

## A WORD FROM THE CEO...



**Vincent W. Colonna**

As the busses start running again, and students head back to the classrooms, it's hard not to get caught up in the excitement and potential a new school year brings. Here at Catholic Charities, our work is taking us back to the classroom, as eager participants sit down for "Getting AHEAD in a Just-Gettin'-By World," where they learn about poverty, its causes, and how to plan for their own financial future.

Throughout this issue of CC Works, you'll get to take a closer look at "Getting AHEAD" and some of the other ways we're helping our neighbors, like providing back-to-school supplies to local students. You'll read about our HOPE Ministries program, where volunteers in Herkimer County are helping seniors to maintain their independence as they age. You can also get to know Todd Curley, who serves on our Board of Trustees, and learn how a small monthly gift can mean the world to our clients who truly need it.

So often, I look at the work of Catholic Charities and I can't help but think of the incredible people who make it all possible. Our staff, volunteers, and supporters, who come together to ask the simple question "How can we help?" Their dedication – your dedication – make a profound difference in the lives of those who turn to Catholic Charities year after year.

While fall often brings a new school year full of renewed commitments and busy schedules, I hope you take some time to catch up on all the great work Catholic Charities is doing to help. Thank you for all that you do – and your continued support of the mission and good work of Catholic Charities.

Take Care,

*Vince*



Wilhelmina Murray-Davis facilitates a session of "Getting AHEAD in a Just-Gettin'-By World".



At CoNSERNS-U, students could pick out their own brand new backpack for the school year.



Seniors can live independently and remain in their homes, thanks to support from HOPE Ministries volunteers.



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## CC WORKS

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:**  
VINCENT W. COLONNO

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:**  
EILEEN SPATH

**EDITORIAL BOARD:**  
GRIT CAROTENUTO  
KATIE COSTELLO  
MARY PAT HICKEY  
KATE QUALTERS  
SISTER BETSY VAN DEUSEN

DESIGNER: FORT ORANGE PRESS

PHONE: (518) 453-6650  
WWW.CCRCDA.ORG

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Join us for one of these fantastic events to support Catholic Charities!

### DINING OUT FOR OTHERS

**November** | Each Wednesday night in November (November 6, 13, 20, and 27), we will be partnering with local restaurants in Columbia and Greene Counties who will donate a portion of the evening's profits to Catholic Charities. For a list of participating restaurants and dates, visit [www.ccrda.org](http://www.ccrda.org).

### HOPE FOR THE HOMELESS

**November 7** | Join us to end homelessness and benefit Catholic Charities Housing programs. This year's breakfast will honor Deborah Damm O'Brien, former Executive Director of Catholic Charities Housing Office, DePaul Housing Management and McCloskey Community Services Corporation. Visit [cchoalbany.org](http://cchoalbany.org) or call 518-459-0183x10 for tickets.

### CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

*featuring Matthew Desmond*

**November 14** | Changing the Conversation: Home is Where the Heart Is with Pulitzer Prize winning author, Matthew Desmond. An informative lecture and discussion on his award-winning book, *Evicted*. This event is hosted by Catholics Charities, the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, Unity House and the NYS Writers Institute, visit [www.cfgcr.org/evicted](http://www.cfgcr.org/evicted) to RSVP and for more information.

# HOPE MINISTRIES PROVIDES ASSISTANCE, INDEPENDENCE FOR SENIORS

By Eileen Spath



It's the things we do every day that we take most for granted— a quick trip to the store; chores around the house; a friendly visit and good conversation. For so many of us, these things come easily. For many others, age and lack of mobility has made such simple tasks difficult, if not impossible.

HOPE Ministries, a program of Catholic Charities of Herkimer County, is designed to help the elderly remain independent in their communities. Through the program, seniors in need of assistance are paired with volunteers, who assist with shopping, laundry, light housekeeping, and meal preparation, among other tasks.

