



2024

ANNUAL REPORT



Catholic Charities
of Onondaga County

OUR MISSION

Catholic Charities of Onondaga County is dedicated to caring for those in need while promoting human development, collaboration, and the elimination of poverty and injustice. We strive to empower those served to transform their lives in the spirit of God's love and compassion.

"Preach the gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words."

- St. Francis of Assisi



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

Each year, as we reflect on our work and the lives touched through our programs, we are reminded that the true strength of Catholic Charities lies not only in the services we provide, but in the support we receive from you.

Last year, our community was shaken by a home explosion on Carbon Street. In an instant, families lost everything — their homes, their belongings, and their sense of safety. In that moment of crisis, Catholic Charities was there. Because of your support, we were able to respond immediately, offering shelter, clothing, food, and long-term assistance to those affected. We stood with these families not just in the days following the explosion, but in the months that followed, helping them rebuild their lives.

The Carbon Street tragedy was a heartbreaking moment for our city. Yet, it became an unmistakable example of what Catholic Charities does every single day. Whether it is a family facing sudden homelessness, a refugee starting over in a new country, a child walking through our Pre-K doors for the first time, or a veteran in need of support, our mission remains the same: to serve those who are vulnerable, to stand beside those who are suffering, and to

work toward a community where all people are treated with dignity and compassion. You have made this possible.

Because of you, we served thousands of individuals and families in 2024 across a wide range of programs — from emergency services and housing support to education, resettlement, and advocacy. **Each success story begins with your belief in our mission.**

We know the road ahead presents challenges. But we also know that, with your continued partnership, we will meet those challenges with hope, resilience, and action.

On behalf of our entire team — and especially on behalf of those we serve — thank you. Thank you for your trust, your compassion, and your commitment to making our community stronger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Melara".

Michael F. Melara
Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM OUR **BOARD PRESIDENT**



As President of the Board of Directors at Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, I have the privilege of witnessing the extraordinary impact of your generosity and the dedication of our staff each and every day.

Over the past year, our agency has continued to meet deep and growing needs in our community, providing housing support, nourishing meals, educational opportunities, and vital services to thousands of individuals and families. In every program, in every story, we see the values of compassion, dignity, and justice brought to life.

This work is not easy. It requires persistence, heart, and vision. It also requires people like you who believe in our mission and are willing to invest in it.

As a Board, we are constantly inspired by the strength of our team and the resilience of those we serve. We are deeply grateful for the role you play in making all of it possible. Your partnership gives us the confidence to move forward boldly, expand services, advocate for change, and extend love and care wherever the need is greatest.

Thank you for standing with Catholic Charities. Thank you for standing with our community.

Sincerely,

Julian B. Modesti
President, Board of Directors

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CRISIS RESPONSE PROGRAMS

In an instant or over time, circumstances may shift, prompting a crisis that demands urgent aid. Despite varying causes, the outcome remains constant: those in crisis are vulnerable, and we stand ready to provide relief.

Catholic Charities' Crisis Response programs offer immediate shelter, food, rental assistance, hygiene products, utility payments, transportation to temporary housing, and more to people who are facing immediate needs. Our staff ensure access to essential resources, empowering individuals and families to focus on realizing their full potential.

For many members of our community, Catholic Charities' crisis and emergency services are a critical lifeline, providing vital support during extremely challenging times.

HOMELESS SERVICES

- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative
- Rapid Re-Housing
- HUD Rental Assistance Program
- Men's Shelter

EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Supportive Services for Veteran Families
- Food Pantries
- Relocation Assistance
- Emergency Assistance Services
- Homeless Prevention

PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

Janet is a single mother of four with a heartbreakingly familiar story – a hardworking parent doing everything she can for her family and still ending up short a bag of groceries. She visited our **Food Pantry** to bridge the gap, a familiar face we saw from time to time. One day, Janet came to us in distress. She had just given birth and was on unpaid leave. Her rent was due, her fridge was nearly empty, and two of her children were showing signs of disability. She was dispirited. Her children's future seemed uncertain. Janet had held her family up alone for a long time, but the weight had become too much. What started as a quiet struggle spiraled into a crisis. Staff helped Janet lower her rent, find diapers, connect with mental health supports, and enroll her kids in preschool programs that meet their unique needs. Janet's outlook transformed from despair to hope.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



251

Individuals served monthly at
our downtown food pantry



450

Guests welcomed at our
Men's Shelter



STABILITY PROGRAMS

Finding stability in life can pose challenges, particularly when emerging from difficult situations. **Catholic Charities' Stability programs** strive to mitigate disruptive behaviors or conditions affecting the lives of those we assist. Individuals served may include seniors lacking a reliable advisor or refugee families adapting to a new culture.

