

A WORD FROM THE CEO...



Vincent W. Colonno

As the calendar year comes to a close, I look around at the work of Catholic Charities and all who help support our mission and I can't help but be overwhelmed with gratitude. Gratitude for our staff and volunteers, who pour so much of themselves into our work; and for our partners, who help us accomplish small and great things, and for our donors, who supply the funds, prayers, and encouragement to make it all possible.

This Advent season is one where we are thankful for our blessings, where we rejoice in the coming Christmas season, and where we work to help those in need in the spirit of our mission. In this issue of CC Works you'll read a personal reflection on our mission from Jack Simeone, one of our long-time employees and Chief Program Officer; you'll learn about our immigration legal services program and the dedicated staff that make

it run; you'll also find out more about Board Member Mark McCarthy; learn about the legacy gift of two dedicated donors; and find out about how Catholic Charities is helping our consumers find employment opportunities through New York State Industries for the Disabled (NYSID).

Though we are all too busy this time of year, I hope you and your family take the time to have a wonderful Holiday season. Thank you for all that you do – in the course of our year, through the ups and downs that inevitably accompany our walking with people through their difficulties, you are there with us (and with our clients!) supporting the mission and good work of Catholic Charities. And for that, I am again so grateful!

Take Care,

Vince



Immigration Services helps people to navigate citizenship and green card applications.



Catholic Charities Staff help to distribute food items in Amsterdam as a part of Catholic Charities Mobile Outreach Vehicle Extension (CC MOVE).



Chief Program Officer Jack Simeone reflects on how the work of Catholic Charities is inspired by scripture.

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

By Paul McAvoy



Though he's spent a career in the courtroom working on the nuances of labor and business law, Mark McCarthy knows the importance of organizations that are mission-based and about more than just the bottom line. His support of non-profits in the area, including

Catholic Charities and NABA, has helped shape his contributions to the community.

Mark McCarthy grew up in Troy, and after attending Dartmouth College came back to the Capital Region for law school. The local area held a draw for him, and he's made his career as an attorney and raised his family in this area. "Ten years ago, I was looking for something to get involved with, and speaking to my pastor about it, he set me up with Catholic Charities Caregiver Services," Mark said. Though the caregiver agency looks different now, Mark worked for a number of years on the agency board and from there was introduced to the larger work of Catholic Charities.

"It's been eye-opening," Mark said. "having served on one of the agency boards, I didn't realize the scope of services provided by Catholic Charities." Mark credits CEO Vince Colonno's leadership and vision as one of the reasons why he chose to join the Board of Trustees. "He has a very practical way of looking at the challenges we face," Mark explained, citing Vince's approach with helping the agencies come together as one organization as a real benefit to Catholic Charities. "There are benefits with keeping the best parts of the decentralized system, but improving the way we keep moving things forward as a cohesive organization."

Serving on the finance committee, Mark has gotten to know the details at each agency and is impressed with how much that Catholic Charities provides. Looking ahead, he is optimistic about the No Wrong Door approach that is encouraging agencies to leverage the other services provided within the CC system when helping clients. But the biggest impact comes with visiting the sites, like a recent trip made to the DePaul Housing SRO building in Albany. "When you get a tour and meet some of the people who are working there," Mark said, "it really drives home that the staff works amazingly well with the resources."

A BEATITUDE IN OUR MIDST

A Reflection by Jack Simeone

Sometimes, when talking about Catholic Charities, we hear a staff person, a program volunteer, or Board member make a biblical reference to the Gospels. Other times we



might hear someone at a meeting speak about the Beatitudes and the Parable of the Good Samaritan. And if we look back a little further in time, we see how the mission of CC is rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures, where we discover a God who has a love for poor and vulnerable people. To this very day, the mission, values and purpose of Catholic Charities is felt by those children, families, young, middle-aged and senior adults in the most ordinary elements of life.

We can see how a 9-year old girl who has lived with too much abuse is comforted and made to feel a little less insecure in her new home at CMS Farano House. How a middle-school boy lights up when his mentor in Saratoga Springs greets him affectionately on a Saturday morning. Or when a CC staff driver brings a home-delivered meal to a senior in Schenectady and shows interest in her day. This same mission is evident in the mother [along with her young son and daughter] who made a recent decision to move out of their apartment and find sanctuary in our shelter for those who have experienced domestic violence. And as we stand aside for a brief moment and observe the families in our Ilion food pantry, we watch in admiration in the way our volunteers and staff treat all people with a true sense of human dignity without any trace of judgment.

Let us take a few moments to pause this December to name the ways we have been a blessing to the people we serve, to the individuals whom we work alongside, to the cadre of people who comprise our Catholic Charities volunteer corps, to the individuals who continue to say "Yes" to serving on our Boards and represent our mission at large in the greater community, and to those donors who have contributed their personal resources toward our mission. Let us remind ourselves that 'being blessed' is what we might call a *Beatitude* in our neighbors' midst.

