



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.

## A Time for Growth

Dear Friends of Catholic Charities:



As we leave the Lenten time of penance, let us embrace the renewal that Easter brings. Just as we have observed the signs of spring through the budding of trees and bloom of flowers, we have witnessed CCANO clients across our 30+ programs grow from strain to stability through our services.

early stages of pregnancy through labor, delivery, and post-natal care.

All of the clients and the CCANO staff who graciously serve them are raised up by the grace of God. As it is written in 1 Thess. 4:14, "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep." At Catholic Charities, supporters like you raise up staff and clients, and this transformative season is not possible without all of us coming together to raise up our community as a whole.

For the formerly incarcerated clients of our new Workforce Development services, our work begins while they are still imprisoned, transitioning with them into a season of rebirth. Our clients in Immigration and Refugee Services are leaving a period of darkness and going forth into the light with newfound language acquisition thanks to our robust and dedicated volunteer pool. In the case of one of our Health Guardians clients, our services have resulted with her health arising from slumber. Additionally, our ACCESS and St. Vincent Maternity Clinic maternity services bring new life into the world, helping mothers on their journey from the

Easter reminds us that Jesus rose from the grave, paving the way for us to have new life. Thank you for your prayers and gifts that allow our clients to have a chance at a new life as well.

May you and your family receive the fullness of Easter joy!

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

## Celebrating New Life at ACCESS

Earlier this month, ACCESS hosted their annual Jazz Brunch, which ensures compassionate care for over 600 pregnant women and their unborn babies in our community. One such client is "Eliza" who recently gave birth to a baby boy. She first came to ACCESS Pregnancy and Referral Center for a pregnancy test and ultrasound after hearing about us through a friend who was a former client. Because she was visiting from another country, she did not qualify for Medicaid.

At the clinic, she saw Dr. Bacchus and was able to see the same doctor and nurse at every visit, ensuring consistent care throughout her pregnancy.

Debbie Donahoe, CCANO client advocate, saw Eliza on her first appointment and explained that there would be no charge for any of the services at ACCESS. She received pregnancy testing and scheduled her first ultrasound. During this appointment, Margaret Murphy, CCANO's nurse sonographer, was able to show Eliza the first image of her baby, which was just one of so many special moments shared at ACCESS.

When Eliza and her 11-year-old daughter brought her new baby boy in to the clinic for her last visit at St. Vincent, she received a gift bag full of essentials and signed up for the ACCESS Diaper Bank to return every month for diapers, wipes, and any additional baby items.

With the services offered by ACCESS and St. Vincent, CCANO is able to meet a woman early in her pregnancy and continue a relationship until her child is potty-trained. ACCESS has locations in Metairie, Gretna, and New Orleans East, and St. Vincent is housed in our Metairie location.

Eliza was concerned about how she was going to pay for healthcare during her pregnancy until she heard about St. Vincent Maternity Clinic and the discounted private pay package offered to families who do not qualify for

Learn more about ACCESS' services at <http://www.ccano.org/access-pregnancy-services/>.



## Youth Innovators Lead the Way

CCANO's Immigration and Refugee Services program was one of five pilot organizations out of 250 applicants chosen for CONNECTED, a two-year initiative from the National Council for Behavioral Health designed to reduce anxiety, depression, and suicide among young people in underserved communities, while empowering youth to engage in meaningful community change. The National Council for Behavioral Health launched this groundbreaking initiative to increase access and engagement in quality, appropriate care for culturally diverse populations that experience barriers to mental health support systems. The youth innovators selected to participate will engage with mentors throughout the community to use their voice and experience to champion youth engagement in mental wellness using peer-to-peer learning.

Recently, CCANO Immigration and Refugee Services staff members accompanied the participants to the National Council for Behavioral Health's annual conference in Nashville. These youth change-makers were not only able to connect to their peers from the other participating organizations but also build relationships with healthcare professionals from across the country in conference workshops and sessions. While they learned a lot from the experienced professionals, they were also able to share feedback as to how these healthcare providers could better connect with teenagers who are traditionally overlooked or disconnected from mental health services. In the future, The National Council for Behavioral Health hopes to provide opportunities for the participants to present their own sessions as they develop as leaders and communicators.

