

## Tidbits



### Head Start Makes a Difference!

Little D'Angelo recently transitioned from Early Head Start into Head Start at our Felman Center in Joliet. His mom was so appreciative of all that the teachers did for him, that she had these certificates printed and awarded them to his teachers, Kristi Eumana and Lisette Garcia!



### Daybreak Homework Help Center

Daybreak Shelter recently celebrated the opening of a new room in which homework help services are provided to homeless schoolchildren residing in the shelter. This project was funded by a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Will County.

### Hope House Awarded Grant

Hope House homeless shelter in DuPage County was among the recipients of the DuPage County Human Services 2016 grants. The shelter was awarded \$35,000 to help fund the program.

## Providing Help in Food Deserts

**H**opkins Park is a small, rural village in Kankakee County which has an extremely high rate of poverty. It is also a food desert, which means that affordable and nutritious food is difficult to obtain for various reasons. In Hopkins Park, many residents are unable to afford transportation and can't travel outside of their remote area to purchase food. With grocery stores difficult to access, those who live in poverty in food deserts often find themselves with empty cupboards and hungry families.

Catholic Charities partnered with the Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) in 2013 to provide "mobile food pantries" (MFP) in food deserts within the Diocese of Joliet. Hopkins Park was quickly identified as an ideal spot for the MFP program and Catholic Charities began working with Sister Marybeth Clements, SSCM at Sacred Heart Mission to begin providing Hopkins Park MFP services. Sr. Marybeth reports that she receives frequent phone calls from residents asking for the date of the next distribution. She has worked very hard to help and believes this program has made an impact that reaches beyond food. "The residents realize that someone cares for their wellbeing," she explains.

When the mobile food pantry pulls into Hopkins Park, it's a big event. Each truck provided by the NIFB has nine bays, six of which are refrigerated, and can hold up to 9,000 pounds of food. Every distribution includes frozen meat; fresh produce; bread; nutritious non-perishable items; and cleaning items when available. During the cold winter months, Catholic Charities often distributes warm coats, hats, and gloves. Helpful information about other programs offered by Catholic Charities is also provided.

At each visit, about twenty volunteers unload food from the bays and organize them on tables around the truck. Then, clients from the community receive a box of nutritious food. Each mobile food pantry distribution visit lasts two hours. In the small community of Hopkins Park, an average of 125 families receive food at each distribution, which reaches about 300 individuals. Families receive food which can last up to ten days. This truly makes an impact on this small village.

Cat, 65 years-old, is an instrumental volunteer at the Hopkins Park mobile food pantries. She works closely with Catholic Charities and is constantly working to streamline the process and help as many of her neighbors as possible. "You wouldn't think that a box of food would be so important to people, but it is," she said. She explained that many of her neighbors in Hopkins Park are often forced to choose between buying food and paying a utility bill. "When someone receives a box of food, they don't need to grocery shop that week," she said. "That often allows them to pay the electric bill or for prescription medication."

Cat knows how much of a difference the mobile food pantry makes because she also receives a box of food for her household. She's on disability and explains that after she pays her bills, "there's not much left over." She has lived in this community since 1979 and



*Volunteers prepare boxes of food for each family that attends the Mobile Food Pantry.*

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# Dear Friends

## Volunteers Vital to Catholic Charities

We couldn't continue to operate our programs and services at Catholic Charities without the help from volunteers. That's not an exaggeration. In the past twelve months, we have been blessed with 7,687 volunteers who contributed a total of 144,470 hours of service to the Agency! Our volunteers serve in a wide variety of roles in each of the seven counties of the Diocese of Joliet and work alongside staff, truly as members of our Catholic Charities team. The youngest of our volunteers are children and the oldest are over 90 years-old. Each volunteer is drawn to service for different reasons and each one is vital to our ability to serve the needy and vulnerable.



