

## COMING EVENTS!

### Holiday Food Project

Catholic Charities will once again be providing holiday food baskets for families in the Oneonta City School District over the December holiday break. Families whose children receive free or reduced lunches while at school have an added financial burden when their children are not in school receiving free meals. Catholic Charities will provide food for a holiday meal, but more importantly, food to assist in feeding food insecure families during the school holiday break.

### Shine the Light

Our third annual Shine the Light, a candlelight vigil event, will take place on Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 6:00 pm, at Fusion Community Church, 375 N. Grand Street, Suite 3, Cobleskill, NY. This year's evening will include music, vocalists, special speakers, and two local domestic violence survivors sharing some of their personal story. This event is open to the entire community and we encourage involvement by all who have survived or supported and cared about survivors of domestic violence.



## BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

Catholic Charities is looking for a few talented and conscientious volunteer board members to lead the organization in achieving its mission of serving the poor and vulnerable in our local communities. If you can contribute your time, thoughtfulness, and leadership, and are interested in exploring this opportunity, call Lynn Glueckert at 607-432-0061 or at 518-234-3581 to find out whether this volunteer opportunity is right for you. This is a working Board that assists the agency in raising funds, marketing, and meeting the unmet needs in our local communities.

## ISSUE 8 | Fall 2018

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**LYNN GLUECKERT**

## A SURVIVOR'S STORY

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month. What follows below is a testimonial from a survivor of domestic violence that Catholic Charities' Domestic Violence Program in Schoharie County has served.

The impacts of Domestic Violence have affected my life to this day and may for years to come. Domestic Violence dictates the way that I let my family and friends in, how close I let them get to me, and overall I have trouble feeling valued. I would like to put you in my shoes to see what programs like Catholic Charities can do to make a difference in the life of a Domestic Violence victim.

When I came up here, from living in an abusive environment with my mother, I expected that my life would dramatically change for the better. Sadly, like life, it did not work out the way I had intended. When I was a child, I always felt the urge to protect my mother from her own instances of abuse. I grew up surrounded by a chaotic environment and became very accustomed to daily explosions between her and her partners. There were good times, like road trips to look at stars at night, but those good times in reality did not make up for being homeless due to her drug addiction or the constant fear I lived in while witnessing the abuse she endured and how she would always go back to her abuser.

But like most Domestic Violence victims, I latched on to the good and kept it close hoping someday the good times would outweigh the bad. After years of this, my mother's irresponsible choices led to me being taken away from her like my other siblings, by CPS, and I was sent to live with my father. For years afterward, I still clung to the perception that she needed me around to take care of her, and I still held onto those good memories like a security blanket. Focusing on her needs allowed me to ignore my own and the fact that they had never been and still were not being met.

Living with my father and step-mother was the segue to me becoming a direct rather than an indirect victim of Domestic Violence. What started out as snide remarks and daily assaults of my physical being and emotional character, became a slaughter of my self-esteem to the point where I truly believed I was worthless and should just kill myself. My sense of voice was stifled; I didn't feel like I could freely talk anywhere about my reality. The occasional instances of physical abuse exacerbated the trauma I was enduring emotionally. There were many times over the years where I didn't care about living or think tomorrow would come but eventually, after I left home, the trials I endured from being homeless on my own showed me that it is perfectly acceptable and okay to love someone from a distance and to put myself first and love me first and foremost. I'll never stop loving my family, but I love the person I'm becoming and the life I am building for myself, more.

Catholic Charities provided me with a safe shelter, food, and various amounts of physical and mental support including therapy and helping me access resources to become fully independent. This is something I was led to believe would never be possible for me when I was living with my family.



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## A SURVIVOR'S STORY, CONTINUED

To this day, Catholic Charities is still helping me reach my goals; what started out as me aiming to live in my own apartment has led me to want to find overall peace in my life and I am achieving this. Like anyone else, the goals will always be changing and continuing to improve. I know now that I am entitled to have a good quality of life. I may not have realized this without the help of Catholic Charities. I went from being homeless and only having the clothes on my back and no access to resources, to now having a paying job that allows me to help others and I have the confidence to know that I can take care of myself without the help of anyone else. I went from being held captive by anxiety and depression as a result of my abuse to not having an anxiety attack in over three months.

I am happy to say that the anniversary of my emancipation from captivity is approaching and I am now able to seize opportunities in my daily life wherever I go; whether this is helping others or being proactive in my community to stand up for what I feel is right. I still have hard days where it is difficult to get out of bed but I have learned how to manage this stress and push myself forward. It took a lot of hard work and perseverance but I have achieved more in this past year than I ever dreamed possible.

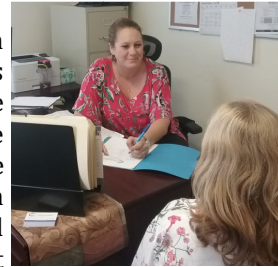
Dear Reader, if you or someone you know of is going through Domestic Violence, know that with tremendous amounts of support I carved out this life for myself, I chose this path, I persevered. Please remember that even when you don't believe in yourself, know that I and others like Catholic Charities do, regardless of your story or background. Please know that whenever you are ready, and think that enough is enough, that you will find what you need to get to where you truly want to be.

