

## Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas

### Families Find Peace of Mind, Success With Financial Programs

Two years ago Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas and Community America Credit Union Foundation came together with a common goal: to help break the cycle of debt and end generational poverty. From that, **Family Financial Transformations™**, one of Catholic Charities' financial education programs, was born.

It's difficult to change what you don't know and finances are no exception. Making wise financial decisions can be difficult if you've never been taught how to manage your income, create a budget or save for emergencies.

Family Financial Transformations™ is a 12-month program in which participants receive financial classroom instruction, budget counseling to help guide them to long-term success.

One of the perks to the program is that is geared for the entire family. While the parent attends financial education classes, there is separate, age-appropriate instruction designed just for the kids. It truly is set up to educate the next generation about how money works and how to avoid unnecessary debt.

Statistically, the program has exceeded expectations. Over the past two years, **127 families** have *paid off \$254,279.56 worth of debt* and have successfully *saved \$38,883.30*. These participants have also seen an increase in employment, income and healthcare coverage.

What statistics can't convey is where emotions take over. Several participants report feeling the peace of mind in knowing they have a brighter financial future.

One couple even experienced a better home environment stating, "It's had a big impact because we don't fight about money anymore."



To learn more about the program or how you can be a financial mentor, visit us online at: [catholiccharitiesks.org/financial-education/](http://catholiccharitiesks.org/financial-education/)

### "CAN" We Fight Hunger? Yes, We "CAN"!

*Hope Hero Shout Out!*



Principal Shane Rapp joins SJA co-captains, Emily Miller and Kyle DeKraai, with Catholic Charities representatives, Denise Oglivie (left) and Meg McLaughlin during "Canstruction."

Students at **St. James Academy Catholic High School** rolled up their sleeves and "can-structed" a plan to help fight hunger in our community.

As part of their annual "Canstruction" food drive, they collected **21,201** canned food items to donate to Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas.

But even feeding the hungry can include a lesson in art and engineering. Before the food is donated, teams within the school's system of communities design and build structures from the cans and boxes of food. A ballot is cast for each creation and the winning team obtains bragging rights for the remainder of the year.

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## "CAN" We Fight Hunger? Yes, We "CAN"! *Hope Hero Shout Out!*

This generous food contribution helps stock the shelves of our nine food pantries, providing food in the community nearly 25,000 times a month. So, really, that makes us all winners.

Thank you to all the students, faculty and staff at St. James Academy!



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## Earthly Angels Provide Comfort at the End of Life's Journey



Although it can be hard to accept, death is a stage in all of our lives. Through the Angel Vigil program, Catholic Community Hospice provides around-the-clock bedside volunteers, so that patients and their family members don't have to go through these final hours alone.

Juanita Hernandez is one of 20 Angel Vigil volunteers. A nurse by profession and vocation, she views her time with a patient who is actively dying, as a gift. "The patient is preparing to go home to his or her creator," she says. "I believe that God is most present at that time."

Catholic Community Hospice Volunteer Director, Bonnie Krause, provides training to those interested in serving as a hospice volunteer. She recommends that new volunteers spend their first six months volunteering with patients, before sitting with the dying. Depending on the faith of the patient, Angel Vigil volunteers read a

passage from the Bible or perhaps a spiritual book or favorite novel, say prayers, play comforting music or sometimes just sit silently holding the patient's hands.

"Silence is huge," adds Juanita. "As a volunteer, you have to be very comfortable being silent during this time. It's very powerful."

Barb Trum had thought off and on about volunteering for hospice, but wasn't sure she could handle it. As her faith and devotion to Saint Teresa of Calcutta deepened, she felt an even stronger calling to do something meaningful for others. After much discernment, she contacted Catholic Community Hospice. A year later, Barb has become passionate about her volunteer service and knows she's where she should be. "I'm an earthly angel sent by God to walk with these patients on their final journey."

To participate in this beautiful ministry and become an end-of-life care volunteer, complete a hospice volunteer interest form available online at:

**[catholiccharitiesks.org/hospice/volunteer-with-hospice/](https://catholiccharitiesks.org/hospice/volunteer-with-hospice/)**

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## WAYS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

For more information about any of our volunteer positions, contact:

**Michelle Carlstedt** at **913.433.2080** or **[mcarlstedt@catholiccharitiesks.org](mailto:mcarlstedt@catholiccharitiesks.org)**

## Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas

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