Our Stability programs provide a range of social, emotional, mental, physical, and economic resources tailored to individual needs. Our personnel craft personalized plans aimed at fostering community connections, refining communication abilities, and promoting independent living.

HEALTH SERVICES

- Children's Health Home
- Adult Health Home
- Elderly Services
- Clinical Services

REFUGEE SERVICES

- Refugee Resettlement
- Refugee Youth Programs
- Employment
- Citizenship & Immigration Legal Services
- Health Care Navigation

PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

When Kabul, Afghanistan, fell to the Taliban in 2021, Mohammad made the impossible choice to flee for safety with his six-year-old son, leaving behind his wife and two toddler daughters. After arriving in Syracuse through our **Refugee Resettlement Program**, he found himself in a new country, raising his son alone, learning to cook for the first time, and searching for work that'd allow him to be both parent and provider.

With our help, Mohammad found flexible employment and childcare support, and began building a new life. He applied for asylum, and has started the process to reunite his family.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



388

Adult Health Home
participants served



954

Refugees resettled



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

Capacity Building programs empower individuals to enhance their knowledge, skills, and adaptive strategies, enabling them to better care for themselves and/or their families. Through personalized or group instruction, coaching, and mentorship, participants acquire skills needed to pursue their aspirations. These programs target healthy emotional, mental, and educational development by engaging with parents, children, single adults, and youth.

By combining educational resources with support from our dedicated staff, Catholic Charities creates an environment that fosters optimal learning opportunities.

CLINICAL, FAMILY, AND PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

- Mental Health Counseling
- Peer Support
- Family Preservation
- Early Intervention

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

- Universal Pre-K
- Youth & Teen Skill Building
- School-Based Services

PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

When Maria came to our **Mental Health Counseling** team, she was experiencing anxiety and flashbacks following a traumatic house fire. Everyday triggers—like smoke, fire drills, or even sunlight—left her feeling unsafe and constantly on edge. Through trauma-focused clinical treatment, Maria began to address the images, sounds, and beliefs that caused the trauma. Over several months, her sense of fear transformed into one of safety and resilience.

Today, Maria can engage in everyday activities—lighting candles, cooking, and handling fire drills—without fear. Her story is a powerful reminder of the healing that is possible through compassionate, evidence-based mental health care.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



476

Children enrolled in our
Pre-K program



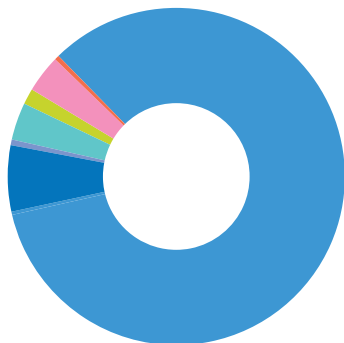
95%

of clients maintained or improved
their mental health



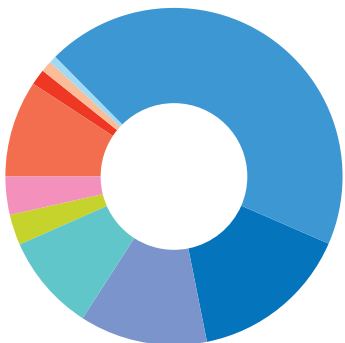
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

From audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, excluding non-cash depreciation expense
(In millions)



OPERATING SUPPORT: \$32.1 M

\$27.0 M	83.9 %	Government Support
\$2.1 M	6.4 %	Special Events & Contributions
\$0.1 M	0.4 %	Investment Income
\$1.3 M	3.9 %	Program Service Fees
\$0.4 M	1.3 %	Rental Income
\$1.1 M	3.6 %	Management & Accounting Fees
\$0.1 M	0.4 %	Consulting & Other Income
\$32.1 M	100%	



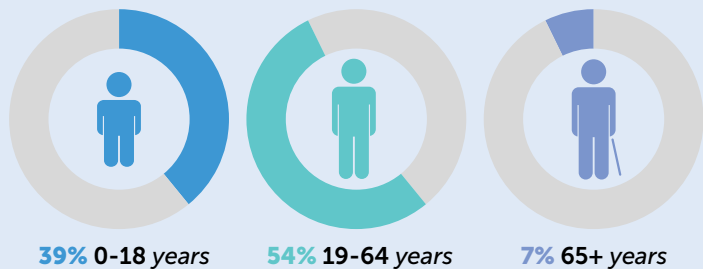
OPERATING EXPENSES: \$33.8 M

\$14.9 M	44.2 %	Salaries & Fringe Benefits
\$5.1 M	15.1 %	Occupancy
\$4.1 M	12.2 %	Professional Fees
\$3.1 M	9.1 %	Specific Assistance
\$1.0 M	3.0 %	Program Supplies
\$0.8 M	2.5 %	Transportation & Equipment
\$3.6 M	10.7 %	Management & General
\$0.5 M	1.4 %	Donor Engagement
\$0.4 M	1.1 %	Bad Debt Expense - U.S. Dept. of State
\$0.3 M	0.7 %	In-Kind Rent
\$33.8 M	100%	