- Anonymous, Domestic Violence Survivor

## NEW SERVICES

### OVS CASE MANAGER

Catholic Charities welcomes Shawnee Willoughby to staff at the Cobleskill office. Shawnee began employment at Catholic Charities on July 16, 2018 as the OVS (Office of Victim Services) Case Manager. This is a new position at Catholic Charities, funded by the NYS Office of Victim Services. We are pleased to be able to offer this valuable service to victims of crime. Shawnee will provide assistance to domestic violence victims as well as all victims of nondomestic violence crime in Schoharie County. In her role she will make crime victims aware of the benefits available to them, and provide assistance in filing the OVS Compensation Application. In addition, she will advocate for clients in the court system, inform them of victim rights, and provide support and accompaniment for them to court appearances. She will also form and implement targeted outreach goals for the program as part of the agency's strategic plan. We welcome Shawnee to her new role at Catholic Charities and look forward to working with her.



### CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL

In July, Catholic Charities hired Kimberly Ahearn as a Child Care Specialist to work with our Child Care Resource and Referral program. Kimberly comes to the program with a background in education. She formerly worked with the Head Start program. Kim's experience includes teaching children and their parents about child development and early care and education. Kim will provide community outreach, and provider services including technical assistance and education.

The Child Care Resource and Referral program allows us to support Otsego County's parents and children by providing child care referrals and information, by educating the community as to the importance of early care and by supporting the child care providers through training and technical assistance. We are pleased to be able to offer these services to our community.

### MENTORING

Starting on July 1, 2018 Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties received funding from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services to manage a pilot mentoring project in Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties. The pilot program will focus on using college students from the four area colleges, including SUNY Delhi, SUNY Oneonta, Hartwick, and SUNY Cobleskill, to become approved mentors for at-risk youth ages 7 - 17 years. Youth will be matched with a caring approved college student who will spend on average six to eight hours per month with the child. The mentoring relationship encourages self-worth, skill building, confidence, and a caring adult who will not disappoint or abandon the child. Group activities will also be offered for mentors and youth and will take place once per month on the college campuses.

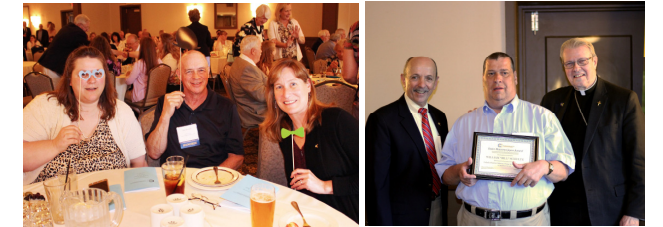


## IN THE SPOTLIGHT



### **2018 Color Run / Walk**

The second annual color run/walk benefiting Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties was held on Saturday, July 21st at Keith Clark Park in Sidney. 28 participants completed the course. Catholic Charities would like to thank those who participated along with our sponsors and donors including: Gates-Cole Insurance, Huff Ice Cream, Chobani, Fidelis, Great American, Price Chopper, Sidney Fire Department, NBT Bank, Alpine Metal Roofing, Video Entertainment Plus, Mirabito, Trakside Dining, Bassett Health Care Network Tri Town Regional Hospital, Waste Recovery Enterprises, Ermeti Law Office, H&H Interiors, AIM Dave Reynolds, Sidney Elks Club, and ACCO. A very special thank you to main sponsor Sidney United Way.



### **Annual Gathering**

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany held their annual gathering on Tuesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. At the annual gathering each one of the agencies of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany celebrates the employee of the year and the volunteer of the year. In 2018 Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties honored our employee of the year, Ron Rovetto who is our Nutrition and Outreach Education Program Coordinator and our volunteer of the year, William Schultz. Thank you to both honorees from our agency as they do so much to help Catholic Charities meet our mission of serving the poor and vulnerable in our local communities.



### **Summer Food Service Program**

This summer marked our fifth year of the Summer Food Service Program in Oneonta. New this year was the addition of a site at the Laurens Central School. We would like to thank all those who have helped us make this a great program! We have continued our partnership with the Oneonta First United Presbyterian Church to offer the Program for this fifth year. The volunteers prepared and served approximately 2,064 lunches this summer.



### **Ommegang Event**

Thank you to Ommegang for selecting Catholic Charities to be the beneficiaries of the tips at one of their summer concerts. Volunteers from Catholic Charities had a great time serving at the Old Crow Medicine Show concert on July 14<sup>th</sup>. All the tips earned that evening were donated to the programs at Catholic Charities.



Lothar Benz from Germany has been a very generous and strong supporter for several years of our agency's Veterans Program. Catholic Charities Veterans Program assists area Veterans who are struggling to meet their basic needs such as food, housing, utilities, and essential transportation. On Tuesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> Mr. Benz visited Catholic Charities to donate funding to support our Holiday food basket program, as well as his annual donation to our Veteran's fund. During this visit Lynn Glueckert, Executive Director and Tracey Martindale, Program Director presented Mr. Benz with a bat decorated in American colors to thank him for his years of support.



### **Volunteer Appreciation**

On April 26<sup>th</sup> Catholic Charities held our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. Eight volunteers were honored for their years of service to Catholic Charities.



### **Back to School Campaign**

In August Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties gave out 112 backpacks full of school supplies to children attending the Sidney School District. This program allows children from low-income families to be prepared when school starts. Catholic Charities would like to thank our donors and sponsors for this project including: Fidelis, Salvation Army / Youth Bureau, Sacred Heart Church, and ACCO.



### **100+ Women Who Care Otsego**

Catholic Charities was honored to be selected as the winner for the 100+ Women Who Care Otsego event held on July 24<sup>th</sup>. The event raised \$8500 for our Caring Connections Program!