

BREAKING

FALL 2017

catholic  charities
OF NORTHEAST KANSAS

Bread

Summer Food Program Fills Gap for Hungry Kids and Adults

Moms and dads in Northeast Kansas worried 13,633 less times about whether or not their children would eat lunch this past summer. That's the number of times this year that Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' Summer Food Program provided meals to hungry kids.

A lot has changed since the program started three years ago. The number of sites has increased from 11 to 32, including 13 libraries. All are located where 50% or more of the children that live in the area receive free or reduced lunch during the school year.

"Our aim is to have the program in sites like libraries, parks and community pools where kids are already gathering. There's no social stigma attached. All kids are welcome to come in and have lunch," says Emily Wildhaber, Summer Food Program.

The program, which experienced a 40% increase in number served over last year, relies heavily on parish and community volunteers. This past summer, 260 adults and children gave 2,711 hours. They helped set-up and distribute the nutritious sack lunches. They also engaged the children in fun activities at the sites including games, coloring and painting.

One of the biggest program additions has been offering adults meals so parents can eat lunch with their children. "After noticing that adult caregivers who were bringing their children to the Summer Food sites were also in need, we partnered with St. Agnes and Ascension parishes who generously provided well-balanced sack lunches for adults," says Camille Pickhinke, Parish and Community Outreach Coordinator.



15,264
total meals
served to children
and adults during
our **Summer**
Food Program.



This summer, 1,631 adult meals were served. "Feeding those adults changed the atmosphere of the Summer Food sites," says Pickhinke, adding, "We helped create an environment where families can share a meal, talk, laugh and simply spend time together."

It's hard to truly measure the impact Catholic Charities' Summer Food Program has on families. For Desiree, a mother of five who brought her children to a site almost daily, the program was a difference-maker. It was something they looked forward to coming to, and it helped ease the financial burden of feeding her family. "This is a good time for us bonding together," she says, "and getting to sit at the table and all eat together." ❖

FISCAL YEAR-AT-A-GLANCE



Every 60 seconds
Catholic Charities
of Northeast Kansas
provides **assistance**
to families across our **21 county**
service area.



Food assistance
provided over
25,000 times
each month.



Served our
neighbors
in need
558,673
times.



81% increase in
the number of
individuals receiving
Employment
Counseling & Assistance.

Pilot Program Removes Barriers

Two years ago as I was sitting at a Wyandotte County Economic Development Council meeting, I was taken aback by the discussion. The business and industry leaders in the room were frustrated because they could not fill available jobs. In fact, 63% of Wyandotte County companies were hiring.

That sounded like great news to an agency like ours. Unfortunately, as we tried to match these jobs, we found that those we serve were not only under-qualified, but they faced multiple and serious barriers to attaining the necessary education and training.

The challenge was on for Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas to create a program where we could help several people a year overcome absolutely everything that stands between them and real income. If we could do that, we could have a deep impact on poverty in the poorest county in Kansas.

Kim Brabits, Vice President, Program Operations, spearheaded a team to help develop what would become St. Rita's Barrier Removal Center. A planning grant from the Hall Family Foundation helped us research the problems in depth, design the program and evaluate its feasibility.

The Wyandotte County Economic Development Council reported that there were 1,451 open positions among 200 companies surveyed. There were openings for machinists, welders, diesel mechanics, truck drivers and forklift operators – all jobs that demand trade certifications, but all paying between \$40,000-\$60,000 per year. For the people we serve, those are life-changing wages, not just for them, but for their whole families.

This fall, we are excited to work with Kansas City Kansas Community College to launch the pilot program. For our first group of six students, I believe that their St. Rita's journey is off to a life-changing start. ❖



Help on Wheels

Susan and Joe live in a rural Kansas town with limited resources. Due to medical conditions, they were unable to work for a couple of months. They fell behind on their rent, and had no money for food. They relied on fishing for their meals, sometimes catching only a turtle.

RESOURCE BUS FISCAL YEAR 2017 STATS:



4,403

Number of times the mobile resource bus provided food, shelter, case management and financial education.



43%

Of those receiving services were children.



\$16,900

Value of USDA food commodities provided to low-income seniors.

