

Voices of Hope

SPRING 2022



Community Markets Expand to Fourth Parish Site

CORAL STEAM Volunteer Recognized by CCUSA

The Window Remains a Beacon for the Unhoused

Widen The Circle of Hope with Your Legacy

FROM THE CEO

Calendar

MAY

21-22 Annual Appeal Weekend

JUNE

13 38th Annual Catholic Charities Invitational Golf Tournament
Silver Creek Valley Country Club

OCTOBER

6 14th Annual Bocce Tournament
Campo di Bocce

Visit CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/events for details

Dear Friends,

Whenever overwhelmed by the terrible news in the world, I find it helpful to remember God's presence in our lives, through family, friends, safety, shelter, food, health, meaningful work, knowledge and the beauty of nature. I reflect on the lives of the people we serve through Catholic Charities and am so moved by their determination, courage, and resilience. For though they struggle to find safety, shelter, food, health, education, economic security, and a sense of belonging, they have the courage to ask for help, the courage to hope for a better life for themselves and their families.



In this spring of 2022 we are blessed at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County to accompany these members of our community on their journey of hope. Our massive expansion of food distribution begun at the start of the pandemic continues through parish drive-throughs, home-delivered groceries and nutritious meals for seniors facing daily hunger. Thanks to the David & Lucile Packard Foundation we have relaunched our free tax assistance (Tax EZ) to help lower-income families access Child Tax Credits and the Earned Income Tax Credits as well as public benefits to stabilize their incomes. Our refugee resettlement efforts have expanded beyond our Refugee Foster Care to being a Community Partner to help Afghan families jump-start their new lives in the valley as part of the Afghan Placement and Assistance program.

In the face of growing income inequality in the valley, Catholic Charities continues to alleviate, reduce and prevent poverty by assisting the unhoused, preventing homelessness, finding jobs, providing immigration legal services, teaching children after school, providing senior, youth and family resources and social and mental health supports, assisting those incarcerated and re-entering society, and building a network of advocates and community volunteers through parishes and neighborhoods.

Thank you to our volunteers, staff and generous donors for enabling Catholic Charities to provide help and create hope with people of all cultures and beliefs. If you have not yet had the opportunity to help this spring, I invite you to join us by investing through Catholic Charities to make a difference in our community and to truly change lives for good.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads 'Gregory R. Kepferle'.

Gregory R. Kepferle, CEO

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Dedicated volunteers support expansion of community markets

As the Parish Engagement Program plans to open its fourth community resource market since the initiative launched in late 2019, much of the program's impact on poverty comes from a committed and growing volunteer corps.

More than 80 volunteers consistently help at the Community Markets that operate weekly at three parish locations, offering resources and services to all who drop in. Parish Engagement will be opening a fourth Community Market site this summer in North Santa Clara County. It will join the existing San Jose locations at Our Lady of Refuge, Christ the King, and St. Leo the Great.

Each of these parishes has a different service focus, based on population, although many overlap in services as volunteers support grocery distribution, hot meals, and translation for clients working with service providers for legal aid, rental assistance or medical support. Additionally, Santa Theresa in San Jose and St. Mary's in Gilroy have Parish Engagement staff onsite daily to support the social service needs of these communities.

There are also 40 "Accompaniment Volunteers" who have completed extensive training. They work with assigned Community Market clients on an individual basis weekly, focusing on the clients' goals. Many of these volunteers

establish long-term mentoring relationships with clients on their unique journeys out of poverty.

"It really is about the client's journey," said Larry Cargnoni, who completed the Accompaniment Training with the



PHOTO ON LEFT: Former Parish Engagement Program client Juda (right) meets with her Accompaniment Volunteer, Irene, in 2020. PHOTO ABOVE: Today, Juda has made positive changes in her life and is supporting herself and her daughter.



Parish Engagement Program in 2020. "I don't believe my role is walking behind and pushing them, or walking in front of them and pulling them. It's walking with them on their journeys, side-by-side. I want them to thrive."

One former client, Juda, attributes much of her life transformation to her Accompaniment Volunteer, Irene. Today, this first-generation college graduate is on track to complete her master's degree. But in the early months of the pandemic, Juda sought help after medical complications following the birth of her daughter left her with serious financial difficulties as a single mom. Through the Parish Engagement Program, she received food, clothing, maternity supplies, diapers and gift cards to purchase other items. And the program connected Juda with Irene for long-term guidance and mentorship.

