

FEBRUARY, MARCH & APRIL 2021

# Employee Newsletter



Catholic Charities  
Southwestern Ohio

Serve | Enlighten | Empower

April 26, 2021

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## Post Adoption Services

Post Adoption Services provides various types of services to clients that have been touched by a previous adoption through Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio. Oftentimes, clients are hoping to gather information about their adoption story or are in need of a referral to an outside agency. Frequently clients are interested in just talking through their previous adoption in order to gain insight, understanding and support. Occasionally, however, a client reaches out to Post Adoption Services with a hope that a longstanding need can finally be fulfilled.

***This story was featured in the most recent Blessings Newsletter.***

### **After 37 Years of Dead Ends and Frustration, Tamara Finds Hope through Catholic Charities**

Imagine having to prove you exist.

That is the challenge that faces Americans like Tamara Marquez who, because a paper was never filed when she was an infant, never had a birth certificate.

Without this simple piece of paper, Tamara could not obtain a Real ID.

"I'm at the end of my emotional rope over this," Tamara said when she reached out to Catholic Charities in December. "During this pandemic, I have struggled to find work. I applied for benefits, for food, and was required to prove my birth to get the benefit. I was unable to do that and was unable to get any help."

Tamara was placed for adoption in the early 1960s. She was adopted by her new parents at the Kenton County (Ky.) courthouse, but the Cincinnati Department of Vital Statistics believed her adoption paperwork was never filed. Complicating her quest further, her adoptive parents died when Tamara was 12 years old. She began pursuing a birth certificate in 1983, without any success.

When Tamara reached out shortly before Christmas, she felt Catholic Charities was her last hope. She was put in touch with Debbie Melucci, our post-adoption social worker. Debbie immediately began an exhaustive search for Tamara's file, praying she would be able to help Tamara end this decades-long trial.

Like Tamara, Debbie was met with one dead end after another but refused to give up. As a last-ditch effort, she contacted a Kentucky social worker, and finally, Debbie and Tamara's prayers were answered. The social worker found Tamara's adoption files!

"She said she feels like she now has hope," Debbie said of Tamara.

For Tamara, it is a dream come true, and she is so thankful for Debbie's dedication and the support of Catholic Charities.

## Senior and Caregiver Support Services

### *Powerful Tools for Caregivers*

Powerful Tools for Caregivers teaches caregivers skills to reduce stress, manage emotions, build confidence, and access community resources. Classes enable caregivers to improve their own health and well-being so that they, in turn, become better caregivers. PTC classes are offered in both English and Spanish.

"Powerful Tools for Caregivers" is a program designed to help family caregivers. The PTC class curriculum meets the highest-level criteria of evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion programs per the Administration on Aging/Administration for Community Living. The PTC class series received a 2007 National Family Caregiving Award.

- We held our first virtual PTC class this fall with 11 caregivers participating. We partnered with Ohio Family to Family to offer the class to caregivers of special needs adults as well as caregivers of adults with chronic conditions. It was a diverse class where all the caregivers contributed from their unique perspectives.
- Just this past week we trained 13 new volunteer class leaders who are right now planning class sessions for the spring and summer. We are excited by new partnerships with Sycamore Presbyterian Church and Episcopal Retirement Services to offer this program in their communities.
- We plan to have an additional PTC leader training later this spring, developing additional partnerships with church communities and senior service organizations.

Since 2017, Catholic Charities has engaged over 75 caregivers in PTC classes, as well as trained Jeannie Cairns, Angie Homoele and Aaron Glauberman as master trainers and 20 class leaders. Su Casa and Senior and Caregiver Support Services are partnering to provide Powerful Tools for Caregivers of Children with Special Needs to the Hispanic Community. At this time, two Su Casa staff members have been trained as class facilitators along with one volunteer. Powerful Tools for Caregivers classes are being offered both in-person and virtually. If you want information on how your clients and families can benefit from this program please reach out to Aaron Glauberman.

## Marketing & Communications

*Serving Local Families, Empowering Local Lives - that is our theme for 2021.* While we change local lives, we also empower individuals to sustain themselves through services we provide such as job placement, parenting education, ESOL classes, mental health counseling, and so much more. In addition, while we are still dealing with the pandemic in 2021, this has not held back our marketing, communications, and event initiatives.

From a marketing awareness outreach perspective, we are continuing our outdoor billboard campaign on I-71 North at Smith Edwards Road during the months of February, May, August and November with a 14' x 48' HD digital billboard. Six junior poster billboards will also be placed throughout the city during the months of April - October. Our awareness campaign will gain additional support by ads featured in the Catholic Telegraph magazine throughout the year. These ads will focus on Catholic Charities as well as specific programs.

Our Winter Blessings Newsletter dropped in mid-March. Thank you to all who helped make this happen. We will have two additional Blessings Newsletters taking place this year, Summer and Fall editions, and will also begin work on the Annual Report in April. Internal and external email blasts will continue to take place monthly to share the work we do in our community.

I am also currently working with the Dan, Spring, Jacob, Sara, Karen, and Giovanna on the 2021 Su Casa Virtual Gala. This event is scheduled to take place on Thursday, May 6 at 7:00 PM. The theme for this year's event is "Building a Welcoming Community for All" and the event will include a chat box, raffles, trivia questions, gift basket online auction, client stories, and so much more. To register for this event, visit <https://www.ccswoh.org/su-casa-virtual-gala/>. Additional big events scheduled to take place this year are World Refugee Day and Champions of Mercy. More to come on these events as the COVID-19 vaccine rolls out.

Finally, I have been working diligently with José and Litz on the development and launch of the marketing campaign for AccuracyNow Language Services. We just finished the messaging strategy and are currently working on website enhancement. Marketing strategy and implementation to follow.