As summer begins, perhaps you have some extra time in your schedule and are motivated to make a difference in your community. If so, I encourage you to reach out to Catholic Charities to find a volunteering opportunity that matches your interests. Each one of our programs needs volunteers... from our homeless shelters, senior programs, mobile food pantries, to our Head Start program. Please visit our website or call one of our locations to learn more. Also, you'll see an inspirational story in this issue about Bennie Mae Gavin, one of our treasured volunteers in our Foster Grandparent Program.

Another way to help our clients at Catholic Charities is to make a donation to our Angel Fund (please see the box at the bottom of this page). As always, we appreciate your continued generosity and your prayers.

Thank you and God bless you!  
Glenn Van Cura, Executive Director



## Board of Young Professionals Springs into Service

Catholic Charities' Board of Young Professionals continues to make a difference in our community. They recently gathered on a Saturday to build and plant raised garden beds at our Broadway Head Start site in Joliet. In addition to this wonderful project, the Board of Young Professionals regularly cooks and serves meals at both of Catholic Charities' homeless shelters, Daybreak Center and Hope House.

The Board of Young Professionals is always welcoming new members. To learn more, visit [catholiccharitiesjoliet.org](http://catholiccharitiesjoliet.org) or email Edith at [eavilaolea@cc-doj.org](mailto:eavilaolea@cc-doj.org).



## Angel Fund is Heaven-sent!



From time to time, we all need an angel to answer our prayers and keep us safe. Each day at Catholic Charities, we meet individuals and families who are praying for an angel.

**We have been blessed with an angel. For every dollar you donate, our special angel will match it – up to \$50,000. Please help us double the impact of your donation.**

Please be generous. This is an opportunity to help someone who will have no where else to turn if Catholic Charities isn't there to help.

**Please mail your donation in the enclosed envelope. You can also make a gift online at [catholiccharitiesjoliet.org](http://catholiccharitiesjoliet.org), or by calling 815-724-1140.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## Introducing: Pete Kinsella

**P**ete Kinsella was recently named Senior Development Officer for Catholic Charities. Pete is responsible for managing major donors, corporate sponsors, and identifying new funding sources in DuPage County.



Kinsella recently left the banking industry after a 35 year banking career, spending the last 26 years at BMO Harris Bank as a Senior Relationship Manager in Business Banking. Over his career, he has been on numerous non-profit boards including Big Brothers Big Sisters, United Way, Family Shelter Service, St. Francis High School, and has spent the last seven years on Catholic Charities' Board of Directors. Pete is a graduate of St. Francis High School in Wheaton, received his BA in Accounting from North Central College in Naperville, and received his MBA from Keller Graduate School of Management.

As a DuPage County resident, Pete is looking forward to this new opportunity: "I knew that at some point in my career I would be working for a not for profit agency that serves people in need. I am very excited to be a part of Catholic Charities whose mission is to help the poor and vulnerable.

Pete will report to Kathleen Langdon, Director of Development and Communications. He can be reached at 630-495-8008 extension 2109 or [pkinsella@cc-doj.org](mailto:pkinsella@cc-doj.org).

## Food Deserts

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shares a home with her daughter and two young grandsons. "This program helps our family tremendously," she said. In addition to providing much-needed food, Cat also enjoys the social aspect of the mobile food pantry. The small community gathers for the arrival of the NIFB truck and has a chance to catch up with one another, which is especially nice in the rural area where the homes are very spread out.

Catholic Charities' Mobile Food Pantry program provides services in food deserts throughout the Diocese of Joliet. To sponsor the Mobile Food Pantry or to learn more about it, please call 815-724-1140 or email [sambrose@cc-doj.org](mailto:sambrose@cc-doj.org).



## Governor's Award of Excellence

Catholic Charities is pleased to announce that all five of our Head Start locations received the Governor's Award of Excellence for the State of Illinois for Family and Community Engagement. Accepting the award from left to right: Ericka Williams (Manager of Family and Child Support Services), Melisa McGee (Family Advocate), Teresa Reedy (Family Advocate), Maria Tover (Family Advocate), Glenn Van Cura (Executive Director), Katie Adams (Family Advocate), Samantha Rabb (Family Advocate), Kathy Fudge-White (Director of Early Childhood Service Division).

