

# BREAKING

SPRING 2017

catholic  charities  
OF NORTHEAST KANSAS

# Bread

## Strengthening Programs Set Course for Achieving Self-Sufficiency

Jack came into one of Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' Emergency Assistance Centers seeking more than food and utility assistance. He was looking for a job.

Jack is among the growing number of people turning to Catholic Charities for employment support services. "Our goal is to help people obtain full-time jobs with a career path that will further their employment opportunities," explains Kim Brabits, MSW, Vice President, Program Operations.

At Catholic Charities, case workers provide screening tools that look at work experience, skills and education. In Jack's case, his skill set was in carpentry. It was a field he wanted to pursue, but lacked the resources.

After setting him up with the Carpenters District Council of Kansas City, Jack signed up for the apprenticeship program and had a contractor willing to hire him if he could pass his OSHA 10 certification. But Jack didn't have access to a computer to take the required online training – or the \$35 to pay for it.

Computers are available in the Emergency Assistance Centers for use to do job searches, create resumes and complete online job applications. "We identify employers who are hiring, and we coach them through the application and interview process," adds Brabits. "We help with training fees and provide some special tools, if necessary, to meet job requirements."

With Catholic Charities' help, Jack now has a good paying, full-time job and is enrolled in the Carpenters' Apprenticeship Program. The job, however, provides more than a paycheck. It gives Jack a renewed sense of dignity.



*"The greatest gift that Catholic Charities can provide to those we serve is to help empower them to be able to provide for themselves and their families," says Most Reverend Joseph F. Naumann, D.D., Archbishop of Kansas City in Kansas. "Work is ennobling."*

Beyond employment support, Catholic Charities provides financial education and practical information so that people are better equipped to handle their expenses once they start receiving a regular income. A Fundamental Financial Series is offered that includes how to budget, the importance of establishing credit, how to set financial goals and more. In addition, Catholic Charities works in partnership with CommunityAmerica Credit Union Foundation on a 12-month financial program geared for the entire family. To help eliminate hardships caused by predatory payday loans, the organization also has a loan refinance program, the Kansas Loan Pool Project (KLPP).

Although the circumstances of those served may necessitate on-going assistance, the goal of Catholic Charities is to help people move into more hopeful, sustainable and self-sufficient states. Adds Archbishop Naumann, "We want those we serve someday to be in a position where they cannot only provide for themselves, but also help others realize their dreams." ❖

### FISCAL YEAR-AT-A-GLANCE



**Offered Employment Support Services** including job referrals and application assistance over 550 times.



71% increase in number of individuals who received **financial education**.



Overall 14% decrease in debt and 11% increase in savings for **Family Financial Transformations™** program graduates.



**Kansas Loan Pool Project** converted more than 150 high-interest predatory payday loans to 6% loans.

## A HUNGER FOR DIGNITY



Pope Francis once addressed a crowd, stating: "...It is certainly necessary to give bread to the hungry – this is an act of justice. But there is also a deeper hunger...the hunger for dignity."

Human dignity is the innate right to be valued and respected. It's not something that's earned or acquired. It's the right of everyone—regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual preference, IQ score or socio-economic status.

When Jared walked into one of our Emergency Assistance Centers recently, he was unemployed with only a meager amount of money. We were his last choice. The emotional and difficult decision he made to ask for help was only outweighed by his physical need for food and shelter.

We gave Jared food that day. But, we didn't just hand him a pre-packed bag and escort him to the door. Instead, he shopped. By pushing a grocery cart and selecting his own items from the shelves, Jared was able to maintain his personal autonomy. Acknowledging his ability to make his own choices is a small way of bringing dignity to an experience most of us can't imagine.

Jared's despair stemmed from unemployment. His difficulty finding consistent work caused him to lose sight of his own inherent value. Catholic Social Teaching holds that work is dignified and an intrinsic good.

