

# Voices of Hope

FALL 2020



**Rotary Club Sponsors Mobile Van**  
**Food Delivery Drivers Log 35,000 Miles**  
**Couple "Pays It Forward"**  
**Thank You To Community Sponsors**

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the amazing support Catholic Charities has received from our community of donors and partners in the first six months of this pandemic. While the needs in our community continue to be staggering, the response to that need has been generous and compassionate.

Thousands of families continue to come to us hungry, without jobs, unable to pay rent, fearful of losing their homes, often without health insurance, stressed, depressed, anxious, concerned for their children struggling to learn, and uncertain how to keep their families safe and healthy.

Even in the midst of the ongoing disaster, the economic crisis and uncertain times, Catholic Charities remains steadfast in responding to our community's most urgent needs. We continue to feed the hungry through our partnership

with six parishes and Second Harvest Silicon Valley, as well as through our ongoing Senior Nutrition program at John XXIII and Eastside Neighborhood Center, and at our Family Resource Centers supported by First Five Santa Clara County. We are helping families stay housed through rental assistance provided by the Sovereign Order of the Knights of St. John and HOME funds through the City of San Jose. We are helping unemployed workers access benefits, training and jobs through convening Bridge to Recovery with the City of San Jose, Santa Clara County and multiple nonprofit, philanthropic, academic and corporate partners. Our disaster response capacity has expanded with a mobile disaster response unit thanks to the support of the Rotary Club of San Jose. Meanwhile we continue ongoing programs to serve children, youth, families, immigrants, refugee foster youth, people living with mental illness and other disabilities, seniors in nursing homes and inmates in jail. Throughout the



pandemic and economic crisis, we continue to advocate for equitable access to affordable housing and for solutions to the crushing poverty that disproportionately affects communities of color.

On behalf of the clients, staff and volunteers of Catholic Charities, thank you for being a supporter, donor and ally as we work to create a just and compassionate community.

Many blessings,

Greg

## Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County's Pandemic Relief Food Distribution Impact:

**953,329**  
Total Boxes

**4,132,117**  
Total Meals

**130,928**  
Total Households

**499,987**  
Total Individuals



From March – July 2020



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## *San Jose Rotary sponsors mobile response van*

Catholic Charities is excited to announce the deployment of a new mobile response van, sponsored by the Rotary Club of San Jose, to increase the agency's outreach and capacity to serve the community quickly during a disaster.

"When a disaster happens, like the COVID-19 pandemic or the 2017 Coyote Creek flood, our team at Catholic Charities must rapidly and efficiently go to the areas in crisis and bring help to support our neighbors in distress," according to Greg Kepferle, CEO of Catholic Charities. "This new van will become the centerpiece of our mobile response deployment unit. We are so grateful to the San Jose Rotary and their foundation."

For the donation of the van to Catholic Charities, San Jose Rotary's support came from both the club and their foundation. Also, their membership solicited donations and through their networks were able to reduce supply costs. Members Jeff Speno of Mission Valley Ford Trucks supplied the van and buildout at a reduced cost; Jonathan Willhelm of Market Smart supplied the graphic wrap; Daniel Bozzuto of DB Insurance donated the TV; and many other members made connections, advocated and opened their networks to bring the van to reality quickly.

"This was truly a team effort," explained Rotary's immediate past president Karyn Sinunu-Towery. "It took a club of Rotarians – not just members – to make this exciting project a reality." Committed to service in our community, San Jose Rotarians have volunteered more than 3,000,000 hours of community service and have given more than \$5 million in direct grants to over 100 community organizations.

The new van, which provides the ability for teams to set-up at practically any outdoor public location, expands Catholic Charities reach for critical services to individuals and families, including during non-emergency times. It will also enhance our current pandemic response effort for food distribution, begun in March, of free groceries at multiple parish locations and pick-up meals at two senior centers.

"We've seen the tremendous success during the pandemic of having our teams set up at a parish site and meet the needs in that community, on that particular day – without having to have a designated office there," said Fr. Jon Pedigo, Director for Advocacy and Community Engagement at Catholic Charities. "Even before the pandemic, we began operating a multi-service fair weekly at Our Lady of Refuge which is open to all families and individuals who need help. We have to be able to go where the need is and respond in their neighborhoods where it's accessible."

