



CARING BEYOND BELIEF

VOLUNTEERISM—THE GLUE THAT HOLDS US TOGETHER

ISSUE 4 | Spring 2016

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The month of April is volunteer appreciation month and here at Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie Counties we are fortunate to have many volunteers to be appreciative of. Catholic Charities has several opportunities for volunteers including the Food Pantry, Thrift Shop or the Domestic Violence Program in Cobleskill, in Caring Connections or with the Summer Food Service Program in Oneonta, and the Dispute Resolution Center needs volunteers in Chenango, Delaware, and Otsego Counties. We also welcome volunteers who are interested in becoming a member of our Board of Directors from Delaware, Otsego, or Schoharie Counties. With over 100 volunteers helping our agency to meet its mission of serving the poor and vulnerable in our local communities, Catholic Charities is blessed by many very gifted individuals who give of their time and talents to make their community a better place.

President Barack Obama has been quoted as saying the following about volunteerism: "The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope." This quote seems to capture the essence of volunteering and why people volunteer. Simply put, the fact that you always get more than you give is why volunteering pays more than any other job.

It is reported that people become volunteers for many reasons, including that it reduces stress, it saves resources, it brings people together, it strengthens the community, you learn a lot, you gain professional experience, you get a chance to give back and you make a difference. All of these are indeed benefits of volunteering at Catholic Charities. When we asked some of our volunteers why they have chosen to give back to their community through volunteering with Catholic Charities, here is what they said:

"I've been blessed; family, health, employment and friends. I knew when I retired 6 months ago that I wanted to volunteer somewhere in the community. CCDOS is a local community organization and is a perfect fit for me. I benefit more than anyone when I volunteer here. I give a little of my time and I get back the satisfaction of helping others. All the people here make volunteering enjoyable and provide a much appreciated social interaction. All of these folks, that I have met, have all made volunteering a real rewarding experience." - Patrick, Food Pantry and Thrift Shop volunteer.



"Volunteering is an opportunity for me to serve God and my community, by being a helping neighbor. I enjoy working with our clients, to hear their stories and to problem solve with them. Working with the CCDOS staff and other volunteers is an uplifting and joyful experience that I look forward to every week." - Ed, Caring Connections volunteer.

I would encourage individuals who truly want to make their community a better place to live to look into volunteer opportunities. What better way to share your talents and gifts with others? Think about it, where would our public safety be if not for volunteer first responders? Where would services to those less fortunate be if not for volunteers at our local non-profits and feeding programs? How would our local churches survive without volunteers and what about the arts programs and public libraries? Volunteers help us to become the community we need to be. There is something for everyone to contribute and an opportunity for all to give back. Our local communities need you.

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Catholic Charities is proud to say that we are able to help the surrounding communities in multiple areas of focus. The programs that we offer include: Alternatives to Incarceration, Adult Treatment Court Case Management, Caring Connections, Child Care Provider Support Services, Child at Risk Response Team, Clinical Support Services, Crime Victims Program, Dispute Resolution Center, Domestic Violence Program, Family Support Services, Food Pantry, Summer Food Service Program, Thrift Shop, and Victim Impact Panels.

As an agency we appreciate the commitment and support of our volunteers.

- 17 volunteers donated 571 hours to the Caring Connections Program.
 - 3 volunteers donated 117 hours to the Food Pantry.
- 32 volunteer mediators donated 548 hours to the Dispute Resolution Center.
 - 12 volunteers donated 2,100 hours to the Thrift Shop.
 - 5 volunteers donated 24 hours to the Domestic Violence Program.
- 40 volunteers helped prepare and serve lunches to children in the Summer Food Service Program for approximately 1,088 hours.
- 17 student interns and volunteers provided 2,297 hours of support to agency programs.



