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CATHOLIC CHARITIES Connections

SUPPLEMENT TO ARKANSAS CATHOLIC • CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF ARKANSAS • 2415 N. TYLER ST. • LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72207 • NOVEMBER 22, 2014

AT A GLANCE Catholic Charities of Arkansas serves

- **Adoption Services:** Birth parent services, adoptive family services and search and reunion
- **Immigration in Northwest Arkansas:** Family-based legal assistance, domestic violence and crime victims services, refugee resettlement, employer trainings, education and advocacy, legal assistance with applications for DACA
- **Immigration in Little Rock:** Family-based legal assistance, domestic violence and crime victims services, supporting survivors, legal assistance for foreign national priests, legal assistance with applications for DACA, education and advocacy
- **Parish social ministries:** Parish-based ministry development, disaster recovery parish-based teams, emergency assistance
- **Social Action:** Prison ministry, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, legislative advocacy, alcohol and drug, Catholic Charities Summer Institute
- **Westside Free Medical Clinic:** Medical and dermatology clinics for noninsured adults, outreach and community education
- **Development:** Grants management, Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic, Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl and St. Nicholas Partners

FOR MORE INFORMATION
 Catholic Charities of Arkansas
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 Little Rock, AR 72207
 (501) 664-0340
 www.dolr.org

CATHOLIC CHARITIES' MISSION STATEMENT
 The mission of Catholic Charities of Arkansas of the Diocese of Little Rock is rooted in the challenge of the Gospel: To serve persons who are poor or marginalized; to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable; and to actively promote charity, justice, and the sanctity of life in the Church and the community.

Disaster relief reaching 125 families

More families getting financial assistance to rebuild, start over

Six months after a tornado tore through central Arkansas, damaging parts of Mayflower and Vilonia and western Pulaski County, Catholic Charities of Arkansas has been offering many services through its Disaster Case Management Office.

In the days after the April 27 storm, Catholic Charities set up operations in office space provided by the St. Joseph Church in Conway. Initially, CCA participated with other groups in multi-day events in the affected communities. Its role was to meet as many of the survivors as possible and enroll them as clients for long-term case management. CCA began assisting clients by helping them meet their initial needs of food, medical care, temporary housing, clothing and emotional support.

Catholic Charities needed assistance in setting up and running its operation. This was provided through Catholic Charities USA, which coordinated temporary support from Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri, the Florida Catholic Conference and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of



Client Neal Henry gives information during client intake with Susie Rhoads-Mickels at the Multi-Agency Response Center (MARC) in Vilonia May 3. Experienced case managers came from three other states to start the recovery process.

Oklahoma City. Experienced case managers came for up to three weeks to help with case intake, provision of immediate needs, and to provide guidance as CCA established a permanent case management office.

Contributions of money, in-kind items, and volunteer labor streamed in during these early days. From outside of the state, the diocese received thousands of dollars from individuals, families and organizations. From within the state, through the diocesan

collection and from direct contributions from parishes and individuals, a fund of more than \$350,000 was collected to provide relief and administer the operations. With support from grants from Catholic Charities USA and the Sisters of Charity, an administrative fund was established to provide for the operations of Disaster Case Management Office.

MAY AND JUNE

In May and June, cases were processed. The caseload grew

from 60 in May to 90 by the end of June.

During June, the office was able to hire two case managers, Clara Avila and Cynthia Shuffield. In late June, Tracy Eichenberger was hired as the case management coordinator. All three continued work out of the office space made available by St. Joseph Parish.

The case managers worked to solve immediate needs of clients but also began developing long-

See Recovery page 10

Birth and adoptive families bless, celebrate together

BY ANTJE HARRIS
 CATHOLIC ADOPTION SERVICES

November is National Adoption Month. An official presidential proclamation was first declared in 1995 to draw attention to the need for more adoptive families to provide permanent homes for children.

We are grateful for families at Thanksgiving, and we want to add awareness that there are so many young people, including sibling groups and special needs children, who are waiting for their forever family. We hope you will consider adoption especially through the Arkansas Department of Human Services as a way to grow your family and to provide security and love to a deserving child. Catholic Adoption Services is also looking for a few fine families open to a plan for adoption.



GaborfromHungary / morguefile.com

Our agency arranges a celebration for our newly formed families with a blessing service soon after a child is adopted. We have such an

event scheduled this week at our office for one of our recent placements. Birth and adoptive families come together to celebrate what

a blessing the child is to everyone involved. Parents, grandparents, friends and significant others are invited to attend. An adopted child is raised knowing that they are loved by both families.

