

## A WORD FROM THE CEO...



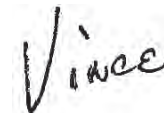
Vincent W. Colunno

Welcome to our new edition of CC Works! As you can see, we have updated our newsletter with a new design and colors. The best part is, thanks to our generous community partners and advances in printing, we are able to do this without increasing our costs. This issue highlights a few of the exciting things happening at Catholic Charities – from upcoming events and celebrations to program milestones. You'll read about United Tenants, a program affiliated with Catholic Charities, and their mission to advocate and empower people who rent their homes. Molly Nicol writes about Feeding our Neighbors, a statewide Catholic Charities effort to raise funds to purchase food during the winter months – a time when hunger affects so many people in our area. Juan George, a member of our Board of Trustees, tells us a bit about his life and his work with Catholic Charities and the Latino community. Sr. Betsy Van Deusen

takes us through Catholic Charities' program to assist victims of domestic violence, and we get a chance to sit down with Sr. Mary Ann LoGuidice, who is celebrating 35 years of working with Community Maternity Services.

These stories highlight the important work that Catholic Charities is doing in our communities – and I'm blessed to have you be a part of that work. Thank you for all that you do to support Catholic Charities, through donating your time or treasure to assist the staff and clients of our programs. It takes all of us, working together, to help the poor and vulnerable in our communities. Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday season, with the hope that the New Year is a happy one for you and your loved ones.

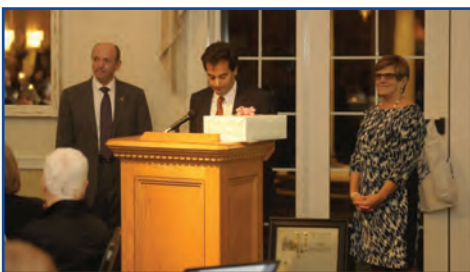
Take Care,



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## THANK YOU TO THE DONORS WHO HAVE ALREADY CONTRIBUTED TO HARVEST OF GIVING!

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Vince Colunno, CEO of Catholic Charities (L) and Tony Fazzone, Board President of Community Maternity Services (C) honor Sister Mary Ann LoGiudice (R) at the Community Maternity Service's Celebration of Hope at Treviso by Mallozzi's. The article on Page 2 reflects on Sister Mary Ann's 35 years of service.



Sister Betsy Van Deusen pictured with Bishop Ed at the Catholic Charities "Bishop Scharfenberger Pizza Competition" at Catholic Charities Tri-County Services in Rensselaer, with the winning business name: The Orchard Tavern of Albany. More pictures of this event, including the "People's Choice" can be found on page 3.



Members of the Catholic Charities Board of Trustees are pictured before the formal program of the Annual Gathering got underway at the Schuyler Inn in Menands. Pictured from left to right: New Board member Kirsten Keefe along with Mark Morrison, Board Secretary Shari Golub Schillinger, Board President Paul Stec and Betsy O'Haire. More photos on page 3.

# BOARD MEMBER PROFILE



**Juan George**

I was born Juan Julio George De La Cruz in Santo Domingo, the Capital of the Dominican Republic. In 1966, my parents, brother and I migrated to the United States and like many immigrants before us, landed in New York City.

After graduation from High School, I migrated again, this time to Upstate New York to attend the State University of New York at Oswego. In December of 1972 during my junior year, I begged the former Luisa Contreras to marry me. She accepted and so far, has given me 42 wonderful years, which have included two great children who in turn have provided us with five incredible grandchildren.

Throughout a life full of blessings and opportunities, I have also faced difficulties, challenges and disappointments. However, there have been many people and organizations that have been there to help me navigate through the darkest times. Naturally, I am inclined to give back every time I have a chance to do so.

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany is one of those organizations that provides me with a vehicle to do just that. An organization whose mission is to “serve and empower persons in need, advocate for a just society and collaborate with women and men of good will” is something I want to be part of.

