

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS

ATCHISON

502 Kansas Ave.
Atchison, KS 66002
913.367.5070

KANSAS CITY

600 Minnesota Ave.
Kansas City, KS 66101
913.621.3445

LAWRENCE

1525 West 6th 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.
Kansas City, KS 66106
913.432.3141

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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



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Program Impacts Hungry Kids — Serving Over 89,100 Meals!

When COVID-19 abruptly closed schools last March, the free or reduced-cost school lunches that many families rely on throughout the academic year suddenly disappeared. Without access to this food, local children were at an increased risk of going hungry.

Traditionally, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas offers a Kids Summer Food Program from June through August. With kids at home and families experiencing financial distress, the agency launched the program early, and extended it to the beginning of September. As a result, over 89,100 meals were distributed, compared to 12,283 the previous summer.

The program reached children across 18 sites throughout the Archdiocese, including a brand new partnership with 7 low-income housing programs in Kansas City, Kansas. Due to the

pandemic, the format was adjusted. Each lunch bag contained enough nutritious, shelf-stable food to provide five meals per child each week. Also, instead of having children sit at tables to enjoy their meal at community centers and public libraries, a drive-thru distribution was set up at a few of the Family Support Centers, as well as other community locations.

For the first time, the Resource Bus traveled weekly to underserved neighborhoods providing kids' sack lunches, as well as produce boxes to families in need. At times, volunteers went door-to-door delivering the food, witnessing firsthand their impact.

"During COVID-19, a lot of these kids had been at home for a long time," said Claire Doyle, a VISTA volunteer. "Our deliveries were something to look forward to and get excited about. You could see the joy that it brought to the kids."

To learn about Kids Summer Food Program volunteer opportunities, contact Cari Olberding: colberding@catholiccharitiesks.org.



BREAKING Bread

FALL 2020



A Call to Love and Serve One Another

When COVID-19 hit Kansas in March, schools and long-term care facilities closed along with many businesses and organizations. This world-wide pandemic, however, could not keep Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas from serving those in need.

"In what felt like an instant, our operations would forever be changed," said Lauren Solidum, President and CEO. "We quickly assessed the need, and what we knew at the time about COVID-19 safety protocols, and began to strategize how our agency could continue to provide hope, help and hospitality to the most vulnerable children, women and men among us."

Ministries outside of food distribution, shelter and Catholic Community Hospice halted. As the volunteer workforce decreased by as much as 85 percent initially, employees shifted into new roles serving on the frontlines.

Leavenworth Family Support Center Manager, Jackie Masoner, is among those in a high-risk health category. She considered taking a short-term leave of absence. As she reflected on her decision, she remembered the advice her son gave her before leaving to serve in the military. He said, "Mom, if I don't serve our country, who will?"

Masoner took this advice to heart, and asked herself, "If I don't serve our neighbors in need at Catholic Charities, how can I expect this from my staff and volunteers?"

Since the onset of COVID, Catholic Charities has made many changes to how services are provided. Drive-thru food distributions have been set up at all seven of the Family Support Centers; the Kids Summer Food Program kicked off early and ran for nearly six months; case management appointments to help with housing, rent and utility assistance were set up remotely,



but are now back to being held in-person; and virtual financial education classes were scheduled to help families manage their finances and unexpected hardships through these difficult times.

"We had to pivot our services. Our neighbors were counting on us for assistance. If not Catholic Charities, then who?" said Solidum, adding, "Words do not justly express how proud I am of our team, and the impact that we have had during this challenging time."

Although parish and neighborhood food drives, as well as financial contributions have helped Catholic Charities meet the increased demand, community support remains critical. "We are so incredibly grateful for the outpouring of prayers and donations," said Solidum. "It's so important for Catholic Charities to be out serving during this pandemic, but it is beyond COVID. This truly is a call by God to love and serve one another. Together, with the generosity of our supporters, we are doing just that."

Hear from the Catholic Charities' staff and volunteers who have been serving during this time. Watch our COVID-19 impact video by visiting: catholiccharitiesks.org/covid19.

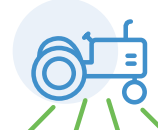
COVID IMPACT STATS MARCH-JULY 2020



Over **120 tons of food distributed** at monthly mass food distributions.



