

Three art contest winners recognized 11
 Local anti-poverty grants range from \$500 to \$2,500 11

CATHOLIC CHARITIES Connections

SUPPLEMENT TO ARKANSAS CATHOLIC • CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF ARKANSAS • 2415 N. TYLER ST. • LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72207 • NOVEMBER 26, 2016

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 with applications for DACA, education and advocacy
- **Parish social ministries:** Parish-based ministry development, disaster recovery parish-based teams, family 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
 2415 N. Tyler St.
 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.

CIS unites families, protects victims

Immigration services ministry helps the most vulnerable

By Maricella Garcia

Catholic Immigration Services - Little Rock provides low-cost immigration counseling and support to those who are eligible for immigration benefits. The mission of Catholic Immigration Services is to help people clarify their legal status in the United States and to alleviate the related problems of family separation, economic victimization and social isolation.

The office's work is based on three central areas:

- helping reunite families under amazing circumstances
- helping protect and stabilize the most vulnerable, including victims of severe crimes and human trafficking
- promoting community integration by helping qualified permanent residents apply to become U.S. citizens.

Although it can sometimes be difficult work, we see the overall success of the office through the individual clients who have been able to achieve their goals with our assistance.

In the past year, through screenings, consultations and workshops, CISLR reached more than 7,000 individuals in Arkansas advising



CNS / Eugene Garcia, EPA

A mother and daughter in Los Angeles react after the U.S. Supreme Court issued a split ruling June 23 blocking President Barack Obama's executive actions to temporarily stop deportations.

them of potential immigration remedies for their particular situation. Through partnership with various community groups and parishes, we conducted 21 community presentations. With only one attorney and one Board of Immigration Appeals-accredited representative full-time, we conducted 407 immigration legal consultations and

opened 244 new cases. Most importantly, we provided services to 103 at-risk and vulnerable immigrants.

Over the past year, our office has seen a 30 percent annual increase in our case load, including 198 family-based cases. Helping families navigate the complex process of reuniting with their family members is fundamental to our work.

Each of these stories is unique, but in the case of one family we assisted this year, we faced steep odds and remarkable obstacles. A U.S. citizen, who is a mother, came to our office for the first time in 2003, seeking to apply to bring her daughter, her son-in-law and their

See **SERVICES** page 10

After the election, where do we go from here?

The late comedian George Carlin had a line. He said, "I used to be an Irish-Catholic, now I'm an American." Although a cultural Irish-Catholic, his comedy had a secular evolution that appealed to the larger society of his day. He found he had to become an American to be successful.

Many of my immigrant friends are concerned with a Trump administration. They take literally his bluster that he will expel all the undocumented. I read in the press the comments of those facing uncertainty. I get a sense

that these concerned immigrants see the challenges facing them in stark racial terms — the Blond America versus the Brown Immigrants. It is not that simple, nor is it a broad truth.



From the Director
 Patrick Gallaher

All Republicans do not hate all immigrants. All Democrats do not love all immigrants. Political parties, when they play identity politics, do not universally protect their constituent elements for all time. They protect each individual segment of their coalition only so long as it is useful to their cause. Just ask a coal miner how well the Democrats

protected the United Mine Workers as the current administration eliminated 83,000 mining jobs despite the popular notion that the Democrats are the party of unions.

At one time, the Democratic Party was believed to be the party of the Catholic Church, but of late, it is only so far as we Catholics reject the centrality of our belief in the dignity and sanctity of the human person and the sanctity of matrimony between one man and one woman. As the writer Kurt Vonnegut said, "So it goes."

In this presidential election, Hispanic citizens comprised a larger percentage of the electorate than ever. But they did not vote as a monolithic block. More than one-third of Hispanic voters voted for Donald Trump. They voted

as Americans. Nearly half of self-professed Catholic voters voted for Hillary Clinton. Disregarding her support for numerous inherent evils, they voted as Americans.

Donald Trump will not be able to deport 11 million undocumented residents. Aside from the impracticality of mass deportation, immigrants are an integral part of our national economy. Trump was elected, in part, based on his belief that government should support economic growth. Mass deportation will lead to significant economic contraction. Arizona's experiment with anti-immigrant legislation has starkly proven this outcome.

One should filter the spin

See **NEXT** page 10

BRIEFS

Interns

Catholic Charities of Arkansas welcomed two interns recently. Celina Reyes-Vasquez will be an intern for the 2016-17 school year. She is a senior at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, pursuing her bachelor's degree in social work. Originally from Oaxaca, Mexico, she came to the U.S. when she was 4. She settled in Little Rock 11 years ago.

Reyes-Vasquez helps in almost every department, from screening calls in the family assistance ministry, to helping a client find an apartment to rent and meeting with families who have become parents through Adoption Services.

