



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.

THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS – *Love God and Love Our Neighbor*

Dear Friend of Catholic Charities,

Who is my Neighbor? Wikipedia defines **neighbor** as a *person* who lives nearby! Look at more of our community as neighbors as we respond to Jesus' commandment **Love your Neighbor! How do we do this?**

A simple and ready answer is **"treat others as you want them to treat you!"** Most of us have experienced that this response is "easier said than done." Treating others requires self - discipline, respect for differences, acceptance and patience. God the Creator blessed each of us with unique and distinct personalities, abilities, and physical compositions. The very same GOD who made ME made every one of you reading these words! So loving one another should be EASY!! With trust in God and Divine assistance, it is EASIER than our doing this by ourselves.

I call us, each and every one of us, to make and take time to pray, reflect and respond to this Commandment of GOD. LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR!

Let us grow stronger in our desire to improve our neighborhoods and our community! Let our Love of God and Love of Neighbor spread far beyond 'the neighbor nearest to me'!

God bless each of you!

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



*Let us grow stronger in
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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Cornerstone:

Catholic Charities' Cornerstone program is always looking for mentors, especially male mentors. If you're interested in being a mentor, contact Kristina Gibson at kgibson@ccano.org.



ESL and Family Literacy:

Trainings to volunteer for ESL (English as a Second Language) and Family Literacy will be held virtually. All volunteers must attend the Immigration and Refugee Services (IRS) training first.

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| IRS | July 6 | at 6PM |
| Family Literacy | July 12 | at 5PM |
| ESL | July 15 | at 5PM |
| IRS | July 21 | at 6PM |
| ESL | July 26 | at 5PM |

For more information, contact Sami Barefield at sbarefield@ccano.org.



View volunteer opportunities by visiting www.ccano.org/volunteer or contact Shannon Murphy at smurphy@ccano.org.

PACE Greater New Orleans Announces New Medical Director

Catholic Charities announces Brian Cruz, MD, as the medical director of PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) Greater New Orleans!

Dr. Cruz, who grew up in Omaha, Neb., received a Bachelors of Science degree from Notre Dame University. Following a year of volunteer service with the Vincentian Service Corps in New York City and after teaching science for three years at St. Jean Baptiste High School in Manhattan, he then attended medical school at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.



He arrived in New Orleans more than 10 years ago to complete a residency in internal medicine at Tulane Medical Center. Before joining PACE GNO, Dr. Cruz worked at Ochsner Health in primary care and palliative medicine.

As medical director of PACE, Dr. Cruz oversees a comprehensive healthcare program that provides clients with access to physician care, medications, rehabilitative therapy and other services to manage their health. He is excited to work with a program that provides a holistic approach to care for people with multiple medical conditions.

"I am very grateful to be at PACE with committed and passionate colleagues as we work together to promote the health and well-being of our partici-

pants," says Dr. Cruz. "We meet every morning to discuss what is going on with participants so the whole team is aware and can offer thoughts and ideas."

Through this approach to healthcare management, Dr. Cruz says the team considers numerous factors specific to older adults when making diagnoses and deciding on appropriate treatments. He explains that they look at the patient's goals and their ability to carry out the management plan and also with input from family members and caregivers.

"It is a practice of medicine that emphasizes understanding the whole person," he continues. "From a personal standpoint, older adults bring a wealth of experiences, stories and personalities that are delightful."

As the coronavirus pandemic greatly impacted older adults, Dr. Cruz sees the vulnerabilities that it uncovered as increasing the need to ensure robust care for this segment of the population.

"I have this in mind when I come to work each day, thinking about what I can do to ensure safety for our participants in the PACE program," adds the medical director. "Seeing the toll the pandemic took on older adults, especially in underserved communities, has furthered my interest in healthcare policy."

Dr. Cruz continually reviews guidance from organizations such as the National PACE Association while evaluating current healthcare delivery systems to offer healthcare access particularly to the elderly and other vulnerable members of our community.

For more information about PACE, visit www.ccano.org/pace.

Counseling Solutions Program Director Becomes PhD

Catholic Charities' Counseling Solutions Program Director, Dr. Lisa Surrency, recently completed her Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision! We are thrilled for Dr. Surrency! Congratulations! She spoke about her huge accomplishment.

