

Charities USA

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**Helping
homeless
families find
safe and
stable shelter**

THREE CATHOLIC CHARITIES
AGENCIES RECEIVE
\$5 MILLION FROM BEZOS
DAY ONE FAMILIES FUND

**2019
Volunteer
of the Year
Finalists**

A place to call home

THE HEALTHY HOUSING INITIATIVE
OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES

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Editorial and Business Office

2050 Ballenger Ave., Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel: 703-549-1390 • **Fax:** 703-549-1656
www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org | info@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

Catholic Charities USA is the national office for one of the nation's largest social service networks. Member agencies and institutions nationwide provide vital social services to almost 10 million people in need, regardless of their religious, social or economic backgrounds. Catholic Charities USA supports and enhances the work of its members by providing networking opportunities, national advocacy, program development, training and consulting and financial benefits.

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EDITOR'S

COLUMN

“Home is where the heart is.” It is a lovely expression that centers the meaning of love and caring not in material things but in relationships.

But having an actual home to live in makes a big difference in people's lives not only for relationships but also for hearts, in the sense of good health.

The Catholic Charities ministry in the United States sees the connection between safe, stable shelter and wellbeing. Grounded in Scripture and Catholic social teaching, Catholic Charities works to provide homes and healthcare to the most needy and vulnerable in communities nationwide.

Recently, Catholic Charities USA launched a Healthy Housing Initiative with a pilot group of five member agencies. The initiative seeks to reduce homelessness through an innovative strategy: providing – at the same location – shelter and health services to formerly homeless people. You can read more about the initiative starting on page 7.

The professional and caring housing work done by the Catholic Charities ministry was recognized in a special way by the Jeff Bezos Day One Families Fund, which committed \$2 billion to help organizations that serve homeless families. Catholic Charities is among the organizations recognized, and three agencies were picked to receive \$5 million each. Read about this exciting news starting on page 12.

The Catholic Charities ministry continues to adapt its work to the needs of the people it serves, even as its inspiration remains the same: to honor the inherent dignity of every person.

David Werning, Managing Editor

To comment on this issue, please write to David Werning at dwerning@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org.

CONTENTS

06 | The difference a home makes

THE HEALTHY HOUSING INITIATIVE OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES

By David Werning, Managing Editor



FEATURES

- 12** Helping homeless families find safe and stable shelter:
Three Catholic Charities agencies receive \$5 million each from Bezos
Day One Families Fund
- Catholic Community Services of Western Washington
 - Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans
 - Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Miami



DEPARTMENTS

- 05** President's Column
20 CCUSA Update
22 Network Notes
25 Agency Spotlight





“Recognizing that the combination of homelessness and poor health keeps people on the streets, we came together as a ministry to talk and listen and decide how to respond.”

- Sister Donna Markham

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

- ▶ The Housing Act of 1949 listed as one of its goals “a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.”

Today the goal remains unmet, but Catholic Charities perseveres in making it a reality. Throughout the more than 100 years Catholic Charities has served people in the U.S., we have always made housing a priority, from orphanages in the early years to housing for senior citizens, refugees and veterans more recently. We adapt to the times and create solutions based on the needs of our communities.

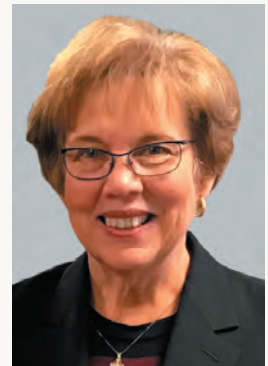
The Healthy Housing Initiative is the latest example. Recognizing that the combination of homelessness and poor health keeps people on the streets, we came together as a ministry to talk and listen and decide how to respond. The result was the Healthy Housing Initiative: providing housing and health services at the same location so that formerly homeless persons can regain full health and move toward permanent housing. It's a five-year plan detailed in this issue, and we include a brief note from each of the five Catholic Charities agencies that comprise the pilot group.

