

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**
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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Summer Food Program Partners with Rural Libraries

While food and drink might be frowned upon at some libraries, it certainly wasn't the case this summer at the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library in St. Marys, Kansas. There the staff encouraged eating -- handing out sack lunches three days a week as part of Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' Summer Food Program.


It was the lack of resources in their small rural communities that inspired the library system to participate in the program. "Originally other local organizations weren't really doing summer food or any kind of food options really, so there was kind of a gap," explains Judith Cremer, Library Director. "Our goal was to fill that gap. It was a package deal if we could provide them food and also get them into the library to read."

The summer food program was held at seven of Pottawatomie Wabaunsee's library branches in conjunction with its Summer Reading Program. Catholic Charities furnished the food and supplies necessary to run the site; the library staff in turn served the meals with the help of local volunteers from Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, the St. Marys Knights of Columbus, and others who were interested in lending a hand.

Much of Catholic Charities' 21-county service area is made up of rural communities that can be described as food and resource deserts -- where there are no grocery stores, community resources or public transportation. "Through our Summer Food Program, we are able to serve and provide some relief in communities not typically supported by social services programs," adds Denise Ogilvie, Vice President, Outreach and Grants Management.

To learn more about the Summer Food Program, visit: catholiccharitiesks.org/kids-summer-food-program ❖

 **16,161 total meals** served to children and adults during our Summer Food Program.

 **2,000 hours** of service provided by 350 adults and children who helped set-up and **distribute sack lunches** and engaged children in activities.

BREAKING Bread

FALL 2018

Lack of Financial Understanding Costs Families

Tom and Sue have 12 credit cards totaling \$34,000 in debt. All have a balance due each month. With a three-year-old child to raise and a second baby due soon, the couple knew they needed help.

Like many who walk through the doors of Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' emergency assistance centers, Tom and Sue had never learned the basics about finances. They were not taught how to manage their income, budget their expenses or save for an emergency.

"It is difficult to change what you don't know," explains Amelia Reyes, Director of Asset Development. "Understanding your finances, however, can be life-changing. It is key for those wanting to regain economic stability."

With guidance from a case manager, Tom and Sue enrolled in Catholic Charities' Family Financial Transformations™ (FFT) program. Participants receive financial classroom instruction as well as individualized budget coaching and personal goal development throughout a 12-month period. Afterwards, participants have the opportunity to continue to meet with a volunteer financial mentor focused specifically on that family's financial goals and challenges.

Since enrolling in the classes last spring, Tom and Sue have not used any of their credit cards. In addition, they are up-to-date on all of their bills. They are now excited to learn ways to improve their finances. Also, the classes have given them confidence as they journey towards self-sufficiency.




For some, it's not credit cards but high-interest predatory loans used for a quick financial fix that can lead to lasting debt. Catholic Charities refinances these loans through its Kansas Loan Pool Project (KLPP) which includes financial classes and the development of a durable plan and budget.

While understanding finances is not easy, it can be especially challenging for refugees as they resettle in a new country. Individual Development Accounts (IDA) is a savings program that Catholic Charities offers for refugees who have been in the U.S. for five years or less. Funded by a public grant, it helps them set up a savings account and matches their earnings, up to \$4,000 for families or \$2,000 for individuals. The money can be used for school tuition, house or car payments or start-up funds for businesses.

All of Catholic Charities' financial programs share a single goal. Says Reyes, "We want people to understand how to budget and save so that they can achieve long-term financial independence." ❖

FISCAL YEAR-AT-A-GLANCE:

 **\$101,688** amount of debt families eliminated last year through **Family Financial Transformations™**.

 **128 predatory loans** eliminated last year through the **Kansas Loan Pool Project**.

 **58 new savings accounts** opened by refugee families through the IDA savings program.

 **21 counties** benefited from financial classes, monthly budget coaching and predatory loan assistance **32,794** times.

Lauren Solidum, President & CEO

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others.”

1 Peter 4:10



Rounding out my first 60 days at Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas, I reflect on why I am called to this vocation. The answer is summed up in two words – to serve.

There is no better

opportunity to serve our neighbors in need than through the many ministries of Catholic Charities. But we cannot do it without you. In another two words, I am asking you to join us.

Unsure where to start? Connect with us for a bus tour to understand the operations of many of our ministries. Maybe you are ready to jump in and donate your time through volunteering. Together, we can fulfill the Gospel mandate to live out the Corporal Works of Mercy.

Help feed the hungry by sorting food at one of our Emergency Assistance Centers or Hope Distribution Center; clothe the naked by collecting and sorting gently used donations with your family at our TurnStyles Thrift stores; shelter the homeless by sharing a meal with our Shalom House residents; welcome the stranger by tutoring our Citizenship Preparation program participants; or care for the sick and homebound through our Friendly Visitors, In-home Support, and Catholic Community Hospice ministries.

Catholic Charities offers the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ. We are a gateway to serve and interact with a multitude of other organizations supporting those in need within this community. We need you to help share the Catholic Charities story.

I will conclude with yet another two words – thank you!

Thank you to those who have graciously given time, talent and treasure to continuing the mission of Catholic Charities. Your contributions offer life-changing impact throughout the 21 counties we serve.

