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Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans provides life-giving programs that deliver health and human services to the most vulnerable and needy throughout 8 civil parishes in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. We serve people regardless of race, religion, age, ethnicity or economic status.

## Heading into the Holidays with Open Hearts

Dear Friends of Catholic Charities,

It's hard to believe that the holiday season has arrived! I am sure you and your family are looking forward to all the good things that come with this time of year –cooler temperatures, brighter skies, celebrations with loved ones and the hustle and bustle that fill our schedules.

With Thanksgiving and Christmas just around the corner, I find myself reflecting on all those we serve at Catholic Charities. I am grateful to work alongside those who care for the most vulnerable and needy in our community; I am grateful for the volunteers who share their time and talent; and I am grateful for you and all our generous benefactors, without whom our programs could not exist.

As preparations for holiday feasts get underway, our Food for Families/ Food For Seniors program comes to mind. One of our largest programs, **Food for Families/Food for Seniors delivers 68,000 food boxes to low-income families and seniors.** Our staff and volunteers pack and transport supplemental food boxes to more than 120 sites throughout Louisiana each month.

This time of year, we are also blessed by donors and volunteers who make the holidays brighter for our clients. **Over 1200 clients received toys, gifts and food baskets during the holiday season last year.** Volunteer Services does a wonderful job coordinat-

ing food baskets and gifts for families that are adopted by generous donors. Their work will once again be a blessing to those in need.

These are just two examples of the many ways those in Catholic Charities bring hope, help and care to clients throughout the year. Blessings come in many forms, and we can often overlook the impact of our daily work and ministry, especially amid hectic schedules. Let us remember, when we serve those in need, we are recognizing the face of Jesus in our brothers and sisters. When we reach out and touch them with a smile, a helping hand or a hug we become the hands and heart of our loving Father.

Our prayer for one another might be that we continue to open our hearts to those around us: family members, friends, co-workers and perhaps even the stranger we pass on the street. As we get back to our busy lives, thank you for taking a moment to spend time with Catholic Charities. Your prayers and support are felt by those in ministry and put into action in the lives of the clients we serve. From the Catholic Charities family to your family, thank you for sharing your talents and gifts with our organization. Wishing you a blessed holiday season!

*Sr. Marjorie Hebert, M.S.C.*

Sr. Marjorie Hebert, M.S.C.  
President & CEO



### The Newsletter of Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

#### INSIDE:

- Holiday Blessings from Sr. Marjorie
- Programs and Leaders Honored by Community Organizations
- Health Guardians Provide Full-Circle Care
- Celebrating National Adoption Month
- and more!



*May peace and blessings be yours  
in abundance this holiday season!*



### Approaching the mid-way point in the Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal!

As of the beginning of November, we are 43% toward our \$1.965 Million goal for this year's Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal (AHCA). Our annual volunteer-driven appeal raises crucial undesignated funds to support areas of most need within our organization. It also allows us to swiftly respond in times of disaster and crisis. Thank you for your continued prayers and support as we move into the final stretch of our campaign! For more information, to give or get involved, contact Helen Young at [hyoung@ccano.org](mailto:hyoung@ccano.org).



## Spirit of Hope Receives CCUSA Award

Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) recently presented the CCUSA Social Innovation Award to the Spirit of Hope program at the Partners in Excellence Regional Gathering October 22 and 23 in New Orleans. The award recognizes socially-innovative programs being run by Catholic Charities agencies in communities across the country and includes a cash award of \$5,000 to be reinvested into the program.

Award nominations were judged jointly by members of the Catholic Charities network and the Gigot Center for Entrepreneurship at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, based on a set of predetermined criteria.

Spirit of Hope was launched in June of 2010 after the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill disaster, establishing a new precedent for disaster response. The program was designed within a holistic model and focused on strengthening community participation, promoting inter-agency collaboration and integrating services with a client-centered approach.



The Spirit of Hope team receives the CCUSA Social Innovation Award.

It also placed a strong emphasis on empowering local communities and was designed to transfer ownership and authority to the clients by way of consumer councils. Spirit of Hope's mission continues today through work force development, case management and Health Guardians Patient Navigation program. Congratulations, Spirit of Hope!

## Health Guardians Provide Full-Circle Care

The gift of health and wellness is a precious one, especially for those facing challenges like poverty and homelessness. When chronic health issues compound on top of a struggle to maintain employment or shelter or to even get a good meal, many in need can easily fall through the cracks of society. Health Guardians of Catholic Charities is working to provide the support needed for the most vulnerable in our community to manage their healthcare and get back to a state of self-sufficiency and stability.

