“I thought things were getting better. We were going to church and he did it again. He hit me and I was holding the baby,” said Kellie as she reflected on her decision to finally let go of her abusive husband, John, after nearly 12 years. “You just don’t think of yourself as a domestic violence victim,” she says.

“In the beginning it was far and few between. Maybe once a year he would explode,” Kellie recalls. In 2007, she took a job as a corporate manager for a restaurant franchise and relocated her family from Michigan to Cleveland. “Things just got worse over the six years we were in there,” she said. John had to leave his job in Michigan and struggled to find work, so Kellie got John a job working for her. “You never want your wife as your boss. It’s pretty emasculating,” she said. As the couple fought and struggled to keep their relationship together, John lost his temper. “The last time in Cleveland was really bad. I cannot even put it into words,” Kellie said. She decided to stand up for herself and sent John to prison. Then Kellie got the news that would change her life – she was pregnant.

“The thing is, we both wanted kids more than anything, so she’s our miracle baby,” said Kellie. During her pregnancy, Kellie visited her sister in Colorado Springs to seek comfort. When she returned to Cleveland, LaShiya was born. By that time, John had been released from prison and was in counseling. Believing he had changed, the couple reconciled and decided to move to Colorado Springs to start a new life. Kellie had difficulty finding a job, and as soon as they began to get on their feet, John hurt her again, but this time LaShiya was in her arms. “It’s one thing for me to put up with it, it’s another thing for my daughter to be a part of it. I’ll never let her grow up thinking that’s what love is or that’s what a relationship looks like. John went back to prison, and it was just one more the end another,” Kellie said. “I lost my job and my apartment got broken into. I didn’t have childcare and we got evicted and so I stayed with a friend for a while. We lost everything,” Kellie found another job, but it was still a struggle to keep up with bills and live with her friends.

John was soon released from prison and stayed in a local shelter. Kellie felt that she saw a change in him. “He spent 40-some days by himself [because he was on dialysis] so he and God got real close,” she said. “Even though we will not be together anymore, he still loves his daughter.”

Kellie and LaShiya met John for lunch at the Marian House Soup Kitchen. While there, she visited Marian House Client Services and explained her situation. Catholic Charities was able to help pay part of a deposit so Kellie and LaShiya could move into a one bedroom apartment. “If it wasn’t for Catholic Charities and the Marian House, I wouldn’t be in my own place. They also helped us with food, pots and pans, dishes, utensils and so much more,” Kellie says gratefully.

Kellie has big plans for the future. Although she currently works as a waitress, she knows her extensive experience in the restaurant business will help her get a better job and get her off all government assistance. She wants to focus on raising her daughter. “We have some big goals, like deciding what to do for school; and then we have some little goals, like getting a couch.” Although she knows her relationship with John is over, Kellie allows him to have supervised contact with LaShiya. “He’s a good dad and he loves his daughter.” Ultimately, Kellie is grateful for the services she received from Catholic Charities to help her and LaShiya get on their feet. “I have worked hard,” Kellie states firmly. “I’ve given to charities. I’ve done a lot of volunteer work. People are out there actually helping people.”
Dear Friends,

I began working at Catholic Charities of Central Colorado on January 5th of this year with what I believed was a solid understanding of the agency and its role across the diocese. What I learned very quickly was the only way to fully appreciate our broad impact, both in services and in geography, was to be immersed in it. With that in mind, I used the first three weeks to meet with staff, board members and the volunteers serving in the Marian House and Hanifen Center. I have visited the Catholic Charities office in Castle Rock and attended the Douglas County Strive to Thrive event which supports struggling families. I have also visited with key community stakeholders from the parish, non-profit and government sectors. It has been an overwhelming couple of weeks; I have never been more excited to go to work each morning.

There is still a great deal for me to learn, but here are few things that have become immediately clear to me. First: the volunteers and philanthropic investors of Catholic Charities are truly fulfilling God’s desire for all people to be, in Isaiah’s words: “Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.” (Isaiah 58:7).

Whether it is the hundreds of volunteers who serve lunch at the Marian House, those who provide essential human services in the Hanifen Center, our English as a Second Language teachers or the HEART walk volunteers, each and every one of you provide help and create hope. Equally important are the individuals, families and businesses who give so generously of their financial treasures to ensure Catholic Charities has the strength not only to provide services, but also to explore innovative solutions to the root causes of poverty and injustice.