"Catholic Charities respected my decisions and my timeline for my life," Juda says. "And I am grateful for Irene, who gives her love unconditionally and encouraged me to see beyond my own environment. Now I am strong enough to do things on my own. I am financially supporting myself and my beautiful two-year-old daughter, who is a strong, happy, confident little girl. I feel very blessed." ■



Accompaniment Volunteer Larry Cargnoni (top left), also volunteers with a mobile shower van, donated by The Village House, that is set up at Our Lady of Refuge each Thursday. Volunteers, including Monica and Francesca (top row, left-right) from the nonprofit BASICS, recently posed with the mobile unit that allows unhoused persons to take a warm shower.

To volunteer, bit.ly/volunteercsc. To learn more about the Parish Engagement Program, visit CCSCC.org/parishengagement

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Cathedral Social Ministries: A beacon of hope during pandemic and beyond

Q&A with Sharon Miller, Director, Cathedral Social Ministries located at John XXIII Multi-Service Center

Why has it been critical for your services to continue to be accessible during the last two years of the pandemic?

John XXIII's "The Window" is the only stable day service in the county where a homeless person can receive mail while homeless. This is critical because we received over 300 stimulus checks, including unemployment checks for the homeless.

Another critical need besides mail, sandwiches, and healthcare is access to a telephone. We revived an old service, our landline telephone, so the homeless could connect with providers and family. Many homeless have cell phones. However, during the first year of the pandemic there was no place open that would let a homeless person charge their cell phone. We then partnered with San Jose Rotary who donated battery chargers. We will give the homeless person a charger and they return the charger in two weeks for another fully charged battery pack.

For the first two years, Martin Luther King Library across the street from us was closed so the homeless could no longer access their public computers. Because of this, we needed to begin providing a laptop service at The Window. Our service navigators would help the homeless access social security benefits and unemployment benefits online since government agencies were closed to the public. We also registered them to receive social service benefits. The Window saw a 25% increase in receiving Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards which are public assistance benefit cards, much like a credit card, allowing people to purchase food.

"The pandemic taught us to come together in a way we never knew was possible. Our human worth, dignity and creativity turned barriers into opportunities and tragedy into long term changes resulting in positive outcomes. I am thankful to our donors, volunteers, and community partners,"

Sharon Miller, Cathedral Social Ministries



Catholic Charities partners with Gardner Healthcare for the Homeless to provide free primary healthcare in Cathedral Social Ministries' clinic. As soon as the vaccine was available, curbside COVID-19 vaccines to the homeless were offered and weekly curbside COVID-19 testing.

Are you serving more people?

Our numbers average around 150 people a day. However, our registration for first-time services increased to 25 new people and families a week. We started to see more women and children who were struggling with domestic violence, as well as people who had never

been homeless before. We were able to serve more homeless people with shelter placement because the county pivoted creating a centralized shelter placement hot line. We placed over 300 homeless people in shelter the first year. We also united more homeless people with

family members who allowed their family member to return home to shelter in-place.

What do you expect going forward in the needs of those you serve?

Our services will continue to be client centered. We will always address the barriers to health, food insecurity, shelter, employment, recovery from substance abuse, mental health, and our dire need for permanent supportive housing. ■

To learn more about Cathedral Social Ministries' programs – The Window, Bridges of Hope, and Catholic Charities John XXIII Gardner Healthcare Clinic – visit [CCSCC.org/cathedralsocialministry](https://www.ccsc.org/cathedralsocialministry)

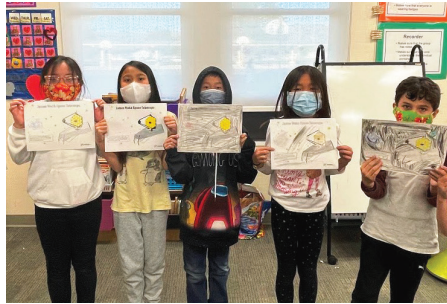
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Google.org, SCU's Ignatian Center fund STEAM expansion

With the support of Google.org and Santa Clara University's Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education, the STEAM curriculum will be expanded for weekly learning in all 22 Catholic Charities' after-school locations in Santa Clara County public schools.

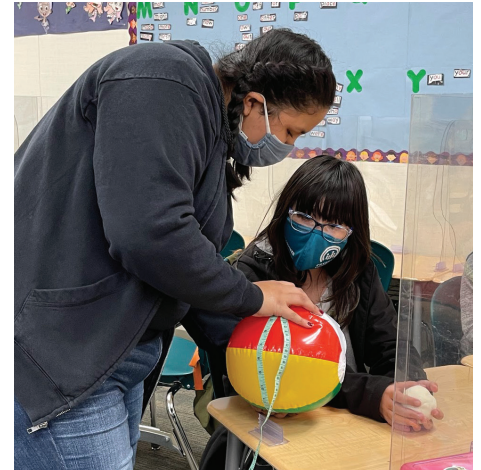
Google.org's grant continues their support of the STEAM program offered through CORAL, Catholic Charities' Extended Learning Program. In 2018, they provided a grant to create a STEM lab at Anne Darling Elementary School. The program has continued to engage students, many from low-income backgrounds, and is now called STEAM, adding "Arts" to the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math curriculum.

