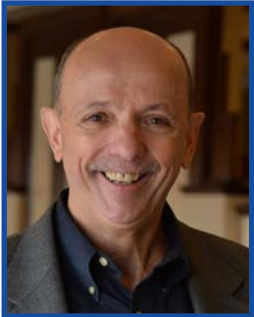


A WORD FROM THE CEO...



Vincent W. Colonno

Greetings,

It is my pleasure to share with you yet another edition of CC WORKS. We have been very busy this spring and I cannot overstate how grateful I am to the staff at Catholic Charities. It is with great pride I look back at what they have accomplished these past few

months - including opening not one, but *two* new programs to help people in our Diocese.

Inside, you'll be able to read more about these programs - a Food Farmacy in Montgomery County and a new Warming Center in Oneonta. You'll also get a closer look at Camp

Scully's 100th Anniversary and get to know Bob Bellafore, who serves on our Board of Trustees.

At Catholic Charities, we're not in the business of turning people away and with your support, we are opening even more doors for our neighbors.

Thank you for all you do to support our mission of Caring Beyond Belief. We truly appreciate it. Have a safe and relaxing summer.

Take Care,

Vince

IN THIS ISSUE...



A new partnership in Oneonta provides our neighbors with a warm, safe place to stay when temperatures drop.



Camp Scully celebrates 100 years of summers with renovations and improvements.



Meet Meghan Meyerson, the new Director of Development for Catholic Charities.

CC WORKS

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Committed to Active Witness*

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WARMING STATION OPENS IN ONEONTA

The Caring for the Homeless Collaborative (pictured above) is a group of community members, human service providers, faith-based groups and public officials and others who worked together to create a safe, warm place for people to go when temperatures drop.

It started with an idea: a low barrier, accessible place for our homeless community members. This warm, safe place to sleep during the cold winter months was born over two and a half years ago by the Caring for the Homeless Collaborative.

This collaborative was led by Fox Hospital and includes members from the faith community, human services providers, county departments, city officials, and concerned community members. Together, collaborative members worked to make this dream a reality.

Main Street Baptist Church identified a location for the warming station. They set about renovating it, creating a warm and welcoming place for others. Meanwhile, our teams at Catholic Charities Housing Office and Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties agreed to manage the warming station and began to identify and hire staff to operate the project.

Another part of the collaborative started fundraising. By March 8th, 2021, staff had been hired and trained, the location was ready to accept guests, and the collaborative had raised close to \$50,000!

After over two years of work and collaboration, on March 8th at 5:30 pm, the doors to the warming station were opened. They remained open until April 11th and will re-open in October for those searching for shelter in the cold.



The warming station acts as a Code Blue shelter, housing anyone who is homeless when the weather is 32 degrees or below including wind chill.

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

By Jason Carnegie



Reporter, gubernatorial adviser, policy maker, communications consultant, husband, dad and crisis manager are just some of the hats **Bob Bellafore** wore before joining Catholic Charities Board of Trustees. Over the past 35 years, Bob has made a difference helping numerous organizations, schools and non-profits.

Bob grew up in Queens, the youngest of six children. His father Lenny moved to Brooklyn from Sicily at age 11 not knowing a word of English. His mother Marie, born in the US, shared her husband's strong Sicilian roots and street smarts, strong Catholic faith and caring nature. Lenny established a small coat-making business and together, they built a life for their children that included Catholic education,

"This mindset taught me that nothing is free, hard work matters, there's a difference between right and wrong and you might not really know a person's story so treat everybody with respect," said Bob.

He always trusted God and prayed he could recognize and act on the opportunities God provided. One such opportunity was reconnecting with a former classmate, Marilyn, at their high school reunion. The two are now happily married with two sons: Robert Jr., a policy analyst in Washington, D.C. and Father Sam, assigned to Our Lady of the Annunciation in Queensbury and Sacred Heart in Lake George.

Through a distinguished media career, Bob built a strong set of strategic communications skills. When Matt Maguire, a long-time friend, colleague, and board member relocated to Western NY, opportunity knocked again: Bob was approached to join Catholic Charities Board of Trustees.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bob began to volunteer with CC MOVE and traveled to food distributions all over the Diocese. He witnessed firsthand our mission in action and felt fulfilled serving others. "I saw hungry people brave enough to accept food from strangers and this committed group of Catholic Charities staff and volunteers showing up to help them with no questions asked."

Bob sees the needs across our area growing and becoming more complicated. Securing funding is difficult, especially for projects that don't capture the public's attention. And, while he finds efforts to curtail religious freedom concerning, he remains driven and faithful. If we continue to be smart about what we do and driven by love for our mission, Bob believes that we can continue to serve our neighbors from all walks of life. "We don't help people because *they're* Catholic. We help them because *we're* Catholic."



100 YEARS OF MEMORIES

As Camp Scully marks a century of summers, we're celebrating with improvements and renovations for future campers to enjoy.

