



# Catholic Charities NEWSLETTER

Creating Hope, Transforming Lives

WINTER 2021



Dear Friends,

As we start the New Year, we find ourselves embroiled in a pandemic that is claiming thousands of Americans each day. COVID

continues to impact every aspect of our lives to the point where our daily existence seems less recognizable from even one year ago. During these unprecedented times, I think it is important for all of us to remember that the *circumstances* of our lives are always changing. But what we *believe in* remains the same.

At Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, we believe in the love of our family and friends. We believe in our supporters and donors who place their faith and their resources in our hands to do good work. We believe in our staff who carry the mission of our agency in their hearts, minds, and actions. We believe in the people we serve and recognize the divine presence in each and every one of them. At the center of all of our beliefs is our faith and trust in Jesus, whose love for us is the one constant in an ever-changing world.

While COVID has presented a number of challenges in how we deliver services, I'm happy to report that we remain connected to the most vulnerable members of our community. In some cases, we connect through video technology. In many cases, we are still

meeting with people face to face, which is especially true of our shelter and emergency services programs. In all cases, the people we serve know they can count on us to be there when they need help.

Just as the people we serve count on us, we count on you for your prayers, good wishes, and support. Yes, the circumstances of our lives are constantly changing, but you can believe in us and the work we do. And we believe in you.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Michael F. Melara  
Executive Director

## In This Issue

[Thank You for Supporting Our Christmas Programs](#)  
page 3

[Pre-K and the Pandemic](#)  
page 4

[Home. Health. Community. Service.](#)  
page 4

[36th Annual House of Providence Dinner](#)  
page 5

[Become a Champion](#)  
page 6

[Employee Recognition](#)  
page 6

[Men's Shelter Special Recognition](#)  
page 7



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## SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Michael F. Melara**  
Executive Director

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Chief Program Officer

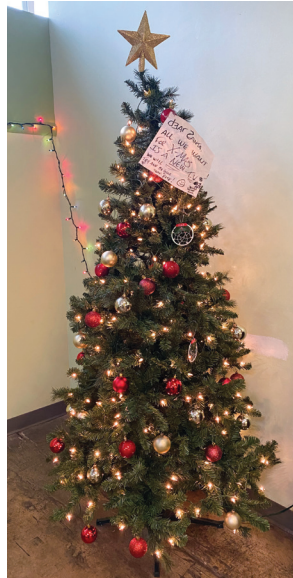
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## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM!

We at Catholic Charities want to extend our deepest thanks and appreciation to our donors who supported our Christmas Program. With your help, we were able to provide a memorable Christmas to 160 families. While Christmas looked differently for many of us this season, we were still able to provide funds for Christmas meals, presents, and holiday supplies. We cannot express our gratitude to all the

people who step up each year to make these moments happen. Thank you for turning Christmas wishes into reality for so many. ■

## 1923 SOCIETY

*"As members of the 1923 Society, our recurring, monthly gift enables Catholic Charities of Onondaga County to meet the immediate needs of individuals and families, our neighbors, who are served through Catholic Charities' effective, life-changing programs, and it is an honor for my wife, Madge, and me to be able to support the organization and our community in this way."*

Bill Brower, 1923 Society Member

The support of our 1923 Society members is vital to the programs that help us reach nearly 17,000 local people in need every year. The 1923 Society is named for the year Catholic Charities of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse was incorporated. In this leadership giving society, members commit to making one or more gifts permitted for use across any of Catholic Charities' programs. 1923 Society membership is \$1,000 annually. Please consider giving at one of the levels below to help positively influence the lives of people in need in our community.

**Circle of Light** – \$10,000+

**Leadership Partners** – \$5,000 - \$9,999

**Sustaining Supporters** – \$1,000 - \$4,999

Membership is open to individuals, couples, families, foundations, and corporations who would like to make a difference in the lives of those we serve. For more information on how to join the 1923 Society, contact Tino Laterza at 315-967-9578 or [tlaterza@ccoc.us](mailto:tlaterza@ccoc.us), or by visiting [www.ccoc.us/giving/1923-society](http://www.ccoc.us/giving/1923-society).

Members receive special recognition in our annual report and invitations to our special events. First-time 1923 Society members also receive a unique 1923 Society donor pin as a welcome and thank you. ■



# PRE-K AND THE PANDEMIC

Throughout the pandemic, our teachers have been working hard to create a safe learning environment for the 300 students enrolled in Catholic Charities' six Pre-K sites around the city. After a few weeks of online learning, teachers began to notice parents attending virtual lessons with their children. "This year has been more of a partnership than ever between teacher and families. Persistence and continued communication is paying off" said one of our Pre-K Teachers.