As a member of the Board of Trustees, I am honored and thankful to be allowed to work with this special group of people; particularly people like Paul Stec who invited me to join this board. This group is committed by their leadership, efforts and actions to improve the quality of lives for individuals and subsequently, improve the quality of life for the community in general.

I always feel that I have been given so much that I will never be able to give enough back in return. However, I will keep trying.

*(Juan feels very passionate about reaching the Latino Community so chose to write the article himself with a Spanish translation, which follows below.)*

Nací Juan Julio George De La Cruz en Santo Domingo, la Capital de la República Dominicana. En 1966, mis padres, mi hermano y yo emigramos a los Estados Unidos y al igual que muchos inmigrantes ante que nosotros, nos erradicamos en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Después de graduarme de la Escuela Secundaria, emigré de nuevo, esta vez al norte del estado de Nueva York para asistir a la Universidad Estatal de Nueva York en Oswego. En diciembre de 1972, durante mi tercer año, le rogué a la que formalmente se llamaba Luisa Contreras que se casara conmigo. Ella aceptó y, hasta ahora, me ha dado 42 años maravillosos, que incluye dos tremendos hijos que a su vez nos han proporcionado cinco nietos increíbles.

A lo largo de una vida llena de bendiciones y oportunidades, también me he enfrentado a dificultades, desafíos y decepciones. Sin embargo, han habidos muchas personas y organizaciones que han estado allí para ayudarme a navegar a través de los tiempos más oscuros. Naturalmente, me inclino a ayudar cada vez que tengo la oportunidad de hacerlo.

Caridades Católicas de la Diócesis de Albany es una de esas organizaciones que me proporciona un vehículo para hacer precisamente eso. Una organización cuya misión es “servir y empoderar a las personas en necesidad, defensora de una sociedad justa y colaboradora con las mujeres y los hombres de buena voluntad” es algo que yo quiero ser parte de.

Como miembro de la Junta de Directores, me siento honrado y agradecido de que se me permita trabajar con este grupo de personas especiales; especialmente gente como Paul Stec quien inicialmente me invito a ser parte este foro. Este grupo se ha comprometido por su liderazgo, esfuerzos y acciones a mejorar la calidad de vida de individuos y posteriormente, mejorar la calidad de vida de la comunidad en general.

Siempre siento que se me ha dado tanto que nunca voy a ser capaz de dar lo suficiente a cambio. Sin embargo, voy a seguir intentando.

*(Juan se siente comedido de alcanzar y envolver a la comunidad latina en todos los niveles de vida de esta comunidad y por tanto decidió escribir este artículo traducirlo también al español.)*

## SISTER MARY ANN LOGIUDICE AND CMS – 35 YEARS OF FOREVER TOGETHER

By Ken Goldfarb



**Sister Mary Ann LoGiudice and Bishop Emeritus Howard Hubbard at the Celebration of Hope honoring Sister Mary Ann for her 35 years of service to Community Maternity Services.**

Jimmy Carter was president, an 8-Track Player sold for \$169.00, a gallon of gas sold for about 63 cents, the Camp David Peace Treaty was reached, two Popes died and two new Popes were elected, and in that same year, 1978, Sister Mary Ann LoGiudice, RSM, first joined Community Maternity Services (CMS) as Residential Director of the Maternity Center.

Now, more than 35 years later, and as Executive Director of CMS, Sister Mary Ann acknowledges half her life has been spent with this Catholic Charities agency, and what a run it's been. “I really did just about every role,” she said.

Sister Mary Ann has held the top job since 1990, succeeding CMS's founder Sister Maureen Joyce, RSM, who at that time went on to become CEO of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany.

CMS was founded in 1971 as a single residential program providing services to pregnant adolescents. The agency has grown through the years to meet the changing needs of the children, adolescents and families in our communities throughout the fourteen counties of the Albany Diocese. Today, CMS provides a continuum of services including care for pregnant and parenting adolescents and their families; group residence and family care for children; prevention services and support for families at risk, as well as adoption services, foster care services, kinship

**(Continued on page 5.)**



# THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CATHOLIC CHARITIES!



## DENISE BENTON WINS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FROM PEERS

By Ben Patten



Denise Benton (3rd from left), Youth Services Director for Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, has been selected as the Credentialed Prevention Professional (CPP) of the year. The award was announced by Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez, Commissioner of the NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services.

