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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.

Strength in Unity

Dear Friends of Catholic Charities:

As we start a new year, let us reflect on the lyrics of Marty Haugen's hymn, "We are many parts, but we are all one body." This message reminds us that we may be able to make a small impact alone, but that when we come together, we are stronger. Marty Haugen was of course referencing Corinthians 12: 12 – 27, which says, "The eye can't say to the hand, "I don't need you!" The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you!" In fact, it is just the opposite. ... If one part suffers, every part suffers with it." Similarly, each of Catholic Charities' 30+ programs tend to the specific needs of our clients, but without the entire organization, only a few issues are resolved.

At CCANO, our programs address the needs of the entire individual from conception through every phase of life's journey. Our services clothe, feed, house, educate, and heal. A client who might initially enroll his or her child in one of our Head Start programs could then be referred to our English as a Second Language services and later our Counseling Solutions program to reach a goal of self-sufficiency and to grow from vulnerability to stability. This approach is a holistic one, digging into the root causes of why an individual is struggling and taking a comprehensive look to lift a person to his or her full potential. Today, research

has found that this holistic treatment method is the best practice to assess each client's life experiences and what obstacles are hindering progress.

It is the Spirit of Love that unites us in our hope against despair. While Catholic Charities has many services, we are one organization. We achieve more together collectively than we do separately through our partner agencies, parish ministries, and supporters like you. We are all called to serve others but, most importantly, we are called to love one another and must love the entire person, not just the parts we prefer. It is only through the work and support of *all* of CCANO's programs that we are moving the needle to reduce poverty. As Marty Haugen's hymn reminds us, "May the Spirit of love, make us one indeed."

Thank you for your prayers and gifts.

God bless you,

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



SAVE THE DATE!

February 28

You Are Not Alone
Opioid Forum,
6PM,
St Angela Merici Gym

March 20

Volunteer Information
Session,
4PM,
1000 Howard Ave

March 26

Peace Prayer Walk,
5PM,
St. John the Baptist

"Neighbors Helping Neighbors" Recovery Initiative Reaches Finish Line

Catholic Charities and the Orleans Parish Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRO) gathered this month to commemorate the second anniversary of the New Orleans East tornado and celebrate the many residents served under the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" recovery initiative.

Marking the close to the core phase of the initiative, the event recognized the success of LTRO and funders like Entergy New Orleans that raised over \$2.9 million to help households rebuild after the Feb. 7, 2017, tornado.

Our partner organizations from the LTRO included United Way of Southeast Louisiana, Baptist Community Ministries, the City of New Orleans, Camp Restore, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, Greater New Orleans Foundation, HandsOn New Orleans, Louisiana Baptist Convention, Open Architecture Collaborative, New Orleans Baptist Association, NOLA Tree Project, Rebuilding Together, SBP, Second Harvest Food Bank, United Saints, Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training, and Volunteer Louisiana.

Mary Smith, Case Manager Supervisor from CCANO's Parish and Community Ministry, served as co-chair of the Long Term Recovery committee and provided care to New Orleans East clients who lost everything. Her supervisor, Division Director Tom Costanza, said, "We are all so appreciative of Mary's work and service in this community. Her client came up to me and basically said she was a God send."



Survivors Find Their Voice Through Project SAVE

At CCANO Project SAVE (Stopping Abuse through Victim Empowerment), staff members like Program Director, Allyson Tuttle, triage a variety of urgent symptoms for their clients, many of whom have never shared their stories of abuse before with anyone. "We are the emergency room to get people interim protection to get them back on their feet," Tuttle stated. As the first responders to clients' truths, CCANO staff like Tuttle not only provide the primary need of legal services, but also emotional support.

"By having an attorney with them in court, they automatically feel like they have a voice, that someone will speak up for them and give them reassurance," Tuttle expressed about clients like Olga, a domestic abuse survivor originally from the Ukraine who found Project SAVE after being attacked by the father of her child. In peril and concerned for her child's safety, she regained control of her life through Project SAVE's assistance.

"I was really scared and didn't know what to do," Olga disclosed, "I didn't go to the police because he threatened me with violence. I had to protect my child and myself, so I searched online and found Project SAVE. The counselor there helped me apply for a restraining order and walked me through how to file the papers with the courts. The lawyer from Project SAVE helped me get a restraining order and was very understanding. ... Having her with me calmed me down and made me feel more comfortable."

Through representation in court, Olga received full custody of her child and now encourages others in her shoes to be as brave as they can be. Survivors may resist taking their abuser to court because they fear that the judge may take their child away from them, particularly if they are not financially independent. However, a common theme in abusive relationships is control, including the abuser controlling all the finances.



Project SAVE does not have income guidelines for this reason so that their services are accessible to all.

While Project SAVE empowers survivors to break the cycle of abuse legally, CCANO has additional counseling programs to serve the more emotional and psychological impact of abuse. Since undergoing counseling, Olga feels more confident, has found her own voice, and has earned a master's degree in journalism.

To learn more about Project Save, visit <http://www.ccano.org/domestic-violence-services/>.

Workforce Development AmeriCorps Members Give Back

On Saturday, January 19, 2019, CCANO Workforce Development AmeriCorps members participated in the Martin Luther King Day of Service event held at the Global Green Community Center in New Orleans.