The majority of our clients choose to gather in this way to recognize that we are connected with the love we share for the child and for each other. This is not a requirement but has become a special tradition over the past 17 years as adoption has become more open. We have a delicious meal consisting of favorite comfort foods that always seem to include chocolate. We begin with prayer, which unites us in God's love and in a spirit of gratitude. We bless the food, which is an integral part of the work that we do in sharing a meal together. We

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Recovery

Continued from page 9

term plans in each case to allow each family to resiliently recover. The case managers exercised creativity in finding sources of financial assistance for clients. Funds from many organizations were made available, particularly the Salvation Army and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

June also saw the initial formation of community groups designed to respond directly to assist clients. In Mayflower, Catholic Charities participated in the formation of a long-term recovery group called the Interfaith and Partners Disaster Recovery Alliance. In Vilonia, the Vilonia Disaster Recovery Alliance was reactivated. VDRA had been established after Vilonia's 2011 tornado.

Lastly, the office participated in the formation of a county-wide entity that has become known as the Faulkner County Long-Term Recovery Board. From the perspective of case management, the activities of each group are coordinated through a joint long-term case management committee, organized by Tracy Eichenberger and Janice Mann of the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Through this coordination, the joint long-term case management committee established uniform procedures and forms for processing cases.

The committee goals are to ensure that no person or family needing assistance is neglected and that delivery of services is coordinated among the organizations so that no services are duplicated.

JULY

Throughout July, the case managers continued to address the immediate needs of families, the long-term recovery groups continued to organize, and outside assistance arrived to provide training.

Gabe Tischler of the Florida Catholic Conference traveled to Conway in early July to provide a nuts-and-bolts presentation to case managers. Late in the month, two more formal trainings were presented.

Church World Service provided a one-day course on disas-

ter recovery: assessment, case management, construction, volunteer management and emotional and spiritual support. This was followed by a two-day, intensive course on disaster case management, presented by UMCOR. Catholic Charities participated in each of these training sessions.

During July, the Disaster Case Management Office at St. Joseph distributed approximately \$40,000 in assistance to clients, meeting immediate and long-term needs. Relief provided included permanent housing, furnishings, appliances, decking and ramps for mobile homes, roof repairs and interior repairs. Case managers facilitated the delivery of relief through office and home visits and conducted the price comparison shopping required for both items purchased and for construction supplies.

AUGUST

During August, cases under management increased to more than 90. Again, approximately \$40,000 in assistance to clients was provided. As with July, the fund sources for the assistance were, for the most part, from outside agencies as solicited by case managers.

Coordination with the long-term recovery groups continued and those groups began to become more effective as they became organized.

SEPTEMBER

During September, an organization called World Renew came to Arkansas and conducted a two-week survey of the neighborhoods

The first six months after the tornado have been productive and have cared largely for immediate needs. It is anticipated that the next six months will see significant rebuilding efforts and the return of more and more survivors to normalcy.

impacted by the path of the storm. The goal of World Renew's effort was to identify all possible clients not already enrolled in the case management system.

This effort, by the end of the month, generated an increase of cases, to more than 100 for the Disaster Case Management Office. During September, approximately \$40,000 in assistance was provided to clients to meet immediate and long-term needs.

One of the significant immedi-

for each other. We know that we are all part of God's plan for the joining of two special families, and we appreciate as well our agency's role in this endeavor.

We read from Ecclesiastes 3 that for everything there is a season — a time to weep and also a time essentially to rejoice. We acknowledge the pain for birth families of an unplanned pregnancy and the



Arkansas Catholic file

Tracy Eichenberger, disaster preparedness and response coordinator for Catholic Charities of Arkansas, said, "We are the long-term case managers. Our goal is to follow through with that client until they reach their new normal."

ate needs continued to be rental assistance. Before the tornado, a family renting property typically found an affordable rental. After the tornado, the rental market became tight, and the costs of rentals rose.

Families needing rentals were forced to rent properties that consumed a significantly higher portion of the family budget, thus requiring ongoing assistance until reasonably priced, permanent accommodations could be located or built.

By the end of September, the Disaster Case Management Office had assisted 177 households, comprised of 485 individuals. Approximately 10 percent of those assisted were immigrant families.

OCTOBER

The case management routine continued through October. By the end of the month, the Disaster Case Management Office caseload had risen to more than 125 cases.

Working principally through the IFPA, the office managed cases from Pulaski County, Mayflower, Vilonia, unincorporated areas of Faulkner and White counties. The VDRA managed an addi-

losses associated with infertility for adoptive parents. We also celebrate the peace that can come from making a loving decision for the best interests of a child and the joyful gratitude the new parents have for their baby.