Araceli Gonzales, Program Director for Disaster Services at Catholic Charities, who organized many of the parish food distribution sites for pandemic relief, described the detailed preparation of deploying teams and equipment to a remote



location. She and her team are packing and transporting Catholic Charities uniform vests and PPE to keep the frontline workers safe; several large Catholic Charities banners for site visibility; orange traffic cones and flags to direct the high volume of cars; sunscreen and cooling blankets; and tally counters (or "clickers") along with paperwork to keep track of the number of cars coming through the food lines. The new van will make it easier to store and transport these supplies.

"When your office is a parking lot, you need a dedicated vehicle that is highly visible to bring people in need to the site for services," Gonzales said. "We have a lot of ground to cover in Santa Clara County – from Mountain View down to Gilroy. This van is going to mean so much to so many people who see the Catholic Charities name when they are in crisis, and know they can trust us." ■

**The van is equipped with state-of-the-art features to better serve families and individuals through traveling community-based deployment during a disaster or for services during non-emergency times. These include:**

- an LED flat-panel electronic screen where videos and other information may be displayed in multiple languages;
- two designated laptop computers;
- WIFI hotspot provided by Comcast;
- a 300-watt generator;
- and an awning, tables and chairs with a van roof rack to transport them.

**For information on how you or your organization can provide services, like the Rotary van, please contact David Russo, drusso@catholiccharitiesscc.org or (408) 325-5248.**

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## *Parish Engagement “people power” provides hope, changes lives for good*

By Fr. Jon Pedigo, Director for Advocacy and Community Engagement, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County

Earlier this month, the Parish Engagement Program provided support to a 26-year-old single mother who was two months post-partum and had been discharged from the hospital after two surgeries in two weeks. This young mother was a graduate student at Santa Clara University and is also the sole income earner for her baby, mother, and two younger sisters.

We discovered that she only had two diapers left and a quarter of a can of formula, and the only food in the refrigerator was a loaf of bread. Using our client-aid money and the market at our flagship parish, Our Lady of Refuge, we were able to buy her diapers, wipes, formula, and a play mat for the baby. Our team members at Santa Teresa Parish provided this young mother with all the basic supplies for her child and gift cards within 48 hours of our request. Donations from individuals and Martha’s Kitchen helped her get on her feet and “Accompaniment Volunteers” from our volunteer training model connected the mother to a lactation consultant and a job offer at Target. By tapping into the “people power,” this is just one example of being able to change lives for good.

Parish Engagement not only prepares volunteers with knowledge about resources, how to listen and offer emotional support, we also help volunteers deepen their relationship with God and their parish. Through Parish Engagement, parishes will not only become places of services, they become sacraments of hope. In the midst of the Pandemic, Parish Engagement worked with our Disaster Relief Services to set up food distribution in parishes serving over 20,000 people a week. We are expanding the array of services at Our Lady of Refuge and adding Christ the King Parish as a direct service hub with a Community Market; offering training to Diocesan clergy, parish staff, and parishioners; and creating a network of referral support to all social service ministries in the Diocese.

Our year-end goal is to connect 800 new volunteers to serve their neighbors in a variety of capacities to ease the



Our Lady of Refuge, the first parish in the Diocese to partner with Catholic Charities to establish a regular weekly “market” for on-site services, has continued to meet critical needs, like free meals and food, during the current pandemic. As many as nine parishes have served as contactless distribution sites for free food and grocery distribution since March. (Photos by Anthony Torres)

burden of poverty that is exacerbated by the Pandemic. Our recent study, *“The Social and Economic Impact of the Pandemic in Santa Clara County – Results of Parish Site Study,”* shows the severity of the economic impact on tens of thousands of people and will help us better respond to this disaster.

With God all things are possible and *when we work together*, we make the possible happen. We look forward to working with you this year! ■

To learn more about volunteer opportunities and to read the Parish Engagement program’s recent survey in full, please visit: [CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/parishengagement](https://CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/parishengagement)



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## *Catholic Charities staff log almost 35,000 miles as vans and drivers deliver food to homebound seniors*

Food delivery vans deployed by Catholic Charities have logged almost 35,000 miles in Santa Clara County since the agency launched its pandemic response effort in March.

While Catholic Charities has operated programs for youth and families at Washington United Youth Center for many years, the center quickly pivoted to become a hub for one of the agency's free food delivery initiatives. The Washington United food delivery program averages 205 deliveries a day to homebound individuals, who are mostly older adults, and also those under quarantine because they have tested positive for COVID-19 or come into contact with someone who tested positive. The team's highest one-day delivery total was 315 households.