CCANO is excited to see how these youth leaders grow as individuals and help their communities grow as well!



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**APRIL 24**  
Immigration and Refugee Services  
Volunteer Orientation  
6PM,  
Tulane's Newcomb Hall

**APRIL 30**  
Peace Prayer Walk,  
6PM, St. Martha

**MAY 7**  
GiveNOLA Day  
<https://www.givenola.org/ccano>

# 10th Anniversary of SERVE

Ten years ago, Shannon Murphy, CCANO Director of Volunteers, alongside a team at the Archdiocese recognized a need in the community for high school students to participate in impactful service experiences over their summer vacation. Thus, SERVE (Students Engaging in Reflective Volunteer Experiences) was born to enrich teenagers' personal growth, professional skills, and community engagement.

program depending upon their interests and schedule. Students will also participate in a Reflection Day hosted by CCANO's Office of Justice and Peace where they will engage in activities and learn about topics that challenge them to think critically about Catholic Social Teaching and social justice issues.

Here's to the next ten years of SERVE and beyond!

Since its inception in 2009, the program has grown leaps and bounds, working with 870 students and leveraging 32,201 volunteer hours in the community over the past ten years. Last year alone, 42 high school students from 17 high schools served 1005 hours valued at \$24,248 for Greenwall Adult Day Center, Ozanam Inn, and Second Harvest Food Bank. At Greenwall, students played games, served lunch, and talked to seniors. Students prepared meals, organized donations, and helped with the facility's laundry and bed making at Ozanam Inn, a homeless shelter in the CBD. During their week at Second Harvest, students packed nearly 30,000 pounds of non-perishable food into boxes for distribution.



In their own words:

*"My favorite part about SERVE was working with so many amazing people and meeting people I would have probably not met otherwise."*

*"My favorite part was seeing the smiles on people's faces."*

*"I liked meeting new people and knowing that what I did was for a good cause."*

*"My favorite part was the very friendly staff that supervised me!"*

*"I always tell my friend who need service hours to sign up for SERVE."*

Sign up for this summer's SERVE at <http://www.ccano.org/serve-app/>.



CCANO offers multiple sites so that students can pick a

## Introducing CCANO's New Workforce Development Services

This February, the Cornerstone Builders program started services funded by a new grant earmarked from the criminal justice reform savings to reduce recidivism and improve public safety. The goal is to provide resources to decrease the prison population and ensure that formerly incarcerated individuals receive the appropriate wraparound services so that they do not return to prison and can become productive members of society after reentering the community.



Until recently, Louisiana had the highest incarceration rate not only in the country but also in the world. Due in part to the advocacy efforts of Ronnie Moore, Program Coordinator, and CCANO staff, Louisiana has been able to move the needle on incarceration, and this grant will make a significant impact to the future of the state. CCANO will serve 60 clients in Orleans Parish, 60 in Jefferson Parish, and 15 to 20 in St. Tammany Parish. These clients have been identified as medium to high-risk offenders with a high risk to recidivate, have previous drug and mental health issues, and have spent 5-40 years in prison.

Led by Stephanie Mills, CCANO's cutting-edge approach is currently a unique one. Looking at the factors that have historically caused offenders to recidivate, the team has developed strategies to address those issues while clients are still incarcerated. This profound difference means that offenders will have resources within the first 72 hours of their release, which is a crucial time when many formerly incarcerated individuals

recidivate. With this approach, our case managers will develop a plan with the inmate to address specific needs like family support, medical care, transportation, substance abuse treatment, securing an ID, and more while they are still imprisoned. Family support is a huge component of an individual's success after prison, so our case managers will arrange bus trips for family members who have previously been unable to secure transportation to visit their loved ones.

One of the most pressing issues that causes recidivism is lack of employment, which the program addresses head on. Upon release, clients will immediately have a part-time, temporary job with CCANO, which has been arranged with partner organizations through New Orleans, Jefferson Parish, and St. Tammany Parish. While receiving hands on job training, clients will work with case managers on workforce development skills, such as resume writing, interview skills, and applying to jobs. In addition to assisting the client to find full time employment once the 100 hours of employment with CCANO ends, the case manager will also be visiting the clients' site supervisors to review their work and determine how they can improve their soft skills.