Nearly **800 families** and over **2,000 individuals** received housing, rent and utility assistance.



15 rural counties provided basic necessities for families in need.



More than **50% of recent St. Rita graduates** have secured **new job opportunities**.

Lauren Solidum, President & CEO

"I am not afraid because God is with me; I was born to do this."

- St. Joan of Arc



Keeping the ministries of Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas (CCNEK) operating through a pandemic has been challenging! With the health of our team in question, a dramatic decrease in our volunteer workforce and community food needs that felt beyond our capacity, the Holy Spirit quickly reminded us that a storm is often a beautifully masked opportunity to serve our neighbors in need. And we went to work.

Our ministries outside of food distribution, shelter and Catholic Community Hospice halted. Employees shifted into the unknown of new roles and expectations to meet the urgent needs of our Archdiocese.

It has been a time to become both agile and creative. We could not open our pantry doors to the public, so outdoor food distribution became a reality at each of our Family Support Centers. We utilized technology to leverage virtual case management and financial education classes for those in need, and we even started our Kids Summer Food Program three months early so that the children who relied on free or reduced cost lunches during the school year, would not go hungry.

At Catholic Charities, we believe that we are all born for this, this time, this place, this situation and we ALL have something to contribute to our neighbors in need.

I am deeply overwhelmed by the generosity that continues to flow from our supporters, as well as the willingness and fortitude of our employees and volunteers choosing to serve side-by-side with us.

The pandemic continues to tell a critical story of the necessity that is Catholic Charities within our Archdiocese. It has reaffirmed our purpose and mission and, perhaps most importantly, it has inspired many to enact their faith through service to our organization. Thanks be to God. ❖

Landing Dream Job During a Pandemic

Fidelis, a 36-year-old Army Veteran, was struggling to pay his rent and several other bills. Although he loved his job as a recreational therapy assistant, he lacked the certification required to earn a livable wage. He turned to Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' Leavenworth Family Support Center (FSC) for help. He had no idea that this action would change his life's trajectory.

During the intensive case management and budget counseling, the case manager learned that Fidelis was educated with a diverse skill set, but was underemployed and living paycheck to paycheck. A certification program could help him find more stable employment and earn a higher income.

Covid Impact Stats (March - July 2020):



19 new participants enrolled in the St. Rita skills training program, and **15 existing participants**

graduated within the areas of nursing and skilled trades.



357 financial case management appointments and **7 virtual financial education classes** were conducted to help individuals and families manage their finances and unexpected hardships.

Fidelis researched the demand and earning potential for a new career. He enrolled in the St. Rita workforce program and began online training for certification to become a Catastrophe Property Adjustor.

Fidelis was also referred to the Leavenworth Family Financial Transformations™ (FFT) pilot program to help him become financially self-sufficient. Due to COVID-19, the financial classes were offered virtually. Fidelis learned how to take charge of his personal finances, which became more valuable as the pandemic resulted in the loss of his job. Fortunately, with help from the FSC, he could maintain his apartment and utilities. As a FFT participant, he was able to visit the FSC's food pantry weekly, which helped his budget immensely.

With his new certifications, he was hired as a contractor with FEMA. Currently, he is in Louisiana providing assistance to others during their time of hardship. He shared that without support from Catholic Charities, the FFT classes and intensive case management through the FSC, he would not have been able to change his course – especially during a pandemic — and gain the skills and resources to pursue his dream career. ❖

Volunteers Help TurnStyles Re-Open

Like other retail stores, the TurnStyles Thrift locations closed in March in response to the pandemic. One by one, each of the stores has successfully re-opened – a feat that could only be accomplished with the help of a mighty group of volunteers.

"At a time when we saw an increase in need across our communities, many of our volunteers answered the call to mobilize again," explained Ryan Forshee, Senior Director of Store Operations. "They recognize that TurnStyles is a ministry of Catholic Charities, and that our three stores raise funds that directly impact the agency's efforts to provide help, hope and hospitality to our neighbors in need."

Volunteers are essential to keeping the thrift stores up and running. "We are grateful for those who are willing to serve during this difficult time," said Cari Olberding, Volunteer Coordinator.

