



2025

ANNUAL REPORT



Catholic Charities
of Onondaga County

OUR MISSION

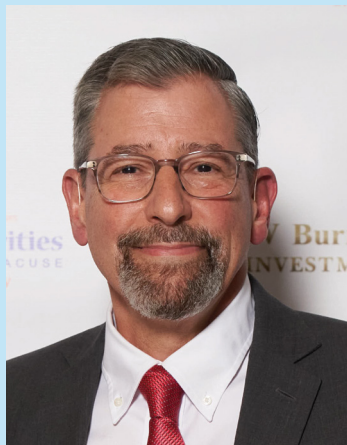
Catholic Charities of Onondaga County is dedicated to caring for those in need while promoting human development, collaboration, and the elimination of poverty and injustice. We strive to empower those served to transform their lives in the spirit of God's love and compassion.

***"There is no hospitality
like understanding."***

- Mike Melara,
Executive Director



A MESSAGE FROM OUR **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



Dear Friends,

Each year that I have served as Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Onondaga County has been unique in one form or fashion. The year 2025 was no exception. The new federal administration brought sweeping changes, especially in the area of refugee services.

In the span of four weeks, refugees were no longer allowed to enter the United States and our government contracts were suspended, resulting in the loss of \$6.95 million in funding. Everyone was impacted: our board, senior management team, staff, and most importantly, those we serve.

The events and decisions following the presidential inauguration could have easily defined Catholic Charities for 2025 and beyond. Instead, we worked tirelessly to realign resources, adapt, and continue to fulfill our mission. We learned lessons in resilience and put those lessons into practice.

You might ask, "Where did you learn to be resilient?" My answer: "From the people we serve."

This annual report captures a slice of our work on behalf of the thousands of people served during 2025. Each individual was carrying their own story of incredible hardships, tragedies, and challenges. We joined them, offering comfort and compassion. In return, we learned what it truly meant to be resilient, as their journey became our journey. Their lessons became our lessons.

We accomplished a great deal in 2025 under less-than-ideal circumstances. It was possible because of guidance from a wonderful board of directors, our talented personnel, and the support of generous friends and donors like you.

Thank you, sincerely.

Michael F. Melara
Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM OUR **BOARD PRESIDENT**



As Board President of Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, I continue to be inspired by what is possible when a compassionate community comes together with purpose.

Because of your support, lives are changing every day. Families are finding stable housing. Neighbors are receiving warm meals and critical assistance. Children and adults are accessing programs that open doors to opportunity and hope. At a time when needs are complex and growing, your generosity helps ensure that no one must face hardship alone.

Every service we provide is grounded in something deeper — a steadfast commitment to honor the dignity of each person, to extend mercy in moments of hardship, and to pursue lasting solutions shaped by justice. Our dedicated staff embody this commitment every day, bringing both expertise and heartfelt compassion to their work.

Fulfilling this mission requires courage, empathy, and a shared resolve to stand beside our neighbors when they need us most. It also relies on faithful partners like you — individuals who believe that caring for one another strengthens our entire community and who choose to be part of that meaningful work.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, thank you for your trust and your partnership. Together, we will continue to meet urgent needs, strengthen families, and build a more hopeful future.

Sincerely,

Ryan A. McDermott
President, Board of Directors

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CRISIS RESPONSE PROGRAMS

In an instant or over time, circumstances may change, prompting needs that require immediate attention. Although the causes vary, our response remains constant: we lean in, offering comfort and relief.

Catholic Charities' Crisis Response programs ensure easy access to essential resources within a safe environment. Our talented personnel facilitate immediate shelter, food, rental assistance, hygiene products, utility payments, and transportation to individuals and families in crisis.

HOMELESS SERVICES

- Emergency Shelter for Homeless Men
- Case Management for Homeless Women and Children
- Subsidized Supportive Housing
- Warming and Cooling Center for Unhoused Adults

EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Food Pantries
- Rental Assistance
- Housing Relocation Assistance
- Information and Referrals
- Document Recovery for Individuals Needing ID

PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

A longtime guest at our **Emergency Homeless Shelter** was diagnosed with a terminal illness and made the decision to remain at the shelter rather than spend his final days alone in a hospital.