Susan and Joe heard about Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' Mobile Resource Bus coming to their area. The bus is equipped with basic essentials including food and clothing. A case manager is on board to provide services such as budget coaching, employment counseling, referrals or help filling out paperwork for other existing programs. Some direct financial assistance is available to help with rent, utility and medication costs.

"It's not possible to have a permanent office in every county, but we are committed to serving those who live in rural communities where emergency assistance may not be easily accessible," says Denise Ogilvie, Vice President, Outreach and Grants Management. "Also, our Mobile Resource Bus is a way to engage people in every community to be Christ to those in need by volunteering with us and helping in our mission of serving."

Susan and Joe came to the Mobile Resource Bus feeling helpless. Although Joe was scheduled to begin working at a temp agency in the coming days, their landlord was about to evict them. Catholic Charities helped with the immediate rent need, as well as food assistance. The case management, however, went beyond that. "We provided financial coaching to the couple, developing a goal plan for budgeting their money and paying their bills once Joe started his job," explains Dani De León, Case Management Specialist.

Susan and Joe left the Catholic Charities' Mobile Resource Bus with more than a bag of food and a budget plan. They had hope – something they hadn't had in a very long time. ❖

Snow Ball is a Labor of Love

The 44th Annual Snow Ball benefiting Catholic Charities Foundation of Northeast Kansas will be held Saturday, January 20, 2018 at the Overland Park Convention Center. Maureen and Mike Bukaty are serving as Snow Ball Presidents alongside Honorary Presidents Susan and Mike Gangel.

For the presidents, chairs and 250 event volunteers, Snow Ball is more than a fundraiser – it's a ministry. That's why they stay involved year after year, working tirelessly to help neighbors in need. John and Mary Campbell, Patron Committee Chairs, and Joe and Melissa Valenciano, Table Committee Chairs, garner support for the event nearly year-round.



Snow Ball Table Committee Chairs, Joe and Melissa Valenciano, and Patron Committee Chairs, Mary and John Campbell

"Snow Ball impacts all of our programs and services, from providing food to hungry families to housing assistance to those at risk for experiencing homelessness to hospice care for the dying," explains Ken Williams, President and CEO, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas.

To support Snow Ball through a patron gift or to purchase a table, visit: catholiccharitiessnowball.org ❖

A Lesson in Service

Students are back to school reading literature, figuring out math problems and conducting science experiments. Many are also learning important lessons that go beyond the classroom — what it means to serve others through Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas.



St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Overland Park is gearing up for its annual fall canned food drive. The students have donated more than half a million cans of food to Catholic Charities since 2010. Their contribution, along with other area schools that host food drives throughout the year, makes a sizeable impact on Catholic Charities' commitment to feeding the hungry.

St. Agnes Catholic School in Roeland Park dedicates its annual Ram's

Reaching Out Day to several of Catholic Charities' ministries including the Foster Grandparent Program, Catholic Community Hospice, Adoption, New Roots for Refugees, Summer Food and more. Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, who kicked off last year's event with the celebration of Mass, was impressed by the level of involvement from pre-school through eighth grade.

"What a great opportunity for them not only to do service," adds Archbishop Naumann, "but to get a taste of the breadth of services that the Church is providing every day to people throughout our communities." ❖

Refugee Children Learn about American Schools

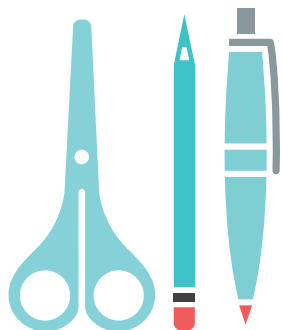
Starting a new school can be difficult for anyone. It's especially challenging for refugee children who must become familiar with another country's school rules and culture.

To help get the children ready for school in America, Catholic Charities' Refugee and Immigration Services offered a four day, back-to-school camp. Twenty-eight students attended, with the majority being from the Congolese and Bhutanese populations. The children were split into two age groups. The younger group focused on more basic rules and English phrases, while the older group discussed cultural identity and ways to be successful in school.