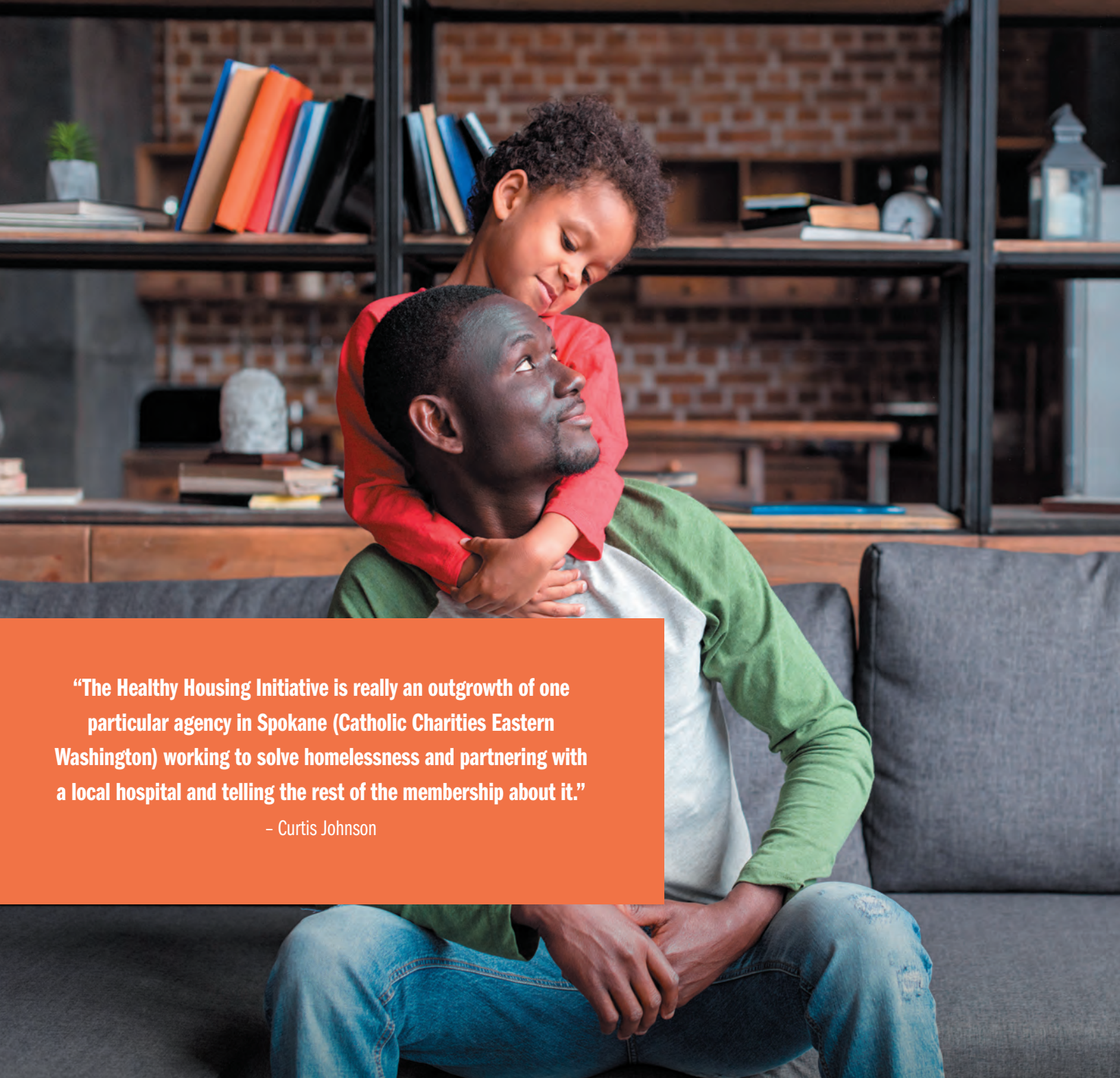
Catholic Charities works every day to minister to those in need, and the work includes seeking new ways to approach perennial problems. Serving people, particularly those who are poor and vulnerable, continues to be the focus of our ministry. That's why we don't fit people into our programs. We build programs to help people. ■



Sister Donna Markham OP, PhD

President & CEO





“The Healthy Housing Initiative is really an outgrowth of one particular agency in Spokane (Catholic Charities Eastern Washington) working to solve homelessness and partnering with a local hospital and telling the rest of the membership about it.”

– Curtis Johnson

The difference a home makes

THE HEALTHY HOUSING INITIATIVE OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES

By David Werning, Managing Editor

- ▶ Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), with five Catholic Charities member agencies, has launched a Healthy Housing Initiative that combines health and housing services to help homeless people remain off the streets.

The five agencies are Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (Detroit); Catholic Charities of St. Louis (St. Louis, Mo.); Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada (Las Vegas); Catholic Charities of Portland, Ore. (Portland); and Catholic Charities Eastern Washington (Spokane).

The initiative sets three main goals to achieve by 2025 in each of the agencies' cities, and it assumes the collaboration of local arch/dioceses, Catholic health sys-

tems and other partners such as financial institutions and government entities:

1. reduce chronic homelessness by 20 percent;
2. decrease hospital readmission rates for homeless persons by at least 25 percent; and
3. connect 35 percent of newly-housed persons to primary care and behavioral health services.

"The Healthy Housing Initiative is really an outgrowth of one particular agency in Spokane (Catholic Charities Eastern Washington) working to solve homelessness and partnering with a local hospital and telling the rest of the membership

about it," said Curtis Johnson, vice president of Housing Strategy for CCUSA. "We learned from them that housing is a social determinant of health; people who have stable shelter are healthier and use emergency room services less often. So the question became how to 'co-locate' health services and residences in other cities."

Encouraged by Spokane's example, CCUSA in 2017 convened subject matter experts from Catholic Charities agencies in order to discuss how the Catholic Charities ministry nationwide could address the integration of housing and healthcare. They considered the existing capacity and infrastructure among their agencies, including investment capital, housing supply, health policies, demographics, affordability and

the potential for collaboration with church and government organizations. The results of the meeting showed that the Catholic Charities ministry – which has 167 agencies nationwide – is a unique space where both comprehensive care and safe shelter could be provided at single locations to address the problem of homelessness in communities.

Building upon the conclusions of the 2017 meeting, CCUSA requested and received funds from the Kresge Foundation for a Healthy Housing Innovation Lab, which took place in Chicago in June 2018. The lab brought together 41 professionals from 16 national/regional organizations and 12 local Catholic Charities agencies for dialogue and action planning. The group identified three assets of the Catholic Charities ministry to include in any plan: converting surplus church property into affordable healthy housing; partnering with Catholic or other local health systems to provide permanent supportive housing or respite services; and using Catholic Charities case managers for integrated care in service models. They also decided to develop and implement the following two models: permanent supportive housing and homeless shelter medical respite.

The permanent supportive housing model follows the Housing First approach, which prioritizes access to permanent housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. The basic need of safe and stable shelter must be met before other needs like health, employment and/or finances can be addressed. Case managers who have access to affordable housing facilities will provide formerly homeless persons with wraparound services such as eviction protection, job placement and links to primary and behavioral health care services.

The homeless shelter medical respite model provides acute and post-acute medical care for homeless individuals who are too frail to recover from illness or injury on the streets, but are not ill enough to be in a hospital. A Catholic Charities agency would partner with a neighboring Catholic hospital to operate temporary housing for recently released patients who need a place to recover fully.

