

Voices of Hope

SPRING 2021



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

A year ago we closed our offices and staff sheltered in place at home following the county public health order in response to the pandemic.

A year later so much has changed. This has been a year of loss. Families of clients, volunteers, donors and staff have experienced the suffering of illness and deaths without the normal celebrations of life. We worried for the wellbeing of staff and the wellbeing of the people we serve – the loss of jobs and businesses, mental health challenges, students' learning loss, the isolation of seniors, increased hunger, anxiety over threatened evictions and the illnesses families have faced.



Meanwhile our approach to helping the community has had to change. This has been a year of survival and year of resilience. While long standing programs like Adult Day Care and several Behavioral Health contracts have gone away, new programs like Food Distribution, Rental Assistance, Parish Engagement and Bridge to Recovery have grown exponentially. We ended up helping at least ten times the number of families than we do in a "normal" year. Staff from different departments and divisions learned to work together in new ways. We have learned to "pivot" to where the need is the greatest at a given period of time, helping with food distribution, financial assistance to immigrants, rental assistance, and developing a coordinated safety net and employment network. We have learned the hybrid model of working both in person and remotely. We have demonstrated a strong culture of being client-centric and doing whatever it takes to help each other succeed. We have demonstrated that we can quickly adapt and learn new methods to help the community. We demonstrated our collaborative approach as a trusted community partner. Rather than hiding in fear of the unknown, we stepped forward into the fray, being present to individuals and families who had no one else to turn to. Donors responded with amazing generosity and flexibility. And we did all this during a global disaster.

While the pandemic still takes its toll, a feeling of hope has begun to blossom. More staff and clients have been able to get vaccinated. New federal resources are beginning to flow into our community. But we can't become complacent. There is much more to do.

We need to keep up our advocacy for the diverse communities most impacted by the pandemic and economic crisis. We still need to raise unrestricted donations that allow us the flexibility to respond quickly where most needed. We need to expand our community outreach and awareness to encourage fearful community members to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their loved ones. We need to keep practicing wearing masks, washing hands and social distancing. We need to double down on our culture as a flexible learning organization, so that we can be better prepared for the next disaster. **And most importantly, we need to take care of ourselves, to trust in our God, to have hope and to remember that we are loved.**

I am so grateful for our generous donors and volunteers, for our dedicated board and resilient staff with a "whatever it takes" spirit.

All the best,



Greg

P.S. Our clients continue to need our help as they recover from the pandemic and economic disaster. Please continue to be generous in supporting them through Catholic Charities. Your investment makes a tremendous difference!

Please see the back cover to learn more on the impact of our pandemic relief efforts over the last year.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Employment Network quadruples job placements, empowering individuals with barriers to employment

Catholic Charities' Employment Network has quadrupled their job placements over the last year – an especially impressive accomplishment during the ongoing pandemic and its related economic downturn.

The program, part of the agency's network of services for more than 25 years, is known as a leader in the community for supporting individuals with significant barriers to finding jobs. Over the years, the program has remained flexible in providing employment and economic support services to meet the changing needs of our community's most vulnerable populations. Aligning with Catholic Charities' overall mission of alleviating, reducing and preventing poverty, the Employment Network is a key performer in lifting at-risk groups out of poverty.

"Employment services are intrinsically Catholic Charities, embodying our mission to support individuals and families on their journeys to self-sufficiency," said Eila Latif, the Deputy Director of Economic Development Services who joined the staff of Catholic Charities in 1993. "The successes of our clients and our team proves that there is a niche for anyone who desires employment if there are systems in place to support these job seekers with challenges. Our team is constantly inspired by the resilience and high levels of motivation we see in our daily interactions."

The program specifically serves individuals referred by the mental health system and formerly incarcerated adults. Approximately 300 individuals are served annually in this "high-touch" program that builds a relationship with clients for their success and tailors services to

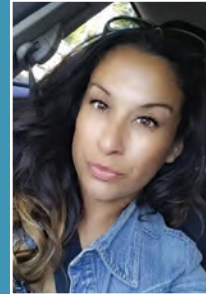
each individual's unique situation. Because of this comprehensive and individualized approach, the program has a higher job retention rate than other similar programs.

Fourteen staff members – two of whom are graduates of the program – help clients with resume writing, job applications processes, practice interviewing, job placement, job retention, job coaching and follow-along support for 90 days after placement. Graduates of the program are working in every industry throughout Santa Clara County: hospitality, health care, education, hi-tech, food services, retail, construction and legal.