## Someone You Should Know: Bennie Mae Gavin

**B**ennie Mae Gavin isn't your average 92 year-old. While some of her peers may be slowing down a bit, she lives independently and volunteers 20 hours per week for Catholic Charities' Foster Grandparent program.

Bennie volunteers daily as a foster grandparent at Trinity Services in Joliet, which is a non-profit organization helping adults with developmental disabilities lead full and abundant lives. Bennie helps the clients at Trinity Services with their daily activities. She has also forged meaningful relationships with many clients and their families. "We laugh and talk," she says with a smile.

"This program means a lot to me," Bennie says of the Foster Grandparent Program. "It gets me out of the house each day. At my age, that's very important. Get up, get out. It's what keeps me alive," she explains. The clients at Trinity Services refer to Bennie as "grandma" and hug her each day when she arrives. "Bless their hearts," she says. "I just love them." Every morning, Bennie's daughter drives her to Trinity, and Bennie quips she "can't get there fast enough."

Recently, Bennie's outstanding efforts were recognized when she received the prestigious 2016 Governor's Volunteer Services Award. These awards honor volunteers through a statewide program to highlight the importance of volunteerism and community service in the State of Illinois. Bennie was recognized in the North East Senior Corps category for her work with Catholic Charities.

Congratulations, Bennie Mae Gavin. You are truly a blessing!



**The Foster Grandparent Program** offers older adults (55 and over) in Will County the opportunity to assist young adults with disabilities in addition to assisting children in local preschools and grade schools. Foster Grandparent volunteers receive a modest tax-free stipend, mileage reimbursement and generally volunteer 20 hours per week. Catholic Charities is currently seeking volunteers for this program. Please call 815-723-3405 or email [mruiz@cc-doj.org](mailto:mruiz@cc-doj.org) for more information.



## The Human Race

More than 100 runners and walkers (several pictured above) joined Catholic Charities' team for the Human Race on Saturday, April 30th in Downers Grove. Hosted by Giving DuPage, this community event and fundraiser benefits 72 non-profit organizations serving DuPage County, including Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet. Thanks to everyone who supported Catholic Charities.



## Donate Your Car and Help Your Community!

**D**id you know that donating your car, motorcycle, boat, camper, even farm equipment can make a significant difference in your community? Help Catholic Charities by donating your vehicle! We make it easy for you to donate your unwanted, used, or broken-down vehicle at NO COST to you. It's a win-win situation. Your donation helps to support a great cause and you may receive a tax deduction for your generous gift. Get started at [catholiccharitiesjoliet.org](http://catholiccharitiesjoliet.org) or call 815-723-3405.



## Spring Baskets Delivery

The parishioners at St. Mary of Gostyn in Downers Grove and St. John Vianney in Lockport donated spectacular spring baskets for our clients again this year. Thanks to their generosity, local children living in low-income households had a fantastic surprise Easter morning! These beautiful baskets were filled with items specific to each child who received them. Everyone was thrilled and very thankful!

## 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
- Bicycle locks
- Small box fans
- Gift cards for gasoline

Can you help? Items will be gratefully accepted at your nearest Catholic Charities office Monday through Friday between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm (closed from 12:00 to 1:00 pm for lunch).

## Catholic Charities Named Ombudsman Program Grantee

Catholic Charities officially began providing the State of Illinois' long-term care Ombudsman Program. This program is part of the Agency's Aging and Disability Services division and serves clients in Kankakee, Will, and Grundy Counties.

The goal of this program is to protect and promote the rights and quality of life for those who reside in long-term care. Staff and volunteers in the Ombudsman Program are advocates who seek to resolve complaints on behalf of individuals who receive long-term care services. Program team members also assure that the interests of residents are represented to policymakers and governmental agencies. These services are confidential and free.