In 2020, Camp Scully marked its 100th Summer – once again providing children from all walks of life a summer of new friendships, new experiences and new memories.

This year, we are celebrating 100 years of memories made at Camp Scully.

We are excited to share with you a few of the improvements that are currently underway at the camp. We cannot wait for these renovations to be completed for future generations of campers!

- A retaining wall and fresh sand have been added to our beach to keep the area level and to keep the sand from washing away.
- We've repaved the camp's entry road to allow for easier access for campers.
- Work is underway to maintain and improve the cabins so campers are well rested and ready for the summer days ahead.

Visit www.ccrda.org to learn more.



FOOD FARMACIES: A NUTRITION-FOCUSED APPROACH TO HEALTH



Above: Valerie Veltri (left), Food Farmacy Case Manager in Montgomery County and Hana Chehade (center), Dietician, Albany Food Farmacy, help participants build healthier lives regardless of income level.

Catholic Charities recently opened the doors of its third Food Farmacy program in as many years. The latest Food Farmacy is located at St. Mary's Memorial Campus and will serve food-insecure individuals with health-related issues in Montgomery County. Catholic Charities oversees another site in Schenectady at Ellis Hospital and a third in Albany.

How does a Food Farmacy work?

Each Food Farmacy operates like a food pantry inasmuch that participants have access to readily-available food items.

Unlike a food pantry, our Food Farmacies have specially-trained staff onsite to work directly with referred individuals. These individuals receive fresh, healthy food items along with nutritional counseling to better manage their health and any medical conditions they might have, such as diabetes or hypertension.

This innovative approach is designed to address social determinants of health by combating food insecurity and addressing immediate and long-term nutritional needs of our neighbors. Our goal is to provide people with the tools they need to make informed health-conscious and budget-friendly decisions long-term.

"Access to nutritional education and healthy food is important when maintaining a healthy lifestyle," said CEO Vince Colonno of the Food Farmacy sites, "We've operated food pantries and meal programs for decades and have found this approach helps to create healthier outcomes for the people we serve."

Mary Carpenter, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, agrees, "We've seen it work. Just recently, a gentleman was referred to our Food Farmacy program at St. Mary's hospital. He worked with our staff and is now leading a healthier life. This approach works for people."

Can I visit the Food Farmacy?

Visits are scheduled on a referral-only basis. If you think you might qualify for one of our Food Farmacy programs, ask your doctor or medical provider for more information!

Our Food Farmacies are made possible through partnerships with Ellis Hospital, St. Mary's Healthcare and the Alliance for Better Health, as well as through generous donations from our neighbors and supporters across the Diocese!

5 QUESTIONS WITH MEGHAN

Meghan Meyerson joins Catholic Charities as the new Director of Development. In her role, Meghan works with donors and partners of Catholic Charities to support our work of serving and empowering our neighbors in need!

What are you looking forward to most in your role as Director of Development?

What drew me to Catholic Charities initially is our wide reach and holistic service menu. I am so excited to be a part of an organization that's able to impact so many individuals and families across such a diverse geographic area. I'm looking forward to learning more about how we're meeting our community's needs and engaging with our donors and partners to support those efforts.



How did you come to work in human services?

From a young age I knew I wanted to give back to my community, but originally I thought that meant becoming a psychologist. After receiving my BS degree in psychology from Indiana University, I began working for a nonprofit focused on empowering young girls. There, I learned a lot about the systems of injustice that have led to the marginalization and oppression of entire communities. With this understanding, I moved back to my home state to pursue social work. In my second year of grad school at UAlbany I fell into the development world and don't see myself leaving anytime soon -- I love it here.

From where do you draw inspiration?

I draw a lot of inspiration from the people around me. Growing up I was really lucky to have family who instilled the importance of supporting disenfranchised communities in me. I'm still able to bounce my ideas off my parents and mentors. They've really helped me stay grounded and see the bigger picture, which I'm truly thankful for.

What would you say to someone interested in supporting Catholic Charities or working with us to receive services?

Rather than focusing on a single area of need, Catholic Charities recognizes that many of our community's most vulnerable individuals and families are facing diverse sets of challenges that require innovative solutions. With Catholic Charities our wide array of programs and supports ensures we're able to meet all of an individual's or family's needs holistically.

What's something about you that people might not know?

When I'm not working, you can find me teaching group fitness classes over at Vent Fitness. I'm passionate about helping others feel strong and comfortable in their body. Currently, I'm working on a personal training certification so I can impact gym-goers on a more personal level.



NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM HONORS OUR CC HEROES

On Thursday, June 17, Catholic Charities is slated to host its annual Night at the Museum event, with a twist. This year, we are proud to honor our CC Heroes: the Catholic Charities staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to help our neighbors through the COVID-19 crisis.

We will be broadcasting this virtual event live from the Irish Heritage Museum in Albany and invite you to join us in celebration and support of the programs and services of Catholic Charities.

Please visit www.ccrda.org for more information or to RSVP.