“Our senior population in Herkimer County continues to grow every year, and they want to stay in their homes and live independently but they can't, because they need assistance. So that's where Hope Ministries comes in,” says Maureen Petrie, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Herkimer County. “We might get a phone call from a relative who says ‘I live out of state, but I would really like it if we could have a HOPE Volunteer assist my mom or dad. That's how we make the connections.’”

As HOPE Ministries Program Coordinator, Lori Joy takes the time to pair each volunteer with a senior or seniors looking for a hand around the house or simply someone to talk to. “A lot of seniors in their 90s just can't push the vacuum cleaner anymore. They look forward to the volunteer coming,” explains Lori of the service, “even if it's just the friendly visit, when they get to talk about their families.”

For program participants, HOPE Ministries means so much more than the services it provides. Volunteers, whether assisting with laundry or meal prep, provide the means for seniors in the community to stay independent, but connected to their community.

Maureen Petrie has seen first hand the impact HOPE has, not just on Catholic Charities' clients, but on the volunteers as well.

“We have so many elderly that are living alone, and they don't want to go into assisted living or into a nursing home. This is a way for them to have their independence, but also have the connection to others in the community. So what's come out of it is this bond between volunteer and senior. And, really, the volunteers tell us they get just as much out of working with the seniors as the seniors do. So, I think it's worked out very well.”



**Lori Joy (right) connects volunteers to seniors in the community through HOPE Ministries.**

*To learn more about the services Catholic Charities of Herkimer Counties provides, including HOPE Ministries, call (315) 894-9917 or visit [www.ccherkimercounty.org](http://www.ccherkimercounty.org).*

# BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

By Mary Pat Hickey



For as long as he can remember, Todd Curley has seen his dad, Bob, a former Board of Trustee President, somehow involved with Catholic Charities. He has witnessed the passion that his father and their good friend Ken Raymond share for our

organization through the selfless work they both have done to help those in need. So when Todd was presented with the opportunity to join the Board of Trustees in 2016 it was an easy decision for him. He knew it would be a natural fit.

Since graduating from Siena College in 1997, Todd has worked for real estate development companies; Columbia Development, Nigro Companies and is now a Partner with Prime Companies. He has brought to Catholic Charities an expertise and a particular interest in finding quality housing for those facing financial hardships as well as supporting those with special needs. His work has a direct impact on people and communities.

Todd understands the critical role housing plays in providing stability for individuals and families. He is committed to helping others find the security and peace of mind that a home brings, something he knows he has been fortunate to have with his own family. Todd & his wife Stacey have three young children, Eva (12), Gabriella (11) and Christopher (6), as well as two labs, Duke and Siena!

He believes one of the greatest challenges Catholic Charities deals with is capacity and having the necessary resources to provide support for all of those in need.

Todd has been instrumental in leading several different initiatives for Catholic Charities with his work on the Housing Committee particularly through The Campaign for Catholic Charities and the new Property Development Department. We are grateful that, like his father, this Curley does not plan to stop helping anytime soon, either.

## GALLERY: Back to School with Catholic Charities



Students picked out new backpacks and went back-to-school “shopping” as a part of CoNSERNS-U’s Back to School day! CoNSERNS-U, a program of Catholic Charities Tri-County Services, supports residents in Rensselaer County.

## DEVELOPMENT CORNER

# GIVE MONTHLY, HELP DAILY

Becoming a Community Sustainer means that strong and steady funding will allow Catholic Charities to deliver food, shelter, and emergency assistance to families in our local community.

When you join the Community Sustainers, you will join a special dedicated group of people reaching out each month to provide support to families in need around our community.

### Just look at what One Monthly Gift Can Do:

- \$5 a month can provide bedding for a resident in a shelter.
- \$10 a month can supply a family in need with diapers for their growing daughter.
- \$50 a month can provide enough for a family of four.



Kate, from Troy, has been giving to the Catholic Charities Annual Fund each month for more than two years:

*“Giving monthly fits into my budget easily and allows me to contribute more each year than if I gave a one-time gift.”*

It's simple and easy to join the Community Sustainer giving program. Just choose the amount of your gift and your subsequent giving will happen automatically.