Funding from Google.org was especially critical when the pandemic hit and in-person learning was paused. It allowed Catholic Charities to pivot and use the funds to provide virtual curriculum to students across its entire network. Now that schools are open and in-person classes in session, students need the well-rounded curriculum STEAM



provides. And the program broadens opportunities and career paths.

Catholic Charities welcomes its newest partner in CORAL funding: Santa Clara University's Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education which is providing one of its inaugural grants made through the newly created Dan McCormick Technology Fund. Named after an alumnus, the Dan McCormick Technology Fund provides STEM/STEAM materials and curricular support to organizations addressing academic inequity among local children, in particular those Ignatian Center community partner agencies who host SCU student tutors in conjunction with community-based service-learning courses.



CORAL STEAM students at Windmill Springs Elementary School recently completed a four-week curriculum on the solar system and participated in a virtual NASA James Webb Space Telescope Outreach Event.

CCSCC's after-school/extended learning program, Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL), is a K-8 educational program focuses on improving academic achievement through literacy and homework support and incorporating STEAM programs throughout the school year. ■

Rebecca Rosales and Otilia Samame

For the past 16 years, Rebecca Rosales and Otilia Samame have worked side-by-side as receptionists at Catholic Charities' headquarters on Zanker Road in San Jose. In fact, this "dynamic duo" started their jobs on the same day in April 2006. They are the first contact when families and individuals in crisis call or come to Catholic Charities.

"Rebecca and Otilia really serve as the 'faces and voices' of our agency for the public, and they do their jobs with respect and compassion," according to Catholic Charities' CEO Greg Kepferle. "Their knowledge and experience in responding to all types of situations are invaluable in our mission to care for the poor."

The two never stopped working in-person during the pandemic and, at its peak in 2020, their volume of incoming phone calls requesting help jumped from an average of 150 to 250 per day. They also willingly worked at other Catholic Charities' program sites to help respond to the increased demand for services caused by

the pandemic. But even under pressure, the two remain calm and resourceful.

"My favorite part of working for Catholic Charities is knowing that I'm helping people with the services we offer,"

Otilia says. "I feel very proud and thankful to work at an agency where we do so much to help those in need."

Rebecca agrees: "We meet and speak with so many people who are in a really bad place in their lives. Working at Catholic Charities makes me incredibly grateful." ■



Rebecca Rosales and Otilia Samame

SPOTLIGHT

Dan Wu's retirement leaves legacy of quality low-income housing

When Dan Wu began working for Charities Housing in 1995 as a Project Manager, the organization owned three properties with 176 units. Wu retires in May as the Executive Director of Charities Housing, leaving a legacy of great expansion in affordable housing opportunities.



Current housing units now number 1,452 plus 229 under construction. And an additional 1,411 units are in the development pipeline over the next five to seven years.

"We house those who are most in need and create great places for people to call home. Just because people don't have resources, they still deserve safe and affordable places to live," Wu said. "I firmly believe our contributions are essential to the creation of healthy communities."

Catholic Charities established the Division of Housing Development and Services in 1990 and formed Charities Housing Development Corporation of Santa Clara County (Charities Housing) in 1993 to address the lack of safe and affordable housing opportunities in the community. Current residents of

Charities Housing's 34 facilities include low-income families, single adults and seniors, and those with disabilities. All properties are professionally managed to compassionately assist residents with their needs. The organization, which currently employs 70 staff members, maintains a reputation in the community for quality construction with limited resources while still achieving attractive modern designs. "The public expects more from us as we develop these properties in partnership with local governments and residents," Wu adds.

"Not only is Dan a person of incredible integrity and honesty, his real strength as a real estate developer is that he is a smart risk taker," according to Chris Block, who preceded Wu as the founding Executive Director of Charities Housing and the two have remained close colleagues over the years. "Some less successful developers don't have this skill. Because of Dan's approach, Charities Housing has grown exponentially under his leadership."

