

SPRING 2020

THE **CLARION**
NEWS FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES



B R I N G I N G T H E
HOPE OF EASTER
WITH A TWO-GENERATION APPROACH

BRINGING THE
HOPE OF EASTER
WITH A TWO-GENERATION APPROACH

Bringing the Hope of Easter to those we serve requires a two-generation approach, meaning we must assist both parents and children. And this approach works wonders. From assistance with basic needs through support for degree completion, job retention and management of finances, our programs and services help individuals and families become thriving members of our community.

Studies have shown that every \$1 invested in a Two-Gen family can return up to \$4 to society through first-generation benefits of decreased dependence on public assistance and increased taxable earnings. There are also second-generation benefits of increased lifetime earnings/taxes paid, and savings from costs associated with crime and special education. You can learn more at EradicatePoverty.org.

On behalf of the families we serve,
we remain deeply grateful
for your prayers, volunteer
time, and financial gifts.
In this season, may God
grant all of us the grace
to experience the Hope of
Easter.

Gloria Whitcraft

Gloria Whitcraft, CEO



NEW PARTNERSHIPS
..... WILL BRING HOPE TO MANY



Catholic Charities is partnering with The Rescue Mission in Fort Wayne to provide a professional social worker on site to assist residents with a successful transition from The Rescue Mission to living in the community, all in an effort to prevent recidivism.



The mission of REAL Services is to assist the elderly so they can maintain their independence to the extent possible. However, 40 to 70% of their caregivers show symptoms of depression. Our role will be to provide counseling to caregivers of aging adults who participate in services at Care Connection at Milton Village in South Bend.



Located in South Bend, The Center for the Homeless helps families break the cycle of homelessness by helping residents discover their worth, dignity and potential. Catholic Charities is currently raising the philanthropic support needed to provide mental health counseling for residents as they transition out of the Center. If you are interested in learning more, please contact our office.

MENTOR TOM MARTIN HELPS A STUDENT STAY ON

THE STRAIGHT & NARROW

“That’s the coolest thing I’ve seen all day!” said Daniel, who was amazed at the site of a large-mouth bass eating a smaller fish. It happened when he went fishing for the first time with his Catholic Charities mentor.

Daniel (not his real name), a high-school student with special needs, lives with a grandparent and is struggling in school with poor grades and under developed social skills. Understanding his circumstances, Daniel’s guidance counselor at school referred him to the Catholic Charities Mentor Program.

Tom Martin says his first job as a mentor is to develop rapport with the student. When he learned that Daniel enjoys outdoor activities, he took him fishing and hiking at Bixler Lake in Kendallville. The two have also gone kayaking and on other occasions Tom has taken him to movies and dinner. Through these activities, Daniel was able to open up to and bond with Tom.



Tom Martin - Mentor

“Trust between the mentor and student is crucial,” says Shirley Johnson, Mentoring Program Coordinator. “For many, this is the only stable adult relationship they have in their lives.”

Tom learned about becoming a mentor through his parish Immaculate Conception in Auburn. He immediately warmed to the idea and thought he could put his many years of teaching experience to work for kids who greatly need a positive role model.

Tom emphasizes that there are a couple very important ground rules when he and Daniel spend time together: first, no video games and, second, no cell phones.

“We want kids to learn how to socialize with people, not phones,” says Tom. “And it’s amazing to see how a little one-on-one time in the outdoors can help a young man come out of his shell.”

The Mentoring Program, which is made possible by a collaboration between Catholic Charities USA and the federal Office of Juvenile Justice Prevention, is for students age nine to 17. Mentors typically work with students six to eight hours a month and help mentees like Daniel work on their individual goals.

“We are seeing many kids being raised by grandparents,” says Shirley. “In many cases, parents lose custody because of opioid addiction, which is rampant in some rural areas.”

When a student first enters the program, Shirley begins by creating a Development Asset Profile (DAP), which provides a baseline for assessing a student’s progress. For example, the assessment revealed that Daniel needs to learn to do chores at home without being told. He also needs to develop better social skills with his peers.

Tom, who has 23 years of experience as a special education teacher, was matched with Daniel because of his struggles in school. He has used his knowledge of the school system to advocate for better classroom support and accommodation of Daniel’s individual needs.

“It helps to know the ropes,” says Tom.

One of the most important tasks of the mentors is to help students explore vocational interests. For example, the mentor might take a student to the Impact Institute in Kendallville to explore construction trades, automotive service or culinary arts. Whatever their interest, the important thing is that it can connect students to a future beyond high school.