***Work is more than simply making a living. It's fundamental to the dignity of the person.***

Utilizing our employment support resources, Jared's case manager helped him obtain meaningful work. More than earning a wage, his sense of self-worth was restored – an important step towards self-sufficiency. ❖

# Services Grow as the Face of Homeless Changes

A victim of domestic violence, Felicia knew that she and her daughter needed to get out. While that meant they could be safe, it also meant that for the first time in their lives, they would be homeless.

"The face of homelessness has dramatically changed over time," explains Dustin Hardison, Director of Stabilization and Housing. "It's not just the person sleeping on the park bench. It's someone fleeing an unhealthy living situation, or a single income family who can't keep up with the rent and other expenses."

As the definition of homelessness has broadened, so have the housing services offered by Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas. The organization's introduction into housing began in 2008 when it assumed operation of Shalom House, a 24-bed facility for homeless men in Kansas City, Kansas. In 2011, Catholic Charities began implementing the first Housing First Rapid Re-Housing grant in Johnson County. Within three years, the organization began assisting with rapid rehousing throughout its 21-county service area.

The last five years has brought even more change to the way Catholic Charities approaches housing. "We collaborate closer with community partners and our local planning committees to help those who are at risk for, or who are experiencing homelessness, gain permanent housing," says Kim Brabits, MSW, Vice President, Program Operations.

While people may think finding housing marks the end of services, at Catholic Charities, it's just the beginning. Individuals and families receive up to 12 months or more of multidisciplinary



*Volunteers assist with housing set-up, preparing a place that's clean and welcoming.*

case management to help them maintain their housing. "We work as a team to get to know these families and identify the barriers they have concerning employment, transportation, childcare and healthcare," says Dani De León, Case Management Specialist.

Catholic Charities offers financial education coaching and classes including topics such as budgeting, the importance of credit, predatory lending and financial goal setting. Creating and implementing a plan for employment is also a primary focus. "Access to health care is a constant concern, and with the help of our Community Health Coordinator, we're able to bring services to our participants or identify appropriate referrals," adds Brabits.

Thanks to this comprehensive housing program, Felicia has maintained a one-year lease and paid her utilities on time and in full each month. She has a job with benefits. Most of all, she has hope for her and her daughter's future. ❖



The Ben and Betty Zarda Family Golf Classic has become a favorite among golfers and non-golfers alike. Now in its 36th year, the event will be held on **Monday, May 15th at Lake Quivira Country Club**. For the Zarda family and

other participants, the outing isn't about golf – it's about raising money for Catholic Charities Foundation of Northeast Kansas. Proceeds from this year's event will help fund the organization's summer food initiative, keeping the shelves at the nine food pantries stocked for families in need throughout the 21 county service area. To register to play or donate to the Fund-A-Need, visit: [catholiccharitiesgolfclassic.org](http://catholiccharitiesgolfclassic.org) ❖

# School's Out. Food's Out.



As the end of the school year draws near, many parents are starting to feel anxious. The school lunch programs they relied on to help feed their children for the last nine months, soon will take a break.



"More and more families turn to our food pantries during those summer months," says Nickie Daneke, LMSW, Director of Stabilization-Programs. "While we try to keep up with the demand, that's usually when our shelves are growing empty due to a decrease in donations."

To help ease the burden on families and the pantries, Catholic Charities offers a Kids Summer Food Program in partnership with Harvesters, the US Department of Agriculture and the Kansas Department of Education. Last year, 8,642 healthy sack lunches were served to hungry children and nearly 1,200 to their parents or adult caregiver.

Parish and community volunteers are instrumental to the program's success. Fr. Daniel Schmitz, pastor of three parishes in Frankfurt, Kansas, participated in the Kids Summer Food program for the first time last summer. "It's one of the most concrete ways a parish can feed the hungry and fulfill Christ's command," he adds. ❖

## Giving Seniors an Extra Hand

In-Home Support has been Catholic Charities' cornerstone service to the elderly since 1993. The licensed home health program provides non-medical services to seniors 60 and older.