Started in 1994, the MLK Day of Service occurs every year on the third Monday in January and is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service. In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy, the annual event inspires individuals, builds bridges, and aims to create solutions to social problems in communities.

The City of New Orleans and the MLK Holiday Planning Commission sponsored the day with support from the Omicron Lambda Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Team Happy Foundation, and the Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development. Originally planned



as a community-led trash cleanup, invasive plant removal, driveway framing, and deck staining, planners rolled with the punches when inclement weather rolled in. After the Commission decided to change the activity and location, CCANO participants prepared bags of fresh food for the New Orleans Homeless Shelter.

CCANO AmeriCorps members, CCANO AmeriCorps volunteers, and CCANO's Workforce Development Director, Janner Wilson, participated in the event. Over 50 volunteers from judges, public defenders, former teachers, AmeriCorps Vistas, Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority sisters, community activists, and children all worked together tirelessly, showing the strength of character and spirit of the people of Louisiana in the face of adversity.

Learn more at <http://www.ccano.org/workforce-development/>.

Introducing Bethlehem Housing

Funded by Amazon's Jeff and MacKenzie Bezos' Day One Families Fund, our newest project is a four-year expansion of our Homeless Services. Bethlehem Housing serves homeless families with children in the eight civil parishes of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, providing rapid re-housing services to stabilize families quickly to address the root causes of their homelessness.

Our primary goal is to help families locate and secure affordable housing, which may include deposits, first month's rent, and other necessary move-in costs. Ongoing financial assistance is based on a progressive engagement model and will decrease over time with the family's portion increasing at a manageable rate. This also comes with the expectation that the family



will engage in financial education, including budgeting, avoiding predatory lending, managing bank accounts, and saving for the future.

Once the family has stabilized housing, the deeper work begins. Families will complete a comprehensive assessment that measures functionality across 20 life areas. From this assessment, we will begin to build upon the family's strengths and target interventions in areas of growth. The family and case manager will work together to define the family's goals.

Case managers will serve as coaches, advocates, and resource coordinators, but ultimately, the family is responsible for implementing the plans.

Expanding upon our extensive history with federally funded homeless programs, we will utilize best practices from services across the country and the latest research from evidence-based homeless programming to design an effective project that inspires lasting improvements for the families we serve. We are excited to build upon our rich history as a homeless service provider, and we plan to use this infusion of funds to bolster our services so that no child sleeps outside in our community.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Health Guardians Patient Navigator Paula Stewart

Paula Stewart originally came to work for CCANO after the BP oil spill and became the first case manager to work in affected parishes to assist residents with the physical and emotional aftermath of the disaster. While providing excellent service and care, she noticed that locals had poor health indicators because they had not had access to primary and specialty medical care at a time before Louisiana had Medicaid expansion, which meant most low-income people were uninsured.

After recognizing a need for a comprehensive care management program, Paula founded Health Guardians in tandem with the Medical Director of Catholic Charities, Dr. Elmore Rigamer, MD, to address the medical and social determinants of health. She pioneered the practice of accompanying patients to their medical visits to ensure they could express their medical concerns and understand the physicians' orders. She has demonstrated that when patients understand their illnesses and learn to manage their problems, they are more likely to seek preventive care and not need frequent ER visits. Her work at Health Guardians has resulted with significant economic savings, and her team has received the National Case Management Award.



Health Guardians contributes to the City's Emergency Medical Services by reducing the number of unnecessary calls patients make once they learn how to receive care in medical clinics rather than in emergency rooms. Patients are chosen because of their poor health and the unnecessary costs they incur with avoidable hospital and emergency room visits. This model is so successful that other Catholic Charities across the country are adopting the program.

Outside of her immediate duties, Paula continues to fight for health education for all by mentoring students in the Health Sciences, including pre-med, medical, social work, and public health students. Through this work, she encourages students to look at patients not just clinically but from social, medical, educational, familial, and economic perspectives.

Paula's supervisor, Dr. Rigamer, says, "She has a strong empathy for the underserved, and it is through her mentorship that students have come to appreciate what a patient experiences when trying to obtain health care."

To learn more about our Health Guardians program, visit <http://www.ccano.org/health-guardians/>.

Meet Bethlehem's new Project Director

Lauren Coudrain Zeringue has been a part of the CCANO family since 2016. She has worked as a Disaster Case Manager, Program Coordinator, and, most recently, as the agency's Grants Manager. Her diverse work experience includes child welfare, community development, and entrepreneurship. Lauren has successfully launched several programs in both the public and private sectors. Lauren is excited to lead the new Bethlehem Housing Initiative to ensure that no child sleeps outside in the New Orleans area.

Get to know Bethlehem's new Lead Case Manager

A Louisiana native, Trinna Stanford has 18 years of experience in her field, is a registered social worker, and has earned her Masters in Counseling. She has been with Catholic Charities since 2006 when she worked as a case manager on the disaster relief team post Hurricane Katrina. She is known for her excellent relationship-building skills and her meaningful engagement with clients. As the Lead Case Manager, she is most looking forward to leading the charge in eradicating homelessness.