In response to CCUSA's Healthy Housing Initiative, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco offered to host a local healthy housing convening in 2019 for CCUSA member agencies at each of the 12 Federal Reserve Bank districts. The effort

will promote new affordable “healthy housing” projects or enhance current projects by bringing together key local organizations and staff, including the Catholic Charities agency, hospitals, health associations, housing funders, lenders, and public officials. Catholic Charities agencies will be able to promote a variety of healthy housing projects specific to their local needs and capacity.

The key to success, according to Johnson, is the collaboration of all community partners: “No one group – whether it’s the feds, the states or locals – can do it alone,” he said. “If you’re putting health and housing together, you have to put local and federal agencies together. You have to bring together social service agencies and housing agencies, like Catholic Charities and their partners, with the hospitals.”

The five agencies in the pilot group of the Healthy Housing Initiative submitted the following notes on the beginnings of their efforts and plans for the next five years.

“The key to success, according to Johnson, is the collaboration of all community partners: “No one group – whether it’s the feds, the states or locals – can do it alone.”

– Curtis Johnson





Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM)

CCSEM is a proud member of the CCUSA Healthy Housing Initiative pilot group. We will work to reduce chronic homelessness by 20 percent in our city through permanent supportive housing that includes wrap around case management and health services for these persons. Our strategy includes working closely with the Archdiocese of Detroit, our partners at Trinity Health System, Ascension Healthcare and CCUSA. CCSEM plans to convert surplus church property into 44 affordable housing units with easy access to health services. With approximately 221 chronically homeless persons in Detroit, we remain committed to help our homeless brothers and sisters leave the streets and live according to their inherent dignity in a safe and decent home.



Catholic Charities of St. Louis (CCSTL)

While many of CCSTL's eight federated agencies are expected to participate in the initiative, St. Patrick Center, the agency that works most directly in the area of homelessness, will serve as the lead agency. CCSTL and St. Patrick Center will also partner with local and national affordable housing and health care organizations to improve identification and support for our most vulnerable citizens, especially those who are chronically homeless. Our current local partners for the Healthy Housing Initiative include the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the Incarnate Word Foundation, Mercy, and SSM Health. We plan to engage additional partners as well. Many existing programs that include behavioral and physical health and housing services will be enhanced and expanded due to our participation in the CCUSA Healthy Housing Initiative. We are and will remain committed to providing housing, health and financial stability with dignity and respect to our neighbors in need of our services and support.





Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada

Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada is proud to be at the forefront of making a meaningful change in reducing the chronically homeless population in our community. Together with the Diocese of Las Vegas, Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada and Catholic Health Systems will develop an initial project offering 50-75 housing units that will provide wraparound services onsite. On any given night, there are an estimated 505 chronically homeless people in our Las Vegas Valley. With the help of community partners, we can address the systemic issues of homelessness and transform the lives of the vulnerable men, women and children in our southern Nevada community.



Catholic Charities of Portland

Catholic Charities of Portland looks forward to reducing chronic homelessness in Multnomah County and the Portland metropolitan area through permanent supportive housing that includes wraparound case management and health services for these vulnerable households. At the same time, we remain committed to serving a broad continuum of housing needs, with over 800 existing affordable housing units in the Portland area and across Western Oregon. Our strategy includes partnering with the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon and Providence Health & Services. We aim to add at least 300 housing units in developments that contain or have easy access to health services. With approximately 3,300 chronic homeless persons in our Multnomah County, we remain committed to help our homeless brothers and sisters leave the streets and live according to their inherent dignity in a safe and decent home.



Catholic Charities Eastern Washington

In Spokane we have come to the realization that the future of our work to serve the poorest of the poor is profoundly connected to our ability to engage and integrate our services with health care systems. We continue to make intentional connections to show hospitals, health insurance companies and others in the world of medicine the many ways that Catholic Charities programs that stabilize fragile people can also help their bottom lines with utilization aversion. Above all else, we help the most important bottom line for them and for us - the dignity of every human person. ■



“Catholic Charities of Portland looks forward to reducing chronic homelessness in Multnomah County and the Portland metropolitan area through permanent supportive housing that includes wraparound case management and health services for these vulnerable households.”

Helping homeless families find safe and stable shelter

THREE CATHOLIC CHARITIES AGENCIES RECEIVE \$5 MILLION EACH FROM BEZOS DAY ONE FAMILIES FUND



- ▶ Three Catholic Charities agencies are among the 24 organizations that received grants from Jeff Bezos' Day One Families Fund.

Catholic Community Services of Western Washington, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans and Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Miami received \$5 million each to help provide shelter for homeless families.

Jeff Bezos made the announcement Nov. 20, 2018. "We hope these grants provide the additional resources these leaders and their organizations need to expand the scope and impact of their efforts," Bezos said (www.bezosdayonefund.org/day1familiesfund).

Catholic Charities USA asked the three agencies to discuss their plans for the grants. Their responses follow.



Catholic Community Services of Western Washington

By Rosemary Zilmer, Vice President for Development

As a first recipient of the Bezos Day One Families Fund, Denny Hunthausen, vice president and agency director of Catholic Community Services (Tacoma, Wash.), calls the \$5 million gift “transformational and the chance to change the trajectory of family homelessness in the region.”

“The rising numbers of children and families experiencing homelessness in our communities is unacceptable,” Hunthausen said. “This grant is an encouraging sign that, together, we are committed to addressing this challenge.”

According to Hunthausen, families often have to wait eight days or more to be assessed, and even longer to receive the help they desperately need. Research shows that the sooner you intervene in a family’s experience of homelessness, the more likely you are to get them out of homelessness.

The grant will help to expand and enhance the agency’s Family Housing Network Day Center for families experiencing the physical and psychological stress of homelessness. Initial basic needs for food preparation, showers and laundry access will be met. Most importantly, Day Center staff will provide a connection to a host of critical services including rapid rehousing, employment, education and training, entitlements and health care.

