

Summer 2022

# NEWSLETTER



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

A letter from Executive Director David Bethuram to the friends of Catholic Charities.

## EDUCATION

Information on our senior care programs.

## UPDATES

Success stories and the impact of our many programs.



## Friends,

At Catholic Charities, it is not unusual for us to experience and hear various dimensions of hope from those we serve. When dreams are fulfilled and prayers are answered, it is a time of rejoicing. But when aspirations are dashed, one may feel despair, discouragement or isolation. Hope is a gift and blessing that we hold in the highest regard. It is the foundation of serving in the name of God – a God who can make all things possible. In hope, we know God’s providence leads us from unexpected turns in life to a new and better reality.

With this perspective, we recognize that the service to which we are called is not merely an act of assistance but a solution rooted in providing hope to those who struggle. The truth is that the challenges of the people who walk through our doors are at times complex and intense. Our mental health services provide meaningful hope and assistance that enable individuals and families to overcome barriers and live productive, healthy lives in our community.

I am ever so grateful for our professional staff and dedicated volunteers who compassionately love and serve people in crisis. We believe there is but one answer for each person looking for help and comfort: hope.

Hope is what keeps fear at bay. Hope opens the doors to possible solutions. Hope is our future. Hope is the echo in every neighbor’s “thank you.” Hope is knowing that our mission, despite the challenges and obstacles that come our way, is possible because of you, our faithful supporters and benefactors. Thank you for believing in our mission of providing help and creating hope.

Sincerely,

**David J. Bethuram**  
Executive Director

# SENIOR PROGRAMS

## A Caring Place Adult Day Service

We support caregivers and their loved ones by providing a safe daytime environment for adults with physical and cognitive challenges. In recent months, our participants have enjoyed their usual fun and games, including trivia, Bingo, Valentine's Day crafts, a drum circle with The Bongo Boys, weekly visits from Bob the dog and more. Volunteers from Butler University have helped with some of our programming, and we are grateful for their enthusiasm.

To enroll a loved one, please contact Lisa Sperry at [lsperry@archindy.org](mailto:lsperry@archindy.org) or 317-466-0015.

## Senior Companion Program

This peer-to-peer program links Senior Companion volunteers with older adults who can stay in their homes and benefit from a friendly visitor. While the primary purpose is companionship, Senior Companions may also assist with a variety of helpful tasks including light meal preparation, appropriate exercise, respite care for family/caregivers, occasional light housework and escorts to medical appointments.

If your loved one, neighbor or friend needs a companion, please reach out to Joyce Beaven at [jbeaven@archindy.org](mailto:jbeaven@archindy.org) or 317-236-1565.

**"I am able to have a friend, and we have a great time together."**

**– Carla**

## Caregiver Support

Most people will provide caregiving services to an older adult at some point, and education and communication are essential parts of preparation. Now is the time to have conversations with loved ones about preparation for caring for someone in the future and the care you will want for yourself. Make plans now, avoid crises and the risk of second-guessing decisions. The Conversation Project ([theconversationproject.org](http://theconversationproject.org)) and Five Wishes ([fivewishes.org](http://fivewishes.org)) provide guides to prepare for caregiving situations.

To speak with someone about caregiving or to find caregiving resources, contact Monica Woodsworth, MGS at [mwoodsworth@archindy.org](mailto:mwoodsworth@archindy.org) or call 317-261-3378.

## RSVP

AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) works with community partners to connect adults 55 and older with volunteer opportunities that will impact the surrounding areas. AmeriCorps, a federal agency, provides major funds and administers RSVP while volunteers serve from home or in their community. Learn more at [HelpCreateHope.org](http://HelpCreateHope.org).

# HOLY FAMILY SHELTER

Jessie and her three children came to Holy Family Shelter (HFS) after being asked to leave their house by the health department. HFS placed Jessie and her children in an extended stay hotel for four months while she worked with a case manager to become self-sufficient. During her time at HFS, Jessie battled breast cancer. She attended every necessary appointment and had two major surgeries, all while searching for housing and ensuring her children were attending school. With the assistance of her HFS case manager, Jessie was accepted into an apartment and moved herself and her children in with no issues. Through hard work and determination, Jessie obtained safe and suitable housing and bettered her life for herself and her children. To volunteer, call the shelter at 317-635-7830.



# CHRISTMAS STORE



2021 was another great year for our Christmas Store. The store served a record-breaking 926 families (3,564 individuals) in just five weeks. The store operated as a drive-up again this year with volunteers pulling gifts for families and loading them into cars. We would like to thank our staff, volunteers and donors who make the Christmas Store possible every year. To donate online, visit [HelpCreateHope.org](https://www.HelpCreateHope.org).

# REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT



Our employment team had the privilege of helping a special needs refugee client get a job at Goodwill despite having an expired Employment Authorization Card, no state ID and no Green Card. We helped him complete a job intake form, provided an employment presentation and collected documents. Through our program, he was able to obtain a state ID, secure a full-time position at Goodwill and was provided a one-month bus pass to travel to and from work smoothly.

Follow us on Facebook at Catholic Charities Indianapolis Refugee and Immigrant Services.

## ST. ELIZABETH | COLEMAN

Rebecca visited us several years ago to make an adoption plan for her unborn child. Since then, she has worked hard to become self-sufficient and provide for her young children. This past Christmas, she was worried about not being able to afford presents for her children due to financial struggles and turned to us for assistance. Thanks to our kind donors, we are able to assist women like Rebecca and helped 25 families with a total of 50 children this Christmas season. One mother commented, "What a relief I feel this year! From the bottom of my heart, I am truly thankful."

Throughout the pandemic, adoptions have been challenging with new hospital regulations, but our services to birth families and adoptive couples have continued. We assisted over 30 families with stepparent/relative adoption this past year. After two years of no international travel, we recently had several families travel abroad to bring children home to their forever families. To learn more about our mission, visit [GivingBirthtoHope.org](http://GivingBirthtoHope.org).

# COUNSELING PROGRAM

We offer a variety of counseling services to help individuals, couples and families struggling with their mental health. For inquiries about our confidential counseling services, please call 317-236-1500.



## CRISIS OFFICE

James Williams came to the Crisis Office upon referral from Wheeler Mission after suffering a job loss and a divorce in the past year. In his 50s, James found himself unemployed and homeless for the first time in his life. He needed help paying for his prescriptions, obtaining health services and getting transportation. We learned James was an honorably discharged veteran and referred him to the Veteran's Affairs office to assist him with his health needs and finding housing. We gave him food, clothing and hygiene items, as all his belongings were in his impounded vehicle.

The following month, James returned to let us know that the Veteran's Affairs office was helping him with housing and his medical needs. His situation has improved thanks in part to community partners working together to find him the help he needed. To volunteer, contact Stephanie Davis at [sdavis@archindy.org](mailto:sdavis@archindy.org) or 317-236-1556.

# IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

Our team has gone through some recent expansion to help better serve our clients. Julie Wakolbinger joined the team as our citizenship instructor, and Mbarka Belkassim is the new community integration and legal specialist. Two attorneys have also joined the team and have helped to grow our services. Haddy Rikabi is our immigration attorney, and Katie Bray is our immigration junior legal counsel.

The Immigration Legal Services team is excited for this period of growth. This expansion has provided the opportunity to service more immigrants in Indianapolis and the surrounding areas.

To volunteer, contact Beth Carney at [ecarney@archindy.org](mailto:ecarney@archindy.org). Clients seeking legal assistance from our program can contact us at [ccimmigration@archindy.org](mailto:ccimmigration@archindy.org) or 317-236-1526.



## SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

The School Social Work Program is comprised of 24 master's level social workers and counselors who serve 29 Catholic schools in Indianapolis and the surrounding area. These dedicated counselors provide a wide array of services including individual and small group counseling, classroom guidance, collaboration with teachers and administrators, family support services, school crisis intervention and more. At a time when children's mental health is in crisis, our staff continues to provide quality professional services to students and families.

We recently hired a full-time mental health school-based bilingual counselor to serve the Spanish-speaking students and families at Holy Cross Catholic School in Marion County. The counselor works with the principal and school faculty to provide mental health support to those referred for services. She meets with students weekly to set goals and work toward better class outcomes. She has even connected parents to other community resources to help meet additional needs such as medication or behavioral modification supports.

[www.HelpCreateHope.org](http://www.HelpCreateHope.org)



Facebook: Catholic Charities Indianapolis



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Caregiver Support Groups

Virtual and in-person support groups for caregivers of older adults. The groups are not disease specific, but registration is required. Contact Monica at [mwoodsworth@archindy.org](mailto:mwoodsworth@archindy.org) or 317-261-3378. If you are not able to attend, feel free to call for caregiver information.

- 3rd Tuesday** from 5:30 - 7 PM in person at St Jude's, 5375 McFarland Road
- 3rd Thursday** from 1 - 2:30 PM in person at the Catholic Center, 1400 N Meridian St.
- 4th Thursday** from 4:15 - 5:30 PM virtually. Registration required to get Zoom link.

## Leave a Legacy

Donors 70 1/2 and older may use Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) to donate up to \$100,000 per year to the charity of their choice. At age 72, these donations count as required minimum distributions. For more information on how to utilize QCDs in your giving plan, please contact Kim Pohovey at [Kpohovey@archindy.org](mailto:Kpohovey@archindy.org) or 317-236-1568.