(l-r) Sarah Neill, Director of Community Services (southern counties) for Catholic Charities; Joe Butkovich, Chairperson of Disaster Recovery for the north central region of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul; Kathleen Langdon, Director of Development and Communications for Catholic Charities.

## House in a Box

Catholic Charities has teamed up with The Society of St. Vincent de Paul to help with their House in a Box initiative, which provides new household items to families who have lost everything as a result of man-made and natural disasters, and who are forced into situational poverty. On Saturday, May 14, boxes were distributed in Watseka to flood victims.



Guests in Catholic Charities' private hospitality suite enjoyed a fabulous night at this black-tie event!

## First Look for Charity

Catholic Charities participated in the 2016 First Look for Charity fundraising event at McCormick Place in Chicago on Friday, February 12th.

Guests enjoyed a "first look" at the Chicago Auto Show and also basked in the amenities of Catholic Charities' private hospitality suite. The suite featured live music, light food, drinks, and professional photos.

This was Catholic Charities eleventh year as a benefactor of this elite black-tie fundraiser. Thanks to everyone who made it a night to remember!



(l-r) Terry and Sue D'Arcy enjoy the event with their guests!

## Thank You to our Event Sponsors!

### Benefactor:

- D'Arcy Buick GMC
- D'Arcy Hyundai

### Patron:

- Chicagoland Ford Dealers

### Donor:

- Panduit



(l-r) Al Pakeltis, Glenn Van Cura, and Bishop Joseph Siegel enjoyed the evening tremendously!



203 North Ottawa Street  
 Joliet, Illinois 60432  
 Administrative Office  
 815.723.3405

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

[catholiccharitiesjoliet.org](http://catholiccharitiesjoliet.org)



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*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*



**Glenn Van Cura**, Executive Director  
 gvancura@cc-doj.org

## Catholic Charities Development Staff

**Kathleen Langdon**, Director, Development & Communications; klangdon@cc-doj.org

**Maggie Snow**, PR & Communications Coordinator; msnow@cc-doj.org

**Susan Parker**, Grants Manager; sparker@cc-doj.org

**Pete Kinsella**, Senior Development Officer; pkinsella@cc-doj.org

**Edith Avila Olea**, Parish Outreach and Board of Young Professionals Coordinator; eavilaolea@cc-doj.org

**Stephanie Ambrose**, Agency Volunteer, eBay, and Mobile Food Pantry Supervisor; sambrose@cc-doj.org

**Marianne Melcher**, Agency Event Coordinator; mmelcher@cc-doj.org

**Claudia Rodriguez**, Data Development Administrative Assistant; crodriguez@cc-doj.org

**Mechelle Horvat**, eBay Analyst; mhorvat@cc-doj.org

*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!



**Friday, August 26, 2016**

**Joliet Country Club**

1009 Spencer Road, Joliet

Shotgun start at 1:00 pm

Golf Foursome: \$500 (\$540 after 7/26/16); Single Golfer: \$125 (\$135 after 7/26/16)

Sponsorship opportunities are available.

For more information, visit [catholiccharitiesjoliet.org](http://catholiccharitiesjoliet.org).

*Proceeds benefit Catholic Charities' programs and services throughout the Diocese of Joliet.*

### Will County

203 North Ottawa St.  
 Joliet, Illinois 60432  
 815.723.3405  
 fax: 815.723.3452

### DuPage County

26 West St. Charles Rd.  
 Lombard, Illinois 60148  
 630.495.8008  
 fax: 630.495.9854

### Kankakee, Ford & Iroquois Counties

249 S. Schuyler, Suite 300  
 Kankakee, IL 60901  
 815.933.7791  
 fax: 815.933.4601

### Grundy County & Kendall Counties

201 N. Liberty, Suite 241  
 Morris, Illinois 60450  
 815.941.2560  
 fax: 815.941.2563