Parents of our dual language learners, with limited English speaking capabilities themselves, have been able to reap the benefits of their children's virtual English classes by joining in with the instruction. Parents have been practicing letter sounds and repeating the teacher's instruction in English together with their children, creating a strong and shared learning experience between them and the teacher.

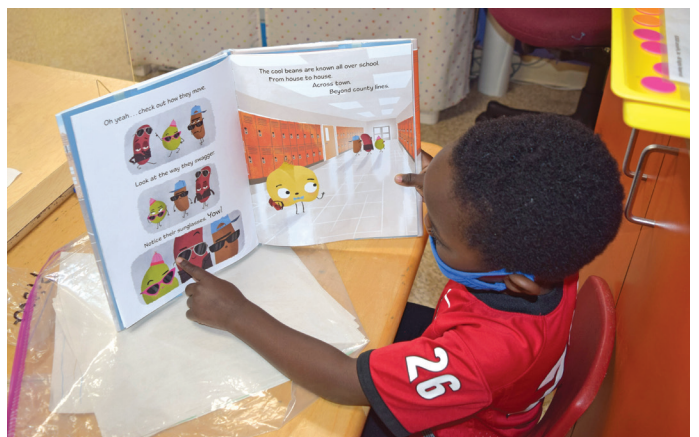
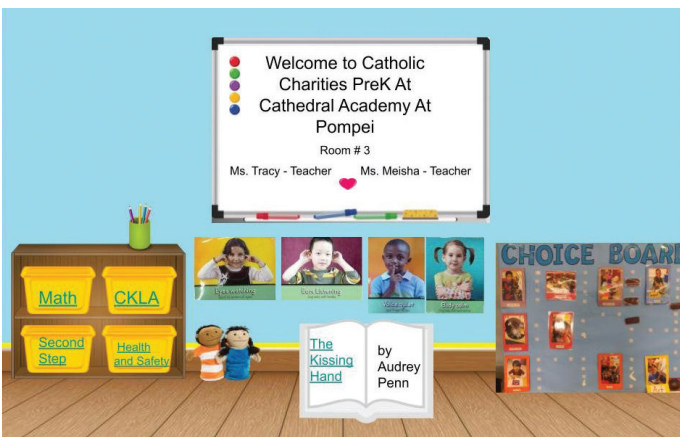
This has enabled parents to encourage real-time participation, have a more comprehensive understanding of the material and their children's learning strengths and challenges, and more authentically connect with

the teachers about how to best support their children's educational progress.

Through regular telephone calls and home visits, our students are able to learn and grow, even with the many obstacles of hybrid learning. The biggest impact has been the quality of interactions between teachers and student families. At Catholic Charities, we have always viewed and approached our families as teaching partners, but the collective hardships we have faced this year have transformed this teacher-family relationship into something even more impactful than ever before.

While remote learning poses many challenges, our teachers' persistence, consistent communication, and utmost dedication to their students have created an unexpected gift in these challenging times – a true partnership between teachers and families.

We are deeply grateful to our teachers and staff for their continued hard work, and we applaud all the parents and teaching partner for their commitment to our young students. ■





## HOME. HEALTH. COMMUNITY. PURPOSE.

*"I understand you  
because I was you."*

*– Peer Recovery Coach*

Recovery looks different to everyone. Our program, Hope Connections, offers an individualized and customized plan for each Journeyer's recovery. Hope Connections is a peer-led recovery program for people affected by substance use, addiction, and/or mental health issues. The program focuses on four pillars: home, health, community, and purpose. Each Journeyer is assigned a peer coach – an individual and resource with an understanding of the complexities of the recovery journey. Together they develop a plan and work collaboratively to achieve a Journeyer's desired goals.

With five peer recovery coaches and roughly 30 Journeyer's at any given time, coaches are able to engage with program participants frequently and deliver a hands-on, humanistic, and compassionate approach to individual needs. Peer coaches help to create a network of support for Journeyers by connecting them with additional internal programs within Catholic Charities along with other external resources and programs.

A Journeyer typically participates in the program for about 6 to 12 months. The ultimate goal of the program is that the Journeyer will have the skills and confidence to continue to navigate their recovery on their own. Throughout participation in the program, peer coaches celebrate every milestone and success. Every day a Journeyer is not using drugs or is practicing mental wellness is a success story and something worth celebrating.

