



(Left to right) Hailie Moore,  
Courtney McHale, Rep. Ben Smaltz,  
Emma McHale, Kodie Rennaker

## Turning another page in life

Participants in RSVP's National Mentoring Program, a service of Catholic Charities, enjoyed another Page for a Day event at the Statehouse.

Ten students participating in the Catholic Charities' portion of the National Mentoring Program were Pages for a Day at the Statehouse in Indianapolis on Tuesday, March 10, for Rep. Ben Smaltz, Sen. Susan Glick, and Sen. Dennis Kruse. The pages were treated to a tour of the Senate and House chambers, plus they had an opportunity to sit in on House and Senate sessions. And some of the pages had their photos taken with Gov. Mike Pence.

The goal of the National Mentoring Program—funding for which derives from a grant written by Catholic Charities—is to help young people ages 9 to 17 stay in school, get better grades, and avoid at-risk activities, such as truancy, drug use, gangs, and teen pregnancy. Participation in the program curbs unproductive behavior and points more at-risk children in the right direction.

It was the second consecutive year for the Page for a Day event, which is organized by Shirley Johnson, who leads the Mentoring Program and serves as project coordinator for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble, and Steuben Counties. This year, 10 students ages 9 to 12 from DeKalb County and Noble County participated.

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Issue 1, 2015



**Catholic Charities**  
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Ber



(Back row left to right) Alexis Bolding, Rylee Bolding, Emma McHale, Tori Hall, and Miranda Lee.  
(Front row left to right) Jacquelyn Davenport, Hailey Freeman, Hailey Moore, Kodie Rennaker, Courtney McHale

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“We had another wonderful day at the Statehouse—we really appreciate that our state legislators take the time to meet with the kids and make them feel welcome,” Shirley says. “These trips give participants in our program the chance to see what they can accomplish by staying in school, studying hard, and choosing behavior that will help them follow the right path in life. They see that there is a better life awaiting them as adults if they make good decisions and avoid the many pitfalls of adolescence.

“I really believe in this program—it’s making a real difference in the lives of these young people,” Shirley continues. “And the program is growing. We have more participants and mentors since we began nearly two years ago. Although the age range for participants is 9 to 17, we focus on kids from 9 to 12 because that’s a crucial time in their lives to head off and prevent at-risk behavior.”

Catholic Charities Executive Director Gloria Whitcraft was present in Indianapolis the day Catholic Charities mentees served as pages at the Statehouse. “We’re incredibly grateful to Rep. Smaltz and Senators Glick and Kruse for providing the young people in the Catholic Charities mentoring program this opportunity,”

she says. “I was privileged to be in the group that paged for Rep. Smaltz. I can tell you first-hand that he went out of his way to make the experience very meaningful for the students. Rep. Smaltz and his assistant were very kind and enthusiastic to hosts. I think I got as much out of it as the children did. I’m also very proud of the work that Shirley Johnson and Patti Sheppard from our office in Auburn put into this day. This program is very close to our hearts. The children were so well-dressed, polite, earnest and excited. It was a delightful day!”

More mentors are needed. Mentors must be at least 18 years old, undergo a thorough screening process, and be willing to commit to working with a young person a minimum of two hours a week or eight hours per month for at least one year. Special group outings joining several mentors and participants also provide memorable moments.

To learn more about the Mentoring Program, contact Shirley at (260) 925-0917 or [sjohnson@ccfwsb.org](mailto:sjohnson@ccfwsb.org). A grant to support the National Mentoring Program comes through Catholic Charities USA and the Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. ■

# Meet our new board president

Mike Handlin, Catholic Charities' new board president, is no stranger to the agency. Mike has served as the board's vice president in 2014 and as a board member since 2011. But Mike's tenure with Catholic Charities dates back much further, to the year 2007, when he worked at the agency as a counselor.

"It's an honor to be serving the agency in this new position," says Mike, "because I believe Catholic Charities plays an integral role within the social service community, and so fulfills the social justice mission of the Church." As president, Mike hopes to act as a facilitator between the agency and the

board, encouraging board members to be as active in the organization as they wish to be. In addition, he hopes to be a good communicator, keeping the board informed so they can make prudent decisions.

