Family Services Combines Under New Name & Location: Family Connections at Helen Hunt Campus

The Family Day Center, Family Mentor Alliance, and Life Support Services will combine family programing under a new department named - Family Connections - and move from the Marian House Complex to the new Helen Hunt Campus in the Hillside neighborhood in late October/early November. “The opportunity to secure space in the new Helen Hunt Campus came just at the right time. With the expansion of family programs, as well as the rapid growth of the Life Skills & Career Development Center, the Marian House was becoming crowded,” said Andy Barton, CEO of Catholic Charities (CC).

The move also brings a collaboration with Community Partnership for Childhood Development (CPCD). As families seek services through Family Connections, CC will be able to place preschool children into the CPCD Head Start program at the Helen Hunt Campus. “This is just one more tool available to help families in crisis,” said Kathy Thayer, VP of Family Services at CC.

The new center will serve a spectrum of family needs from those facing homelessness, to those needing to strengthen their family’s resilience and stability, to those who want to engage in ESL education. In addition to offering safety net services to address immediate needs for families in crisis, Family Connections will use a Healthy Engagement model where families participate in multiple programs over a longer period of time, earning points toward essential items (like car seats). This shift puts the families themselves in charge of achieving their own goals for their family. “Our programming is focused on a family strengthening perspective as families are their decision makers,” said Thayer. "The objective is to help families in deeper, more meaningful ways and get them to engage in healthy behaviors such as playgroups, early literacy, and educational opportunities for the child, as well as for the parent."

Staff who previously were called case managers or family advocates are now Family Life Coaches who work to bolster the sense of self and build self-regulation to improve outcomes for those engaged in traditional antipoverty programs. Coaching works to build skills and mindsets over a period of time through interactive relationships, coaching them to move forward, providing positive self-efficacy and motivation.

The Family Life Coaches will use a 2Gen approach, creating opportunities for, and addressing the needs of, both vulnerable children and their parents together. Parents regularly put their needs aside to address their child’s needs. Because low-income children tend to have more complicated needs, and low-wage work usually means little flexibility for parents, in many situations parents are simply fired for not being at work while dealing with their child’s needs, setting back the entire family. This is why a 2Gen approach is needed.

The concept of Family Connections means it is possible for a family to enter into services to address an immediate housing or shelter need, but then continue to engage to build financial resiliency, parenting skills, and get their young children engaged in preschool and literacy programs. In total, fewer families may be served than the former Life Support Services program, but those who are in the program will have more long-term success in attaining and maintaining stability because of the new Healthy Engagement model.

The biggest challenge many of our families face is finding affordable housing. Family Connections, the community’s new coordinated entry process, and our family housing partners will continue to work to bridge the gaps in emergency shelter and affordable and attainable housing needs. But finding and developing more affordable family housing options will need to be resolved as our community continues to work toward family poverty solutions.
Most of those who see our homelessness are able to recognize some of the extenuating circumstances of the condition. The woman whose loud outbursts are directed at an imaginary companion, we diagnose as battling mental illness. We guess the man sleeping in the park is likely struggling with addiction. In many cases, there is mixed truth in our assessments - mental illness and addiction are often conditions of homelessness – however, the limits of our perspective result in oversimplification. What we cannot see in those who struggle is the sequence of life events they have faced. If we could see that woman or man on the street when they were children it would be as illuminating as it was heartbreaking, not only for the pain we would see in their childhood, but equally in the recognition of missed opportunities for redemption and rescue. Perhaps we would find ourselves saying, “If only someone could have done something then!”

Focusing on children and parents as good policy for ending poverty was the subject of a 2015 report from the conservative American Enterprise Institute and the left leaning Brookings Institute. This bipartisan publication, entitled, “Opportunity, Responsibility and Security” identified 12 recommendations for ending poverty under the broader headings of family, work, and education. Their roadmap hinges on empowering parents, beginning at conception, to ensure they have every resource to raise their children outside the stress of poverty. The need for this support grows exponentially for single parents and the critical moments, according to the study, start at birth. Only slightly less important than parents, is education.