Beyond the core services, the program is committed to practices that encourage an inclusive and diverse community, while advocating on behalf of employment seekers and working to reduce stigma in the workplace. Additionally, the Employment Network has been continuously accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) since 1993, with the agency receiving the highest level of recognition and the accreditation process expanding to other Catholic Charities programs.

"What makes our work rewarding is that it is about more than just finding jobs for people," Eila said, describing the program as an investment in individuals who are highly motivated to find employment and who then ultimately give back through paying taxes and contributing to the local economy.

"We are creating a foundation to help talented individuals recover their sense of self-worth and find purpose. And that strengthens families and has a positive impact on our entire community." ■



"I'd lost everything after drug offenses and was sleeping on my grandmother's floor. I felt like giving up. Then I found Catholic Charities and the hope to turn my life around. Even though I got turned down for the first few jobs, I stayed positive and found work in retail that I love. I've already been promoted since I started in October. I'm so hopeful and grateful now. I feel like a different person!"

~ Rachel,
former Employment Network client



"After serving a 23-year sentence, I needed help getting started and Catholic Charities was such a blessing. The staff really listened to me and took the time to learn about my skill set and what I wanted to do. They helped me find employment working in manufacturing. Today, one year after getting released from prison, I'm proud to say I have a job, a car, a bank account and just moved into an apartment. With their help, I've come full circle."

~ William,
former Employment Network client

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Working with Parishes during the Pandemic: We are the Light of Hope

By Father Jon Pedigo, Director for Advocacy and Community Engagement

The pandemic has affected everyone we know. Many of us had family and friends fall sick or lost someone close to us. We also face food and housing insecurity, high levels of anxiety and stress, unemployment and income loss, and depression from social isolation. Catholic Charities works not only to bring services to parishes, but also to involve parishes and their parishioners in a collective effort with Catholic Charities and other agencies to address these challenges.

Food Distribution & Volunteer Support

Each week, we provide the distribution infrastructure for meals and groceries to upwards of 12,000 people through a cooperative effort between Second Harvest, Martha's Kitchen, Loaves and Fishes. Catholic Charities recruited hundreds of volunteers since the beginning of the pandemic to serve in multiple roles in the food distribution effort: delivery drivers for the homebound, volunteers at the food distribution sites, "accompaniment volunteers" who walk beside clients who need extra support, and on-site logistical support.

Lynda DeManti, our Parish Volunteer Coordinator, coordinates the placement for 950 volunteers of which 700 are from parishes. "I'm so glad to be a part of this effort. I feel connected to my faith when I do this work," says one volunteer.

Housing & Rental Assistance

Aside from food insecurity, the pandemic also affects other areas of people's lives, especially in housing. Our Cares Act Rental Assistance (CARA) administers rent support to extremely low-income families who have not received unemployment benefits. The CARA program works one-to-one with families to support them with rent relief, as well as other expenses associated with severe income loss due to COVID. We processed 365 households, disbursing over \$710,000 in the span of four months to 110 households.

Parish Engagement & Collaboration

Our Parish Engagement efforts – led by our Parish Engagement Program Manager Bridget Balajadia at Our Lady of Refuge and Christ the King – works alongside CARA to support some of the most vulnerable populations in the County, especially those who cannot be helped by existing programs. Working with parish volunteers, Bridget helped clients re-enter housing or get stabilized in their housing situation. Another example of parish volunteer collaboration is the "Everybody Loves a Baby" ministry at Santa Teresa Parish where new mothers receive financial assistance, support and are connected to social services.



Bridget Balajadia (right) and Maria Camacho deliver meals to cars lined up to pick up free groceries at Our Lady of Refuge Parish.

Support for Disabled Adults

Social distancing is a necessary measure to arrest the spread of the virus, especially to the disabled community. Saida Nagpurwala, who leads our Handicapables program (a support program for adults with disabilities) maintains personal contact, conducts wellness checks and takes members on virtual tours of museums and parks with 59 members. "You bring me hope," says one of her grateful members.

Program Expansion Plans

Catholic Charities will expand our reach into more parishes in these next few months. We have expansion plans for St. Mary's in Gilroy and St. Leo the Great and beyond. As Jesus said, "Let your light shine before all, that they may see your good works and give glory God in heaven!" Let us work together and be the Light of Hope to our neighbor. ■

To learn more about volunteer opportunities with our Parish Engagement Program, visit CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/parishengagement

May is National Foster Care Month

Learn more about becoming a foster parent for our Refugee Foster Care program

rfc@catholiccharitiesscc.org
1-866-842-1467
ccsc.org/refugee-foster-care



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CORAL STEM students develop chatbot

Developing a chatbot for COVID-19 resources is the latest hands-on project for middle-school students in the CORAL STEM Extended Learning Program.