With Hope Connections, there is no cookie cutter approach or a one-size-fits-all. Rather, the success of the program is meeting each Journeyer where they are, beginning the work of recovery. Hope Connections is a community of peers that empower, advocate, and mutually support people by inspiring hope through choice and opportunity. ■

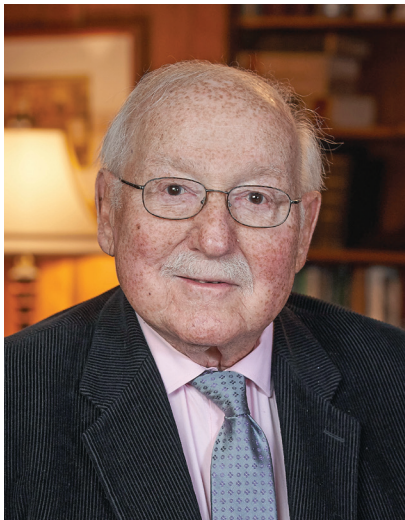
Get connected:

**Hope Connections 315-362-7641**





**Monsignor Neal Quartier**  
*Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception*



**Hank Centore**  
*Ignatian Volunteer Corp*



**Sharon Owens**  
*Deputy Mayor*

## 36th ANNUAL HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE DINNER

At the Annual House of Providence Dinner, Catholic Charities of Onondaga County honors individuals for their exceptional leadership and service to the agency and our Central New York community. The 36th Annual House of Providence Dinner will be held on **Wednesday, September 29, 2021** at 5:30 pm at the Oncenter as well as via a virtual livestream. All funds raised benefit Catholic Charities programs.

We are excited to honor three exceptional individuals this year. The Bishop’s Award will be presented to **Monsignor Neal Quartier** of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception for his dedication to actively serving people in Onondaga County. The President’s Award will be given to **Hank Centore**, member of the Ignatian Volunteer Corp and a volunteer at Catholic Charities’ Emergency Services Food Pantry, in recognition of his contributions to the enhancement of the Onondaga County community. **Sharon Owens**, Deputy Mayor, will receive the Humanitarian Services Award for her services to the community.

We look forward to a great night celebrating truly remarkable members of our community. We hope you will join us. Our sincere thanks to our Co-Chairs, Joseph Charles and Patricia Callahan, and to the House of Providence Dinner Committee for all of their support. ■

Save  
the  
Date

Please Join Us  
for the

### 36th Annual House of Providence Dinner

**September 29, 2021**

5:30 pm

Oncenter, Syracuse

For tickets and sponsorship information, contact Tino Laterza, Events & Development Specialist, at **tlaterza@ccoc.us** or **315-967-9578**, or visit **ccoc.us/HOPDinner2021**.



## BECOME A CHAMPION!

Please consider joining our recurring gift program and become a Catholic Charities Champion. Your monthly or quarterly recurring gift will provide reliable, consistent support to serve vulnerable communities in Onondaga County.

Sustaining donors who commit to becoming a Catholic Charities Champion receive a Catholic Charities branded pen and notebook and official certificate acknowledging your commitment to being a Champion as a welcome and thank you.

Become a Champion by visiting [www.ccoc.us/giving/monthly](http://www.ccoc.us/giving/monthly) or calling **315-967-9578** to make your gift.



## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION EVENT

During the first week of December, we celebrated our employees virtually. Employees were recognized for their years of service and for special contributions to the agency. Congratulations to all who were honored.

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### SERVICE AWARDS

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#### C. WALTER DRISCOLL AWARD