“It’s really gratifying to see a student like Daniel blossom,” says Tom. “It’s amazing to see how a little effort can really turn a kid around.”

A CALL FOR MENTORS

The Mentoring Program will match mentors and students in Noble, Steuben and Dekalb counties through a referral system and application process. The goals for students are to increase school attendance and improve grades.

Here are the personal attributes necessary to become a mentor:

1. Time to spend with a mentee
2. Patience to deal with the mentee and their family
3. Good communication skills
4. Creativity in planning time together
5. Flexibility to adjust to circumstances
6. Share personal interests and hobbies with a mentee
7. Learn about mentees academic grades and attendance
8. Choose activities to assist with their learning
9. Listen to their mentee’s concerns
10. Caring attitude toward their mentee

MENTOR REQUIREMENTS

Sign up for 12 months

Commit to one to two hours a week

Complete an application and interview

Participate in the Safe Environment Curriculum for interacting with youth

Pass a background check

Participate in an orientation

Pass the TB test

Get fingerprinted

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Shirley Johnson in our North Region office.

260-925-0917 or sjohnson@ccfwsb.org

107 W 5th St. Auburn, IN 46706

MEET ANISU

A REFUGEE FINDS A HOME, A COUNTRY AND A FUTURE.

"I really wanted to work at Catholic Charities," says Anisu. "I like helping [new arrivals] get acquainted with everything here in America."



Anisu Yunus

Anisu Yunus is a petite 20-year-old with a large ambition to become a physician's assistant. While she pursues her degree at Purdue - Fort Wayne, she works part-time at Catholic Charities as a translator (she speaks five languages: Rohingya, Burmese, Malay, Hindi and English) and administrative assistant, helping new arrivals from her native Burma and around the world.

"Catholic Charities was so helpful to us when we arrived," she says. "Now it's my job to do the same for new arrivals."

Anisu's journey to the United States began at age 5 when, along with her mother, father and two sisters, she traveled by boat to Malaysia where there are nearly 100,000 other Rohingya refugees. Though Malaysia allows them to register with the U.N.'s

refugee agency, the country provides them little aid and does not permit them to work, all the while charging them for health services.

The Rohingya are a much-persecuted ethnic minority from Burma (aka Myanmar). For the past 50 years, they have faced severe persecution from the ruling military junta, which declared arbitrarily that they are not citizens. This came even though the group had lived in Burma for centuries and enjoyed citizenship for nearly 20 years after the British left in 1947.

Since then, over 800,000 Rohingya effectively became refugees in their own country. They were scapegoated as outsiders, denied education, and prevented from voting and owning property. They were also excluded from government employment and many have been killed, solely because of their ethnicity.

Life was not much better for Anisu and her family in Malaysia. Given their refugee status, her father could not hold a job and Rohingya children were only permitted to go to school through grade six.

"The teachers were very strict," she says. "I was struck with a cane if I gave a wrong answer. I learned to keep my mouth shut."

Eventually, though, the UN opened a school there and she was permitted to continue her education. She was introduced to the Latin alphabet for the first time. Centuries prior, English and Dutch colonists adapted the European alphabet to create a more familiar written form of the Malay language.

"The Malay alphabet made the transition to English a little easier in school, but it was very different from American English," she says.

Because of these difficult conditions, Anisu's family applied for refugee status with the US State Department. The process took many years because of detailed background checks and health screenings. Once they were cleared, they were given legal permanent residence, issued green cards and flown to Fort Wayne, which is well-suited to accommodate their cultural adjustment because of the many Burmese in the area.

Once here, Catholic Charities helped Anisu enroll as a freshman at New Haven High School. For the soft-spoken 15-year-old, it was a big culture shock. Fortunately, she made a friend with another Rohingya girl, a junior who had been here a few years and was more fluent in English. Thanks to loyal friends, good teachers and hard work, Anisu learned the language and graduated with honors.

"Everyone was very friendly and helpful," she says. "My teachers were very kind to me, giving me extra help with biology,

chemistry and math. Even today, they still help me with my courses at Purdue."

In this country just four years, Anisu acts as a part-time translator and administrative assistant at Catholic Charities, helping new arrivals from Burma.

"I greet new arrivals at the airport and take them to the many appointments they must complete," she says.

With only 90 days to get settled, there is much to do for new arrivals. Anisu translates correspondence and acts as an interpreter at meetings. She also provides assistance with government documents and job applications. Securing employment is critical because, by day 91, they are expected to pay their own expenses and even reimburse the government for the cost of the airfare to get here.