There is extensive scientific research for putting as much effort as possible into helping parents in poverty support their children. A recent report by a neuroscience researcher from the University of Pennsylvania has gained attention for its conclusion that by the age of five, the lower a child’s socioeconomic level, the lower the lifelong brain function impacting working memory, impulse control, emotional regulation, and executive decision making. In short, the stress poverty brings on children impacts the very brain function they need to have any hope of finding their way out of poverty as adults.

So we are called to dedicate more resources than ever to children and parents in poverty as a response to the science and social policy, but perhaps most importantly, in recognition of our faith. In the Parable of the Lost Sheep Jesus says, “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father… It is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost.” (Mt 18: 10, 14)

For the above mentioned reasons, Family Connections at Helen Hunt Campus, which is highlighted in this newsletter, is a much needed expansion of services for Catholic Charities. The new name is a perfect description for our approach. First and foremost, we are deliberately engaging in relationships with families in need, connecting with them at the most basic and important levels. From intensive case management and coaching, to the Family Mentor Alliance teams, our approach is to reduce the stress and trauma of poverty and homelessness by increasing the human networks of support.

Our new location will help connect families to needed services and providers while eliminating as much travel and referral as possible. For a family without a car, gas money, or a computer, having to travel to multiple locations for services in one day can be impossible. With our move to the Helen Hunt Campus, we will consolidate services under one roof while working with partners to extend resource availability. We are excited about our on-site connection to four Head Start classrooms provided by Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD). Our partnership with CPCD allows for dedicated space within their on-site preschool programs so a family that walks in from sleeping in their cars or facing eviction, can get their children immediately engaged in the education process.

As an agency and as a community, we must be uncompromising in our support of parents and children. There are cracks in our systems that not only keep families in poverty, they keep poverty in our communities. We see the “little ones” who became lost a generation ago filling our shelter beds and sleeping in doorways today. With an understanding of the science, the insight of policy experts, and a mandate from our lord and savior, there is no questioning the importance of this endeavor. It is long past time that we focus on nurturing the God given resiliency that each of us is born with and begin ending the cycle of poverty by connecting with families.
In Memorium

Tim E. Rickert
Catholic Charities
Board of Directors

Tim Rickert died July 3 unexpectedly from undiagnosed heart disease. Dawn Rickert, Tim’s wife said, "Tim felt that Catholic Charities made an incredible difference in the lives of so many. He felt no one should ever be hungry or desperate." The family has asked that memorial contributions be made to Catholic Charities of Central Colorado in his name.

Tim was involved with Catholic Charities for many years. He served on the Catholic Charities board of directors from 1990 to 1993, then again from 2005 to 2011, holding the position of Treasurer from 2005 to 2011. He remained on the finance committee until February 2014.

As Treasurer, Tim helped guide the Campaign for the New Marian House in the planning stages as well as through the early fundraising stages. His counsel and guidance were invaluable and his wisdom went well beyond finance. "Tim was always promoting better ways to convey complex financial data to the board and senior management in concise, yet meaningful ways. Charts were his 'dashboards,'" said Mike Wolf, former chief financial officer with Catholic Charities.

Tim and Dawn were also longtime supporters of the agency’s premier fundraising event - the St. Patrick’s Day Gala. They attended the event most years and always donated items for the auction. "Tim always looked for ways to make the gala more efficient and profitable and never hesitated to help in any way he could. His smiling face will be missed," said Rochelle Schlortt, chief communications officer with Catholic Charities.

JOHN & SANDRA FISCHER AND NATURAL GROCERS: DEVELOPING THE PERFECT PARTNERSHIP

John and Sandra Fischer, residents of Castle Pines and parishioners of Pax Christi Catholic Church in Highlands Ranch, have become involved with Catholic Charities in a variety of ways.

As General Counsel for Natural Grocers, John has coordinated food donations from stores in both Douglas and El Paso counties to donate to Catholic Charities. The Fischer’s also learned about the progress the Life Skills & Career Development Center was making with job placements and connected Natural Grocers’ local recruiting manager with the life skills team. Although there have been no job placements at Natural Grocers yet, there are many opportunities for LSCDC job seekers to interview and potentially work for the company, especially as a new location opens on South Nevada Avenue.

For the Fischer’s, connecting Natural Grocers and Catholic Charities wasn’t enough. In January 2017, John and Sandra sponsored their first day of meals at Marian House and their second in June, volunteering both days. Sandra said, "Sponsor-A-Day was different for us, but it felt good…That’s money they (Catholic Charities) don’t have to take out of their bank today. We’re taking care of it. And that’s a cool way to think about it.”