We share our prayers, hopes and dreams for the child, the birth family, the new parents and for the work of the agency. We pray for

tional caseload of more than 60 cases. As in previous months, approximately \$40,000 in assistance was provided to clients through the Disaster Case Management Office.

The construction committees of the long-term recovery groups began rebuilding activities in conjunction with volunteer reconstruction groups, such as the Baptist Home Builders and the Nomads.

In October, the IFPA was able to have one house rebuilt, while VDRA built three.

NOVEMBER

During the first week of November, the Joint Unmet Needs Committee convened for the first time to consider cases for rebuilding and repairing homes involving significant expenditures.

Catholic Charities sits on the Unmet Needs Committee as both a funder and case managers presenting cases for clients needing the significant donations to rebuild.

Other participants on the committee include Samaritan's Purse, Salvation Army, World Relief, United Way, Habitat for Humanity, UMCOR and other faith-based groups. Samaritan's Purse and World Relief alone have committed to build as many as two dozen homes, starting in January 2015.

healing for the courageous birth parents and their families. All involved can express their gratitude and love for each other. We have lots of hugs and take many photos before we have more of the tasty food.

We also promise to stay in touch through pictures, texts, letters and sometimes contact in person as well. We conclude with a read-

PROGRESS

Catholic Charities of Arkansas has strictly managed the diocesan funds made available for disaster relief. In addition to expenditures for direct relief and disaster operations, the office provided funding to organizations involved.

Within days after the tornado, Catholic Charities provided emergency funding to St. Joseph Church in Conway and Immaculate Heart of Mary in North Little Rock to ensure these parishes had assets ready to assist parishioners and others in their communities. Catholic Charities also provided seed money to each of the local community long-term recovery groups, the IFPA and VDRA, to allow them to get their operations underway.

Great progress has been made to date. Effective and well-coordinated recovery organizations have been built with the assistance of Tracy Eichenberger. Dedicated relief efforts for survivors have been provided, thanks to case managers Cynthia Shuffield and Clara Avila.

The first six months after the tornado have been productive and have cared largely for immediate needs. It is anticipated that the next six months will see significant rebuilding efforts and the return of more and more survivors to normalcy.

ing from Corinthians Chapter 13 that faith, hope and love abide but greatest of these is love.

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary as a licensed adoption agency supported by the Diocese of Little Rock, we have been privileged to share in so much love.

Antje Harris is the director of Catholic Adoption Services.

Adoption

Continued from page 9

even call it "food therapy."

Birth and adoptive families tell their stories of how they found our agency and made the choice of adoption and ultimately the decision that they were the right match

DACA a success for young immigrants

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals process, targeting young immigrants living illegally in the United States, has been a great success, Maricella Garcia, Catholic Immigration Services Little Rock director, said.

Catholic Immigration Services Little Rock provides low-cost immigration legal services and support to families and individuals who are eligible for immigration benefits, but who otherwise are unable to afford private representation because of the high cost. Its mission is to aid people in clarifying their legal status in the United States, and thereby to alleviate the problems of family separation, economic victimization and social isolation.

One particular process, often called DACA, helps qualified young people to be able to work, go to college and give back to their communities. This initiative was announced by President Barack Obama on June 15, 2012, and began to be implemented only two months later.

"We are now two years into the program and many of those who first applied in 2012 are now eligible to reapply to extend their DACA," Garcia said.

DACA is intended to allow some young people to remain in the United States provided that they meet certain criteria. In order to qualify for the DACA program, applicants must be between 15 and 30 years old, be in school, graduated from high school or obtained a GED, came to the United States prior to age 16, have been continuously residing in the United States since at least June 15, 2007, and must pass a criminal background check.

Garcia said the program has been an unqualified success in



Sandra Carmona Garcia (center), with her parents, grew up in Arkansas and was approved for DACA in 2012. She is now attending the University of Arkansas at Little Rock thanks to a LULAC scholarship.

Arkansas. In many states only a relatively small percentage of the eligible population has applied.

However, in Arkansas, there were an estimated 5,000 people potentially eligible to apply under the DACA program. According to the most recent statistics from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, as of June 2014 they have accepted 4,580 applications from Arkansas, roughly 92 percent of the eligible population. Of those applications, 3,878 cases have already been approved, which is 78 percent of the eligible population.

Many of Catholic Immigration Services clients have graduated from high school and have been able to go to college. Many students are studying for vari-

ous fields in schools throughout Arkansas. One client received a scholarship to Harvard where he is now studying chemistry. He hopes to become a cardiologist one day.