Rachel Musick, a graduate intern in social work, was an intern for Adoption Services in August. She will graduate in December. Musick grew up in New Orleans until 2006 when she and her family moved to Memphis after Hurricane Katrina. After earning her bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Tennessee, she began her master's degree in social work with the University of Tennessee's Distance Learning Program.

Musick and her husband Addison moved to Little Rock recently and attend Christ the King Church. She worked in various areas of the adoptions program during her internship.

"Of course I love being with the babies, but it's really special to see the birthparents and adoptive



Celina Reyes-Vasquez (left) and Rachel Musick are interns helping the work of Catholic Charities while getting practical experience to further their education in social work.

parents interact," she said. "It is truly beautiful to be a part of two families coming together in the love of a child."

Healthy Arkansas

Westside Free Medical Clinic recently participated in the Mexican Consulate's Binational Week. Each year the Arkansas Health

Department and area health organizations participate in a health event for the Hispanic community. Oct. 15 marked the end of the health week for the community. Flor Lopez, program assistant in the clinic, represented the diocese. She was a medical interpreter for Dr. Tom Cannon, who performed more than 75 glau-

coma exams. Additionally, Lopez was responsible for registering 15 men for the PSA blood test and prostate exams.

New life

On Sept. 24, Catholic Charities office administrator Bridget Lewis gave birth to a son, William "Liam" Lewis. This is the second child for Lewis and her husband Nathan. They are members of the Cathedral of St. Andrew.



William "Liam" Lewis was born Sept. 24.

Services

Continued from page 9

children to the U.S. as legal permanent residents. After 11 years, it was finally time to begin the consular process. As we worked to bring her family members to the U.S., it seemed like everything would move along fine until one day we received a call that the mother was very ill and was in the Intensive Care Unit. It seemed that everything we had done to help her reunite with her family would fall apart. Many months later, the mother recovered, was released from the hospital and was able to continue the process. Her family members finally arrived to the U.S. 13 years after we first started.

We have also had an 80 percent increase for people seeking to naturalize. One applicant who was able to naturalize with assistance from our office has been a client from the first moment her U.S. citizen husband petitioned for her to become a resident. When she had her naturalization ceremony, all of their family and friends came to witness her success. Afterward, she and her husband sent a letter of appreciation to the office "for the help, support and encouragement" our office provided

throughout the entire process.

We have also seen a 34-percent increase in cases for victims of crimes, including domestic violence, sexual assault, rape

and human trafficking. These are some of the most difficult challenges we face in representing clients who have undergone the worst trauma imaginable and are

still able to move on and see the bright side of life. One client was referred to our office by local law enforcement in 2012 because she was a victim of human traffick-

ing. We helped her to apply for a T visa as a victim of trafficking.

However, her ordeals were not over. She later found out she had breast cancer and eventually had to have two surgeries and continues to receive treatment today. However, at a recent office visit she reminded us of why we work so hard with these vulnerable populations. She said, "It is only due to the blessing of God that I am alive today, and I don't know what I would have done without the help that Catholic Charities has given me through all these years."

Success stories like these affirm how important our work is. Even though we have seen an increase in need over the past years, we continue to have a 100 percent approval rate in all case types throughout the year. While we anticipate that the need for our services will continue to grow, we are working to meet that extra need and in 2016 we added two new BIA-accredited representatives to help take on that case load.

We intend to continue our work and expand services to even more people throughout the state as we follow the command to "welcome the stranger."

Maricella Garcia is the director of Catholic Immigration Services - Little Rock.



CNS / Jim West

Two hands reach out from the U.S. side of the border fence to shake the hand of a person on the Mexican side Oct. 8 during immigration rallies in Nogales, Ariz., and in Nogales in the Mexican state of Sonora. Activists held protests on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border against what they say is an increasing militarization of the border.

Next

Continued from page 9

projected by the popular media — they got this election wrong and they do not understand our nation. One should not be persuaded by the rioters disrupting the peace in our larger, politically liberal cities. We should stand together in solidarity for justice, and work for the common good of all. We must work in our communities and in our state to emphasize the principle of subsidiarity; all politics is indeed local. We must not slavishly follow the centralized planning of some entrenched national elite, an elite that has assumed privilege to which they are not entitled. We must participate in the political process.

Participation is a virtue. It brings graces. Participation should be peaceful, respectful and constructive. The default in politics today is to use the language of war and violence. Politicians, even soft, pudgy, old politicians say, "I'll fight for you." They won't. They can't. Save the language of violence for real war. Participate in local government, at the parish level or higher. But do so respecting others. Do not refer to your opponents as "enemies." They are your fellow citizens. Throughout the Civil War, Confederate General Robert E. Lee is never recorded as calling his Union adversaries "enemies." He called them, "those people." Recognize the humanity in adversaries. Strive to see the face of Jesus in all.