Plans are also underway to create a mobile team that will engage partners (schools, churches, community centers and health care providers) to connect to homeless families in underserved, vast rural areas of the region with the same supportive services offered at the Day Center.

A new, innovative initiative that addresses racial disproportionality among people experiencing homelessness will be funded as a

result of the grant. The plan includes partnering with the Tacoma Ministerial Alliance (TMA), an organization of African American churches. A model is being developed whereby the agency contracts with TMA in order to hire staff to respond to the needs of homeless families in the African American community and effectively connect them to resources. In the agency's region of service, African American people represent 26.3 percent of the homeless population despite only making up 6.6 percent of the general population. According to Hunthausen, "while this will be a relatively small part of the overall grant initiative, it has great potential for innovative approaches to our community's response to homelessness."


Alan Brown, director of the Family Housing Network, is expanding work with families on "diversion or rapid resolution" as a result of the influx of funding. "Sometimes, in as little as a 90-minute conversation with a client," Brown said, "our diversion specialist can help map out a rapid response plan that begins with the family's own networks. This approach oftentimes diverts people from entering emergency shelters or over-burdened housing programs."

According to Hunthausen, this well-resourced initiative "will enable our community to reverse the trend of increasing family home-

lessness each year and allow us to significantly reduce its prevalence. Over the duration of the four year grant we anticipate problem-solving with over 2,800 families and diverting 650 of these to immediate housing options. We will also provide longer-term housing and services to 200 high-need families."

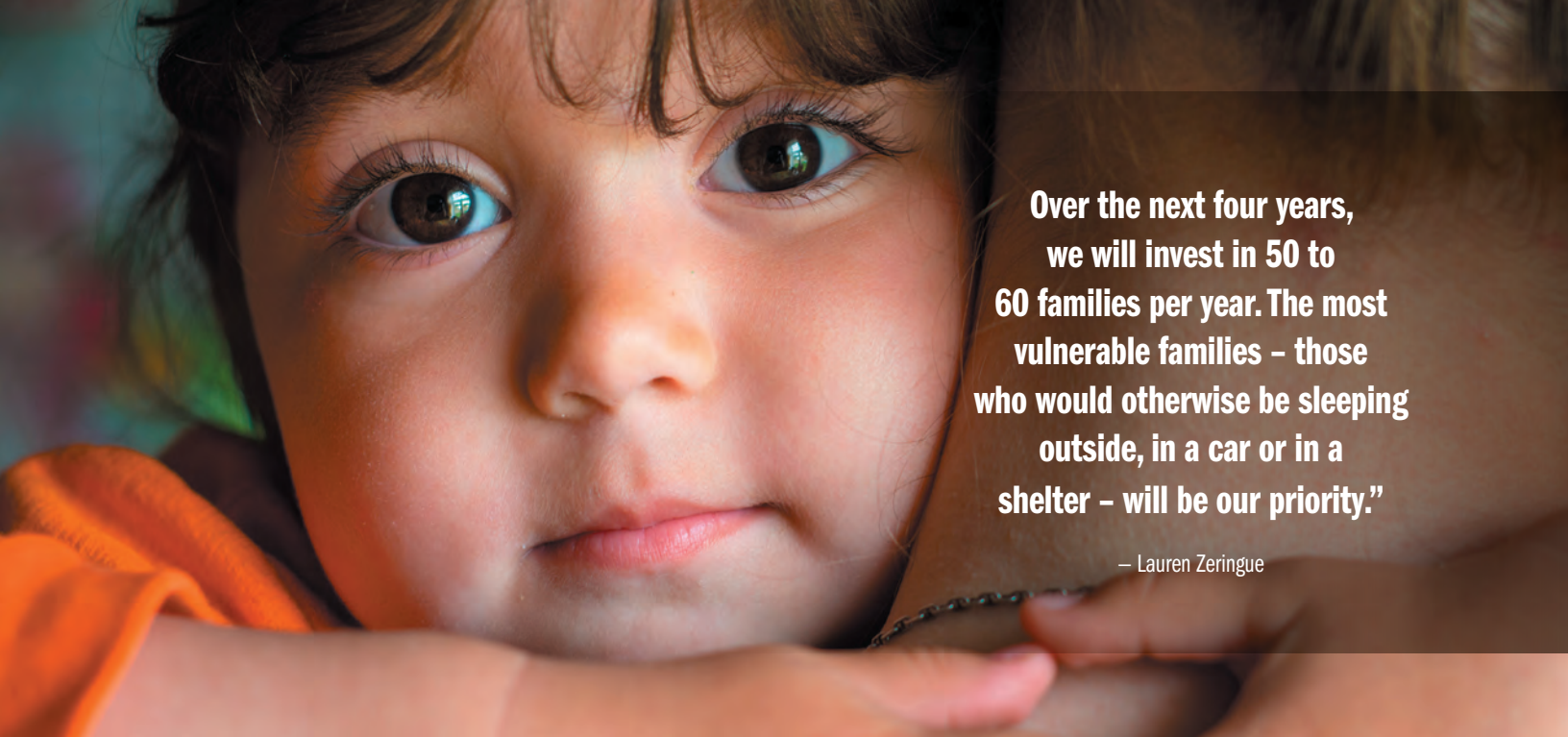
Brown reflected on welcoming a family of four on the cold and rainy first day of expanded services: "The dad had no shoes and the family was living in their car close to their son's school. In no time, their laundry was done, they prepared a hot meal and showers and new shoes were provided." The family's circumstances were complex but with daily access to the Center, skilled staff were able to provide a safer, supportive living situation. Brown remembers well the dad's warm words of gratitude to Center staff for providing "a ray of hope to my family who might still be sleeping in our car."