Sandra Carmona Garcia is a prime example of the success of DACA. Garcia came to the U.S. as a young girl and has grown up as an Arkansan. She applied for DACA in 2012 and was approved. Sandra has more than 50 cousins and many of them dropped out after elementary or middle school, but she always knew she wanted more. She became the first person in her family to attend college when she was accepted to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock where she is now a sophomore.

This October, at the League of United Latin American Citizens scholarship banquet she won both a scholarship from LULAC and was presented with the Clinton Presidential Center jacket as the winner of the first Clinton Foundation Scholarship Award.

DACA clients are grateful for the opportunity to have the opportunity to achieve their dreams, Maricella Garcia said.

"Having DACA has allowed me the opportunity of a better education," Sandra said. "It has given me the opportunity to work so that I can invest in a better future for myself and those around me. Most importantly, it has taken me out of the shadows because it has allowed me to do simple but important things like get a driver's license and an identification card that shows I am actually someone in this country. I no longer have to live in fear of being deported to a country that I do not know."

Director Garcia said it's important to remember that DACA does not confer lawful status upon an individual or provide a path toward citizenship. Instead, it simply allows certain qualified individuals who meet strict standards to receive a work permit and remain in the U.S. for as long as the program is in effect.

If DACA were to go away, these young people would find themselves once again in the shadows, director Garcia said.

"Immigration reform is a contentious and controversial issue these days, but true reform is needed to repair what is an irreparably broken immigration system," she said. "As DACA shows, if given the opportunity, those people who are stuck in the shadows would willingly come forward and enhance our communities."

St. Dymphna Society offers new mental health ministry

Mike Rose, a member of Immaculate Conception Church in North Little Rock, introduced Catholic Charities last year to a book called "Welcomed and Valued — Building Faith Communities of Support and Hope with People with Mental Illness and Their Families."

Based on personal experience Rose believed there was a need for parishes to become more educated on the issue of mental and emotional illness. He also felt, as the book's title suggests, that parishes needed to find ways to be more welcoming and inclusive of those with mental illness. One year later, Rose's idea for a new ministry has come to fruition.

The first organizational meeting of the St. Dymphna Society was held in October at St. John Center in Little Rock. Named after St. Dymphna, patron of those afflicted with mental and emotional illness, it is a support group for those struggling with these illnesses and their loved ones.

One element of the St. Dymphna Society is addressing the spiritual needs of the members. For those who feel cut off from their Catholic faith, those who fear stigmatization, or those who have lost all connection with their spiritual life, the St. Dymphna Society provides a safe place to share thoughts and feelings.

Fourteen people attended the first meeting in Little Rock. The meeting began with the celebration of Mass. The next meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 25 at the St. John Center.

St. Dymphna Society support groups are not limited to the Little Rock area. Groups may grow organically in any parish at any time. Blessed Sacrament Church in Jonesboro is already exploring starting a group.

The St. Dymphna Society meetings are one component of an overall mental health ministry being developed by Catholic Charities. The office also plans to provide education and resources to pastors to help them meet the needs of parishioners with mental and emotional illness.

Feedback received so far from priests and parishioners has been positive, with many stating that a mental health ministry is greatly needed.

"Welcomed and Valued" is available as a PDF file through the National Catholic Partnership on Disability and is available in English and Spanish.

For more information, contact Rebecca Cargile of Catholic Charities by calling (501) 664-0340 or via e-mail to rcargile@dolr.org.

St. Nick's partners help poor here at home

Inserted into this issue of *Arkansas Catholic* is a card and envelope for the 2014 St. Nicholas Partners appeal.

WHAT IS ST. NICHOLAS PARTNERS?

St. Nicholas Partners is an annual appeal to raise money for Catholic Charities' departments and programs. These include:

- Adoption Services
- Immigration Services
- Prison Ministry
- Westside Free Medical Clinic
- Refugee Resettlement
- Emergency Assistance
- Services to Victims of Domestic Violence
- Disaster Response

All provide services to the most poor and vulnerable among us, and all are supported by St. Nicholas Partners.

HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM OTHER CATHOLIC CHARITIES FUNDRAISERS?

It's different in two ways. First, it makes it easier for donors ("partners") to designate which Catholic Charities program they want their contribution to support. Second, because the appeal occurs right before Christmas, a donation on behalf of a friend or family member makes a perfect gift. Just indicate who the gift is for on the remittance envelope or an attached note, and we will send them an acknowledgment of your gift.

WHAT MAKES ST. NICHOLAS PARTNERS SPECIAL?

Each year, a new card depicting St. Nicholas is specially designed for us. These beautiful cards are Catholic Charities' Christmas greeting to you, and an invitation



to become a partner by supporting the ministry of your choice.

ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD KNOW?