"It's vital that we govern prayerfully," he says, "because when we work with the marginalized, the poor, and the suffering, we are standing on holy ground." ■



## Thank you, Pat!

Catholic Charities is grateful to Pat Houlihan for his years of service as board president. Effective January 1, 2015, he has stepped aside from that top post, citing the need

to develop new leadership within the board. However, he will remain on the board and continue to serve as treasurer. "I'm not going anywhere," says Pat. "It's just time to give someone else a chance to lead."

During his tenure, he guided Catholic Charities through two major shifts, including moving its Fort Wayne offices to the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center on Clinton Street and hiring Executive Director Gloria Whitcraft.

"When Bishop D'Arcy asked me to serve on the board in 2009," says Pat, "I felt it was a calling—and I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve as president. I'm confident that under Mike Handlin's leadership, we will keep moving down the road to serve more people within our mission." ■

## DID YOU KNOW?

Catholic Charities of Fort Wayne–South Bend accomplished 197 refugee job placements in 2014.

RSVP of DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble, and Steuben Counties prepared 608 tax returns through the VITA program in 2014.

In 2014, the RSVP Community Center of Caring Food Pantry in Auburn received donations of money, food, and other items with a total value of \$170,873.08.

Catholic Charities offers free, confidential counseling to pregnant women who want or need more support than a friend or a volunteer can offer. We provide a credentialed counselor and a neutral, supportive space for parents to process thoughts and emotions.

For the 12th consecutive year, Catholic Charities of Fort Wayne–South Bend has been awarded a grant by Senior Service America to help older adults obtain job training opportunities. The grant will be used to pay wages to low-income older adults placed in temporary job-training opportunities at host agencies throughout Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Wabash, and Whitley counties. More than 103 seniors will benefit from this program through June 2015.

To learn more about Catholic Charities and how you can help, visit us at [www.ccfwsb.org](http://www.ccfwsb.org)

**D**ear Friends,



I'm writing to you as Lent, the season of penance, fasting, and almsgiving, comes to a close, and as it does, it occurred to me to comment on the gratitude we at Catholic Charities feel

for those of you who made personal sacrifices this past year in order to support our mission to serve the poor and vulnerable as Christ would have us do.

Out of respect for your giving and to help you understand how you've helped others with your financial support, we've included in this letter a few examples of how your donations made a difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters in need.

Most years, the end of Lent corresponds with a softening of the weather, hints the earth will come back to life and that what is brown will become green and fruitful again. Just as Lent reaches its sad conclusion, Easter follows with its joyful new life and replenishment. A similar rejuvenation is occurring at Catholic Charities this year in the followings ways:

In the first quarter of this year, we reinstated services to the South Bend office

in response to the need in that area of our Diocese. The Board of Directors, executive team on staff, and employees of Catholic Charities are working together on a new strategic plan dedicated to our mission and Catholic identity and offering fresh opportunities to meet the needs of our target population in fresh and innovative ways, and expand our mission field. There is also the rekindling of relationships with partners and the beginning of promising connections with first-time supporters and potential collaborators. All this so that we may please God, help more people in need, and make you proud to say, "I support the mission of Catholic Charities."

These thoughts about Lent and Easter, and winter and spring, led me to reflect on my work at Catholic Charities, which is all about contending with the difficulties of earthly life in response to Jesus' instructions to us to care for the poor. I consider the unique privilege of doing what I do—how my Catholic Charities colleagues and I have the opportunity to help so many people suffering everything from a lack of food and shelter to being a newcomer in a strange new land, dislocated and disoriented.

**A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

# Because you give

There are moments of great joy, such as when we find adoptive parents for a child who needs a loving family. And then there are the stories we hear—the pain we carry home with us of lives wounded with addiction and abuse and more bad luck than anyone should have to bear. There are stories, too, of lives knit back together, of hope lightening despair, of grace prevailing.

In the spirit of Easter, there is also gratitude I spoke of earlier. Gratitude for being able to help others, gratitude for all the donors who make our work possible, gratitude for the grace of God we see working in so many lives, including our own. My prayer as I walked into my office was that today I could live in Easter hope and be conscious of what God asks of me—and be content to do what I can in His name. And to be grateful, always grateful—and as cheerful as possible, ever mindful of the multiple, demanding gifts of Lent and Easter.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



Gloria Whitcraft

## YOUR GIFTS GO A LONG WAY!

Even small, one-time contributions to Catholic Charities can make a big difference. Consider the following:

**\$25**

given to one of our food pantries feeds a family of four for four meals.