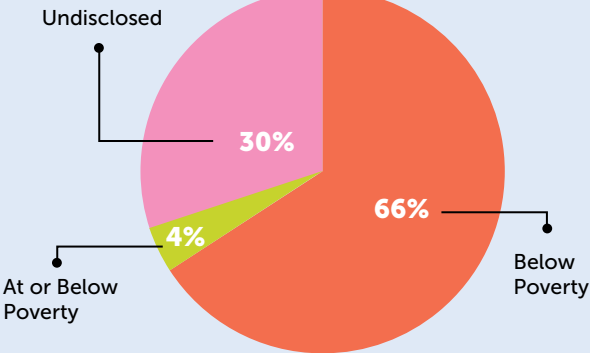
DEMOGRAPHICS

10,063 Unduplicated Clients Served in 2024

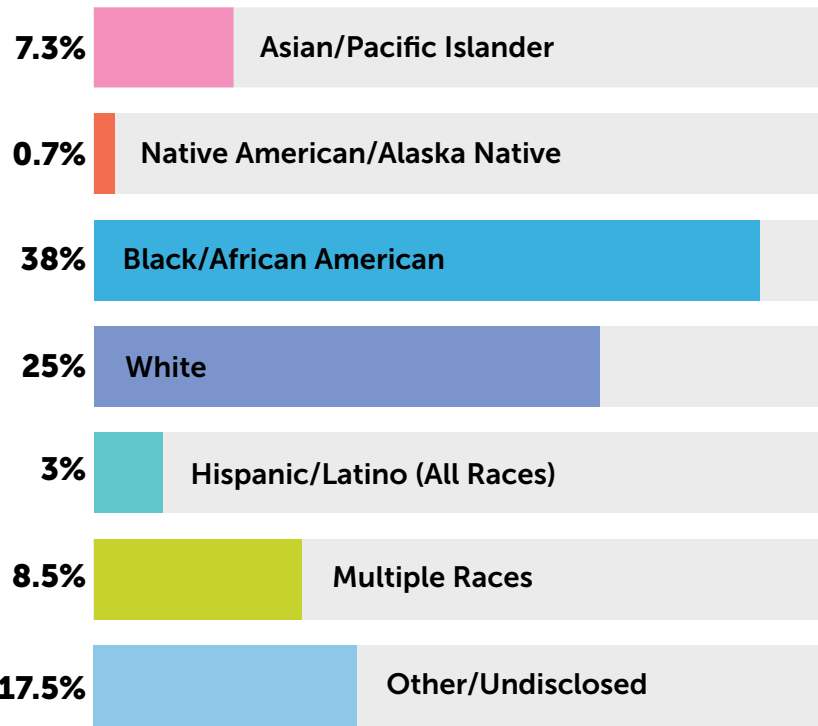
Age



Income Level



Race and Ethnicity



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Catholic Charities proudly partners with the Central New York Community Foundation to assist donors with planned giving. If you would like to explore options for including Catholic Charities in your financial or estate planning, please contact:

Thomas M. Griffith

Vice President of Development
Central New York Community Foundation
TGriffith@cnycf.org
315-883-5544

or

Kacee Shuler

Director of Donor Engagement
Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
KShuler@ccoc.us
315-362-7622



CENTRAL NEW YORK
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GIFTS OF STOCK



Donating shares of stock could be an ideal way to support Catholic Charities while avoiding long-term capital gains income tax.

To discuss potential income tax benefits, please contact:

Kacee Shuler

Director of Donor Engagement
Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
KShuler@ccoc.us
315-362-7622



HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

Gifts made between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024

The Honor Roll of Donors acknowledges the cumulative giving of individuals and organizations that supported Catholic Charities via a financial contribution during the period of January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Special recognition is given to members of the 1923 Society, our premiere giving society named for the year Catholic Charities of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse was incorporated. 1923 Society members have made unrestricted gifts totaling \$1,000 or more annually.

- **Circle of Light Members** have made an annual unrestricted gift of at least \$10,000
- **Leadership Members** have made an annual unrestricted gift of at least \$5,000
- **Sustaining Members** have made an annual unrestricted gift of at least \$1,000

The publication of the Honor Roll is intended to recognize and sincerely thank our donors. We have made every effort to ensure this list is comprehensive and accurate. Notwithstanding, please advise of any errors of omission or fact by emailing us at giving@ccoc.us.

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