In speaking on the importance of the award Commissioner Gonzalez-Sanchez said, "This is an honor which is bestowed upon a Credentialed Prevention Professional who has earned widespread recognition from her peers, and whose work reflects the highest level of professional conduct and best exemplifies excellence and quality of service to our field."

John Nasso, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Fulton & Montgomery Counties said, "Denise is a valuable employee and we are very happy that she received this award. Denise knows a great deal about the substance abuse prevention field, teen gambling issues and the field of tobacco control. Not only does she stay on

top of the changes in these fields, but she is always willing to assist the agency in various ways and to work with other professionals in order to make our community a better place."

Denise has worked in the substance abuse prevention field for Catholic Charities for seventeen years. She has dedicated her life to helping others since she graduated college in 1992. Denise is a leader in her community and fights to improve the lives for everyone. A few of the programs she has supervised are: Substance Abuse Prevention, Parent Gambling Prevention, Reality Check, Tobacco-Free School Policy, and Suicide Prevention. She is a Certified Prevention Professional and a Credentialed Gambling Specialist. This year she has become a Prevention Skills Trainer and constantly enhances her education in the field. She's dedicated to preventing the risks families face and providing social opportunities to her community. Denise began her career as a Prevention Counselor providing individual and group counseling, classroom presentations, and crisis intervention. In January 2009, Denise was promoted to Director of Youth Services.

In 2001 she received the Misheal Boyer Award from the Johnstown School District PTA, and in 2007 was named the Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Counties Employee of the Year. In speaking about her latest honor, Denise said, "I am truly humbled to be a recipient of this honor. I feel like I don't just have a job, but an amazing opportunity to be a true helper of others. I love being able to give assistance, knowledge or even just support to those who truly are in need. Yet this award means nothing without all the support and cohesiveness of a truly amazing staff, co-workers, colleagues, and guidance I receive from my Executive Director. I am always grateful when I can help make a difference in at least one persons life! Its gratifying to know that when we do things that positively affect people, they are more equipped to make better choices and hopefully give the positive to someone else."

# FOUR PROGRAMS, THIRTY-SIX BEDS AND MUCH MORE FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

By Sister Betsy Van Deusen



They are not in a location that you can visit. The addresses of the shelters are not publicized and many of the people who access their services begin with a phone call. The Catholic Charities Domestic Violence (DV) programs are in Herkimer, Warren/Washington, Schoharie, and Montgomery counties. Our DV staff across the system, who,

together, have nearly 60 years of experience have much to share.

Jackie Ward, Program Director in Herkimer, spoke of the Collaborative Project with the Little Falls Police Department in which an advocate is at the department to assist both the officers and the DV victim to report the incident thoroughly. A recent conference for 100 service providers – probation officers, agency staff, and court personnel to hear national, state and local experts on DV resulted in the Herkimer DA unveiling a county-wide policy for law enforcement in responding to domestic violence situations. Jackie also shared a story of a battered woman who fled when her child was hurt. She was sheltered for two and a half months and credits Catholic Charities program staff with her ability to attend college (she will graduate as you read this) and to get away, stay away, and make a difference in her and her children's lives.

“This work is so satisfying because we get to witness our clients making positive life changes and see their personal growth. Helping victims of domestic violence is very much in keeping with the Catholic Charities mission,” said Rachel Gartner, director of the DV in Warren/Washington counties. She said, “Our task is to offer resources and help make a space for when women are ready to leave.” Catholic Charities in Warren and Washington counties also has an Elder Abuse Prevention Project to assist the elderly who are dealing with domestic violence. The program offers safe haven for seniors to learn and get support and safety in their later years.