"I was living on a bench on Canal street. I was going to the hospital all the time because I couldn't take my medicine," said Michael Francis, a recent Health Guardian client. Mr. Francis was diagnosed with congestive heart issues and eventually lost his job in hotel maintenance due to his deteriorating health. "I started to lose everything. I lost my electricity, then my water, and then I got evicted." LSU Hospital connected him with Health Guardians and a Patient Navigator provided full-circle care management from finding him a place to stay to assisting him with understanding his medical needs and how to care for his condition.

"It's a new model of care delivery in our community," said Health Guardian Patient Navigator Meagan Relle. "The program integrates behavioral health, social services and healthcare." Health Guardians provides one-on-one health education and health literacy for their clients in addition to helping them get the basic services like food and shelter.

**"When I say if it weren't for the Health Guardians I wouldn't be here today, I mean that," Mr. Francis said. "I really wouldn't be here. They literally saved my life."**

The program which started with Spirit of Hope clients recovering from the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill has expanded to partner with NOLA 4 Life assisting victims of violent crimes. Their largest group is clients like Mr. Francis who too often find themselves in deteriorating situations due to chronic health issues. Health Guardians is making a difference in our community by helping the most vulnerable achieve wellness.

## North Shore Region Blessed by Collaboration and Community

The North Shore Region of Catholic Charities ensures that services are available close to home for those in need in St. Tammany and Washington Parishes. This includes connecting clients with a network of community partners and organizations. "The relationship that Catholic Charities has with our pastors, social ministries and church staff, is priceless in our efforts to serve the poor and needy," said Craig Marinello, Director of the CCANO North Shore Region. Collaboration includes great partnerships with the Good Samaritan Ministry, St. Tammany Project Christmas, the St. Tammany Homeless and Housing Alliance and the Covington Food Bank, just to name a few.

**"These men and women see the face of poverty every day, yet never look away."** Marinello remarked. CCANO gives thanks for these community partnerships making a difference in the lives of those in need! For more info on the CCANO North Shore Region visit [www.ccano.org/northshore](http://www.ccano.org/northshore).



## November is National Adoption Awareness Month!

**Did you know? Since January of 2013, Adoption Services of Catholic Charities has served...**

- **35 expectant parents** considering adoption
- **23 birth parents** for post adoption services
- **45 families** hoping to create or add to their family through domestic and international adoption services
- **115 individuals and families** through search and reunion support services

For more about Adoption Services of Catholic Charities, visit [www.adoptnola.com](http://www.adoptnola.com)

## Be an Angel this Holiday Season!

Adopt a family for Thanksgiving or Christmas by providing food baskets, toys and gifts for a family in need. Families in need from across Catholic Charities programs are assisted by our annual food and gift drive. Contact volunteer services at 504-310-6960 or email [sslackey@cccano.org](mailto:sslackey@cccano.org) to sign up today or for more information!

## More Kudos for Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans leaders and services were recently honored by several community organizations this fall:

- **Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans was honored as a Champion of the New Orleans Family Justice Center by the New Orleans Family Justice Alliance.**
- **Tommie Vassel, CCANO Vice-Chairman of the Board, received the Outstanding Persons Award from Family Service of Greater New Orleans.**
- **Michael O. Read, CCANO Board Member, was recognized as an honoree in the 2013 Hall of Fame for the St. Elizabeth's Guild.**

Congratulations to the recipients who, in their respective services, have fulfilled our mission: Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans collaborates with the wider community to serve those in need... We offer life-giving programs, advocate for the voiceless and empower the poor and vulnerable to foster a more just society.



St. Elizabeth's Guild Volunteer Activists and Hall of Famers honored: (from L to R) Erin Caruso, Joan Boudreaux Cuccia, Archbishop Gregory Aymond, Anne Favret, Julie C. Vanderbrook, Juli Miller Hart, Ann Monhartova, Ashton Ryan III, Michael O. Read, Beauregard L. Bassich, Angela Hill, Denise Woodward, Ann V. Fuselier, and Jennifer Steel-Bourgeois.

## Volunteer Activists Honored

The St. Elizabeth's Guild recently held their annual Volunteer Activist Luncheon. Honorees were celebrated for their service to the community and proceeds from the luncheon went to support Padua Pediatrics of Padua Community Services, St. John the Baptist Head Start and Independent Living Skills Program. Sincere thanks to the members of the Guild for their continued support for the youth in our programs.



Please remember, the second collection November 23 and 24 in the Archdiocese of New Orleans supports the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). CCHD in our Archdiocese supports the Micah Project and Family and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children, groups working for social justice and an end to the cycle of poverty and crime.