**\$35**

pays 25 percent of a winter utility bill, keeping families warm and helping them hang on to their homes.

**\$50**

provides employment training for one month for two older adults.

**\$100**

provides up to six hours of pro-life pregnancy counseling.

**Executive Director Gloria Whitcraft offers this Lenten/Easter, winter/spring reflection on the unique privilege that is the work of Catholic Charities.**

## A partner in charity

### RSVP pantry receives donation from Eaton Corporation

Just in time for Christmas, employees of the Eaton Corporation's Clutch Division raised \$1,280 for Catholic Charities' Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Community Center of Caring Food Pantry in Auburn. Eaton employees have been generously giving to Catholic Charities and RSVP for several years, donating food to the Auburn pantry, children's coats for the Share the Warmth program, and school supplies during the Pack-A-Backpack program.



Pam Hassett (left) and Gloria Hansen (right) of the Eaton Corporation's Clutch Division in Auburn present a check for \$1,280 to RSVP volunteer Mary Lou Freed.

## Christmas stories

### A diverse group of people received assistance from an equally diverse group of sponsors during our Christmas Program in 2014.

"Tom," the father of two youngsters, hasn't been able to work for some time because of a serious medical condition. He needs surgery before he can work again.

"Sam" and "Janet" are an elderly couple who recently arrived in this country after spending decades in a refugee camp. They need a variety of items to establish their own household. In addition, Sam has difficulty with mobility and breathing.

"Sally" is an unemployed single mother and a victim of domestic abuse. She has two children and another on the way, and she's struggling to make ends meet.

"John" and "Julie" have three kids of their own and serve as guardians for other children. They both work, but they don't make enough to sufficiently provide for their family. One of their simple dreams is to go camping as a family, and John could make some extra money working on cars if he had basic tools.

Newly arrived refugees "Bill" and "Mary" are eager to learn English, find jobs, and become self-sufficient. They also want to connect with Christian religious groups and instill good values in their children.

That's just a brief look at the diverse group of the people who benefited from Catholic Charities' Christmas Program in Fort Wayne in 2014. A total of 32 families received clothing, food, toys, gift cards, help with utility bills, and a variety of other items and assistance.

The group of 21 sponsors was just as diverse: families, parishes, an accounting firm, an entire Catholic school, nuns, a law firm, a retired doctor, a service organization, diocesan employees, and a mother's play group.

"Our annual Christmas Program in Fort Wayne and South Bend is the only source of cheer for so many people who can't even afford what most of take for granted—gifts and a special Christmas dinner," says Catholic Charities Assistant Director Lisa Young. "They truly appreciate what they receive from our sponsors.

"And our sponsors are also grateful," Lisa adds. "They're grateful for what they have, and they're willing to share their good fortune with others who are less fortunate."

# Donate your time and talents

Catholic Charities offers ongoing opportunities to serve as a volunteer in several programs.

## RSVP

RSVP of St. Joseph County is seeking volunteers interested in participating in informal conversation groups with refugees and immigrants learning English. Participants meet with clients in public locations or at Catholic Charities' offices in South Bend to help clients learn conversational language skills. Individuals who speak Spanish and English are being sought to assist with filing and clerical duties in the South Bend immigration department. Contact Josh Story at (574) 234-3111 or [jstory@ccfwsb.org](mailto:jstory@ccfwsb.org).

Individuals interested in providing short-term volunteer support for special events in St. Joseph and Elkhart counties can contact Joshua Story at (574) 234-3111 or [jstory@ccfwsb.org](mailto:jstory@ccfwsb.org).

Help out at the RSVP Community Center of Caring Food Pantry in Auburn. Serving all of DeKalb County, the pantry is open Mondays from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., and Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Call RSVP at (260) 925-0917.

Mentor a child in DeKalb County or Noble County. These children may demonstrate at-risk behaviors such as inconsistent school attendance and below average grades. Mentors must be willing to commit to two hours a week or eight hours a month. Call (260) 925-0927.