Over the years, he had built meaningful relationships with staff and fellow guests, finding not only a place to stay but also a

sense of community and belonging. The shelter had become a place where he felt safe, respected, and cared for.

As his condition worsened, shelter staff and a nurse provided compassionate care and support. They worked to ensure that he was comfortable and that his wishes were honored throughout his final days.

When the time came, a staff member sat with him, gently offering comfort and reassurance. He passed away with a caring presence by his side, never alone.

His story is a powerful reflection of our commitment to bringing comfort, dignity, and compassion to those experiencing their most difficult moments.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



250,662

Nourishing meals provided to homeless
men, women, and children



406

Guests welcomed at our
Men's Shelter



STABILITY PROGRAMS

Achieving a sense of stability in everyday life can feel like an uphill battle. **Catholic Charities' Stability programs** aim to mitigate disruptive conditions and/or behaviors that affect those we serve.

We instill hope by providing a variety of social, emotional, mental, and economic resources. Such resources are incorporated into personalized strategies aimed at maintaining one's progress. We are a reliable source of respect and dignity, offering reassurance when someone may need it most.

HEALTH SERVICES

- Assist Adults on Medicaid in Receiving Primary Medical Care
- Assist Adults Age 55 and Older in Receiving Services to Live Safely and Independently

REFUGEE SERVICES

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

PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

Before coming to the United States, Mohammad and his wife, Benafsha, had built a successful and stable life in Afghanistan. Benafsha had just graduated from medical school, and Mohammad had worked as a surgeon for five years. They had a safe home, respected careers, and a seemingly secure future. Forced to flee Afghanistan due to Taliban control, Mohammad and Benafsha made their

way to Syracuse. Like many newly-arrived refugees, they eagerly accepted their first job opportunities in order to support themselves financially. While grateful to be employed by Walmart and later Amazon, it felt disheartening to step away from their passion for health care. Ebsa, of our Refugee Services team, worked tirelessly to find Mohammad and Benafsha employment opportunities in a

hospital setting. After several attempts, he successfully arranged for job interviews at St. Joseph's Health. Today, Mohammad and Benafsha work as patient care assistants, while taking steps to have their medical backgrounds fully recognized in the United States. Despite hardships, Mohammad and Benafsha hold renewed hope for the future.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



432

Adult Health Home
participants served



926

Clients received refugee services



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

Capacity Building programs empower individuals to achieve their highest level of functioning. Through personal or group instruction, coaching, or mentorship, participants develop skills needed to pursue their goals. Our services focus on healthy emotional, mental, and educational growth for young children and adults, including single parents.

Instruction based on industry best practices and encouragement from our dedicated staff create highly-effective 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

PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

When Olivia first enrolled in our ParentChild+ program, she was very shy and had difficulty focusing on activities. She often struggled to follow directions, communicate her needs, and engage with others. If she needed assistance, she would sometimes withdraw rather than ask for help. Through regular visits and the support of a dedicated specialist,

Olivia participated in interactive learning activities designed to strengthen her communication, attention, and social-emotional skills. With patience and consistent engagement, she began to gain confidence and develop new abilities.

Today, Olivia sits attentively during story time, follows instructions more

effectively, and confidently asks for help when needed. Her language skills have improved significantly, and she is more engaged with people around her. Olivia's journey reflects the positive impact of early learning support in building skills and confidence for future success.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



249

Children enrolled in our
Pre-K program



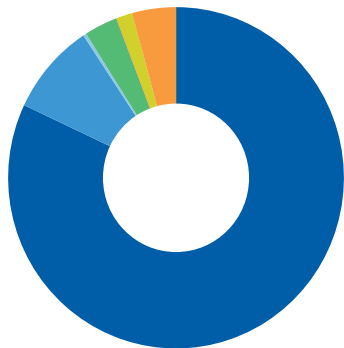
675

People aided by our Parent
Education program



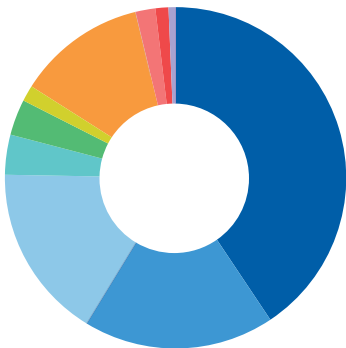
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

From audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2025, excluding non-cash depreciation expense
(In millions)



OPERATING SUPPORT: \$31.2 M

\$25.6 M	82%	Government Support
\$2.7 M	8.7%	Special Events & Contributions
\$0.1 M	0.3%	Investment Income
\$1.0 M	3.2%	Program Service Fees
\$0.5 M	1.6%	Rental Income
\$1.3 M	4.2%	Management, Accounting, & Consulting Fees
\$31.2 M	100%	



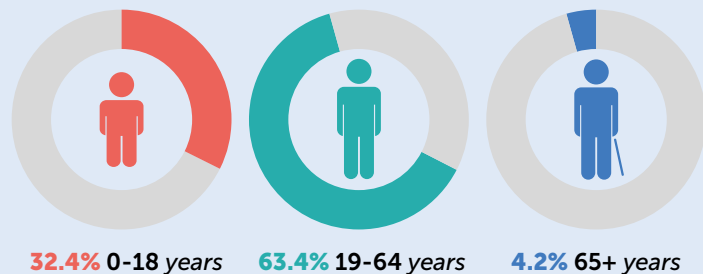
OPERATING EXPENSES: \$30.3 M

\$13.0 M	42.9%	Salaries & Fringe Benefits
\$5.8 M	19.1%	Occupancy
\$5.3 M	17.5%	Professional Fees
\$1.2 M	4.0%	Specific Assistance
\$0.8 M	2.6%	Program Supplies
\$0.5 M	1.6%	Transportation & Equipment
\$3.3 M	10.9%	Management & General
\$0.6 M	2.0%	Donor Engagement
\$(0.4) M	-1.3%	Bad Debt Recoveries - U.S. Dept. of State
\$0.2 M	0.7%	In-Kind Rent
\$30.3 M	100%	