In so many important ways, your work is a manifestation of God’s love for mankind and Jesus Christ’s call to serve the poor and the vulnerable. In the weeks and months to come, I look forward to sharing in the successes and vision for Catholic Charities as we build on our proud foundation.

Blessings,

[Signature]
After 7 1/2 years as Marian House Soup Kitchen Director (MHSK), Paul Konecny retired. Paul came to Catholic Charities (CC) with over 20 years of experience in food and beverage management and played a vital role in setting up the new MHSK. As a dear friend with a true spirit of genuine faith, Paul will be missed. We congratulate him and wish him health, happiness, and relaxation in retirement!

Jim Benavidez will replace Paul Konecny as MHSK Director. Jim has been the Lead Operations Manager for seven years and was chosen to succeed Paul. Prior to coming to CC, Jim spent almost 30 years in food management/hospitality at Cheyenne Mountain Resort and Safeway. He is a Colorado Springs native and a graduate of Widefield High School.

Marco Clark takes on the position of Community Case Manager in Marian House Client Services after spending seven years with CC as a security guard and a Community Outreach Services Assistant. Recently, he developed and now runs the MH Computer Skills classes. Marco plans to complete a degree in Entrepreneurship at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS).

Stacy Sprewer was hired as Communications Coordinator in August 2014 after working as a Communications Intern at CC the previous semester. She will not only play an important role in the St. Patrick's Day Gala, she will be the lead on social media and website development. In May 2014, she graduated from UCCS with a B.A. in Visual Art and a B.A. in Communication. With a heart for non-profit work, Stacy strives to use her creativity to serve her community.

Jenarae Melikan joins Life Connections to complete her practicum and internship. She is pursuing an M.A in Counseling with a concentration in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at UCCS. Jenarae will be assisting with Prenatal Nurturing classes, birth options and individual counseling, and the RealCare™ Baby program.

Rob Stinson joined CC in 2014 as a part-time driver for the MHSK and a Community Outreach Services Assistant. Rob has nearly 20 years experience as an outreach provider. Prior to coming to CC, Rob served as a driver for Goodwill Industries and spent 15 years in traffic engineering with the City of Colorado Springs. In his free time, Rob is a volunteer coach for football, basketball, rugby, softball and several other sports.

Ava Shawkins began working as the Development Coordinator for CC in December 2014. Ava works in all aspects of fund-raising, including gift processing, stewardship, events, and grant proposals. With over seven years of nonprofit development experience, Ava looks forward to applying her skills fully in her work and learning and growing along the way. Ava holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Louisville.

Brandi Randle graduated from the University of Great Falls in Montana with a M.S. in Non-Profit Management. She began working as the Marketing and Sales Assistant at CC in December of 2014 with primary involvement in the Marian House Sponsor-A-Day program. She previously worked for The Independence Center in Colorado Springs and The Suicide & Crisis Hotline in Great Falls Montana. Brandi has a heart for social work and strives to make a difference in her community.
During the winter months, the gift of a hot, nutritious, homemade meal can warm the heart and soul of a less fortunate community member. For just $1,500 you can provide more than 600 meals to families and individuals who are hungry. Sponsorship benefits include:

- Name on the sign on front of the Marian House Soup Kitchen, located on Bijou Street at the entrance and exit to downtown Colorado Springs
- Recognition in Catholic Charities Helping Hands quarterly newsletter, annual report, website, Facebook and Twitter
- Photo of sponsors in front of the sign, or photo of the sign to be shared electronically with business associates, employees, board, etc.
- Volunteer and tour opportunities the day of sponsorship
- Certificate of Appreciation
- Right of first refusal for the same date the following year

Smaller groups and organizations are also encouraged to work with Catholic Charities to crowd-fund a Sponsor-A-Day with an internal campaign to raise the $1,500.

Contact Brandi Randle to Sponsor-A-Day!
brandle@ccharitiescc.org 719-866-6427

PARISH SUPPORT
Catholic Charities (CC) would like to extend a special thank you to the Fusion Family Faith Formation program for donating toys, children’s books, baby supplies such as diapers and formula, and holiday crafts to CC. These donations will help hundreds of children in our programs.

Through the CC Parish Ambassadors (PA) program, PA worked with the Fusion program at Our Lady of the Pines Catholic Church and St. Patrick’s Catholic Church to integrate a special giving opportunity into their December service project. Families were encouraged to bring books and toys to be donated to less fortunate families, and to participate in making hundreds of rhyme cards and reindeer candy canes which were distributed to children in Catholic Charities Early Literacy, Marian House, Immigration and Life Support Services programs.