What does it mean to reach this amazing accomplishment?

"What it means for me to complete my Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision, it means coming full circle. In 2004, my niece was killed in a drunk driving accident. From that moment on, I told my family that I wanted to be able to help others to not make those choices to drink and drive. A moment can change anyone's life and it devastated my entire family. I could have stopped pursuing higher education once I completed my master's degree. However, I wanted to then help supervise or teach future counselors."

What benefit will your PhD bring to clients as Program Director of Counseling Solutions?

"Within my role as Program Director for Counseling Solutions, I have an opportunity to reach so many people in need of counseling. With my combined education and life experience, I can help guide future counselors to be agents of change. I can assist current counselors with enhancing their clinical skills and learn from them as well. (We all have room for improvement.) Finally, with my areas of expertise I can promote advocacy for our clients with not only bringing more awareness to mental health; but finding more

resources and helping break down the stigma that surrounds mental health."

What do you hope your PhD will bring to Counseling Solutions and Catholic Charities?

"For someone with a PhD, we are leaders in our profession and mine is of course, counseling. I hope to become more engaged with counseling organizations, on a local and national level, to promote change with regard to mental health. I hope to continue to present on various topics for Catholic Charities employees, as well as at counseling conferences locally, nationally, and internationally. Just because I am finished pursuing a degree does not mean my education stops. I will continue to learn and help others learn for as long as I can. This is only the beginning of a new chapter in my life and I cannot wait to see what changes I am able to help make in regard to counseling and mental health awareness."

For more information about Counseling Solutions, visit www.ccano.org/counseling-solutions.



Father's Day at Bethlehem Housing

Duavanall Bridges is the father of a 5-year-old son. He began his journey as a single parent in the year of 2016. His son was born in the year of 2015. His child's mother was suffering with a drug addiction; therefore, Mr. Bridges took parenting into his own hands until the child's mother was able to recover.



In the latter part of 2020, the child's mother recovered from her drug addiction and the two have been cooperatively co-parenting. Mr. Bridges said that it is a joy to have the child's mother back in their lives even though she lives separately from his household.

Mr. Bridges said in the beginning it started-out very hard and he wanted to note that it is just as hard for a man to be a single parent as it is for a woman. He also said that even though the journey was hard, help came in along the way.

Mr. Bridges gives his highest praise to God, "I am so thankful for my support system, which is his grandparents and I am truly grateful for Bethlehem Housing for assisting me with not only finding a home for myself and my son, but for providing rental assistance because I live on a fixed income."

Ashley Shields at Bethlehem Housing says, "I have been working with Mr. Bridges for a little over a month now since I started with Bethlehem Housing. I can see that Mr. Bridges does a very good job as a father and puts his kids first."

Mr. Bridges said, "It is an honor to be honored by the agency," and he is so very, very grateful!"

For more information about Bethlehem Housing, visit <https://www.ccano.org/homeless-services>.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES CELEBRATES STAFF RETIREMENT AND FAREWELL

Recently, Catholic Charities celebrated the retirement of receptionist Barbara Octave and said farewell to Division Director Tom Costanza. A soiree was held to celebrate the many contributions of these dedicated employees. Tom will be moving on to work with the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops! We wish them well on their next steps!



Registration for 2021 SERVE Program Continues for High School Students

Catholic Charities' 2021 SERVE (Students Engaging in Reflective Volunteer Experiences) program is open and still accepting registrations! High school students can serve those in need in our community while completing required service hours!

The weeks and camp/sites available include:

June 28-30: SERVE
Must be 13 or older at this site
Giving Hope Food Pantry West Bank,
515 Lapalco Blvd, Marrero: 8AM -3PM

July 6-9: SERVE
Must be 13 or older at this site
Give Hope Pantry East Bank
1340 I-10 Service Road
New Orleans: 9AM - 3PM

July 12-16: SERVE
Food for Seniors, 7649 Townsend Place
New Orleans: 9AM - 12PM



For more information and register, visit www.ccano.org/serve-app/ or email Emily Stieber at estieber@ccano.org.

