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CATHOLIC  
CHARITIES  
100 YEARS OF SERVICE

2020

## Works of Charity Newsletter

Summer 2020



### ON THE COVER:

Serving our  
veterans during  
COVID-19

Breaking Isolation  
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No Estas Solo –  
You Are Not Alone  
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**AND MORE!**

# CATHOLIC CHARITIES

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

# Partner Spotlight: VA Medical Center



The Milwaukee VA Medical Center has been a valuable partner in connecting veterans with our services during the outbreak of COVID-19. We were able to help our veteran pictured on the front cover make a successful transition home after his stay at the VA.

In another call from the VA, we learned of a veteran in his 70's who was about to move into an empty apartment and sleep on the floor. In addition to his health concerns, he recently lost all of his belongings aside from a few bags of clothing. Other programs that could help him were closed due to the pandemic. Our staff helped him acquire dishes, hygiene items, bedding, and more. We purchased an air mattress and one of our In-Home Support clients even donated her recliner. He teared up when we delivered these items to his new home and called us his "heroes".

## COVID-19: Breaking Isolation

### **How have people responded to our COVID-19 services?**

Bob Kaisler, Director of Quality Assurance: "People are extremely thankful. They're not just grateful for the food and supplies, but also for the conversation. Many have no one in their lives to talk to. How many weeks has it been since they had a visitor or a conversation with someone? We're providing much more than basic needs.

When others closed their doors, we stayed open. We changed the way we served to ensure safety and identify new gaps in community services. We answered phone calls, and we followed guidelines to meet people in-person when they needed our help.

While we temporarily closed our Adult Day Center for our members who were most at-risk from COVID-19, we found a way to continue using the space for good. It has become our headquarters for the senior hotline, food donations, and food delivery to the most isolated in our community. In addition, we held two blood drives at the site."

### **When asked for an impactful moment, one of our In-Home Support staff shared this story:**

"I took a call from a woman who explained to me how little food she and her son had and how scared they were to leave home because of health concerns. She was nearly in tears on the phone when I told her we could get food to her that day. When I arrived, she could not stop crying and said; 'now, I know we will make it through this'."



*\* Woman from story not pictured*



# Employee Spotlight: Nancy Munoz



## **What do you want the community and our donors to know about the work we're doing right now?**

"Not everyone knows what we do, or just how far we reach. We collaborate with other agencies, we advocate for those without a voice, and during the pandemic we stayed open. We were there for those who didn't qualify for aid. Many of our clients were the hardest hit in our state as the labor and service industries shut down. We changed the way we were serving to meet new needs."

## **Tell us about a client who has impacted you recently:**

"I was working with a single mom who was struggling even before the pandemic. She had been out of work due to her son being sick. When the pandemic hit, she was not able to access aid like other families in our community, and finding work was difficult. We provided her with cash assistance from United Way, food, supplies, and guidance. I helped her apply for multiple programs, and I'm so grateful she received rent assistance! For this single mom, it means getting back on her feet."

**-Outreach Caseworker, 7 years**

## No Estas Solo – You Are Not Alone



**Community Partner**

Our partners at United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County and United Way of Kenosha County have been instrumental in helping us reach the most vulnerable, underserved, and forgotten individuals in our community. When the coronavirus pandemic reached the United States, many federal and state programs were underway to help families mitigate the financial burden associated with job loss and business closures. Catholic Charities and our partners at United Way quickly realized that these aid packages did not help everyone in our communities.

United Way generously provided direct cash assistance specifically for local families who did not qualify for aid. In addition, they provided funds for our supplemental food drive.

Our dedicated staff remained in the office answering calls from families like Hector and Yolanda, who were experiencing the hardships of COVID-19 without anywhere else to turn for help. After living in Waukesha for over ten years and being financially independent, they found themselves out of work as the pandemic impacted the hospitality and labor industries in which they worked. They were suddenly relying on their daughter's part-time income, a 2020 high school graduate with a full scholarship to a four-year university. Catholic Charities was able to aid through gift cards from United Way, which helped pay their cable bill, a necessity since their daughter was completing her senior year online. We connected the family to rent assistance programs and provided food

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and other items. Hector and Yolanda were extremely thankful as they had never before asked for assistance since their arrival in the United States. They remain hopeful for a brighter future for themselves and their daughter.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY



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