Plant a garden and help landscape grounds at Villa of the Woods, Catholic Charities' residential community for older adults in Fort Wayne. Call Diana or Kathy at (260) 745-7039.

## Refugee Services

Assist with job-readiness training, teach English as a second language, assist refugee children with their homework, help establish households, pick up donations, help with orientation and acculturation, serve as mentors, and much more. Please contact Necia Annis at (260) 422-5625, ext. 244.

## Immigration Services

Help refugees and immigrants prepare to pass the citizenship test by conducting mock interviews. Assist the citizenship instructor with planned activities and lessons. Learn citizenship methods and techniques through working with an accredited BIA (Board of Immigration Appeals) representative. Help facilitate and maintain a comfortable environment for students to express themselves and practice English. Volunteers are needed Tuesday evenings from 3 to 6 p.m. at Catholic Charities in Fort Wayne. Contact Theresa McGuire at (260) 422-5625, ext. 283, or [tmcguire@ccfwsb.org](mailto:tmcguire@ccfwsb.org).



## Our heartfelt appreciation

Catholic Charities wants to thank all the individuals, families, businesses, and other organizations that make the pursuit of our mission possible through their compassionate generosity. And, of course, our appreciation also extends to the dedicated volunteers who provide their time and talents. Without your help, we wouldn't be able to serve "those in need as Christ would have us do."

Find out how you can get involved with Catholic Charities. Visit us at

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Refugee Services

- The next two refugee core services community consultation meetings will be held on Wednesday, April 15, and on Wednesday, July 15, at Catholic Charities in Fort Wayne.

Both meetings will begin at 11 a.m.

- Catholic Charities will host a World Refugee Day 2015 celebration at the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center on Friday, June 19.

### RSVP

- RSVP of St. Joseph County will host its Luncheon (11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and Expo (1 to 3 p.m.) at the Gillespie Conference Center in South Bend on Thursday, April 30.
- RSVP of Elkhart County will host its Luncheon (11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and Expo (1 to 3 p.m.) at the Matterhorn Conference Center in Elkhart on Thursday, October 8.
- Future Senior Conversation Series events (all from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.) at the Waterford at Edison Lakes Assisted Living Community in Mishawaka include April 8 (gardening indoors), June 10 (auction and appraisal day—Antique Roadshow), August 12 (wine and paint event), October 7 (open enrollment season for Medicare), and December 11 (holiday cookie exchange).
- In a year-round effort, RSVP of DeKalb, LaGrange, Noble, and Steuben counties is collecting new or gently used winter coats that are distributed to individuals in need during Share the Warmth. RSVP is also collecting school supplies for Pack-A-Backpack, a program to benefit students from low-income families in the Central Noble and West Noble school corporations and DeKalb County Schools.
- The RSVP Community Center of Caring Food Pantry will be the recipient of the Auburn USPS letter carriers' "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive on Saturday, May 9.

**Learn more about these events at [www.ccfwsb.org](http://www.ccfwsb.org)**

### Immigration Services

- Citizenship classes will be offered from 4 to 6 p.m. every Tuesday from April 8 through May 26. Contact Bertha Spaulding at (260) 422-5625, ext. 282, or [tmenzie@ccfwsb.org](mailto:tmenzie@ccfwsb.org).
- Luz Ostrognai of Catholic Charities, a Board of Immigration Appeals-accredited representative, and Rose Rivera, an attorney, will provide a presentation on President Obama's Executive Action on Deferred Action in both English and Spanish on Friday, March 27, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 225 Gilliam Drive in Warsaw. Contact Bertha Spaulding at (260) 422-5625, ext. 225, or [bspaulding@ccfwsb.org](mailto:bspaulding@ccfwsb.org).

### Villa of the Woods

- Aging with Grace, a workshop featuring guest speakers, is set for Thursday, May 28, from 10:30 a.m. until noon.
- The Mad Hatter Tea Party will take place in July (date to be announced) from 10 to 11 a.m.
- The Holiday Bazaar and Bake Sale is scheduled for Saturday, October 24, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information on these events, contact Kathy Retzios at (260) 745-7039 or [kretzios@ccfwsb.org](mailto:kretzios@ccfwsb.org).



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