The \$5 million grant to CCS, announced during its centennial year, "is a wonderful way to acknowledge the many decades the Church and CCS have been supporting vulnerable children and families of all beliefs," Hunthausen said. "The Bezos gift will have considerable impact on family homelessness and we are most grateful."



"The \$5 million grant to CCS, announced during its centennial year, "is a wonderful way to acknowledge the many decades the Church and CCS have been supporting vulnerable children and families of all beliefs."

— Denny Hunthausen



Over the next four years, we will invest in 50 to 60 families per year. The most vulnerable families – those who would otherwise be sleeping outside, in a car or in a shelter – will be our priority.”

– Lauren Zeringue

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

By Lauren Zeringue, Program Director for Bethlehem Housing

Catholic Charities New Orleans received a \$5 million grant from the Bezos Family Foundation through the new Day One Families Fund. This funding will support unsheltered families with children and will be used to expand our homeless services. We intend to implement an innovative expansion project that is holistic, flexible, family-centered, trauma-informed, strengths-based and data-driven.

Sister Marjorie Hebert, president and CEO of Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, christened the project as “Bethlehem Housing” because the story of the Holy Family’s homelessness and search for shelter coincided with the funding’s arrival just before Christmas.

At Bethlehem Housing, a housing first approach will be combined with our comprehensive poverty reduction model that we have been piloting since last year. We are taking traditional Rapid Re-Housing one step further in order to address each family’s unique root causes of homelessness through intensive case management and wraparound services.

Over the next four years, we will invest in 50 to 60 families per year. The most vulnerable families – those who would otherwise

be sleeping outside, in a car or in a shelter – will be our priority. Building upon a past program funded by the Almar Foundation and our extensive history with federally-funded homeless programs, we will incorporate the latest research into evidence-based homeless and poverty reduction programming.

Our first goal with each family is to help them locate and secure affordable rental housing. Financial assistance to the family will include deposits, first month’s rent and other necessary move-in costs. Ongoing financial assistance, based on a progressive-engagement model, will decrease over time as the family’s portion increases at a manageable rate. The financial assistance package is flexible and tailored to each individual situation. Ongoing financial assistance also comes with the expectation that the family engages in financial education, including budgeting, avoiding predatory lending, managing bank accounts and saving for the future.

Once the family obtains stable housing, the deeper work begins. Families will complete a comprehensive assessment that measures functioning across 20 life areas. From this assessment, we will begin to build upon the family’s strengths and target areas of need. The family and case manager will work together to define the family’s dreams, goals and objectives. Case managers serve as

coaches, advocates and resource coordinators, but ultimately the family is responsible for directing and implementing plans to improve their quality of life and housing outcomes.


One of the core components of Bethlehem Housing is workforce development. Our dedicated workforce case manager will work with families to increase available income through education, training and employment services. Our goal is to connect families to stable, decent-paying employment so they can afford housing costs without assistance.

We plan to work with families for an average of six to 12 months. As needs and barriers are identified, we will connect families to programs within our agency and in the community. Movement from crisis to stability will be measured every three months across the 20 life areas. These measurements allow families and case managers to focus on priority needs while celebrating success in small improvements.

Our goal for each family when they exit the program is to have the resources and skills needed to maintain long-term housing on

their own or through a permanent housing program. Indicators of success include increases in income, reduction of expenses and debts, percent of income dedicated to housing expenses, and reduction of non-financial barriers to maintaining stable housing, if any. We also hope to leave the family in a better place spiritually, mentally and emotionally so that overall quality of life improves and children are able to thrive in a stable environment.

We are very grateful for this gift from the Day One Families Fund, and our intention is to deeply impact the homeless families and children that we serve over the next several years. We are working on ways to have a sustainable impact in the communities after the initial funding ends. We will achieve a functional end to family homelessness in the greater New Orleans area when the homeless response system capacity can meet the ongoing needs of families. Our hope is that Bethlehem Housing will increase this capacity for years to come: initially through direct service and eventually through cost-effective improvements to the current system that ensure no child sleeps outside, ever.



“Our goal for each family when they exit the program is to have the resources and skills needed to maintain long-term housing on their own or through a permanent housing program.”

— Lauren Zeringue



Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami

Peter Routsis-Arroyo, CEO, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, Inc.

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami was truly blessed to receive a \$5 million grant award from the Bezos Day One Families Fund. Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, attended high school in Miami. The grant money will be used toward our homelessness prevention and intervention programs.

The Bezos charity announced Nov. 20, 2018, that it would distribute almost \$100 million among 24 organizations around the country working to support families in need. Most of the grants totaled \$5 million or less and, in the case of Miami, the money will be used to support programs over the next four years.

The process was by invitation and moved very quickly. We credit our Archbishop Thomas Wenski and Miami's Catholic Charities for a record of community service and integrity that made us attractive as an awardee. There will be a system of regular reporting and accountability to the Day One Fund.

The grant will allow Catholic Charities to provide additional assistance to families in need of permanent housing through the Housing First Model, a best practice, and will ensure that Catholic Charities can address more of our clients' most basic needs. It also will expand supportive services that help families fighting homelessness become self-sufficient.

The funds will support two key areas for us:

*The New Life Family Center, a downtown Miami shelter primarily for homeless children and families that provides a safe environment for 15 families while they get back on their feet. Children are a central focus of New Life, which includes an art therapy program, meals and intensive case management. We expect that during the lifetime of the grant we will expand the program to 30 units, which will allow us to add additional caseworkers.

*An expansion of Catholic Charities' rapid re-housing efforts in Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Those efforts are linked with the local Continuums of Care and can include HUD, United Way and local foundation dollars. The programs help families in danger of homelessness and those currently homeless in need of rent, utilities and case management. A recent Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust's annual "Point-in-Time" census for 2018 shows the number of homeless individuals and families at 3,526.