The number of people living in poverty in 2012 (46.5 million) is the largest number seen in the 54 years for which poverty estimates

have been published, according to U.S. Census Bureau. Many who receive assistance from Catholic Charities find the holiday season particularly painful.

Donations can be mailed to Catholic Charities of Arkansas, P.O. Box 7239, Little Rock, AR 72217-7239.

BRIEFS

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

On Aug. 11, Brenda Schumacher joined Catholic Charities of Arkansas as the office administrator. With a background in education and business,



Schumacher brings broad experience to the position and has already proven herself managing this year's Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Schumacher Golf Classic.

A parishioner of St. Theresa Church in Little Rock, she is a member of the parish Ladies' Altar Society and volunteers in the reading program at a local elementary school. As the office administrator, she is responsible for all of the organizational logistics and administration, keeping the office running smoothly so offices can serve their clients.

SOCIAL WORK INTERN

With the start of the fall semester, Jessica Rivera joined Catholic Charities of Arkansas as an intern through an arrangement with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Social Work.

A senior in the School of Social Work, she works three afternoons a week performing various duties, including case work in emergency assistance, helping with

adoptions, assisting at the Westside Free Medical Clinic and case management with the Disaster Case Management Office.

PREPARATION TRAINING

Catholic Charities of Arkansas is participating in a parish disaster preparation project with the assistance of Mark Chan of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. The project should last through 2015.

Chan is employed under a grant from the Margaret Cargill Foundation, through Catholic Charities USA and is charged with helping all of the parishes in Oklahoma and Arkansas become resilient after disasters.

In October, Chan, CCA director Patrick Gallaher and diocesan disaster relief coordinator Tracy Eichenberger presented initial sessions on individual disaster preparation. Presentations were given at St. Andrew Church in Marianna, St. Mary Church in Helena, St. Mary of the Lake Church in Horseshoe Lake and St. Francis of Assisi Church in Forrest City. Arrangements for future presentations have been made for January at St. Agnes Church in Mena and All Saints Church in Mount Ida.

SEMINARIANS DELIVER HELP

On Sept. 19, seminarians from the House of Formation volunteered to spend the day helping



Seminarian Omar Galvan helps Catholic Charities during the move of a client.

a woman with whom Catholic Charities had been working move into her new home.

A house fire at her previous residence required her to move. Special circumstances in the woman's life made obtaining affordable housing difficult, and the process was long. During this period, a relationship developed between her and Catholic Charities.

Ultimately, with financial support from the people of the diocese and two community members, CCA able to help the client move



Chris Williams and Flor Lopez of WFSMC attended a medical interpreters conference in Little Rock.

to safe, affordable housing and even provide her with new furniture.

CCHD COLLECTION

On the weekend before Thanksgiving Nov. 22-23, the Diocese of Little Rock will have a second collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

The collection is especially important for Catholic Charities of Arkansas because a portion of the collection is used to run a statewide grant program. The purpose

of the grant program is to enable small, locally run organizations to help directly in their communities.

During the past year, funds from the collection has been used to assist community food pantries in Booneville, Little Rock and Yellville, crisis pregnancy centers in Fort Smith and Little Rock, immigrant resource centers in El Dorado and Little Rock and a men's shelter in Hot Springs.

MEDICAL INTERPRETERS

Little Rock hosted the annual International Medical Interpreters Association conference in October. The three-day conference focused on quality interpreting services, including American sign language, to ensure proper care and treatment of all people for multiple venues — nonprofit agencies, hospitals or other health care settings — and also the for-profit language service providers who work with medical interpreters.

Additionally, one of the major conference objectives was to publicize that non-English-speaking patients have the right to an interpreter, preferably certified, at no cost to the patient.

Chris Williams, a Westside Free Medical Clinic volunteer and Arkansas chapter chairman, and Flor Lopez, program assistant for Westside Free Medical Clinic, attended.

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Contact: E.D. Muguluma
 501.414.0779 • muguluma6@aol.com

Westside Free Medical Clinic
 a ministry of Catholic Charities of Arkansas

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Can you share some time in your office or at our clinic?
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Arkansas Catholic Associate Editor

Arkansas Catholic seeks an associate editor to contribute stories and photos to the award-winning diocesan weekly newspaper, website and other publications.

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- ❖ Excellent reporting, writing and photography skills and experience filing stories on deadline
- ❖ A bachelor's degree in journalism/communications or equivalent experience
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Send cover letter, resumé and published clips to Malea Hargett, Editor, *Arkansas Catholic*, P.O. Box 7417, Little Rock, AR 72217 or mhargett@dolr.org. For more information or a complete job description, call (501) 664-0125.