All three TurnStyles locations need volunteer support to process donations, hang/tag clothing, price housewares, organize the store floor and serve as cashiers. To help, go to: catholiccharitiesks.org/covid-volunteering ❖



475 volunteers are needed each month at TurnStyles; currently there are **only 175 active volunteers**.

A Beacon of Help, Hope and Hospitality



Covid Impact Stats (March - July 2020):

Nearly **350,000 lbs of fresh produce** was delivered to individuals and families in need.

Much of Catholic Charities' 21-county service area is made up of rural communities. These areas are often described as food deserts. With very few resources available, their struggle to feed families in need has become even greater during COVID-19.

"When we think of disaster relief, we often think of natural disasters. These last few months has reminded us that disaster relief is so much more – it also includes threats to our health. Our ability to mobilize resources and volunteers to respond to this pandemic by supplying food to our rural communities has been just one way of answering the call to give generously," said Camille Pickhinke, Parish and Community Outreach Coordinator.

As part of a new partnership with the USDA designed to provide families relief during the coronavirus, Catholic Charities received 700 fresh produce boxes each week for distribution. These were dispersed through Family Support Center pantries, at summer feeding sites and to rural counties through the Mobile Resource Bus.

In addition, Catholic Charities provided over 19,000 pounds of food to pantries in Linn, Jackson, Nemaha and Lyon counties. These rural communities have been very grateful for Catholic Charities and the generosity of those who have been supporting the organization through food donations. "Linn County is a better place because of the support of Catholic Charities," shared a community member.

It's in moments like this that we remember why we exist as an agency, said Camille, adding, "To be a beacon of help, hope and hospitality in times of unrest." ❖

Families Rely More on Hospice Team

It has always been an honor for the Catholic Community Hospice team to care for patients at the end of life. It has become an even greater one now, as families are restricted from spending time with their loved ones due to the health pandemic.

"Families are grieving because they can't visit. They're counting on us to be their eyes and ears," said Nancy Kelso, Clinical Director. "Hopefully, they are finding some peace in knowing that we are there providing comfort, compassion and prayer."

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, D.D., witnessed firsthand the teamwork between archdiocesan ministries when his mother was a resident at Villa St. Francis. He said, "I have been edified by the exceptional, additional care Mom received through the dedicated staff of Catholic Community Hospice."

Traditionally, patients receive care from an interdisciplinary hospice team, which includes a physician, nurse, home health aide, social worker, chaplain and volunteer. Since March, most long-term care facilities will only allow the hospice nurse to come in on a limited basis.

The team has been trying to enhance communication between patients and family members, utilizing technology such as FaceTime. Also, the chaplains have started doing telehealth visits to ensure patients are receiving spiritual care.

Although it's uncertain how long restrictions will remain, Kelso said that families can depend on Catholic Community Hospice. She said, "We will continue to be persistent and advocate for our patients, who deserve the benefits of hospice care at the end of life." ❖



catholic community hospice

Covid Impact Stats (March - July 2020):

170 patients received **compassionate end-of-life hospice** care despite having limited access to patients and families.

4 Ways to Make an Impact During COVID-19

Serve with us

Although we have welcomed back some of our volunteers since COVID-19 began, we are still experiencing a 50 percent reduction in our volunteer workforce. Each week, our Family Support Centers need pantry assistance, and our TurnStyles Thrift stores need help sorting and processing clothing donations.



Donate/collect items

Food and hygiene items are in high demand and may be dropped off at any of our Family Support Centers. Think about hosting a neighborhood drive or encourage your family, friends and co-workers to donate.

Give a financial gift

The community continues to turn to Catholic Charities to provide disaster relief during the pandemic. Please consider making a one-time gift or joining our M25 monthly giving program. Trust that we operate effectively and efficiently with \$0.91 of every dollar donated supporting those who benefit the most from our programs and services.

Pray for those we serve

One of the most powerful things that we all can do is pray for the most vulnerable children, women and men among us. The coronavirus has been a reminder that we are all one family under God, and we all are called to love our neighbor.

To learn about volunteer opportunities during Covid or ways to donate, visit: catholiccharitiesks.org/covid19 ❖

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.