The true blessing for us was the financial boost to our New Life programing. The Bezos grant could not have happened at a better time. We had recently lost some funding and, while it was not the first time we lost funding, we were going to have to start charging rent, so this will allow us to go back to serving homeless children



and families. The cost of the New Life program will now be covered by the Day One Families Fund and will allow us to work closely with families, helping them create savings for themselves while they are housed with us.

I recently received a letter of congratulations from Mr. Bezos, whose stepfather, Michael Bezos, arrived in the U.S. as a teenager via the Pedro Pan exodus in the early 1960s; a program that brought more than 14,000 unaccompanied Cuban children to the U.S. and was spearheaded by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami. This grant speaks to the history and reputation of the Archdiocese of Miami and Archbishop Wenski, who is internationally known for his work with social justice. The reputation is for excellent stewardship. I thank Catholic Charities USA for their support of our hurricane

relief efforts after Hurricane Irma. In Monroe County alone, more than 60 percent of the housing stock was damaged, by far the highest percentage in Florida. With financial help from CCUSA, we are now constructing 37 units of workforce affordable housing in Key West, housing that is desperately needed. We are doing this while also providing over \$2 million in direct assistance to those impacted throughout our three counties. The flexibility and foresight of our national organization to allow us to use a portion of our emergency funds to create permanent housing is greatly appreciated. Our community will benefit for years to come. ■

This article is based on one written by Tom Tracy for the Florida Catholic of Miami and published in the December 2018 edition.

“I thank Catholic Charities USA for their support of our hurricane relief efforts after Hurricane Irma. In Monroe County alone, more than 60 percent of the housing stock was damaged, by far the highest percentage in Florida.”

– Peter Routsis-Arroyo

2019 Volunteer of the Year Finalists

CCUSA is pleased to honor the following volunteers who are finalists for the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award. They represent the nearly 300,000 volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to the Catholic Charities ministry each year. By applying their skills to serve and help others, each of the finalists exemplifies the mission and spirit of Catholic Charities. The Volunteer of the Year will be announced during National Volunteer Week, April 7-13, 2019. The winner will be recognized and receive the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award at Catholic Charities USA's Annual Gathering in Albuquerque, N.M., in September.

► **Mr. Hank Dever.** Agency: Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada. Program: St. Vincent's Programs. Service: For the past 13 years, Hank Dever has been serving in the St. Vincent's Dining Room providing food for the homeless, frequently working six to eight hours per day, six days a week. When the director who ran the dining room for 25 years passed away unexpectedly, Hank was instrumental in continuing services for clients. He kept the dining room operational and helped train the new director during this critical time. Hank trains volunteers and employees in all aspects of working in the kitchen, while also serving meals to clients and being a mentor to those around him.

Mr. Dan O'Connell. Agency: Catholic Charities Dallas (CCD). Program: Archangels Men's Network. Service: As president for the Catholic Charities Dallas Archangels Men's Network, Dan O'Connell led the Archangels to choose the CCD food pantry to enhance and operate. Dan has achieved monumental success in linking the CCD food program with 20 of the 77 parishes in the diocese. The Archangels have raised funds for large, transportable metal permanent food collection carts currently placed in nine parishes, with 16 additional funded carts waiting to be placed in a willing parish and/or school. Dan's approach to managing the men in the group has been no less serious than a full-time employee, using his charisma, attitude, and know-how behind this Archangels' parish liaison initiative.

Ms. Jana Hukriede. Agency: Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri (CCSOMO). Program: LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home. Service: Jana Hukriede started her volunteer work with CCSOMO in May 2013. Since then she achieved the startup of a gardening and harvesting operation that feeds expectant mothers at the the crisis maternity home, LifeHouse. She executed year-round growing and harvesting operations through the creation of a new greenhouse and performed work in every aspect of the garden tending process. Leading more than 40 gardeners, Jana serves on the 11-acre campus, which directly impacts the 19 mothers and their children who reside and serve along with her at LifeHouse.



Mr. Hank Dever



Mr. Dan O'Connell



Ms. Jana Hukriede



Mr. Vincent Mancuso



Miss Nancy Hirdt

Nearly 300,000
volunteers dedicate their
time and talents
to the Catholic Charities
ministry each year.

Mr. Vincent Mancuso. Agency: Catholic Charities Camden. Program: Refugee and Immigration Services English as a Second Language (ESL) Class. Service: For years the ESL program at Catholic Charities Diocese of Camden was thriving, assisting eager migrants through a full-time ESL teacher. However, in 2018, the program lost funding and faced elimination. Knowing the acute need for this program, Vincent Mancuso stepped up to volunteer Monday through Thursday, teaching the ESL class. He went above and beyond by matching students to volunteer tutors, coordinating the schedules of students and tutors, and developing a new curriculum and evaluation guide, leading the migrants to feel even more excited to learn and succeed.

Miss Nancy Hirdt. Agency: Catholic Family & Community Services of Paterson, NJ. Program: Father English Community Center Garden of Hope (FECC). Service: The FECC Garden of Hope is now a thriving garden producing more than 1,500 pounds of fresh produce for more than 4,000 clients a month at the FECC Food Pantry. This happened in large part because of Nancy Hirdt, volunteer co-director of the FECC Food Pantry Garden of Hope. Nancy managed and worked with team members to reclaim an abandoned urban lot filled with trash, weeds, trees and drug paraphernalia. Throughout the six-year project, Nancy assisted in the cleaning of the lot, raised funds to make the lot safe for volunteering, created an irrigation system and performed planting, weeding, and harvesting of crops.