"We strive to help our elderly live independently and in their own homes for as long as it's safely possible," explains Betsy Holzworth, RN, BSN, Director, Senior Services.



The In-Home Support program serves more than 300 seniors annually living in Johnson and Wyandotte counties. Generally, the program provides a homemaker for two hours either weekly or every other week for light housekeeping, meal preparation, laundry or grocery shopping. Other services include bath aides, respite for caregivers and medication management.

"Our Catholic Charities' homemaker patiently listens to my mother, makes her feel secure and dignified," writes the daughter of a woman receiving services. "She is attentive to how she likes to be involved in the household chores."

Funding for services may be provided by the Johnson County Area Agency on Aging; Medicaid; long-term care insurance; and private pay insurance. If funding allows, some services could be available on a sliding-fee basis. To learn more, visit: [catholiccharitiesks.org/in-home-support](http://catholiccharitiesks.org/in-home-support) ❖

## Helping Break the Cycle of Debt

Nearing the end of his career as an accountant, Vince Nowak was searching for a way to use his professional skills to give back. He found it as a mentor for the Family Financial Transformations™ program.

The strengthening program is offered by Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas in partnership with CommunityAmerica Credit Union Foundation. Mentors are matched to participants who have completed intensive budget coaching and financial classroom instruction. They meet monthly over a nine month period so the mentor can provide ongoing financial guidance while the participant continues to meet with a Catholic Charities' case manager.

Vince's wife, Linda, who had taught nursing for years and who had a real knack for sticking to the budget, joined him as



a mentor. "I'm good at looking at the big financial picture, while Linda is really good at offering practical, money-saving tips," says Vince.

The Nowaks highly recommend others consider becoming mentors. "We've gotten almost more out of it than the participants," adds Linda. "It feels like you're really helping someone as you see them progress and manage their finances in a way that's positively impacting their lives."

Adds Vince, "Mentors don't have to have expert financial skills. They just have to share life experiences with managing their finances." To become a financial education mentor, visit: [catholiccharitiesks.org/volunteer](http://catholiccharitiesks.org/volunteer) ❖

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

Go to [catholiccharitiesks.org](http://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

### EMPORIA

616 Merchant St.  
Emporia, KS 66801  
620.343.2296

### 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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## Friendly Visitors Brings Joy to Seniors and Volunteers



*Leavenworth Friendly Visitors' participant  
Alberta Heintzelman and volunteer  
Sharon Winkelbauer.*

Sharon Winkelbauer knows firsthand the loneliness of being homebound. She was an active school teacher surrounded by children and co-workers before an illness left her unable to work or drive. It didn't prevent her, however, from volunteering.

Since 2008, Sharon has been a part of Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' Friendly Visitors program, which pairs compassionate volunteers with seniors ages 60 or older, or those with minor disabilities, who are confined to their homes. She makes phone calls to five ladies, just checking in to see how they are doing. These ladies have become more than just her volunteer duty – they've become her friends.

Some Friendly Visitors' volunteers help seniors who need support through weekly at-home visits. Kathy Belanger has visited the same lady living in a senior care facility since joining the program nearly two years ago. "I really enjoy my time with my friend. We are close in age and share our personal stories, share recipes and just pass time together. It's one of the highlights of my week," says Belanger. "She is a blessing to me!"

Friendly Visitors are offered to seniors in Emporia, Johnson County, Lawrence, Leavenworth, Topeka and Wyandotte County at no charge. All volunteers are carefully screened and trained. To learn more about Friendly Visitors or to volunteer, visit:

[catholiccharitiesks.org/friendly-visitors](http://catholiccharitiesks.org/friendly-visitors) ❖



**80 Friendly  
Visitors volunteers**  
call-on **98 seniors.**



**742 phone calls** and  
**107 at-home visits**  
to seniors per month.



Over **4,600 total  
volunteer hours**  
per year.