"Some of the seniors are pretty lonely and want to come out and interact with the delivery crew, but unfortunately the crew has to tell them they cannot engage. This is for two reasons – first to ensure the safety of the drivers and navigators, and it will also slow them down getting deliveries of perishable items to homes," according to Sabry Ramirez, who has pivoted from his usual role working with Catholic Charities' at-risk youth outreach programs to overseeing the food delivery program based at Washington United.

The typical day for the team at Washington United begins at approximately 9 a.m. when the food delivery drivers, and the navigators who accompany them, arrive for work at the center in downtown San Jose.

After an extensive round of safety protocols and before leaving



**Sabry Ramirez gives a daily morning briefing to food delivery van drivers and navigators deploying from Washington United Youth Center.**

for their delivery routes, the group receives a daily update on any program news and developments. Then the drivers and navigators pair up, get their lists of delivery addresses, and head out at around 9:30 a.m. to Second Harvest Food Bank on Curtner Avenue to pick up the boxes of food for delivery. Second Harvest, one of several community partners, not only provides the food but also screens and qualifies all of

the home delivery recipients. Many of the vans in the fleet of 11 delivery vehicles are on loan to Catholic Charities from Santa Clara University and St. Francis High School. Both SCU and St. Francis donated the use of their vans in March to help with the response effort.

By the end of the day, each team has made approximately 25 household deliveries with enough food for two weeks' worth of meals. The vans are brought back to be thoroughly disinfected before the next day's deliveries.

The delivery vans are part of Catholic Charities' multi-tiered response to help with critical needs caused by the pandemic, especially among our community's most vulnerable individuals. Other food initiatives include serving homeless individuals with food and referral to services at The Window; drive-through food distribution at local parishes, community centers and Catholic Charities' Family Resource Centers; and meal pick-up and delivery to older adults through Catholic Charities' Eastside Neighborhood Center and John XXIII Multi-Service Center.

In partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank, the County Senior Nutrition Program, and school districts, Catholic Charities services have been distributing food since March to thousands of households each week. But the need continues for many families.

"I'm still amazed at how great the need is out there and how grateful people are for the food delivery," Ramirez said.

Special thanks to these local restaurants who supported our hardworking staff by providing our delivery teams with free lunches each Friday: Aqui Cal-Mex, Round Table Pizza Willow Glen, In-N-Out Burger, Chick-fil-A, Premier Pizza, Costco Wholesale Warehouse (Senter Road, Almaden Plaza, Great Oaks locations) and Safeway Stores. ■



**The Washington United food delivery program averages 205 deliveries a day to homebound individuals.**

**To learn more how you can help or if you need help, visit [CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/covid19-information](https://www.CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/covid19-information) or call 408-468-0100.**

# SPOTLIGHT

## James Otieno

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

I'd been aware for many years of the impressive work of Catholic Charities in the community. Since I retired from Hewlett Packard in 2007, I've volunteered with social services organizations focusing on children's wellbeing, education and mental health. I joined the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities in July and look forward to continuing my work on these issues.

### What is your personal mission of philanthropy and giving back?

I've been blessed to have friends and mentors who inspired me with their lives and making a difference in our world. It is important to me and my wife, Maren, to support children and youth with opportunities for education and learning. We provide scholarships at the University of Minnesota where I received my undergraduate and graduate degrees, and also at Palo Alto University. In 1997, I founded the Karibu Rafiki (which means "Welcome Friend" in Swahili) Foundation to provide educational opportunities and improve the lives of women and children, many of them orphans, in East Africa.

### Why would you encourage others to support Catholic Charities?

With the wealth in Silicon Valley, it amazes me that we still have so many families who have so many critical needs,

especially now during the pandemic. Those of us who are blessed must in turn help others. To me, that's what it means to be human. I believe that my education and career were preparing me for the real work of helping others.



James Otieno and his wife, Maren

### Community Involvement/Personal

James is a former Board Chair and a current Trustee for Palo Alto University; former Board Chair and current Board Committee member for Child Advocates of Silicon Valley; former Board Member for the Children's Health Council; current Board Member for the Center for Excellence in Nonprofits; and an Encore Fellow of the Silicon Valley Education Foundation.