Since these humble beginnings, the garden has grown to a collection of 21 raised beds and a beautiful butterfly garden enjoyed by all. ■



Two new case managers at Seton Center, Catholic Charities Diocese of Wilmington



Tomasha Blount



Shontia Edwards

- ▶ Catholic Charities Diocese of Wilmington is pleased to announce that Tomasha Blount and Shontia Edwards have joined the staff at its Seton Center location as case managers.

Blount served most recently as a case manager at the Lower Shore Shelter, helping residents move toward permanent housing. Edwards worked as a coordinator of community services for the State of Maryland, assisting clients in accessing services and resources.

“We are delighted to have Tomasha and Shontia join the staff at Seton Center,” said Richelle A. Vible, executive director. “Our new hires possess a great deal of expertise to meet the needs of our neighbors. Seton Center continues to be a vibrant member of the Eastern Shore community, and it is Catholic Charities’ intent to continue the legacy of service established by its founders.”

In their new positions, Blount and Edwards will work with individuals and families struggling to maintain, or in some cases, regain, permanent housing. Their work includes helping the households to resolve the financial disruption in their lives, set up and maintain workable budgets, find income, and provide information and referrals to other beneficial services. They will remain in contact until the household regains its financial self-sufficiency.

The new case managers are enthusiastic to take on the challenges. “I’ve worked with individuals who struggled to overcome life challenges throughout my career,” said Edwards. “I enjoy being able to empower people to achieve their goals. Many times, a key to their success is to have someone in their corner. I want to be that support for them.” Blount added, “Homelessness creates so many difficulties for clients and the community. Keeping households from experiencing that trauma, or ending it as quickly as possible, is so important to me.”

Seton Center, a community center in Princess Anne, Md., offers Catholic Charities services including the homeless prevention, rapid rehousing, case management, and food assistance services in our Basic Needs program, and behavioral health services like routine outpatient therapy and psychiatric assistance.

Catholic Charities, the charitable arm of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington, has been serving those in need for over 180 years, offering a wide range of services to strengthen families, care for children, assist the disadvantaged, and build human relationships throughout Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Catholic Charities CEO interviewed on The Weather Channel

As winter storm Gia was moving into the Richmond, Va. area Jan. 11-13, 2019, a senior producer with The Weather Channel contacted Paige Peak, marketing manager, Commonwealth Catholic Charities (CCC) to see if CCC could provide a staff person who would relate its plan for sheltering the homeless in severe weather events. CCC operates the Cold Weather Shelter in partnership with the City of Richmond. Efforts were coordinated with the Richmond mayor's office to get both Mayor Levar Stoney and the new CCC CEO, Jay Brown, to be interviewed via Skype Sunday morning, Jan. 13 at 11:40 a.m. Mayor Stoney was most complimentary of the partnership on-air and Jay Brown, who had been CEO for less than a month, had his first national interview. See interview here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iAhr66EEUnDhyWwVWC9o0oJHrx7lpry/view>

Catholic Charities president Cynthia Colbert honored by Houston Woman Magazine



Cynthia N. Colbert, MSW, Catholic Charities president and CEO, was named as one of "Houston's 50 Most Influential Women of 2018" by Houston Woman Magazine. Each of the honorees was nominated by a subscriber of Houston Woman Magazine and then selected by the publication's staff.

According to Beverly Denver, publisher of Houston Woman Magazine, "Those selected as Houston's 50 Most Influential Women of 2018 are individuals with vast networks of social and professional connections. They have earned an enviable reputation for their expertise in a particular field or arena. They are knowledgeable, credible and trustworthy. The thoughts and actions of these women influence the thoughts and actions of others. It is our distinct pleasure to introduce these remarkable women to our readers and to others in our community."

In the last year, Colbert has received recognition from Houston Business Journal as one of Houston's Most Admired CEOs. In addition, she was accepted into the 2019 Leadership Texas Program, which identifies and develops women leaders at a statewide level.

Catholic Social Services partners with Columbus State Community College to win \$1.2 million national award

Catholic Social Services, Columbus, Ohio (CSS) was one of three human services organizations in the U.S. to be selected for a \$1.2 million award to replicate Stay the Course, a case management program proven to increase community college students' persistence and degree completion rates. CSS will implement the program in partnership with Columbus State Community College.

Stay the Course helps students through intensive case management and emergency financial assistance to address personal, economic and social barriers to college success. The program was developed by Catholic Charities of Fort Worth and is evaluated by the University of Notre Dame's Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities (LEO).

Preliminary results show that participants in Stay the Course are 25.2 percentage points more likely to persist in college than the comparison group, and female participants in the program are 31.5 percentage points more likely to earn an Associate's Degree. CSS and Columbus State will replicate the program and participate in the research study. CSS will add five employees to implement Stay the Course, and three will directly serve students on Columbus State's downtown campus. The grant also includes resources for emergency financial assistance to Columbus State students.

"I find it heroic how many people who are already balancing work and family responsibilities go to school to build a better future for themselves and their children," said Rachel Lustig, president and CEO of CSS. "There is no group fighting harder to make their lives and our community better, and CSS wants to be in their corner with Columbus State to help them be successful."

"We are excited to partner with Catholic Social Services to bring this proven solution to our students," said Columbus State President

David Harrison. “We know that many students face financial challenges that can prevent them from focusing fully on their education. Connecting them to supportive resources is a critical component to overall student success.”

With three years of initial funding, Stay the Course will begin at Columbus State in August 2019.

Catholic Charities Diocese of Monterey welcomes Bishop Daniel E. Garcia as board chair and names Martina O’Sullivan as new board president

Catholic Charities Diocese of Monterey is excited to welcome Bishop Daniel E. Garcia to our diocese and to Catholic Charities as our board chairman. Catholic Charities also named Martina O’Sullivan as board president. The agency is thrilled to receive Bishop Garcia’s and O’Sullivan’s guidance to continue providing a path out of poverty for low-income families and individuals in Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito and San Luis Obispo counties.