Wu's impressive academic credentials earned him the nickname of "The Professor." He is a licensed architect, licensed real estate appraiser, holds a master's degree in real estate, and post-grad certification in real estate



Catholic Charities and Charities Housing opened The Veranda in Cupertino in 2019

leadership from Harvard University Graduate School of Design. In addition to his professional expertise, the "people side" of real estate development is what has kept him going for the past 26 years. Wu recalls early on in his work when a resident unexpectedly stopped by his office: "He poked his head in on a Friday afternoon, two weeks after he'd moved into a building we'd just opened. He wanted to thank us for 'giving him a second chance on life' and then he left. I never saw him again. But it was all I needed to keep doing what I was doing to make a difference." ■

In tribute to Dan Wu's amazing work, he was named as the Honorary Colonel of our Inaugural Cornhole Tournament held in April. It's not too late to recognize Dan with a gift to Catholic Charities. Please visit: bit.ly/ColonelofCornhole

Jenny Ho joins Catholic Charities as Chief Financial Officer

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County welcomes Jenny Ho as the agency's new Chief Financial Officer. She joined the organization's senior management team in March, bringing more than 20 years of professional and nonprofit leadership experience to her role.



Jenny worked most recently as the CFO of Community Housing Partnerships (HomeRise) and previously at MidPen Housing Corporation as VP and Controller and with several for-profit companies.

A CPA, Jenny has a LEAD Certificate in Corporate Innovation from Stanford University Graduate School of Business and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with double majors in Accounting and International Business having graduated Magna Cum Laude from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

From a first generation immigrant family, Catholic Charities' mission resonates with Jenny: "I find the holistic approach to take into account an individual's life situation and extend the support to his/her family very powerful and truly life-changing." She is excited about joining us "to fight poverty and help people of all cultures and beliefs to rise up and achieve self-sufficiency" by delivering the highest standards of financial management and strategic planning.

Welcome, Jenny Ho! ■

Donor widens the Circle of Hope

Vicki M., cat lover and retiree, recently updated her estate plans. Her attorney had given her a list of things to consider, documents to gather, and contact and account information to compile. Of particular importance to her was to get the tax identification number of Catholic Charities so that she could make a bequest to support our work and further her values. When her attorney checked on the progress of her to-do list, Vicki explained that she was yet to inform Catholic Charities of her intention, but she'd get to it. Her attorney advised that this step was unnecessary, that her intentions were private, and informing charities was not required to make a legacy gift. Vicki thought differently.

"I believe it is important for Catholic Charities to know that they will be supported by people like me who include them in their will or trust. By doing so, we ensure that they will be able to continue their wonderful work into the future."

Vicki's opinion is highly valued by charities like ours. By informing us, you allow us the ability to thank you during your life, plan for our future, and bring more help and hope for years to come.

Have you made a legacy gift to Catholic Charities in your will, trust, life insurance, retirement or other



accounts? If so, you are a Circle of Hope member, a group of unique and special friends who have invested in the future of Santa Clara County. When you inform us, you will receive a special message from Bishop Cantú welcoming you to our Circle of Hope.

Join Circle of Hope completing this short survey:

bit.ly/CoHSurvey



Or by emailing

drusso@catholiccharitiesscc.org

Corporate Partner: Sanmina



SANMINA®

Sanmina is accustomed to complexity. As a leader in designing, manufacturing and repairing some of the most complex and innovative optical, electronic and mechanical products in the world, they have several decades of experience tackling tough challenges. Their corporate social responsibility priorities support improving complex social problems including poverty and homelessness. Their repeated investments in Catholic Charities prove they are unafraid to meet challenges facing the communities in which their employees live and work. Sanmina has been integral in the success of our community events and the surrounding Bay Area. These events provide comradery with a purpose to our supporters and area companies. Sanmina continues to address complex community issues, act as fun and engaged employers, and generous neighbors.

If your company would like to join Catholic Charities through event support, volunteerism, or team engagement, contact David Russo at drusso@catholiccharitiesscc.org. ■

38th Annual Catholic Charities Invitational Golf Tournament

Monday, June 13, 2022

Silver Creek Valley Golf Club

Don't miss this premium golf experience!

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 ccscc.org/golf



*John Sze
recognized as a
Finalist, Catholic
Charities USA
2022 Volunteer
of the Year*



Hundreds of youth served through Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County have been given opportunities to expand learning and career opportunities through the ongoing efforts of volunteer John Sze. A mechanical engineer who began volunteering for Catholic Charities in 2015, John shares his expertise to make STEAM

fun for students served through the extended learning/after school program CORAL (Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning). His wife, Leah, is also a Catholic Charities' volunteer and both are great ambassadors of our work to change lives for good in our community. ■

John Sze (top row, third from left) with Sylvandale Elementary School students (bottom row), along with CORAL/CORAL STEAM staff and volunteers (top row).

To volunteer with Catholic Charities,
please visit [CCSCC.org/volunteer](https://www.ccsc.org/volunteer)