In 2015 Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie was able to serve 5,904 individuals, including 1,900 children and 149 seniors, in various programs that we offer:

- 254 individuals participated in the Alternatives to Incarceration Program (ATI).
- 43 children were served through the Child At Risk Response Team.
- 163 individuals attended a Victims Impact Panel (VIP) presentation.
- 255 individuals were served through the Domestic Violence Program.
- 23 individuals served through the Otsego County Adult Treatment Court Case Management Program.
- 1,459 individuals received an emergency supply of food from our Food Pantry in Cobleskill.
- 40 Legally Exempt Child Care Providers enrolled.
- 12,568 completed transactions in our Thrift Shop in Cobleskill.
- 139 mediations, conciliations and facilitations conducted by the Dispute Resolution Center in areas such as custody/visitation, divorce, special education, small claims, and agricultural mediation. The Dispute Resolution Center served 1,016 individuals.
- 108 individuals were provided with counseling and mental health services through the Clinical Support Services.
- 2,321 adults, children and seniors were helped through our Caring Connections Program.
 - \$67,398 of assistance was paid for with the help of various fundraisers throughout the year and the support of local churches and local foundations.
 - Caring Connections assisted: 1,074 individuals with their transportation needs; 492 individuals with their utility needs; 254 individuals with their housing needs; 227 with food; 274 with other basic needs.
- 57 individuals served through the Family Support Services Program.
- 1,765 lunches were served to children through age 18 through the Summer Food Service Program.
- 25 day care providers participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, receiving \$93,298 in reimbursement for 68,677 nutritious meals served to children in care.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Help Your Community Grow... One Drop at a Time

This annual fundraiser begins on April 15, 2016 and runs through September 1, 2016. Stop by our office in either Oneonta or Cobleskill and purchase a raindrop or a flower for \$1 or a watering can for \$5.



Keeping Our Community Warm... One Brick at a Time

This heating assistance fundraiser ran from October 15th - April 1st and had donations totaling approximately \$2,500. Thank you to our major sponsors including New York Central Mutual Insurance, Fidelis Care, and Eddie Leone in memory of Arthur S. Hall.



Summer Food Service Program

Catholic Charities will once again sponsor the Summer Food Service Program in Oneonta's Neahwa Park this July and August. This free lunch program is open to all children through age 18 years. New this year will be the availability of meals for adults who accompany children so they can have a meal together.



The National Grid Foundation has provided generous funding to support the Caring Connections Program in providing utility assistance. This past February one of our utility assistance recipients attended and spoke at the National Grid's annual press conference. Catholic Charities was honored to have Lydia present her story.



Caring Connections Appreciation Event

On April 19th the Caring Connections Program will say thank you to the local churches who have supported the program. In 2015, Caring Connections provided assistance for basic needs totaling \$67,398. This financial assistance was used to help 2,321 individuals to meet their basic needs.



April 10-16, 2016 is National Crime Victims Rights Week. Catholic Charities offers supportive services to all crime victims. For more information call the 24-Hour Crisis Hotline at (581) 234-2231 (collect calls accepted), or call the Schoharie main office number at (518)234-3581 Monday through Friday, 8:30 am-4:30 pm for more information.



Food Pantry Garden

This summer the food pantry will be able to offer fresh vegetables through our Catholic Charities garden. The garden is made possible through a 5-2-1-0 grant.



Thank you to the employees of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center in Sharon Springs for their gift of \$5,000 to Catholic Charities' food pantry in Cobleskill.



Annual Dinner

We will be holding our Annual Dinner on June 7th at Justine's in Cobleskill. Please join us in celebrating the good work Catholic Charities has done in our local communities. For ticket information please visit www.charitiesccd.org.

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OUR WISH LIST

Catholic Charities dedicates itself to providing assistance to the poor and vulnerable in Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie Counties. Our success is due, largely, to the gifts and donations that we receive from our neighbors. If you would like to make a monetary donation, you can find information on our website at www.charitiesccd.org. We can also use several material items to help, as well. Any donation is appreciated, and can include the following:

- Diapers (any size)
- Local Bus Tokens/Passes
- \$10 Gas Cards
- Non-Perishable Food Pantry Items
- Baby Wipes
- Personal Care Items
- Bath Towels/Wash Clothes

Also, gift cards are great for people in need of some items that we may not be able to store in our offices. \$10 gift cards to the following places can make a world of difference:

- Walmart
- Family Dollar / Dollar Store
- PriceChopper / Hannaford