Bishop Garcia was installed on Jan. 29, 2019, as the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Monterey. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Austin, Texas, in 1988 and was appointed as the first Auxiliary Bishop to the Diocese of Austin in 2015. Bishop Garcia

has served on many boards and councils, including the College of Consultors, Dean of the North Austin Deanery, and Communication Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Catholic Charities serves as the Bishop’s social justice arm for the Diocese of Monterey.

Martina O’Sullivan is a long-standing dedicated member of the Catholic Charities family. She was executive director for Catholic Charities from 1997 to 2005 and is currently a devoted board member. She currently also serves as secretary of the Board of Trustees for Catholic Charities USA. In addition, O’Sullivan has been serving for the past two years as the co-chair of the Holiday Food Drive for Second Harvest Food Bank and brings a long history of service in health care through different roles at Dignity Health. She has been a strong community leader involved in issues related to social justice, health care, immigration, food security and domestic violence prevention among many others. At the core of all the work, O’Sullivan shows a strong commitment to social justice and to make a positive difference in our community.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, Executive Director Ana Ventura Phares welcomes Bishop Garcia and O’Sullivan in their new roles to guide and lead the agency’s mission to serve those in need with dignity and compassion. ■



A better option for homeless women: **The Kenton Women's Village**

By David Werning, Managing Editor

- ▶ Since opening two years ago, the Kenton Women's Village, which offers shelter for women experiencing homelessness on the streets of Portland, Oregon, has helped 24 women move into permanent housing.

What is the cause of this success? Rose Bak, director of homeless and housing services at Catholic Charities of Oregon, said it comes with community involvement.

Catholic Charities of Oregon, which provides direct services and case management to the residents of Kenton Women's Village, works with two very important communi-

ty partners: the Joint Office of Homeless Services of Multnomah County (JOHS) and the citizens of Portland, the county seat.

In 2016, JOHS began a community-wide goal-setting process. One of the goals was a better option for homeless women. Traditional shelters or homeless camps serve both men and women, but women on the streets often forgo these accommodations out of fear of violence from the men.

"Most women," Bak said, "become homeless because of domestic violence at the hands of husbands and boyfriends. That's

the number one reason." So being in proximity to men makes the women feel unsafe.

JOHS partnered with Catholic Charities, which has years of experience serving the homeless population, to focus on a shelter for women. The two organizations settled on the Kenton neighborhood, where a significant number of women lived on the streets. But the organizations still needed the Kenton residents' stamp of approval, which did not come immediately.

"Just like anywhere in the country where you want to put a facility [that helps homeless

people;” Bak said, “when we first started talking about it, the neighbors were really worried. Were there going to be sex offenders? Was crime going to go up? Were there going to be needles everywhere?”

In response, Catholic Charities and JOHS talked with Kenton residents and developed a “good neighbor agreement.” They promised to do a number of things: to have on-site staffing, to screen for sex offenders, and to prioritize homeless women who were already in the neighborhood.

“We also just started bringing folks in [to understand what we do],” Bak said. “People came in and made meals. They came in and helped with gardening. And they got to know the women and heard their stories and saw their experiences, and the fear factor went away. They became so invested in this village.”

The Kenton Women’s Village consists of individual pods, which are the size of a backyard shed. Each pod contains a bed and some shelves for storage. The village also provides shared bathrooms and a kitchen area. The village is meant to be transitional housing, and the staff are focused on moving the women into permanent housing.

“We set out very specifically to have intensive services on-site,” Bak said, “so that

women didn’t have to take a bus to go to various appointments. We wanted to bring services to them.”

A team of two full-time staff, two part-time workers and a group of volunteers focus on four domains to help residents remain off the streets: housing stability, income stability, social connection and mental health.

The simple move into a stable structure sets the path toward permanent housing. Dealing with trauma from domestic violence, trying to hold down a job or even maintaining relationships become doubly difficult without a place to live.

Once a woman enters the Kenton Women’s Village, she takes about a month to simply rest and get caught up on sleep. Residents meet once-a-week with staff in order to address issues like trauma and/or addiction. They take classes on job interviews, cleaning up credit and how to access government benefits. Since being homeless is very isolating, the residents also have group meetings and activities in order to increase their social interactions.

As time goes by, some of the women begin working at jobs or achieve some other personal goal. According to Bak, the average time it takes for a resident to move into permanent housing is six months, which may

seem very fast to a public not familiar with homeless people.

“Some people think that the homeless aren’t motivated to do things,” Bak said. “But once you have hope and you have some direction, things move more quickly.”

The women who have benefitted from the Kenton Women’s Village agree. They give thanks for the hope and direction offered to them by Catholic Charities, JOHS, and their Kenton neighbors. Their gratitude even spurred them to do something for others.

Bak said that some months ago a bounty of donations had come to the village, so much so that the storage capacity was reached. The residents decided to make hygiene gift bags and distribute them on the streets. One resident said, “It felt good to give back and give hope to the women out there, to let them know there were other options.”

There’s the old saying: success breeds success. Perhaps other communities, inspired by the Kenton Women’s Village, will work together to provide hope to the homeless women in their neighborhoods. ■

2019-2020 UPCOMING TRAINING & EVENTS

May 13-17, 2019

O'Grady Leadership Institutes, Bethany Center
Lutz, Fla.

Scott Hurd
shurd@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

September 25 -27, 2019

Annual Gathering
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Jean Beil
events@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

October 28-30, 2020

Annual Gathering
Cleveland, Ohio

Jean Beil
jbeil@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

December 2-6, 2019

Applied Institute for Disaster Excellence (AIDE)
Jacksonville, Fla.

Disaster Operations
disasteroperations@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

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