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)
Catholic Charities is once again participating in VITA as a host site provider. Tax services begin February 3rd and continue through April 15th. All services will take place in the Hanifen Center at Marian House, 14 West Bijou Street. Anyone with a gross income of less than $53,000 is eligible for this service.

The weekday schedule for VITA is Monday through Thursday, 1:30 pm through 5:30 pm and Appointments Are Required. All appointment are made by calling 2-1-1. The Saturday schedule is from 9:00 am through 3:00 pm on a drop-in basis only (first come, first served). No appointments will be made for Saturday.

Please bring all relevant tax preparation documents and a government issued photo ID, Social Security Card or ITIN paperwork, or a Social Security Statement (SSA-1099) to your appointment. Due to the rise of identity theft, VITA sites can no longer use memorized numbers or numbers from other tax paperwork. For more information, visit www.ColoradoVITA.org or call 2-1-1.
POVERTY & FOOD INSECURITY

January - Poverty Awareness Month

Nearly 46 million Americans live in poverty including over 600,000 Coloradans. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a family of four falls under the poverty line when their total income is below $23,834. Catholic Charities helps struggling individuals and families by providing for basic needs. In FY 13/14, the Marian House served over 240,000 duplicated clients with basic services such as flu shots, clothing assistance, hot meals and transportation assistance, to higher level services such as financial literacy, computer skills, and parenting classes. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is also offered from January through April to families and individuals with income under $53,000.

Poverty and Nutrition

A primary problem faced by those living in poverty is a lack of nutritious food. Low-income families often sacrifice nutrition and health to pay housing, transportation, and utility costs. While the Marian House Soup Kitchen serves an average of 600+ homemade, nutritious meals to the local community 365 days a year, poverty is not limited to downtown Colorado Springs. Families living in rural areas or with limited access to transportation cannot access services at the Marian House so we take services to those in need via our Community Outreach Services program (COS). Food boxes are delivered regularly to local and rural food pantries and individual homes. In FY 13/14, COS made 481 deliveries to families in need, serving 3,589 adults and children.

Nutritious Food Boxes

Food box deliveries have expanded tremendously in the last several years. Part of this increase is the result of a partnership with American Charitable Trust who provides the funding for food boxes which contain all the ingredients and recipes necessary to feed a family of four for a week. To make these food boxes even more versatile, all the ingredients are non-perishable. A typical recipe would be Shepherds Pie made with canned vegetables, beef stew, and instant potatoes. Snacks such as peanut butter and breakfast foods like instant oatmeal are also included.

February is Canned Food Awareness Month

Non-perishable food items are a primary food source for many low-income individuals and families who cannot afford to purchase fresh foods, or have limited transportation and resources to acquire food. Research by the Canned Food Alliance shows that canned foods can be just as nutritious as fresh foods and are more convenient, have a lower cost-per-nutrient, and can be stored longer than fresh food.

How Can You Help?

Donate canned foods to the Marian House, plan a food drive, or pick up extra groceries in bulk. CC is always in need of canned foods such as fruit and vegetables, meats (tuna, chicken, or salmon), beans and main dishes (ravioli, stew, etc.). At the Marian House Soup Kitchen, large #10 cans of diced tomatoes and tomato sauce are always welcomed. Drop donations at the Marian House dock at 14 West Bijou St. from 8 am - 2 pm, Monday through Saturday. Please call 719-229-9942 for more information. To learn more about poverty reduction, visit www.povertyusa.org. For information on canned foods, visit www.mealtime.org.
Prayer Society

The mission of the St. Anthony of Padua Prayer Society is to foster organized, spiritual support for Catholic Charities’ staff, volunteers, donors, and those we serve, and to pray for those who ask for our prayers.

Visit us at:
ccharitiescc.org
and click on ways to help

or E-mail:
prayers@ccharitiescc.org
to join or to leave a prayer intention.

What Our Clients Say

“I don’t know that our relationship could have withstood what we were going through if it wasn’t for Catholic Charities helping us.”