NYSID & CATHOLIC CHARITIES

PARTNER TO CHANGE LIVES

By Eileen Spath

Kristyn's work as a data entry specialist may seem like a pretty normal job. In a way, it is. For Kristyn, however, it came at a time when she needed it most – working to stay clean after completing an outpatient treatment program. "My outpatient counselor introduced me to Jackie," Kristyn recalled. Jackie Gentile, Special Projects Coordinator at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, oversees Catholic Charities' membership with New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc. (NYSID).



Kristyn appreciates the independence that comes from her job at NYS Department of Health.

NYSID is a not-for-profit membership organization that creates jobs for New Yorkers with disabilities. Through this partnership, Jackie recognizes and recommends potential employees, often Catholic Charities' clients with disabilities, to the Preferred Source Program. This NYSID Preferred Source Program empowers people with disabilities through job opportunities by connecting them to state agencies and partnerships with private sector New York State businesses.

Through Catholic Charities and NYSID, Kristyn was hired to work for the New York State Department of Health. Kristyn remains clean and has found accountability in her job, where her role as a data entry specialist in the Newborn Screening Program is not only important, but necessary.

Kristyn's supervisor, Krystal, is grateful to work with staff members referred by Catholic Charities. She explained that employees from Catholic Charities and the NYSID program are valuable, as they consistently perform well, and help lighten the work load. "People are always having babies," said Krystal of their work entering and tracking newborn data. "It's great having [the NYSID and Catholic Charities employees]. It's helpful."

In addition to the Newborn Screening Program, Catholic Charities works with Green Facility Solution, a cleaning company committed to working with individuals with disabilities. Raymond Walker, CEO of Green Facility Solution, feels Catholic Charities adds to their commitment of finding jobs for individuals with disabilities. "We've had a very positive experience working with the organization as well as the employees," he said, "We look forward to continuing our joint mission."

A mission that, for Kristyn, has had a deep and lasting impact, "I love this new chapter in my life... I'm independent. It's a feeling I've never had before."



Staff from Green Facility Solution, a partner of Catholic Charities and the NYSID Program

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/ for current job listings.

GALLERY: CC MOVE



Catholic Charities staff and partners provide food and services in Amsterdam as a part of CC MOVE - Catholic Charities Mobile Outreach Vehicle Extension. CC MOVE seeks to bring Catholic Charities services to those living in rural, low-income regions in the Albany Diocese.

DEVELOPMENT CORNER A LEGACY OF CARE FOR SENIORS

By Kate Qualters

When Walter and Sophie Socha were in their mid-70s, they wanted to make a lasting gift to Catholic Charities that would help support the needs of seniors, while maintaining a dependable income throughout their retirement years.



Having grown up poor with strong faith, they realized great success building quality and well cared for homes for individuals and families in the diocesan region. Rooted in a belief

of giving back to those in need, the Socha's chose planned giving - not just for their own income and tax benefit, but also to make a difference in another person's life.

They decided to set up a charitable gift annuity for Catholic Charities, which provided income to Walter and Sophie for 10 years. After they both passed away, the annuity was transferred to Catholic Charities and the remainder was used to support programs serving seniors in Schenectady County.

Planned giving is a way for you to provide donations to Catholic Charities in a manner that is tax preferred to you and your estate. What sets planned giving apart from a regular charitable contribution is that the actual contribution occurs sometime in the future, creating a lasting legacy. We can help you decide how and when that contribution will be made.

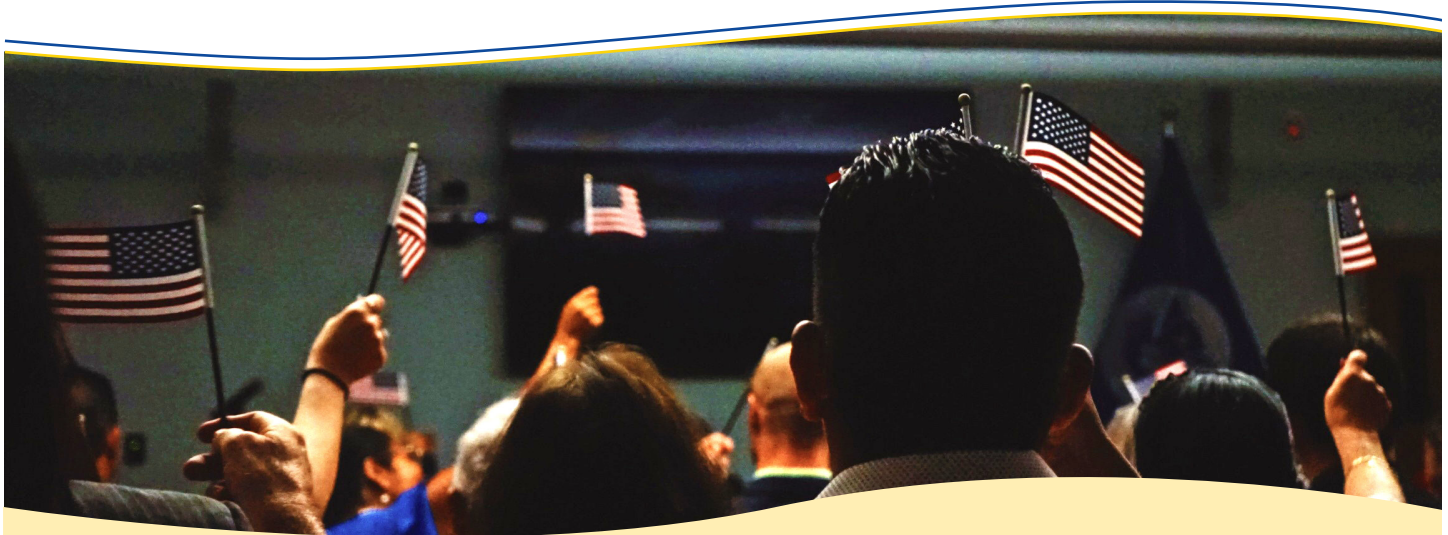
Three Simple Ways You Can Make a Difference