Volunteering was just as rewarding. “We volunteered in the family room and that was fun. We don’t have children so we played with children there so the parents could have a break. It was a totally different experience for us,” said Sandra. John reiterated Sandra’s sentiments with, “It’s been rewarding to help people. Sandra and I have been exceptionally blessed with lots of wonderful fortune. So for us, it’s a great opportunity to give something back to the community.”

Sandra plans to volunteer with the Castle Rock Office, while John hopes to spread awareness about Catholic Charities and the Sponsor-A-Day program. John said, “I think it’s important for Catholic Charities to be able to enhance its visibility amongst all the northern parishes,” and both John and Sandra have ideas on how they can help. They are able to share their experiences with the northern deanery in hopes that more support will come, not just to the Castle Rock Office, but further south as well. In the words of Sandra Fischer, Catholic Charities and the Marian House are “too special” not to want to help.
Make a Difference by Making a Gift

CCharitiesCC.org/Donate

- Make a Gift Online
  - Monthly Recurring or Ongoing Support
  - One-time
- Special State Income Tax Credits*
- Enterprise Zone 25%
- Donations to Marian House
  - $250 or more
  - Check only
- Child Care Contribution 50%
- Donations to Life Connections
- IRA Distributions, Stocks/Securities
- Gift Societies
  - Caritas Society ($10,000/year)
  - 1968 Founders Society ($1,968+/year)
- Sponsor-A-Day at Marian House - $1,500 (Call 719.866.6427 for information)
- Tribute Gifts – In Honor or Memory
- Planned Giving or Estate Planning
- Employer Matching Gifts
- New or Gently Used Goods**
- Vehicles in Working Order***

Questions? Call us!

Monetary Donations & Tax Credits: 719.866.6422 or 719.866.6440*
Material Goods: 719.866.6281**
Vehicles: 719.229.9924***

If you would like to donate a car in working condition, it can truly change the trajectory of a life. Call us for more information at 719-229-9942 (Colorado Springs) or 720-215-4521 (Castle Rock).

SHIRLEY & MIKE: PAYING IT FORWARD

Paying it forward. That is what Shirley King has done. After a brief bout of homelessness, Shirley was working to get her life back. She was employed at Wal-Mart and living in a motel, just barely making it. Then she met Kathy Bullen, a case manager at Catholic Charities in Castle Rock (CC). Kathy coached her toward self-sufficiency, helped with food, gas, and other necessities, and soon Shirley was saving portions of her paycheck for the deposit on an apartment. When she was ready to move, her car broke down: it was not repairable. She thought she had to choose between getting a car to keep her job or getting the apartment. Luckily for her, a car had been donated to CC and because of her hard work, Shirley was chosen to receive that car. As a result, she moved into the apartment and was able to get back on her feet.

The donation of the car changed Shirley’s life.

As Shirley continued to progress, she saved enough money for a new car. In appreciation for what CC had done for her, rather than trade in or sell the car, she chose to donate it to CC, giving someone else a chance to get back on their feet. Just as that donated car came at the right time for Shirley to make a difference in her life, a car is exactly what Mike needed to continue his path to stability.

Mike is on a fixed income. His troubles began when he was forced to move from his apartment complex, which changed ownership and underwent renovation, then significantly raised his rent. He found ranch work that included housing, but shortly after moving, his disabled, teenage granddaughter, struggling at home and at school, came to live with him. As she settled in and her grades improved, Mike felt that things were returning to normal.

Then Mike unexpectedly lost his ranch job along with their housing after a medical issue. He found himself homeless, something unfamiliar to him, but he wasn’t going to give up hope with his granddaughter’s welfare in his hands. Through CC, Mike was provided with gas cards and emergency motel vouchers, and was recommended for wrap-around community services. CC continues as Mike’s community facilitator, has found him an affordable apartment, and furnished it with basic necessities. Things were looking bright until his car became inoperable. That is when Shirley called about donating her car. She was thrilled to learn CC was working with someone who desperately needed a car.

Just when Shirley needed a car to continue her progress toward stability, a donor made one available. And when Mike needed a car, Shirley returned the favor.