-Michelle, Client Services

"STUFF THE BIRD" TURKEY TEAM DRIVE

Thank you to everyone who donated turkeys so thousands of families were able to celebrate Thanksgiving with a turkey dinner. This was the first year for the Catholic Charities "Stuff the Bird" event and it was a tremendous success. 1,880 turkeys were donated to CC which were then used in the soup kitchen and distributed to families throughout our 10 county service area. As part of the Turkey Team with Care and Share Food Bank and Springs Rescue Mission, 5,586 turkeys were donated for central and southern Colorado families.

LAS POSADAS SUCCESS

Almost 200 guests attended the event and enjoyed a traditional Spanish dinner along with dancing and music. A special thanks to Father John Toepfer, the families of Mirani Pelayo (Mary) and Alonso Duran (Joseph), musicians Casey and Erinn Schlortt, and Roca Rirme band, and the Las Estrellas Latinas de San Gabriel dancers. Las Posadas was sponsored by Univision.

OPERATION HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Thank you to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division Raider Brigade for participating in the annual Operation Happy Holidays Event! Also, thank you to the Colorado Springs Police Department for providing additional security. Over 1,200 soldiers marched to Marian House with donations allowing 1,000+ community members in need to be served.

LIFE SUPPORT GIFT PROGRAM

Thank you to the Fusion Family Faith Formation at Our Lady of the Pines and St. Patrick Catholic Church, Our Lady of Peace, and Corpus Christi Catholic Churches, the Boeing Corporation, Lockheed Martin, and many generous donors who provided children’s gifts for our annual Christmas Gift Giveaway! Special thanks to Father Price and St. Mary’s Cathedral for hosting the event. Over 500 gifts were distributed to nearly 300 children for Christmas.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COATS FOR KIDS GIVE-A-WAY

Thank you to the Colorado Springs Knights of Columbus for providing 192 coats for our Life Support Services families. The families were lined up and waiting when the doors opened at 8 am. Children and moms were smiling from ear to ear as they left with brand new coats!
ST. PATRICK’S DAY GALA - MARCH 14, 2015

The 2015 St. Patrick’s Day Gala is just around the corner and it will be a whale of a time! This spectacular evening of green and gold is our premier fundraising event and will take place on Saturday, March 14, 2015 at the DoubleTree Hotel. Guests enjoy a jovial evening of fine dining, spirited entertainment, exciting live and silent auctions and a live dance band.

This event would not be possible without our Gala sponsors who enjoy star treatment at reserved tables and promotion during the event. All sponsorships are eligible for a 25% Enterprise Zone Tax Credit and IRS charitable deduction. Interested in becoming a sponsor? Call 719-866-6440 for more information.

Each year, generous community members and business owners donate unique items to include in our silent and live auctions. Donations can be restaurant certificates, fine artwork, wine, or even a premier vacation package. Last year, auction items ranged from a handmade scarf to a pure-bred puppy. If you have an item you would like to donate, please call us at 719-866-6523 for details or to arrange pick-up.

Invitations are mailed in February, but don’t wait. This year tickets can be purchased online at ccharitiescc.org/stpatsgala.

WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

“Our kids are safe. They receive snack packs and they can sit and eat for as long as they need.”
-Jamie, Marian House Soup Kitchen
Mission Statement
In response to Jesus Christ’s call to affirm the value and dignity of each human life, to build solidarity within the community, and to advocate for justice for the poor and vulnerable, Catholic Charities of Central Colorado humbly engages in the ministry of charity for those in both economic and spiritual poverty so that all – staff, volunteers, and clients – may fully achieve their God-given potential.

Contact Us:
COLORADO SPRINGS OFFICE
228 North Cascade, Colorado Springs, CO 80903
T: 719-636-2345    F: 719-636-1216

Catholic Charities of Central Colorado
is a Pikes Peak United Way Partner Agency, accredited by the Council On Accreditation, and a participant in the Gazette - El Pomar Empty Stocking Fund, Colorado Gives, and CFC.

Warm 600 Hearts
In a Day.
What a difference a day makes.
Sponsor a day of meals at MarianHouseSponsorADay.org

For only $1,500, you, your business, organization or church can sponsor a day at Marian House. In that one day, your support provides a homemade, nutritious meal to everyone who comes through our doors. They are families with children, veterans, seniors, the working poor, and people who are homeless. Most just need a little help to make ends meet, but for some, this is their only hot meal of the day.

Commit to a sponsorship today by calling 719-866-6427 or online at MarianHouseSponsorADay.org

To Donate
Call (719) 866-6440
or visit www.ccharitiescc.org