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Notes from the Heart

News from Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

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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.

Celebrating New Beginnings

Dear Friends of Catholic Charities,

I hope that each of you found the summer months to be a time of relaxation, leisure and enjoying a slower pace of activities – the same cannot be said for us here at Catholic Charities! We had a busy summer full of service. From high school students participating in SERVE (Students Engaging in Reflective Volunteer Experiences) to our continued relief efforts in the wake of the February tornado in New Orleans East and everything in between, we have continued our mission to serve those most in need in our community.

For many, including our Head Start students, August marks the end of the summer and the beginning of a new school year. Catholic Charities has been providing New Orleans area children with a "Head Start" in life for nearly four decades. Head Start centers provide early childhood education and health, social and nutrition services to qualifying children. Head Start also supports parents and families in achieving their educational, financial and other goals.

In 2016, Catholic Charities opened a new Early Head Start center at Covenant House. While the program is open to any family who qualifies, the Covenant House partnership fills a critical need for care and services for the children of homeless parents who have turned to Covenant House for help and support. The program provides quality care, comprehensive early childhood

education and health services for 20 children.

Additionally, St. Paul the Apostle Head Start and Early Head Start center opened in New Orleans East, which is an area traditionally underserved in community resources, especially in the area of education. These new sites allow Catholic Charities to continue serving families most in need.

The fall also marks the beginning of the annual Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal (AHCA). Now in its 52nd year, the volunteer-driven campaign rallies the community to raise unrestricted funds that allow us to respond quickly and efficiently in times of crisis, such as the floods and tornadoes that have affected our area in recent times. We look forward to what is sure to be another successful campaign.

Join me in celebrating new beginnings as we move into a new season and a new school year. Thank you for your continued and generous support of all we do here at Catholic Charities.

God bless you,

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



SAVE THE DATE!

- August 29** Monthly Peace Prayer Walk, 6 PM at Visitation of Our Lady Parish
- September 12** Volunteer Information Session, 4 PM
- September 29** St. Elizabeth's Guild Annual Volunteer Activist Awards Luncheon, 10 AM at the Hyatt Regency
- October 20** Annual Symposium for Systemic Change, 8 AM at the Tracy Center
- November 28** #iGiveCatholic

Notes from the Heart

News from Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

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CCANO Offers New Orleans East Families a Head Start in Life

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans' Head Start and Early Head Start programs promote the social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth and development of children ages birth – 3 years (Early Head Start) and 3 – 5 years (Head Start). In addition to early childhood education, Head Start offers health (medical and dental), social, mental health and nutrition services. The program serves as many children's first introduction to structured education and sets the foundation for years to come.

To better serve the needs of our community, CCANO opened two new Head Start and Early Head Start centers in 2016, including St. Paul the Apostle Head Start and Early Head Start Center, which serves nearly 200 New Orleans East children and their families.

In the past, communities in New Orleans East have been underserved in community resources, including education – a problem compounded by Hurricane Katrina. Pamela Randall, Center Director at St. Paul the Apostle Head Start and Early Head Start, shares, "The families in this community yearn for more accommodations that will improve their family dynamics without having to leave the community to receive the service."



St. Paul the Apostle Head Start and Early Head Start is CCANO's fifth Head Start site and will allow us to offer educational, social and other services to well over 400 children and their families.

The upcoming year will mark the first full school year at St. Paul the Apostle, and the staff, students and families are buzzing with anticipation. Students are eager to return and continue learning, and teachers are ready to help them do so. Students and staff are also excited to welcome new faces to the Head Start community. "The classrooms and campus will be full of laughter, students learning and experiencing new things and a community of learners in the making," Randall says.

Randall and her staff invite and encourage parents and families to participate at the center as much as possible to build and strengthen relationships with their children, the staff and each other. Engaging in meaningful dialogue with their children's teachers allows parents to become more engaged and involved in their children's development. Staff also stands ready to help parents and families through any difficult situations that may arise. This team effort promotes a love of learning, an engaged community and successful children.



Even though the first school year was an abbreviated one, Randall says the students and their families still made huge strides in a short amount of time and will only continue to grow this school year. Knowing their children were learning and receiving care in a safe, nurturing environment, many St. Paul the Apostle Head Start and Early Head Start parents were able to attend school and further their own education. Others were able to obtain employment, and one parent even started her own business!



"Children were identified and provided services they may not have otherwise gotten until they entered elementary school," Randall shared. In their first full year, the staff at St. Paul the Apostle hopes to take more children from where they are to where they need to be by giving them the educational, social and emotional foundation that will carry them through school and through life.

To learn more about Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans' Head Start and Early Head Start programs, visit www.ccano.org/head-start-program.

AHCA

September will mark the beginning of the annual Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal (AHCA). Now in its 52nd year, the AHCA mobilizes the community to raise much needed unrestricted funds. Began by Archbishop Hannan in response to the overwhelming need following Hurricane Betsy, today the campaign underwrites all 30 life-giving programs of Catholic Charities. Unrestricted funding allows Catholic Charities to respond quickly in times of crisis, such as the tornadoes and flooding that have recently affected communities in our area, as well as to fill gaps where economic issues force governments to cut support for social service programs. This year, the 2017 AHCA aims to \$1.82M to serve the most vulnerable in our community.



To learn more about the Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal, visit www.ccano.org/ahca.

Friends & Family Picnic Brings Programs Together

Last month, CCANO's Isaiah 43 Parenting and Mentoring and Cornerstone Kids programs hosted their annual Friends and Family Picnic at City Park!

The event brought together over 100 community partners, staff, volunteers, parents, mentees and mentors from both program to enjoy food, games and fellowship. Thank you to the generosity and support of the St. Elizabeth's Guild for making this fun event possible.

Isaiah 43's mission is to strengthen and support families to bring about a change in the culture of our society through empowering parents and youth to be active in promoting peace and living by the values of love, peace and forgiveness. The parenting component helps parents enhance their parenting skills and provides an opportunity for fellowship with other parents. The mentoring component matches children with a role model that helps them explore topics such as human dignity, respect for life and peaceful conflict resolution.

Cornerstone Kids is a mentoring program for children with at least one incarcerated parent. Through one-on-one activities and group events, mentors provide support and encouragement that promotes trust, confidence, enthusiasm, personal growth and positive thinking.

Together, the programs are working to promote peace and growth in our communities by mentoring youth and reinforcing the importance of family support.



High School Students Give Back Through SERVE

Thank you to the 63 students from 21 local high schools who completed 2,333 hours of service this summer through SERVE!

CCANO's SERVE (Students Engaging in Reflective Volunteer Experiences) is an opportunity for high school students to give back to our community while achieving their required service hours. Each session culminates with a day of reflection where students connect their volunteer experiences to ways they can continue to make a difference in their community.

The experience allows students to volunteer as one person while seeing the greater results of working as a group. Students experience different neighborhoods, classes and cultures firsthand while working side-by-side and breaking down their own barriers.

This summer, SERVE participants volunteered tutoring, playing and learning with children at Good Shepherd, St. Joan of Arc and Faith Bible Camp. Participants of our Mini-SERVE sessions volunteered sorting, packing and distributing food at Second Harvest Food Bank.

To learn more about SERVE, visit www.ccano.org/serve.