CCharitiesCC.org/Donate
CATHOLIC CHARITIES AWARDS MINI GRANTS

Since 2015, The Diocese of Colorado Springs and Catholic Charities have distributed 29 grants totaling almost $48,000 to ministries helping the poor. Most of the grants have been in the area of emergency services or encouraging encounter with the poor through ministry. Funding for the grants comes from Catholic Parish collections to benefit Catholic Relief Services and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. This year nine grants were awarded totaling $11,000:

- **Blackbird Outreach** – survival gear, give bags, temporary shelter, food and post-housing care baskets for the homeless within Colorado Springs.
- **Salida Pregnancy Center** – The Center will purchase informational materials to support the Spanish language Earn-While-You-Learn Program which provides education for parents from pregnancy to the early childhood.
- **Holy Apostles Catholic Church** – Support values, academic and life skills mentorship between selected Sabin Middle School students and members of Holy Apostles.
- **Corpus Christi Catholic School** – Purchase bilingual materials for family literacy for Spanish speaking families.
- **St. Patrick Catholic Church (Society of St. Vincent de Paul)** – Supporting children predominantly in single parent families.
- **Friends of St. Victor** – Celebrate Recovery, a Christ-centered 12-step recovery program.
- **Tri-Community** – Purchase instruments for the music therapy program for vulnerable community members.
- **Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission** – Urban Experience provides a two-day immersion experience into poverty and homelessness in Colorado Springs for churches and other groups.
- **Holy Family Catholic Church** – Help families and individuals stay in their homes or apartments and other ancillary needs associated with crisis.

REGISTER FOR ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES

One of the ways Catholic Charities provides *Paths to Opportunity* is by offering low-cost English and Citizenship Preparation classes. These classes help students better integrate into their communities as well as prepare for their citizenship application. ESL Registration took place Aug. 21 – 24, but registration continues until all classes are filled. Cost is $50/ year and includes a textbook and workbook. Child care is available during class and is $25/semester/child. For more information or to register, call: 719-866-6516 or visit our website at [www.CCharitiesCC.org](http://www.ccharitiescc.org). The link is on the home page story rotator.
The Life Skills & Career Development Center (LSCDC) has helped fill over 200 jobs in Colorado Springs, putting Marian House clients to work. Most people seeking employment with Marian House are considered "the unemployable" or at the very least, the hardest segment of the population to employ due to high barriers such as homelessness, felonies, large gaps in employment history, or a history of job hopping/short-term employment. This makes this milestone that much more remarkable.

What makes the program a success is the ability to link clients to employers. Goodwill Industries conducts a hiring event at the Marian House every six weeks with pre-screened candidates and to date, has employed more than 25 people. Last fall, the first Marian House Job Fair was held on-site where eight employers offered interview opportunities to help facilitate job connections. Another job fair is planned for November just before the holiday hiring season.

Once clients are ready to apply for jobs, most find work within three weeks, often using bus passes and wearing interview clothes provided by Catholic Charities. Those who need more time to hone their skills are placed in the Marian House Works program, where they are paired with volunteers for special attention or given volunteer work within Catholic Charities. Once they develop the necessary skills, job placement usually takes place fairly quickly.

Case manager follow-up within the first 30 - 45 days of employment with the employee as well as the employer to determine if the match is successful. Sometimes there might be a mismatch of skills, transportation issues, or personality conflicts. When this happens, the client returns to Catholic Charities to work on these issues and then applies for a position that is a better fit.

Andy Barton, Catholic Charities CEO said, "The success of this program is emblematic of the work we are doing to help clients every day. Our Marian House Soup Kitchen is an important portal for transitioning families in crisis to link them to services that can help them build resiliency and ultimately, stability. It’s a meal to a job."

Plans are already underway to expand the program from five to 12 computer stations which will help continue the accelerated pace of putting people to work. Once the Family Connections programs moves to the Helen Hunt Campus, LSCDC will move downstairs in the Marian House Hanifen Center (see article on Page 1).

At the July 11 meeting, the Colorado Springs City Council put forth a Proclamation honoring Catholic Charities for this accomplishment. Among other things, the proclamation said:

"...the City Council do hereby recognize the work of Catholic Charities of Central Colorado in Colorado Springs and urge the citizens and businesses of Colorado Springs to participate in expressing gratitude to the staff and volunteers of Catholic Charities of Central Colorado who provide personalized attention to those in need to help them to take steps toward a better life."