Heather Storms

#### 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mary Jane Wood  
Michael Preston

#### 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

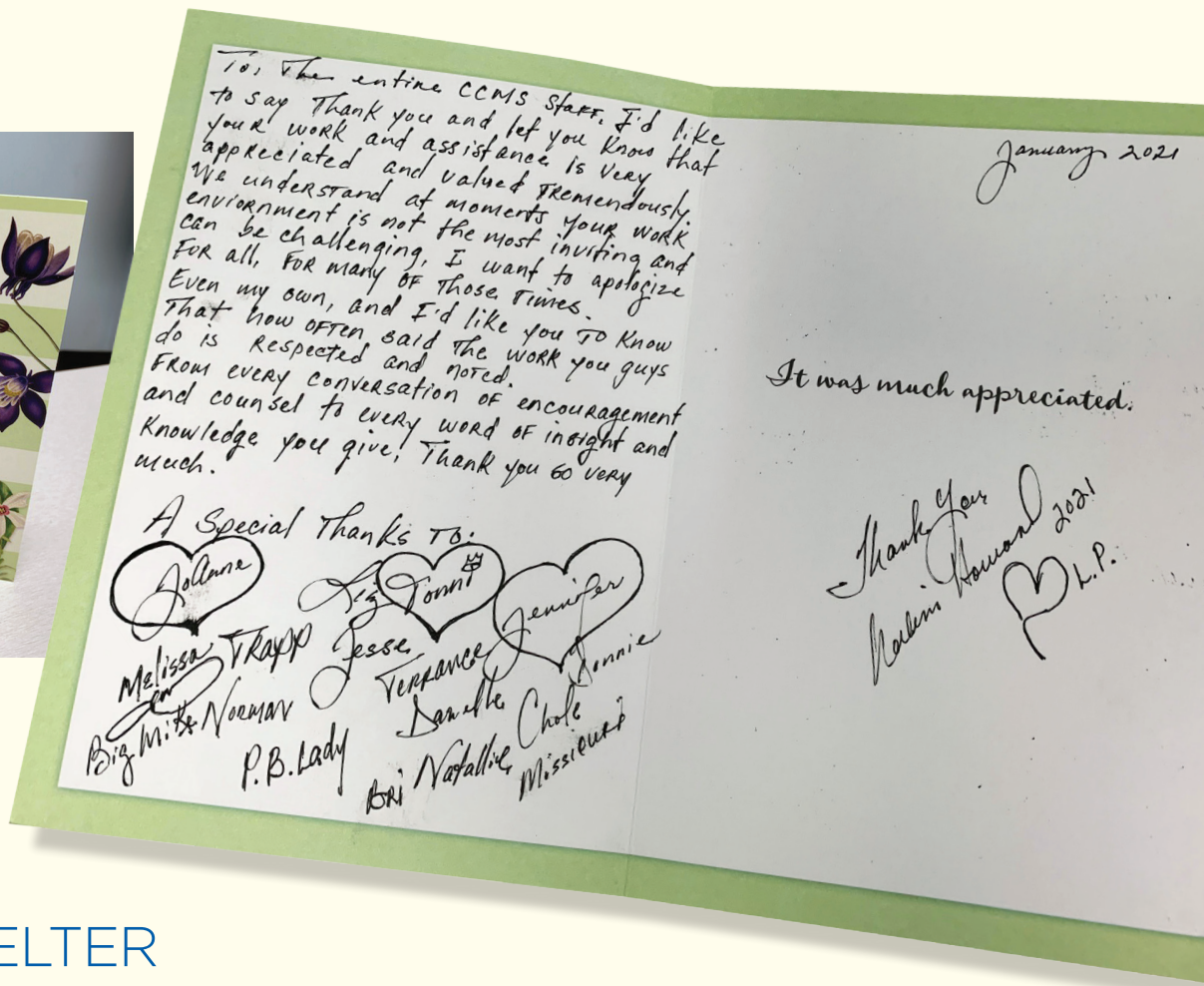
Margaret Malloy

#### 10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Sonja Gottbrecht  
T. Scott Kelso

#### 5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Clyde Anderson  
Nicole Brutcher  
Travis Butts  
Shevanie Clark  
Franchesca Clemente  
Scott Crawford  
Brian Darby  
Meagan Ernestine  
Meredith Espinoza  
Kathleen Fust  
Ryan Grobosky  
Roula Jneid  
Helen Malina  
Love Mouity  
John Root  
Ehdarbu Soe  
Caroline Tihanyi  
Acho Urufle



## MEN'S SHELTER SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Catholic Charities Men's Shelter provides 24/7 shelter for up to 99 men struggling with homelessness. Our shelter staff provide a multitude of services including case management, mental health, and recovery and counseling services. Guests at our shelter are some of the most vulnerable members of our community, including the medically compromised, elderly, and frail.

Shelter staff work tirelessly to provide our guests with the care and comfort a home can provide. From providing personal care products, winter weather items like coats and gloves, to home cooked meals, and game nights, our staff do their best to make the shelter feel like home.

A current guest of our Men's Shelter shared his appreciation and gratitude for the staff who provide critical community care to so many.

"To the entire CCMS Staff, I'd like to say Thank You and let you know that your work and assistance is very appreciated and valued tremendously. We understand at the moment, your work environment is not the most inviting and can be challenging, I want to apologize for all, for many of those times, even my own, and I'd like you to know that the work you guys do is respected and noted. From every conversation of encouragement and counsel to every word of insight and knowledge you give! Thank you so very much!"

We are deeply grateful to our shelter staff and all they do to support our guests. To learn more about how you can support the work of the Men's Shelter, please visit: [ccoc.us/giving](http://ccoc.us/giving) . ■

# WAYS TO GIVE



## DONATE ONLINE

Credit card gifts can be made on our secure site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at <https://www.ccoc.us/giving/>



## MAIL A CHECK

Checks made payable to Catholic Charities of Onondaga County may be sent to: **1654 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13204**



## GIVE US A CALL

Gifts and pledges can be paid over the phone by credit card at 315-362-7528. Annual pledges can also be paid through a quarterly or monthly payment program established by the donor.



## TRANSFER STOCK

Making a gift with securities you have owned for more than one year will earn you a double tax benefit. Not only can you take a tax deduction for the full, fair-market value of the stock, you can also avoid capital gains tax on any asset appreciation. Please call **315-362-7528** for more information.



## MAKE A LEGACY GIFT

Include Catholic Charities of Onondaga County in your estate plan. Consult your legal counsel to explore options or call 315-362-7528 for more information.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please call us at **315-362-7528**.