Someday Anisu would like to visit Malaysia again to spend time with friends and relatives. But this time she wants to return as an American citizen.

"I look forward to becoming a citizen," she says. "I will finally have a country and a future."



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

BY KAREN CAMPBELL,
Catholic Charities' Mental Health Counselor

As a mental health counselor, every day we fight stigma, provide support to people with mental illness and their families, and educate the public about resources available in our diocese. During Mental Health Awareness Month in May, we want to focus on local youth, many of whom we've discovered are burdened with the worries of an adult.

Many students we work with express concerns about finances, the running of a household, feeling unsafe in their neighborhood, and even wars in other countries and general lack of peace in the world. On top of that, many adults dismiss children's worries which only makes them worse.

As a therapist, I have been a witness to children experiencing violence inside and outside the home, bullying, natural disasters, vicarious trauma reactions, disruption in the family unit, family deaths, self-harm, thoughts of death or

suicide, and uncontrollable feelings of anger, fear, sadness, and sensory over-stimulation. Some of what the children are experiencing is not only a part of their environment, but also a part of their family genetic history. In light of this, we want parents to take an active role in helping their children with these concerns.



HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD

- Listen carefully to your child's worries.
- Teach coping skills: emphasize the positive, prioritize worries.
- Speak positively about mental health concerns.
- Encourage conversation with your child about worries.
- Talk to a professional about your concerns.

MEET OUR NEW CLINICAL LIAISON

In 2015, Catholic Charities completed a diocesan-wide survey which revealed priests were in need of trusted mental health services for parishioner referrals. Thus, we created the Clinical Liaison position to assist our priests and schools



Chris Nowak - Clinical Liaison

when they encounter a family in need to find trusted mental health counseling. Chris Nowak now serves in that role. Her background is in Counseling with licenses in the State of Indiana in Mental Health, Addictions, Marriage and Family and School Counseling. Chris is a certified trainer with QPR (a suicide prevention model).

Hope to Healing

YOUR PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT IS NEEDED

As a reminder, our Hope to Healing Initiative is focused on raising philanthropic support for Catholic Charities' counseling services and workshops for our parishes and schools. You can help us reach our goal to raise \$30,000 this quarter. This will allow us to respond to the great demand in our diocese for our mental health services. To learn more about this initiative, please visit www.ccfwsb.org/hopetohealing.

CLINICAL LIAISON

Clinical Liaison position provides our priests with ongoing support when they need assistance accessing community mental health resources for their parish or school families.



Parish priests and school staff encounter a student or family who need help.



The parish priests contact a clinical liaison with a referral for counseling.



The clinical liaison reaches out to the party to gather information.



The clinical liaison connects them with a suitable counselor based on collected information.



The clinical liaison follows up 4 to 6 weeks post-match.

JANET'S STORY

ECHO HELPS TEEN MOM CHOOSE LIFE AND BUILD A FUTURE.

“All you need is support,”

says Janet. “When you have a person who believes in you, that’s all you really need.”



Janet and son Daniel

Janet was just 14 when she got pregnant. She was frightened and confused, a state compounded by a troubled home life. Her father was absent frequently and fought often with her mother. Her mother was routinely critical of her and responded poorly to the news of her pregnancy. In the midst of this, Janet’s school performance suffered and her self-confidence was shattered.

Fortunately, she enrolled herself in the School Age Mothers Program through the South Bend schools. There she received vital information from the professionals on staff and friendship from other teen moms in her same situation. Most importantly, she was introduced to the Catholic Charities ECHO Program.

“We are here to be a resource and provide encouragement,” says Lauren Jankowski, Janet’s ECHO Case Manager. “The key to the program’s success, though, is the long-term relationship we have with these young moms. For many, we are the only source of stability in their lives.”

ECHO, which stands for Education Creates Hope and Opportunity, is designed to help pregnant teens stay in high school and complete their diploma, all while still raising their children. ECHO also helps young mothers continue their education beyond high school.

Like many other teen moms, Janet, now 23, faced the possibility of dropping out. And without a high-school diploma, she would have very poor job prospects. With the right support, however, she could get an education and land better-paying jobs so she could keep her young family afloat.

In financial terms, the Catholic Charities ECHO Program has been a great success. Moms like Janet have a 90+% graduation rate, which compares to only 40% for teen moms nationally. It is estimated that every mother on assistance costs the government a minimum of \$640,000 in services over her lifetime. In the last 20 years, ECHO has helped thousands of young mothers avoid poverty in our diocese.