1. Remember us in your will.
2. Make a gift that pays you back.
3. Give a portion of your retirement plan assets.

We are so grateful to the Socha's for sharing their legacy with Catholic Charities - strong faith and a belief that all deserve a good home, respect, and kindness. Because of them, our work to offer companionship, nutritious meals, and community to homebound seniors is strengthened.

What will be your legacy?

To learn more about Catholic Charities planned giving opportunities, contact Kate Qualters, Director of Development, at (518) 453-6650 or kate.qualters@ccrcda.org.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

By Paul McAvoy

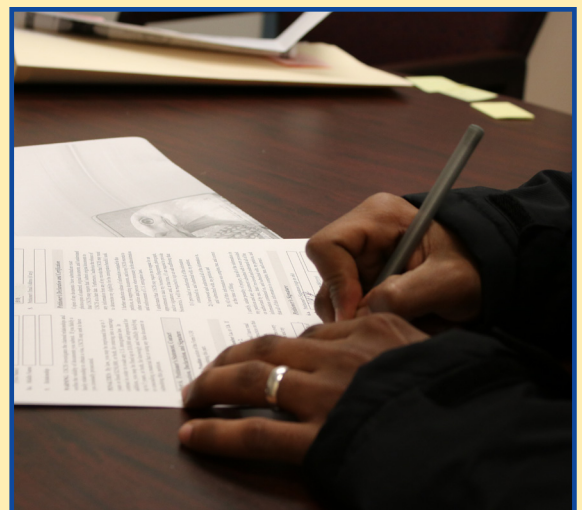
With immigration being in the news on an almost daily basis, it might not surprise you to hear that Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany has an immigration legal services program. What might surprise you is the work that they do – day in and day out.

“We primarily assist with applications for green cards (lawful permanent residence) and applications for citizenship,” said Paula Read, who is accredited by the Department of Justice to help people navigate the complex paperwork that comes with applying for a change in immigration status. Paula is quick to note that she is not an immigration attorney (that work for more complex cases is overseen at Catholic Charities by attorney David Meyers). The vast majority of the people she works with are people who are here legally, have been for some time, and applying for citizenship or petitioning to have a family member brought over. Cases beyond the scope of this office are referred to appropriate agencies or attorneys.

“Besides filing applications, we provide correct information and guidance,” Paula said, pointing out that Patti DiMuria who works with her does a lot to help clients, too.

“Last year we filed over 125 applications and fielded over 350 phone calls.” Though the paperwork can be complicated, not every procedure requires an attorney. But the maze of forms, petitions, fees, and long wait times (it can take over 5 years to get a petition approved for a spouse or child to come over, and 7-9 years for adult children) make many people rely on experts for help. Private immigration attorneys can be very expensive, and the Catholic Charities program is offered for those who have few resources.

“The best part of the job is helping reunite family members,” Paula said. “There’s a gentleman coming in today to introduce me to his wife, who we helped come over. He is just so happy, and the process took over 4 years. The second best part is seeing people on the day they become citizens. They are so proud of what they’ve been able to accomplish in this country.”



Catholic Charities Immigration Services assists with the complex paperwork that comes with applying for citizenship and permanent residence.

Merry Christmas

CC WORKS

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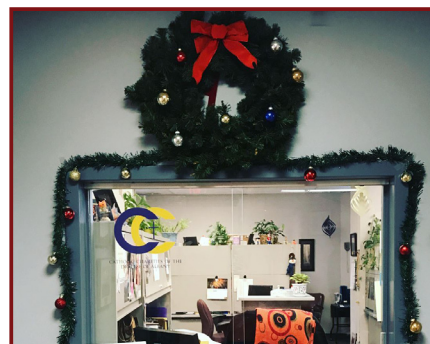
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Scenes from Catholic Charities at Christmas