In addition to classroom instruction, the children participated in a variety of activities including a scavenger hunt, dance performance and ice cream social. Backpacks stuffed with supplies that were donated from a parish drive were distributed to all the participants.

"I think this camp was important because it gave the refugee children the chance to be in a simulated school environment before they had to take on the real deal," says Kayla Bowers, Refugee Learning Center. ❖



"Vocationing" at Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas

When 23-year-old seminarian, Andrew Gaffney, got his assignment, he was excited. He would be spending his summer at Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas. It would be an opportunity to live Pope Francis' mandate for priests to be "shepherds living with the smell of the sheep."

Andrew admits that he had no idea about all the programs and services offered by Catholic Charities. Although he primarily helped with the Summer Food Program, you could find him assisting in one of the food pantries or dining with the men at Shalom House, Catholic Charities' shelter for homeless men.



"It was eye-opening to see what people are struggling with," says Andrew. "It left me with a greater appreciation when working with people in need."

Seminarian Travis Mecum also spent an unforgettable summer with Catholic Charities last year. "My time with Catholic Charities opened my eyes and my heart to the cry of the poor and the power of the Spirit to act through others in this world," says Travis. "It has instilled a greater sense of empathy and compassion in my heart."

In turn, the seminarians have been a great help to Catholic Charities and those served by its ministries. "We are grateful to have the seminarians work side-by-side with us," says Ken Williams, President and CEO. "We ask that everyone join us in supporting them through continued prayers." ❖

Get the latest news about Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas delivered straight to your inbox!

Go to catholiccharitiesks.org and sign up for our monthly e-Newsletter which highlights our programs, upcoming events and ways you can help make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE CENTERS

ATCHISON

502 Kansas Ave.
Atchison, KS 66002
913.367.5070

KANSAS CITY

2220 Central Ave.
Kansas City, KS 66102
913.621.3445

LAWRENCE

1247 Kentucky St.
Lawrence, KS 66044
785.856.2694

LEAVENWORTH

716 North 5th St.
Leavenworth, KS 66048
913.651.8060

OLATHE

333 East Poplar
Olathe, KS 66061
913.782.4077

OVERLAND PARK

9806 West 87th St.
Overland Park, KS 66212
913.384.6608

TOPEKA

234 South Kansas Ave.
Topeka, KS 66603
785.233.6300

HOPE DISTRIBUTION CENTER

1708 Steele Rd.
(Food Pantry Only)
Kansas City, KS 66106
913.432.3141

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

9720 West 87th St.
Overland Park, KS 66212
913.433.2100



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and follow us on



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Donated Items Put to Good Use at TurnStyles Thrift Stores

Gently used items are donated daily to TurnStyles thrift stores. Thanks to these donations, individuals and families on a limited budget have an affordable place to shop. Best of all, by shopping, they are impacting the lives of others who are struggling to make ends meet.

TurnStyles is a volunteer-driven ministry of Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas. Each month, 379 volunteers generously give nearly 4,000 hours. They do everything from helping in the donation receiving area, to sorting/hanging items, to working the cash registers at the store's two locations.

TurnStyles also offers a great volunteer activity for families looking for a project they can do together. Children, ages 10 and up, can join their parents on a Saturday sorting and hanging the clothing donations that come in throughout the week. "It's really about families helping families," says TurnStyles Director Zoran Misisic.

The volunteerism goes beyond the stores. Some who've worked in retail and have a real knack for identifying treasures, pull some of the donated items and sell them on eBay or at one of TurnStyles' booths at the Mission Road Antique Mall in Prairie Village or Sentimental Journey Antique Mall in Olathe.



TurnStyles' proceeds support Catholic Charities' programs and services offered throughout the 21 county service area. During last fiscal year, overall sales increased by 22 percent. "Thanks to those purchases, we were able to help Catholic Charities provide food assistance to over 7,100 additional families," adds Misisic.

To sign up for individual and family volunteer opportunities, visit:
catholiccharitiesks.org/turnstyles/volunteer ❖



**73,218 TurnStyles
thrift store** purchases
helped Catholic
Charities provide food
assistance to over **7,100
additional families.**



4,000 hours of service
provided by
379 TurnStyles' volunteers
each month.