Ginger Cato is the Community Educator/Assistant DV Program Director in Montgomery County. Ginger talks to anyone and everyone who will listen about domestic violence and how it impacts our communities. Issues of power and control are at the heart of DV. Abuse comes in all forms – emotional, sexual, psychological, physical, financial, and no form is in any way acceptable. She is often asked, “Why do women stay?” She reiterated that women stay in abusive situations because of fear and lack of knowledge about available resources.

Kathleen Reinhart, Program Director in Schoharie County reminds us that DV does not discriminate based on income, employment status, age, race, education (or anything else) and that it has a significant impact on everyone in the family. In order for a woman to move from victim to survivor she must learn to trust again. Kathleen feels that their work is often about “planting seeds” - in the community, with women who call the hotline, with shelter clients and that when victims are ready, they know that help is available and where to find it.

What can people do? *Become informed about resources in your community; speak out against violence in all forms; do not tolerate language, gestures, images that are degrading to women; get involved in your local program and (most importantly) If they tell you, believe them...*

The NYS Domestic Violence Hotline Number is 1-800-942-6906 for the program nearest you.



Girl Scout Troop 2376 (Pictured above) is collecting goods for Catholic Charities to give to people that are affected by domestic violence. They are working to earn their Bronze Award and to raise awareness to end domestic violence.

# DEVELOPMENT CORNER



Molly Nicol

## FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS

Holiday time is a busy time for many of us. There is shopping to be done, family get-togethers, social events, and beautiful church services. Many of us reach

a little deeper during this time to help out our neighbors in need by picking up a tag on a gift tree, donating to our church, or contributing to a coat drive. The generosity of people at this time of year has always amazed and inspired me. Imagine if we could continue that spirit throughout the year.

After the Christmas decorations get packed away, and we settle into our winter routines, the people who come to Catholic Charities for help still face an uphill climb. Heating bills start to arrive, and with them, some very difficult decisions about whether to eat, pay for needed medicine, or heat the home. For some families, this can be a “pick the best two out of three” decision. We don’t want anyone to have to live like that. That is why we started the **Feeding our Neighbors** initiative. By helping feed our families in need, they can free up resources to pay for other vitally needed basic services like heat, rent, and medicine.

**Feeding Our Neighbors** is a statewide initiative to raise awareness about hunger in our area and raise funds to support community food pantries and meal programs. These emergency feeding programs can mean the difference between hunger and nutrition during the winter months, especially after the holiday season when donated supplies are low.

Once again this year, Catholic Charities will reach out to the community to help **Feed Our Neighbors** during late January and early February. We are thankful for partnerships with Catholic schools, parishes, and Siena College Basketball who will help us in this effort. We can’t fix every problem in the world, but we certainly can do something to help people who are going to bed without food here in upstate New York. **You can help!** Visit [www.ccrda.org](http://www.ccrda.org) or follow us on Facebook to get the latest information. Come to the Siena College home game on Friday, January 23rd for **Feeding Our Neighbors** night, a great night with Saints basketball and Catholic Charities.



# THANKSGIVING BASKET WISH LIST

United Tenants of Albany  
33 Clinton Ave., Albany, NY 12207  
Phone: (518) 436-8997  
www.unitedtenantsalbany.org

United Tenants of Albany (UTA) is a community based nonprofit organization that works to improve housing conditions, both in terms of physical conditions and in terms of tenants' rights for security and equity. UTA responds to calls throughout the Capital District and concentrates its activities in low and moderate income neighborhoods in Albany.

## SUGGESTED WISH LIST ITEMS INCLUDE:



**10 Ride Bus Passes (Many of Our Clients Have to go Between Social Services, the Court, Code Enforcement and Our Office).**



**U-Haul Gift Certificates (When People have to Move and Store Belongings When They Go Into a Shelter).**



**Children's Toys.**

**(Sister Mary Ann LoGiudice - continued from page 2.)**

care support, and respite services. Over the years, and under Sister Mary Ann's leadership, these programs and services have improved the lives of thousands of clients strengthening and benefitting the communities in which we live.