To make your monthly gift online, visit:  
**[give.ccrda.org](http://give.ccrda.org)**

You can also make a monthly gift by contacting:  
**Annual Fund Manager Laurie Beach at [laurie.beach@ccrda.org](mailto:laurie.beach@ccrda.org) or (518) 453-6831.**



As the session ends, each Getting AHEAD class celebrates with a graduation ceremony and reception.

“Getting AHEAD” challenges its attendees to think about poverty in a new light. Often, when dealing with poverty and resources, we talk about lack of money either as income or as savings. Over the course of this 16-week program, participants learn that poverty is much more complex. All told, there are eleven resources that those in poverty struggle to maintain, from social capital (having friends and family), to integrity and trust, to simply having access to good role models.

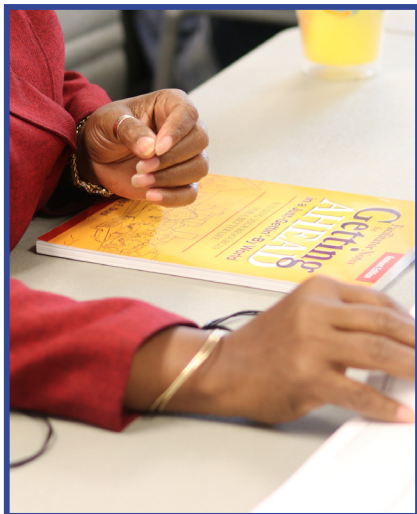
Each attendee is asked to assess how each of the eleven resources is developed in their lives. They then create a future plan that builds on their strengths and formulates a way to grow in areas that need further development. Groups discuss the setbacks and barriers they're likely to face and how to deal with them. As a result, “Getting AHEAD” has grown into more than just a 16-week session; each class is a group where individuals share their goals and above all, receive support when life throws a curve ball.



From Left: Wilhelmina Murray-Davis Facilitates a Getting AHEAD session, Getting AHEAD participants work together to learn strategies and techniques for financial stability, a Getting AHEAD participant engages in class discussion.

## GETTING AHEAD IN A JUST-GETTIN’-BY WORLD

By Grit Carotenuto



For sixteen weeks, each Wednesday, an excited group of individuals could be found seated around a table in a conference room in Albany, sharing their different life experiences and supporting each other in understanding the barriers to overcoming poverty. In Oneonta, a similar group would

meet to look at the causes of poverty and work on their own future plans.

Both groups are supported by certified facilitators and follow a 16-week curriculum developed by Ruby Payne, called “Getting AHEAD in a Just-Gettin’-By World”. The curriculum has been used throughout the US and internationally to teach attendees how best to leverage their resources and plan for success. In Albany, this is the third year that Catholic Charities has offered the program.

Guided by the curriculum, attendees investigate the causes of poverty at the society, community and personal level. During one such session, the individuals discussed how income and wealth disparities have grown over the decades. They looked at the realities of poverty and how poverty influences their daily lives; one participant realized that due to not having a car, she spent nearly 30% of her waking hours on transportation related activities – such as waiting for and riding the bus. With the support of her fellow attendees, she has decided to work on getting her license back and getting a car. In turn, the time she will save getting from point A to point B will allow her to go back to school and further her education.

“Getting AHEAD” participants are often referred from other Catholic Charities programs, such as Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing, but it is not a requirement to join the program. Each group member brings their own unique perspective and participants range in age from their 20s all the way into their 70s. Some have dealt with generational poverty, speaking with their group about a childhood of scraping by, while others face situational poverty due to job loss or illness or family challenges.

**We’re looking for Employees just like YOU!**

Spread the word about employment at Catholic Charities. Make a Difference. Love what you do!

Visit [www.ccrda.org/employment/](http://www.ccrda.org/employment/) for current job listings.