“This was a really exciting experience for our students as we applied STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) strategies to solving a current community issue – accessing nearby pandemic resources,” according to Nisha Shanmugam, STEM Program Supervisor for CORAL.

A chatbot is a software application used to conduct an on-line chat conversation, in lieu of providing direct contact with a live human agent, and interacts with people through messaging platforms. The project was made possible through Catholic Charities’ participation in

Facebook’s #EngineerForTheWeek that offers expanded learning throughout the world. Engineering students from Santa Clara University volunteered to guide the students through the design process.



This chatbot prototype, which can be accessed by any Facebook user, seeks to connect community members with vital social services like food distribution sites, rental assistance, and more. Check it out here: facebook.com/COVID-Help-Bot-101620238417227

CORAL (Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning) programs are based in school sites across San Jose and have continued services virtually and in-person, with safety protocols, during the pandemic. The STEM Program is made possible with funds awarded from Google.org. ■

If you would like to find out more about supporting students in our CORAL programs, please contact Jimmy Shoven, jshoven@catholiccharitiesscc.org or 408-325-5259.

Helping students discover their talents



“Working for the Franklin-McKinley School District for 30 years, I know first hand about the phenomenal work of Catholic Charities’ CORAL program. The CORAL STEM program offers hands-on educational opportunities, like

building robotics, that makes learning fun and interactive. And it helps students discover their talents and have a competitive edge in pursuing their future careers.”

Dario Lomeli, whose son, Junior, is a seventh grader who participated in two CORAL STEM sessions last year. In the summer program, students learned how robotics helps NASA design its rovers for space exploration.

A brighter future for ILS client and family

“After waiting more than half my life, through several petitions that were almost approved but somehow never completed, my case was finally approved for Permanent Resident Status. I will be forever grateful to Catholic Charities because this is something I have only dreamed about and now it is a reality. I have been given a new and brighter future.”



Lorraine Canlas (pictured with her husband and son) works as a retail manager and will be applying for citizenship later this year. She received legal help from Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County’s Immigration Legal Services.

SPOTLIGHT

William Sullivan Board

How and why did you get involved with Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County?

As a lifelong Catholic growing up in the Bay area and attending Catholic schools, I have known of Catholic Charities for most of my life. My wife, Linda, and I became reacquainted recently with their work during a tour of the CORAL Afterschool sites. The program was very impressive, especially the preparedness of the staff and the enthusiasm of the students. Subsequently, we made the decision to sponsor several of the CORAL sites. Last year, I was invited to join the Catholic Charities' Board of Directors.

What is your personal mission of philanthropy and giving back?

Our family's main philanthropic focus is children's primary education and encouraging lifelong learning as the key to a successful life. I am inspired by my Catholic faith and strongly believe it is important to give to initiatives that support the betterment of others. In Silicon Valley, there are many people who have been incredibly successful and it is imperative for all of us to give back to the community. We also support the Children's Discovery

Museum of San Jose, the Hanna Boys Center in Sonoma, and Second Harvest of Silicon Valley.

Why would you encourage others to support Catholic Charities?

Catholic Charities is the place to go to when one wants to make a difference in the community. In addition to the solid leadership of the organization, there are a wide range of services to get involved with. And their formula for success is that the programs deliver services not only with *expertise*, but also with *love* and *compassion*.

I look forward to working along with my fellow board members so that together we can make a broader difference. ■



Bill and his wife, Linda, have two daughters and two grandsons. He is the Former President/CEO of Agilent Technologies Inc.

Foundation Partner: Sobrato Family Foundation

The **SOBRATO**
Family Foundation

For more than 30 years, the Sobrato family and Sobrato Family Foundation has supported Catholic Charities' mission through

active participation in the agency's work and leadership, as well as generous gifts to support our life-changing work to disrupt poverty in Silicon Valley. We are grateful for their continued support, including challenge dollars to excite and engage our donors to support our mission.

Make an even greater impact with your gift during this challenge! From now until June 30, every new or increased dollar you give will be matched through a 2 to 1 Challenge Grant from the Sobrato Family Foundation.

