of the rent and utilities. Suddenly, Damien was responsible for more expenses than he could afford, which left him feeling frustrated and in over his head. Both families were evicted from their home.

With his financial resources now depleted, Damien had few options so he moved his family into an extended stay motel. Although the motel was infested with roaches and bedbugs, the family stayed for as long as they could afford to pay. After 9½ months they were forced to leave. Facing homelessness, Damien's wife researched their options and was referred to Catholic Charities' Hope House homeless shelter.

The family moved into Hope House and immediately found comfort and inspiration there. Damien said, "Hope House was a great experience. Things for our family normalized there. I was able to re-center myself." Damien worked hard during his stay at Hope House. He worked overnights at a convenience store and spent days taking classes provided by Catholic Charities, including Anger Management and Out of Poverty. During their stay, Damien's wife found a job working at a coffee shop.

Soon, Damien's family was able to leave Hope House and move into an apartment as part of Catholic Charities' Transitional Housing Program. "Our apartment is in a good neighborhood. It's quiet and peaceful. We love it."

Damien and his wife both continue to work hard and are becoming more self-sufficient. They work opposite shifts so that their boys always have a parent at home. It's tough working overnights and taking care of the kids during the day, but Damien isn't afraid of hard work and he does whatever it takes to care for his family. This resilient couple remain optimistic despite their struggles: "We don't get down about it – we divide, conquer, and figure it out."

The programs and services that Damien and his family have participated in have had a huge impact on their lives. "Catholic Charities has provided us with stability. I know it won't always be easy, but I'm willing to do the work."

To learn more about Catholic Charities' Transitional Housing Program, Anger Management course, and Out of Poverty classes, please visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org.



Damien is a hard-working and dedicated husband and father of three young boys

Dear Friends

The Board of Young Professionals

I have always wanted to see Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet form an auxiliary board. When the Board of Young Professionals (BYOP) was created this past year, I was delighted. The formation of the BOYP marks a new chapter in the Agency's history. In just over one year's time the board has done a remarkable job spreading our mission, serving our clients, and fundraising on our behalf.



The Board of Young Professionals is comprised of young adult members between the age of 21 and 40. Members join the BOYP primarily to provide service to those in need in our Diocese. Additionally, the board provides an excellent opportunity to network and socialize with like-minded individuals in their age group. Although I am not age-eligible to be a member of the BOYP, they have been kind enough to include me in several of their meetings. I have witnessed a vibrant group of professional young adults who are driven to make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable in the Diocese of Joliet. They are truly inspired by Pope Francis' message: "If love is our mission, then mercy is our way."

In November, the BOYP led a service retreat in Hopkins Park, one of the most impoverished towns in the state. During their three-day retreat, they worked on home repair projects including roofing, flooring and cabinetry. They also spent time getting to know the residents, sharing a spaghetti dinner with the families and learning about the people and history of Hopkins Park. Additionally, the BOYP, organized over 30 events both service oriented and social, including sponsoring a fundraiser at Arlington Race Track. Totaled, the BOYP performed 2,400 hours of service, all in their first year!

In the short time since its inception, the BOYP has become an important piece of the fabric of Catholic Charities and has made a significant impact on our community. I am proud of how they are growing and I am inspired by the work that they are doing.

If you are interested in joining this vibrant group of young professionals who are making a difference in the lives of those that need it most in the Diocese of Joliet, please call Edith Avila Olea at 815-724-1220 or email Edith at Eavilaolea@cc-doj.org

Blessings,

Glenn Van Cura, Executive Director



The Board of Young Professionals regularly volunteers at Catholic Charities' Shepherd's Table soup kitchen, preparing and serving meals.



Christmas at Head Start

The students in our Head Start Program at St. John's Early Childhood Center in Joliet presented a wonderful winter performance just before Christmas!

Dan Gibbons Turkey Trot Raises \$25,000 for Catholic Charities Services in DuPage County

Catholic Charities was honored and grateful to receive \$25,000 from the Dan Gibbons Turkey Trot 5k fun run/walk this year.



Staff from Catholic Charities volunteered their time in support of the Thanksgiving morning event. 8,222 runners and walkers took to the streets of downtown Elmhurst on the rainy morning. Money awarded from the Turkey Trot will be used to help fund Catholic Charities' Community Services in DuPage County.

Employee of the Year: Samantha Rabb

The Employee of the Year award is presented annually to a member of our Catholic Charities' team who demonstrates excellence in his or her work and a commitment to our mission. The recipient of the 2015 Employee of the Year honor was Samantha Rabb, a Family Advocate at Felman Early Childhood Center.

Samantha has worked at Catholic Charities for over 10 years. She is professional, warm, caring and helpful to everyone. She goes the extra mile for her students and their families. If a family does not have a car, she drives them where they need to go. She is trusted and respected by her co-workers, students, and their families. She is known for her positive attitude.

We are extremely thankful to have her as part of the Catholic Charities family. Congratulations, Samantha and thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to our mission!