## From Homeless to Healthy

In July of 2018, Health Guardians began work with a client, "Lauren," who was referred from New Orleans EMS department and University Medical Center Emergency department for using the Emergency Room 15 times in six months with one hospitalization. Medical providers serving the homeless on the street found her inside of a tent with an IV picc in her arm, and she was dealing with an infection in her chest from a previous open-heart surgery. Lauren was also managing additional chronic conditions, such as asthma, heart disease, high blood pressure, type II diabetes, and high cholesterol, which required ten different medications.

When Health Guardians initially made contact with Lauren, she and her boyfriend, "Ron," were keeping her insulin in an ice chest in their tent because it required refrigeration, and Ron was running to the store for more ice throughout the day as each batch would melt. Two CCANO Patient Navigators tracked the couple down to a public library and enrolled them in a patient-centered care plan.

In partnership with the Medical Director of Healthcare for the Homeless, Health Guardians staff scheduled a weekly primary care appointment for Lauren for three consecutive weeks after an initial visit. To stay informed about doctor's appointments and in the event of an emergency, Health Guardians purchased a cell phone for the couple to continue consistent communication. Additionally, CCANO was able to link Lauren to Aetna Medicaid insurance, pay her co-pays for her many medications, and supply boxes of food to the couple when visiting their tent.

Our Patient Navigator at the Low-Barrier shelter helped Lauren and Ron receive slots to stay at the shelter. Their SNAP benefits began once permanent housing in New Orleans East was secured through combined efforts with the Low Barrier Shelter and UNITY of Greater New Orleans. Health Guardians connected the couple to a disability lawyer for Social Security Income, bought work clothes for their job interviews, and worked with her primary care doctor to setup specialty appointments.

Currently, Lauren continues to make her doctor's appointments at University Medical Center with Health Guardians staff members in attendance. The couple purchased a car in February, which has ensured reliable transportation to and from medical care. CCANO Health Guardians staff still makes monthly home visits to their apartment and looks forward to seeing sustained progression in the Lauren's overall wellbeing and health.

Learn more about Health Guardians at <http://www.ccano.org/health-guardians/>.



## IN THE SPOTLIGHT: ESL Volunteer Katie Gray

In honor of National Volunteer Week this month, we are highlighting Katie Gray, a volunteer with over seven years of experience at CCANO's English as a Second Language program.

While still a student at Tulane University, Katie began volunteering with CCANO's ESL program as a service learning fulfillment for a Latin Studies class. "One day, they were low on tutors, so I had five or six students," Katie reminisces on one of her early days with the program, "and I realized that I really liked the group setting, so I asked one of the directors if I could teach a class."

Over the years, Katie has taught all four class levels that CCANO offers. She has continued volunteering because of the people she has met. "The way the staff empowers volunteers to do things, to move up through the volunteer ranks, and to try out different positions is so energizing," Katie says.

The ESL staff is grateful to have such a dedicated volunteer participating for so long in the program. "Katie has helped us with leading professional development training for other volunteers, with orientation for new students, and is truly committed to our student's success. She coordinates student field trips to the library and to volunteer with other organizations so



they can practice their English and give back to the community," reveals Sharon Moscoso, ESL Program Manager. "She has helped clients get closer to self-sufficiency by assisting them with their resumes, financial literacy, and, most importantly, being a friendly face in the community that cares about their success."

Katie's favorite part of volunteering with the ESL program is getting to know her students. She shares, "They've lived through so much, and they always arrive so happy to learn our culture and our language. It's so cool to watch the Level 1 students really get it about halfway through the semester."

When not volunteering, Katie is a language teacher at Isidore Newman High School. She feels that teaching ESL has made her a better communicator in all areas of life.

Learn more about our English as a Second Language program at [www.ccano.org/english-second-language-classes/](http://www.ccano.org/english-second-language-classes/).