Bishop Emeritus Howard J. Hubbard said of Sister Mary Ann, "She has demonstrated a marvelous blend of showing concern for those served by CMS, and, at the same time exhibited her business acumen that together I think has served the agency quite well."

Anne Marie Couser, CMS Associate Executive Director of Administration said, "Sister Mary Ann's leadership at Community Maternity Services has been defined by compassion and caring. This spirit extends to clients, colleagues and staff. She is fun-loving, joyful and determined and has been a positive influence on the agency for many years."

For Sister Mary Ann, back at the beginning at the Maternity Center, "I got to see a lot of babies born," she said. But a lot has changed since then. Yes, babies are still being born, but she noted that population has changed. Accompanying that change is the fact that today most of those teenage mothers are now in local county custody, some as young as 13.

The changing demographics and changes in the law began to require far more training for CMS workers in order to deal with a host of new issues that, for the most part, didn't exist before 1990.

Another major change impacting CMS is the decrease in government funding over the last few decades, according to Sister Mary Ann.

However, state government has begun what's been termed a "Medicaid redesign," which, in her view has the potential for a "very interesting" future for CMS. This appears to be a very complicated program, but it has, she said, a great deal of potential for CMS. It could allow CMS to expand its reach in the number of individuals and the types of services provided. "I see our whole world changing

tremendously," she said. "It's a sea change, no doubt."

Recognizing her many years of dedicated CMS service, the organization's recent annual Celebration of Hope served as a fitting tribute to Sister Mary Ann LoGiudice. The evening, a true celebration, included a video highlighting her service throughout the years.

Looking back at her career, and she's certainly not ready to call it quits, Sister Mary Ann said, "It's a wonderful ministry." She admitted that at times the work can be discouraging, but that, "There really are success stories."

"I learned this years and years ago: I really believe that no matter what happens to kids, they'll remember that there was someone who really cared for them," she said.

Perhaps the one young girl who was truly cared for, beyond what anyone might ordinarily imagine, was the three-year old AIDS child that Sister Mary Ann adopted.

Bishop Hubbard noted that the adoption of Barbara - a very unusual occurrence for a religious sister - required under Church law his approval, among several other special requirements. He said that this act showed "a great deal of love and courage on her part," noting that the limited state of medical care for AIDS babies in those days could have put her at risk. "She never let that danger deter her love and devotion to Barbara."

Little Barbara arrived at Farano House in 1988 and for Sister Mary Ann the connection was instantaneous. The story of their love for each other, the adoption and their life of almost six years together is detailed in *That Place Called Home*, the book she co-authored with Paul Grondahl. "Barbara will always be the greatest gift of my life."

It seems that story is emblematic of what Sister Mary Ann and CMS are all about. In her words, "We always look to where the greatest need is."

## DID YOU KNOW?

**This past year our four Domestic Violence programs served 1626 adults, seniors, and children in shelters and through our non-residential services.**

## CC WORKS

*A Catholic Charities Quarterly  
Committed to active witness*

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

The Feeding Our Neighbors Soup-er Bowl Coin Collection Event in co-operation with Siena College will benefit the Sister Maureen Joyce Soup Kitchen. For more information call Sister Betsy VanDeusen at (518) 453-6650.

**JANUARY 23, 2015** – Siena Saints vs. Marist Red Foxes at the Times Union Center at 7pm

## SAVE THE DATE

**JUNE 18, 2015** – Catholic Charities Night at the Museum –  
The New York State Museum, 4th Floor, Albany.  
For more information call Molly Nicol at (518) 453-6650.

If you would like to receive *CC Works* electronically, please send your e-mail address to [catholic.charities@rcda.org](mailto:catholic.charities@rcda.org). The money we save can be used to directly support those in need. If you would like to continue to receive a paper newsletter you need to take no action. Thank you!



**Catholic Charities Disabilities Services Staff, Board Members, and friends pose with their Paint & Sip paintings. It was a fundraiser for their Families in Need fund for emergency assistance and basic needs.**