“But the program is about more than avoiding poverty,” says Lauren. “ECHO is about helping them be accountable and helping them realize their potential.”

Early on Janet was plagued with worry and self-doubt. How would she provide for her son? Who could she turn to? Who would love and support her? Her ECHO case manager was a godsend. She provided crisis intervention, and monitored Janet’s prenatal care and well-baby care. She ensured that Janet had all the supplies she needed for parenting and school. She helped her prepare for life after high school. She also worked closely with her family members to repair relationships. All the effort paid off when Janet graduated on time with her class.

To make ends meet, Janet worked a variety of minimum-wage jobs. She knew, though, that furthering her education was the only way to move up the income ladder. Her ECHO case manager helped her create a plan. The first step was to earn her Child Development Accreditation, a certificate that enabled her to get a full-time job as a teacher at Head Start.

“My ECHO case managers helped me with everything: applying for school, setting up daycare, finding a place to live, managing my finances,” says Janet. “They were always there for me.”

Janet credits Lauren and her other case managers with helping her organize and prioritize her life so she could continue her studies while raising her son. More

importantly, Janet feels that advancing her education will help her stay out of poverty and provide the life she wants for herself and her family.

Her self-growth and maturity have helped her restore her relationship with her mother. She is also closer to her younger brother and sister. Today Daniel is enrolled at St. Adelbert’s Parish School and Janet is a parishioner at Our Lady of Hungary. She has also healed her relationship with Daniel’s father and today they co-parent.

In 2018, Janet experienced a very traumatic event with a loved one that has taken a great emotional toll. Once again Lauren acted as a stabilizing influence, helping her stay strong for her son, maintaining her home, connecting with support groups. Janet also found new motivation to pursue her dreams of going back to school, getting married one day, having more children, buying a home, and helping others.

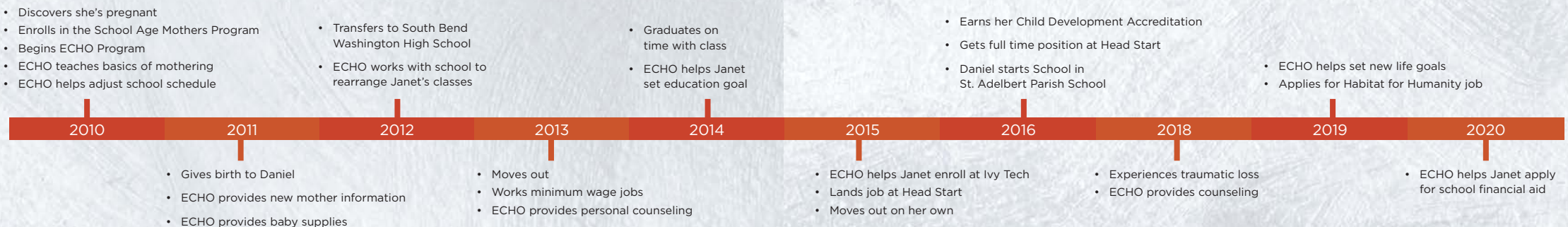
“I want to go back to school to become a social worker,” she says. “I want to help people who are in the same situation as me. I’ve been given so much. Now I want to give back.”

When asked what she would say to other teen moms about her experience with the program, Janet encourages them to contact ECHO right away.

“They are like Google: they will help you find whatever you need,” she says. “But more important, they are always there for you. You will never be alone.”

JANET'S TIMELINE

LONG-TERM PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ARE THE KEY HELPING TEEN MOMS AVOID POVERTY.



..... HELP US AID

NEIGHBORS IN NEED.

We are experiencing an unprecedented crisis with this Coronavirus pandemic. Because of widespread layoffs and related health issues, we are anticipating a great surge in requests for food, clothing, housing, transportation and other basics. Here is how you can help:

1. Pray for Our Lady's protection and intercession in this great time of need.
2. Using recommended safety protocols, assist your neighbors, especially the elderly and most vulnerable.
3. Make a financial contribution to our efforts to support those in greatest need in our diocese.

PLEASE CONSIDER A GIFT OF:

- \$10.....helps us keep our food pantries stocked
- \$50.....helps an out of work family pay for diapers and wipes
- \$100.....helps cover family meals for a week
- \$250.....helps pay for utility bills
- \$500.....helps pay part of a family's rent

For more information
or to donate,
please visit:

ccfwsb.org/donate
or send a check to:

Catholic Charities, PO Box
10630, Fort Wayne, Indiana
46853



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Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

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