He and his wife, Maren, have three adult children: Emmanuel, Nereya and Alena. Originally from Kenya, James came to the U.S. at the age of 11 and he holds dual citizenship. ■

## Couple "pays it forward" to help others

After being shot at by guerrilla soldiers angered over his efforts encouraging his poor, young countrymen to resist guerrilla attempts to recruit them, Antonio Ricalde fled his native Colombia in 2002 and sought political asylum in the U.S. Similarly, Venezuelan native Angie Arnesto's work for a state governor at odds with the Chavez regime put her life in danger and in 2006, she too fled to the U.S. as a political asylee. Though many years have passed, husband and wife are still grateful for the help they received from Catholic Charities when they first arrived in San Jose. Through the Direct Assistance to Refugees program, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County was able to provide each of them a small stipend for several months until they could secure employment.

Today, Antonio and Angie are successful insurance agents and are 'paying it forward.' Along with a gift of financial support to the agency's pandemic relief efforts, they also purchased gift certificates from a restaurant they insure.

"We thought this was a win-win," Angie explained. "We could help the restaurant owner stay afloat during the shutdown and then donate the gift certificates to Catholic Charities for

distribution to clients struggling to put food on the table for their families."

Parish Engagement Manager, Bridget Balajadia, was thrilled to be able to distribute these gift certificates at Catholic Charities' Tuesday Evening Service Navigation Event at Our Lady of Refuge parish. "The clients who received these gift cards typically never get to eat at a restaurant due to financial strain. Having a night where they can take a break from the stress of their daily lives and enjoy a good meal outdoors is an enormous relief to them. We are incredibly grateful to Angie and Antonio," Balajadia said.

Angie plans to further help her community by getting involved as a volunteer at Catholic Charities.

It's people like Angie Arnesto and Antonio Ricalde who embody our motto, 'Changing lives for good.' ■



Angie Arnesto and Antonio Ricalde

## Experienced Advisers Help Maximize Retirement Goals

Achieving goals for long term care, peace of mind and supporting a cause is a win-win for donors and Catholic Charities.

Marcos and Denise Herrera, volunteers for Catholic Charities since 1981 and donors since 1985, had four clear goals for retirement and their estate planning:

- Ensure they had enough to live securely,
- Prepare for long term care or assisted living if necessary,
- Provide some inheritance for their daughter, and
- Support the causes they value.

"Most important to us was long-term care," according to Marcos. "Having experienced the long term care needs that both my parents required motivated us to plan for our own future." The couple met with their advisers, Kathie Sheehy and George Mburi of Transamerica Financial Advisors Inc., who deployed plans that met their long term care funding goals and gave them peace of mind.

"Now that the basics were covered, contingency plans in place, and our daughter is set, we could focus on doing the most we could for the nonprofits we support, like Catholic Charities," said Marcos. George recommended a tool that magnifies their legacy gift to Catholic Charities by using an IRA that includes an insured annuity within it.

"The legacy gift IRA we created significantly magnifies the amount we provided from our estate to Catholic Charities...it really makes our contribution more impactful!" exclaimed Marcos.

According to Aaron Szager, Senior Financial Advisor and Group Manager at Foster City, California-based wealth management firm Summitry, LLC, and a member of Catholic Charities' Legacy Committee: "Once our advisers understand our clients' goals and ensure the necessities are accounted for sufficiently, we have a number of tools and products that can really



Marcos and Denise Herrera

meet the individual charitable aims of our clients."

"We have tools that minimize taxes, provide income, establish fixed payments that are unaffected by the economy, increase donations exponentially, and transform illiquid assets, like real estate. It's just about accessing and connecting with knowledgeable professionals," explains David Russo, Senior Director of Planned Giving at Catholic Charities. "Most importantly, you are creating a legacy of help and hope for our neighbors in need." ■

To learn more about maximizing your legacy, contact David Russo at [drusso@catholiccharitiesscc.org](mailto:drusso@catholiccharitiesscc.org) or by calling 408-325-5248.

## Unsung Heroes



Liz and Richard Waldo are just two of many "Unsung Heroes" helping others during the pandemic.

Read their story and others at:  
[CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/unsung-heroes](https://CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/unsung-heroes)

### Make an even greater impact with your gift today!

The CARES Act, passed in March, allows a tax deduction of up to \$300 of cash contributions for non-itemizers. Learn more at: [CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/legacy-giving](https://CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/legacy-giving)

Also, check out a new feature on our online donation page that makes it easier for donors to search for company matching gifts. [CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/donate](https://CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/donate)





*Thank You to our Corporate and Community Partners  
Providing Funding for our Pandemic Response!*



*We also extend our thanks to the many individual donors for their generosity in donating to the pandemic relief efforts.  
Please visit [CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/donate](https://CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/donate) to make a gift today.*