Client Wish List

Our clients are especially in need of the following items right now:

- Full size hygiene products
- Diapers and wipes
- Cleaning supplies
- White towels and washcloths
- Pillow cases
- Twin size sheets
- Razors
- Laundry detergent and fabric softener
- Toilet paper
- Gift cards for gasoline



Can you help? Items will be gratefully accepted at your nearest Catholic Charities office Monday through Friday between 8:30am and 4:30pm (closed from 12-1pm for lunch).

Thank You!

We received the following notes from clients who received gifts from our Holiday Outreach Program in DuPage County.

Thank you for providing my son with a very Merry Christmas. I really appreciate the gifts we received. God bless you. You will never know how thankful I am - you blessed me and my son on Christmas. Thank you 100 times.

Thank you so much for helping my family during our time of need. Our holidays were great. We are so grateful for all of your help. May God continue to bless you over and beyond.



Girl Scouts helping sort through donations at our Lombard office!

Undy Sunday Collects Underwear, Socks & Diapers for Those in Need

Forty-seven parishes, schools, and organizations collected an overwhelming amount of underwear, socks, undershirts, and diapers for Undy Sunday! Many of us take things like underwear for granted. Most of our clients don't have that luxury. Because of your generosity it will be one less thing that our clients have to worry about. Thank you for helping with this important need!



Board of Directors at Shepherd's Table

Members from our Board of Directors generously donated their time to volunteer at Catholic Charities' Shepherd's Table soup kitchen on January 31st. They prepared and served a delicious meal to our clients on a cold winter night. Thank you for your service!

Please Help Spread the Love!

Dear Friend,

At Catholic Charities, our mission is love. Our love for Christ and our love for those who are struggling is what drives us to do our important work. Please consider honoring your loved one with the gift of a contribution to Catholic Charities. Your gift will be used to spread the love within your community. A special letter will be mailed to your loved one announcing that you have made a gift in their name. What a delightful surprise that will be!

Please be generous. You can include your donation in the enclosed envelope or can make a contribution online at catholiccharitiesjoliet.org. This is an opportunity to help individuals and families who are in poverty, but striving for self-sufficiency. They are working hard to improve their situations, but many are lonely and scared. It's the perfect time to spread your love and show our clients that there are generous individuals in their community who care about them and believe in them.

Bless you for your support of Catholic Charities. Together we are doing God's work — changing lives and spreading the love! If you can't send a gift, please remember the vulnerable and needy in your prayers.

Thank you for your generosity.

Gratefully,

Glenn Van Cura
Executive Director

Kathleen Langdon
Director, Development and Communications

*Let all that you do
be done in love.*
— 1 CORINTHIANS 16:14



The Bradley Lions donated gifts for ten seniors for our Sharing the Warmth program.



Members of the Kankakee Valley Wanderers dropped off gifts for our Sharing the Warmth program.

Our Clients Were Blessed by Your Generosity at Christmas!

Holiday Appeal

Our annual Holiday Appeal benefits clients in all programs throughout the seven counties we serve. Donations to this appeal help us meet the needs of all of our clients year round, not just at Christmas. It's not too late to donate to this effort! Please visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org or send a check in the enclosed envelope.

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A Gift of Christmas

Our "A Gift of Christmas" campaign invites donors to sponsor a specific family or individual client by making a monetary donation which is used to purchase Christmas gifts or other items that the client has specifically indicated they need. As a result of this campaign, many families are able to provide gifts on Christmas morning for the first time in years.

— 152 individuals received Christmas gifts through this program!

Sharing the Warmth

Sharing the Warmth provides gifts to needy seniors in Kankakee County. Case managers identify our neediest senior clients who then make Christmas wish lists. Clients are matched with donors who purchase and wrap the items on the lists and drop them off at Catholic Charities in time for Christmas delivery.

— This Christmas season, donors provided gifts to 213 seniors in Kankakee County!

Holiday Outreach Program

The Holiday Outreach Program serves low-income families in DuPage County who have recently received our services. Churches, businesses, and schools are the biggest supporters of this program. We received donations of gift cards, clothing, winter jackets, hats, gloves, and toys for children.

— In 2015, nearly 1,000 individuals were assisted through this program!

Adopt a Family Program

Daybreak Center in Will County brought Christmas cheer to its shelter clients (and those in the Supportive Services for Veterans Families and Permanent Supportive Housing programs) through the Adopt a Family Program. Clients make wish lists and donors purchase items to fulfill their requests.

— In 2015, 30 families were adopted through this program!

Thank You!

Thanks to all of our supporters, donors, volunteers and friends. You truly made it a bright Christmas for hundreds of needy individuals and families this year.

We appreciate your generosity!



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 815.723.3405

For giving opportunities and more information about our programs, visit our website.

catholiccharitiesjoliet.org



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Visit us Online



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.



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If you have any questions about this publication, please contact Maggie Snow at msnow@cc-doj.org.

Our Mission

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

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Save the Date!



The Human Race® is a 5k run/fitness walk in support of over 60 charity organizations serving DuPage County, including Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet.

Saturday, April 30, 2016 • 9:00 AM

The Esplanade

1901 W. Butterfield Road, Downers Grove

dupagehumanrace.org

Be sure to designate Catholic Charities to receive the donation from your race fee!

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