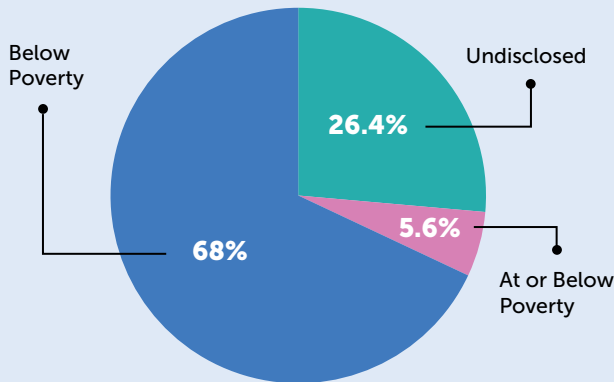
DEMOGRAPHICS

17,899 Unduplicated Clients Served in 2025

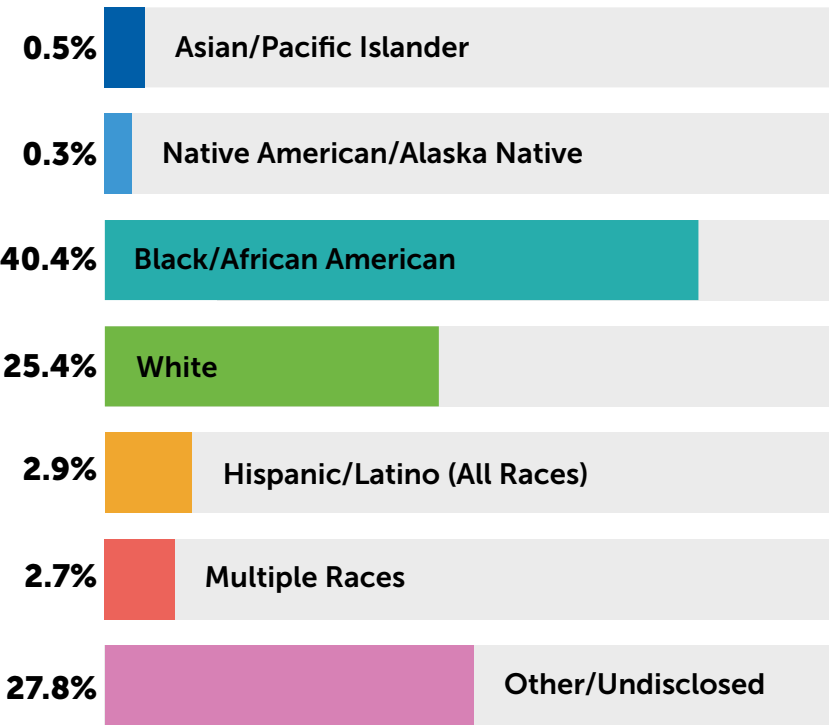
Age



Income Level



Race and Ethnicity



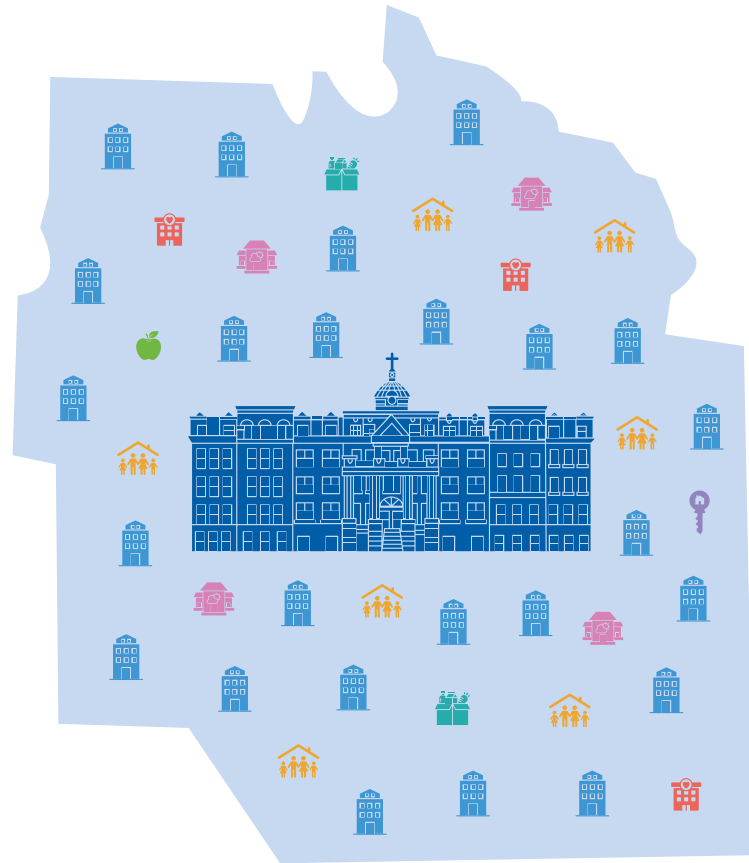
OUR FOOTPRINT THROUGHOUT

Our mission is in motion across Onondaga County

Partnerships with private landlords, hotels, Syracuse City School District, and Food Bank of Central New York, among others, help us deliver services from 350+ locations throughout Onondaga County.

Our majestic House of Providence—built in 1889—serves as our organizational heartbeat.

We extend hospitality and care at each site to each person encountered.



Note: The above image is not geographically accurate.

LEGEND



(1) House of Providence



(1) Fresh Food Distribution



(30) 300+ Apartment Units



(8) Family Shelter Services



(1) Men's Shelter



(3) Other Programmatic Sites



(2) Food Pantries



(4) Sites with Pre-K Classrooms

LEAVE A LEGACY

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

Chief Philanthropy Officer
Central New York Community Foundation
TGriffith@cnycf.org
315-883-5544

or

email us at **giving@ccoc.us**



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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 email us at **giving@ccoc.us**.



HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

Gifts made between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025

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, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

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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