I look forward to getting to know you through one of these Catholic Charities experiences as we join together to serve our neighbors. ❖



At 72 years old, learning a new language and studying civics three days a week for several months, is no small feat. Palak, a refugee from Bhutan, did that and more. He passed his naturalization exam, took the Oath of Allegiance and became an American citizen!

Palak is among the more than 250 students who have successfully graduated from Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas' Citizenship Preparation Program. Since the program's inception in 2014, more than 700 students have enrolled in the classes, offered free of charge.

Three levels of 10-week classes are available from pre-beginner to intermediate literacy. Each curriculum is relevant to the naturalization exam and includes instruction in reading, writing, speaking and listening in English. In addition, students study the required Civics and American History needed to successfully pass the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) 100 civics questions.

The classes are more than just a review of the questions, however. “Students are taught about the U.S. government, and how they can participate in the democracy that their new country provides,” says Tracy Forbush, Manager, Citizenship and Refugee School Impact Programs.


Some of the learning takes place outside of the classroom. Students have the opportunity to attend field trips to the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, the National World War I Museum, the federal courthouse where naturalization ceremonies take place and even to the state capitol in Topeka. These field trips include tailored lesson plans that help reinforce the civics and English content taught in class.


Due to class sizes, volunteer tutors are always a welcome addition to the classroom. Tutors work with small groups of adults helping them learn relevant content in a fun, engaging atmosphere. Classes are offered in the morning, afternoon and evening.

For more information about the classes, or for tutor volunteer opportunities, go to: catholiccharitiesks.org/citizenship-classes ❖

CITIZENSHIP PREPARATION PROGRAM STATS:

 **180 new students** from over 20 different countries enrolled in **Citizen Preparation** classes during fiscal year 2018.

 **More than 700 students** have participated in classes since 2014.

 **250+ students** have successfully graduated, becoming **U.S. citizens**.

Prayer for a More Generous Heart Leads to Major Gift

Michael Shirley grew up with humble means. His parents were the product of the Great Depression and barely had the resources to care for their family.

“They taught me early to save everything that I could,” says Michael. “They taught me to be frugal.”

It was his mother, Irene, who grew up in an orphanage in St. Louis, Missouri, who provided him with a lesson of even greater importance – one of giving, sharing and helping others.

Although it was instilled in him very early, generosity would come later in life for Michael. “It was a struggle for me. I was used to saving and holding on. I prayed and I prayed, but it took me years to grow a more generous heart,” he says.

Along his journey, Michael became involved with Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas, an organization dear to his Mom’s heart. He remembers staff taking him on a tour where he had the opportunity to witness firsthand the mission of Catholic Charities and those served.

It was a defining moment for Michael.

As he personally continued to experience success in his life, the parable of the rich young man (Matthew 19: 16-22) kept coming to mind: “...go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

After consulting with his spiritual director, Father Al Rockers, Michael decided to take action and make a significant real estate gift. “Catholic Charities and its mission became so compelling to me,” he says. “I wanted to give now, so that I could see the impact.”

It was also an opportunity to lead by example. “I want my children to see that generosity makes you come alive,” he says. “And I want them to feel the joy and satisfaction of giving much earlier in their lives than I did.”

Michael hopes that his gift will become a real estate legacy that will inspire others. “This is the first major gift in a real estate initiative for Catholic Charities,” he explains. “I hope that my enthusiasm will lead others to consider making a planned gift while they are living.”

Catholic Charities is incredibly grateful for Michael’s gracious gift. “He has a generous heart and giving spirit. Michael not only offered this opportunity to further advance the mission of Catholic Charities, but is willing to call others to do the same,” says Lauren Solidum, President & CEO. “Catholic Charities recognizes Michael and many others who continuously stand up to provide time, talent and treasure. We sincerely thank Michael for this profound gift and ask others to prayerfully consider joining the call to support Catholic Charities. “

Michael adds, “It doesn’t have to be a large gift to make a big impact. Ultimately, if my gift helps just one person like my Mom, it will be well worth it.”

To learn more about the different ways to make a charitable planned gift to Catholic Charities, contact: **Elizabeth Silk, 913.433.2007** or esilk@catholiccharitiesks.org ❖



Photo (L to R): Honorary Presidents, Don and Patty Kincaid and Presidents, Neil and Fran Douthat.

Snow Ball Celebrates 45th Year

It started as a small, potluck supper. Over four decades later, Snow Ball has become one of the area’s largest philanthropic galas. Although it has grown considerably, its purpose and passion has remained – to help the poor and most vulnerable served by Catholic Charities Foundation of Northeast Kansas.

The 45th Annual Snow Ball will be held on Saturday, January 19, 2019 at the Overland Park Convention Center. Neil and Fran Douthat are event Presidents along-side Honorary Presidents Don and Patty Kincaid. The evening is a celebration of the generosity of donors and Snow Ball volunteers who work tirelessly to raise funds.

“Snow Ball is a ministry that impacts all of our programs and services,” says Lauren Solidum, President and CEO, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas. “We are blessed by the continuous self-giving of those who have paved this incredible legacy and invite others to join the movement.”

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

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.