Please give online at CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/donate

Corporate Partner: Bank of America

Bank of America



Bank of America's support of Catholic Charities' response to the needs of the community during the pandemic was swift. "We are confident that

Catholic Charities would use our funding in the most impactful ways possible" said Raquel González, Silicon Valley Market President. Their support helped us distribute over 9 million meals and 24,000 single use masks! Thank you, Bank of America! ■



Catholic Charities launches FreeWill: A no-cost tool to simplify estate planning

In January 2021, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County launched FreeWill, a tool to help our supporters and community create a free will or California trust. Donor Michael Fallon was among the first to use the tool and make a generous legacy gift to Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County. David Russo, Senior Director of Planned Giving spoke to Mr. Fallon about his experience.

What made you use Catholic Charities' FreeWill?

Among my immediate goals after retirement in 2017 was to establish my estate plans. Well, four years later, I finally took to the task! My procrastination was due in part to my expected longevity, and my reluctance to commit to working with an attorney and processing all necessary documents. Then arrived in response to a donation, an email from Catholic Charities recommending FreeWill as a convenient, expedient means of accomplishing this important responsibility.

How was your experience using FreeWill?

FreeWill was user friendly, guiding one sequentially through the essential questions. While it may be possible to complete in 20 minutes as advertised, I appreciated that it led me to carefully reflect on the aspects of estate planning allowing for thoughtful response. Being of moderately good fortune and intending to leave a legacy beyond that of my family, it was expedient to include support for worthy causes. The 38 printed pages contained instructions for the full and proper execution of both a Trust and Will.

Why did you choose to make a bequest to Catholic Charities?

I have been associated with Catholic Charities in various ways for over 20 years, and have increased donations relative to my economics, and the increasing needs of our community. The organization has a broad range of critical services; their associates are both personal and professional, and are leaders in micro-macro systemic change. At SJSU, I collaborated often with Catholic Charities on community development projects; with our



Michael Fallon spent his career as an educator in the Bay area, teaching high school and then college courses, while also serving with the St. Vincent de Paul Society. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, he received a teaching credential from San Jose State and a Masters in Education from the University of San Francisco. Fallon retired in 2017 as Director of San Jose State University's Center for Community Learning & Leadership and Lecturer Emeritus in the Sociology department.

students serving notably with the CORAL after school program, housing and immigration services. Offering FreeWill as a reputable means for my creating a Trust and Will made Catholic Charities further deserving.

Even if you expect to live to 90, you owe it to your family and yourself to attend to the business of having on file the documents that determine the outcome of your estate. I encourage heads of households to complete your estate plan by giving the Catholic Charities' FreeWill tool a try. In doing so, reap the positive feeling of generosity that comes with supporting the nonprofits you value over time. ■

Catholic Charities Invitational 37th Annual Golf Tournament

Monday, June 21, 2021

Silver Creek Valley Golf Club

Don't miss this premium golf experience!

Safety protocols will be in place to protect golfers.

Enter the drawing to win a chance to play in the Lexus Champions for Charity Golf Tournament at Pebble Beach.

Learn more and register at ccsc.org/golf

To learn more:
FreeWill.com/CCSCC



OUR IMPACT: Pandemic Relief in Santa Clara County

12 million
Meals Provided

1.2 million
Individuals Served

~127,000
Miles Driven

\$8.7 million
in Direct Financial Assistance

March 2020 – March 2021

At our parish food distribution locations throughout Santa Clara County, volunteers and Catholic Charities staff load boxes of groceries into cars for safe and contactless delivery. Lines of cars would very often wind through the parish parking lot and continue onto the street for blocks.

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County (CCSCC) began its “Pandemic Pivot” last year with the launch of an emergency relief effort unprecedented in scale in the agency’s 66-year history.

At the one-year mark since our pandemic relief services began, we have provided food for more than **12 million meals** through distribution at these locations: multiple parish sites, CORAL after school program sites, family resource and senior centers, and The Window at John XXIII. Additionally, we provided home delivery of meals

with drivers logging **more than 127,000 miles**.

In all, our staff and volunteers have provided groceries and meals to **1.2 million people**. This number includes individuals who came back for food multiple times, an indicator of the severity of the economic consequences of the pandemic for our most vulnerable neighbors. Some of these individuals and families were experiencing food insecurity for the first time in their lives.

We distributed **\$8.7 million in direct financial assistance** to nearly 13,000

households who were facing eviction, food insecurity, unemployment and other critical circumstances due to the pandemic.

Thank you to our donors, volunteers, parishes, and our partners from corporations, foundations, government and other nonprofits. With your help, we have met – and will continue to meet – the needs of thousands of families and individuals in our community who continue to be adversely affected by the pandemic. ■