



# WORKS OF CHARITY

NEWSLETTER

**FALL 2019**

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# CATHOLIC CHARITIES

SERVING MILWAUKEE, WAUKESHA, SHEBOYGAN, RACINE, FOND DU LAC,  
KENOSHA, WALWORTH, DODGE, WASHINGTON, OZAUKEE COUNTIES



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: CHILD WELFARE



Our annual Child Welfare Adoption Picnic was held on July 20th at St. John the Evangelist in Greenfield. Families at all stages of the adoption process came together to eat, play games, and have fun.

Jen Layton, Director of Child Welfare Services, enjoyed her first adoption picnic and shared that her favorite part was, “meeting the families and watching them interact with the children.” Jen started this past May, and oversees both the Pregnancy and Parenting Support program and Adoption services. To her, the most rewarding part of working in child welfare is “knowing that we are helping families that otherwise may not have access to services and to help improve their birth outcomes and the future well-being of their families.”

## RIS PARTNERSHIP WITH UWM STUDENTS

Meet Anastassia Christensen and TJ Nixon, two Master of Sustainable Peacebuilding students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee volunteering with Catholic Charities’ Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS) program this year. Anastassia and TJ are learning skills in systems mapping, negotiation, program planning, facilitation, evaluation, conflict transformation, and more.



Anastassia Christensen & TJ Nixon

Anastassia joins the Catholic Charities team as a Refugee Education Initiatives Coordinator for the academic year. Before her graduate studies, she spent time in Jordan and recently completed an AmeriCorps service year with World Relief, a Wisconsin-based refugee resettlement agency. She will be working on a Newcomer Parent Education Program in partnership with a local MPS school, focused on parent-driven goals and helping families better navigate complex American systems. She will also be working on Rohingya women’s education initiatives.

TJ joins Catholic Charities as a Refugee Community Partnerships Coordinator. Prior to graduate school, TJ was working part-time as a project coordinator for African Education Foundation in Togo, West Africa, and full-time as a high school English Teacher at the American International School in the capital of the same country. He will be coordinating volunteer training and matching them with clients in our Be-Friender program. In addition, facilitating the Refugee Community Advisory Board, as well as helping coordinate some Congolese community specific projects.

# 7 DAYS OF SERVICE RECAP



Thank you to everyone who supported the 7 Days of Service Project! During the week of September 23 to 29, Catholic Charities partnered with the Archdiocese for 7 Days of Service as part of the events celebrating the 175th Anniversary of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

The person who receives a donated care bundle of shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste and a container of laundry detergent, will feel the care and compassion of their neighbors who so lovingly gathered

the items for them. In addition to the tangible use of each item, the care bundle is a source of financial relief that can mean the world to someone experiencing poverty.

More than 600 parishioners put together over 2,000 care bundles for people in need. Several charities, in addition to Catholic Charities, including Capuchins Community Service, Bethel House, Family Promises of Washington County, and Gerard's Embrace, will receive bundles for the people they serve.

Catholic Charities staff was present at each event to explain our mission and to share the impact of the items donated for those we serve. It was wonderful to be a part of this event with the Archdiocese and to see the love for our neighbors displayed in action.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: ELIZABETH JOHNSON

Elizabeth Johnson is the Behavioral Health Therapist who serves in our Hoarding Intervention and Treatment program.

### **Tell us a little bit about yourself:**

I'm originally from the Twin Cities, and moved to Milwaukee to pursue my undergrad at Marquette University. I received my masters at University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and moved to New York after graduation. My husband and I moved back to Milwaukee where we met, and have settled down here with a new house and our dog.

### **What sparks your passion for working with individuals struggling with their mental health?**

I've always been curious about people and what their innerworking's are; that's what really sparked my interest in pursuing the mental health field. I really enjoy helping people, because it helps you to understand them, which leads to becoming more compassionate in your everyday life.

### **What is one thing you wish people knew about hoarding disorder?**

One thing people need to know is that changing someone's environment won't have long-lasting effects. You must work at the internal well-being and behavioral habits to see lasting change.

### **What do you love most about working with Catholic Charities?**

The people here are fantastic. We spend eight hours of our day with our coworkers, and having people that are kind, compassionate, fun to be around, smart, etc. makes a huge difference. I love how accessible the leadership team is here; it feels like a team effort fulfilling our mission. Everyone wants to support each other and cheers each other on. Even though we do different things, we are supporting everyone and have an appreciation of what they do.



# THANK YOU, BRUCE AND LAURIE ARNOLD



Bruce and Laurie Arnold at the 2019 Good Samaritan Society Celebration.

As we come towards the end of our 2019 year, we are preparing for a “see you later” to our 2018-2019 Good Samaritan Society Co-Chairs, Bruce and Laurie Arnold. It has been a privilege to work with these dedicated individuals who share our passion and mission for the underserved. When asked about the most fulfilling part of their experience, they shared, “For us, the most fulfilling part was meeting the individuals who serve those most in need. You are the boots on the ground that make a ‘lived love’ possible. At Catholic Charities, our caregivers treat each person with dignity and respect because as Catholics we believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God.”

We are sad to see this chapter come to a close, but know that the Arnolds will be friends to Catholic Charities for years to come. Jackie Rekowski, Director of Mission Advancement, appreciates the care and attention Bruce and Laurie have for the people Catholic Charities serve. “I’m honored to have worked with them over these past two years,” she shares.

As we prepare for the new year, we are excited to share that Dave and Patti Young will be our 2020-2021 Good Samaritan Society Co-Chairs. Bruce and Laurie have left big shoes to fill, but we are extremely excited for the future and to see how Catholic Charities’ Good Samaritan Society will continue to grow.

## CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF SERVICE



2020 marks 100 years of service for Catholic Charities. Will you help us celebrate this upcoming milestone? We’d love to hear any memories you have of Catholic Charities- please send your stories to Sarah Werner at [swerner@ccmke.org](mailto:swerner@ccmke.org).

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