BEER DINNERS - SEPTEMBER 15 & DECEMBER 1

On Friday, June 16, Marian House hosted a Beer Dinner in collaboration with Local Relic and Common Cause Catering, allowing six clients from the Life Skills and Career Development Center to hone their cooking and serving skills throughout the evening. The next Beer Dinners are scheduled for Sept. 15 and Dec 1. Tickets go fast as we only sell 60 seats per dinner. Visit localrelic.com/events to buy your ticket today!
BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE HELPS LOCAL FAMILIES

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Knights of Columbus School Supply Drive. With the anticipated move of family services to the Hillside neighborhood, supplies were distributed through a fair at the Hillside Community Center as well as through Catholic Charities Community Outreach. Through the support of this program, children were able to begin school with the tools needed that for so many families, put a burden on their already limited budgets.

LARRY H. MILLER CHARITIES & DEALERSHIPS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Bill Stahelin, general manager of Larry H. Miller Toyota of Colorado Springs, and his wife Leslie, became involved years ago with a baby layette project for Life Connections. They encouraged Catholic Charities to apply for a Larry H. Miller Charities grant with a successful result of a $10,000 donation in May.

We were also invited to apply for another $10,000 grant through the Toyota Match Program to support Catholic Charities’ family strengthening programs. Additionally, Larry H. Miller Toyota Colorado Springs and Larry H. Miller Liberty Toyota Colorado Springs were gold level sponsors at the St. Patrick’s Day Gala earlier in March. Thank you Colorado Springs Toyota dealerships for your continued support!

RESPECT LIFE DINNER BENEFITS PROJECT RACHEL MINISTRY

In October 2016, Bishop Michael J. Sheridan hosted the annual Respect Life Dinner. Cardinal Timothy Dolan was the distinguished speaker for the event which was attended by over 1,000 guests. Each year, proceeds from the dinner are distributed to pro-life causes. Project Rachel was selected this year as one of the recipients, receiving $29,000 to support the ministry, which offers healing to those who have been involved in abortion. Project Rachel operates as a network of healing composed of specially-trained caregivers which includes a priest, a licensed professional counselor, and volunteers who have personal experience with abortion. These individuals provide direct care to women, men and adolescents who have been touched by an abortion loss, enabling them to grieve, receive forgiveness, and find peace. For more information, call 719-866-6535.

Material Needs:

**FOOD:** Spoons, ground beef, hot chocolate, spices, canned vegetables

**INFANTS & CHILDREN:** Size 5 & 6 diapers, baby formula, baby food, new baby clothes; Birthday Buddy Bags: Cake/frosting mixes, candles and $10 gift cards

**HOME & TRANSPORTATION:** Dishes, pots & pans, working vehicles, grocery store and gas gift cards

**CLOTHING AND ESSENTIALS:** Men’s/women’s underwear, ladies socks, XL t-shirts, razors, shaving cream, deodorant

Drop donations at the Marian House Dock
14 West Bijou Street
Monday - Saturday, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Volunteer Needs:

Soup Kitchen, Clothing Closet, Family Day Center, Client Services Navigator, Family Mentor Alliance Mentors

Call 719-866-6559 to get involved!

Grateful to our Grantors

American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)
The Marson Foundation
Philip S. Miller - Douglas County
Pikes Peak Community Foundation
SC Ministry Foundation
Toyota Dealer Match Program

Sarah Bidon, Andy Barton, Bishop Michael J. Sheridan, and Kathy Thayer.

Kathy Thayer, Sarah Tremmel, Angela Sparks and Bill Stahelin.
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.

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Don’t be fooled by the quality look of this newsletter. We are committed to using our funds in the most cost-efficient way possible so we can forward our work to reduce poverty in our community.

This newsletter is designed in-house by our Communications Team, printed on economical, recycled paper stock with vegetable based inks, and sized and organized to get maximum use of the press sheet paper we purchase.

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“No family drops down from heaven perfectly formed; families need constantly to grow and mature in the ability to love.”

-Pope Francis

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Providing Help, Creating Hope