Construyendo Una Comunidad  
Acogedora Para Todos



**SERVING LOCAL FAMILIES.  
EMPOWERING LOCAL LIVES.**

[CCSWOH.ORG](https://www.ccswoh.org)



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## AccuracyNow Language Services

AccuracyNow Language Services has gone through multiple changes in the past few months. We have switched our scheduling system to Interpreter Intelligence. This new platform supports all aspects of language services, maximizes our team efficiency, and improves our interpreters' experience so they can also stay on top of their schedule.

In addition to this, we are working on taking our website to a completely different level. Our goal is to drive more traffic to it and use it as a powerful sales lead generator. If you have not had a chance to visit our [AccuracyNow](#) website yet, I encourage you do it now, so you have the opportunity to compare once the newly transformed site goes live soon.

Lastly, as some of you may have heard, we are no longer at Mid-Pointe Tower. With the upcoming addition of a Sales Coordinator to the team, the need for a new space could not be ignored. On March 29, we moved to the Montgomery office. The new space allows our staff to work together while following social distance guidelines.

## Caregiver Assistance Network

The Caregiver Assistance Network is continuing to serve families in a variety of ways. Our volunteers continue to facilitate virtual support groups, make caregiver support phone calls, and help seniors in our community with resource and referrals. See our calendar at [www.ccswoh.org/programs/caregiver-assistance-network/](http://www.ccswoh.org/programs/caregiver-assistance-network/). All events are open to anyone who helps a friend or family member who has a chronic illness, is aging, or lives with a disability. Please share our information with any caregivers you know.

### Support Groups

- Several of our caregivers were recognized in November at our annual Caregiver Recognition Mass at the Cathedral Basilica St. Peter in Chains. At this modified event, we were able to recognize 20 caregivers with a sash, rose and blessing at Mass.
- Weekly virtual groups are still meeting on Wednesday evenings and Friday mornings.
- Some of our groups are looking forward to returning to modified in person meetings in March.

### Resource Information and Referral

- As one of our Council on Accreditation standards, we offer referrals to community resources for older adults and their caregivers. Part of this effort has included COVID vaccine education and referral. Many of our caregivers have been able to get vaccines through advice gained during support group meetings. There are still many, many others who are struggling to get appointments and we look forward to the agency working with the health department to increase access to vaccinations for the most vulnerable.

Karen is updating our community resource list and we are renewing our partnerships with the Alzheimer's Association, local hospice organizations, while creating new ones with 55 North, the Greater Cincinnati Care Partners, and the Giving Voice Foundation. Many of these organizations offer services for caregivers.

## Su Casa Hispanic Center

Greetings to all! We have been very busy at Su Casa! Some of the activities which took place late in March and in the month of April are listed below.

- Su Casa welcomed Annita Koerlin as a new Bilingual Case Worker within the Emergency Assistance Services. Annita has already obtained her notary license and is happy to be part of the Su Casa Team!
- During the month of March, Su Casa in partnership with the OneSight Foundation, were able to serve close to 200 clients with eye screenings and eye glasses! We are very pleased to be able to offer this great service to our clients.
- On Thursday, April 8, Su Casa distributed 500 boxes of food, PPE, and cleaning supplies during an outreach event at MidPoint. We are very appreciative to our staff and volunteers that made this event possible!
- We are happy to report that the UC Students of Medicine finalized their project in which they had five classes in Spanish for the members of the Hispanic/Latino Community. The topics were related to anxiety, depression, and bullying. These classes were very well received by our clients!



- Mariela Baltodano-Murillo, was trained as facilitator for the Power Tool for Caregivers. Mariela and Sara Obando-Rischbeck will be starting a session of classes starting on April 19.
- Our MADRES program has received 68 referrals! We currently have a MADRES program in session. The program is being offered virtually and we have 34 moms attending the program regularly.
- Our Buckle Up for Life Classes will be starting the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April. We are also offering Cribs for Kids ongoing as the needs of our clients arise.
- Through our partnership with UC Health, we have been able to register over 100 clients for the Covid-19 Vaccine. This is in addition to the registration efforts in partnership with the Cincinnati Health Department.
- Our Education Program was recognized with the “Make A Difference Award” by the English Language Learners Foundation, our Summer Program Vacaciones Utiles was highlighted! Congratulations to our Education Services Supervisor Karri O’Hara, and the Education team: Lizzie Royster, Jasmin Luna-Villa, Betsy Rossi, all the teachers and volunteers who made this possible!
- We have a MARCC ID Drive on Saturday, April 24, 2021! This event will be prior registration and by appointment only.
- Furthermore, Su Casa will have an outreach event at St. Clements on May 16.

## Birthdays

### February

Zac Sanders	February 2
Maribel Gonzalez	February 9
Yudith Escobar Leon	February 10
Gay Wischer	February 18
Donald Foley	February 22
Yuliya Fieno	February 23

### March

Lilian Aries	March 15
Spring Duncan	March 21
Karen Burke	March 25

### April

Bishnu Phuyal	April 1
Angie Homoelle	April 4
Jacob Clarke	April 19
Karri O’Hara	April 19
Patsy Bolden	April 20
José Nine	April 22
Stephanie Dagher	April 30



## Anniversaries

### 2 Years

April Hoak  
Madeline DiFilippo  
Sandy Rodriguez

### 3 Years

Bridget Myers  
Karen Burke  
Mercy Lopez  
Miriam Ortega  
Sara Obando

### 4 Years

Karri O’Hara  
Maribel Andrade  
Maribel Gonzalez

### 5 Years

Aaron Glauberman  
Dan Sarell  
Robert Tamm

### 6 Years

Rosa Reyes

### 7 Years

Zach Auciello

### 23 Years

Stephanie Slack

### 31 Years

Pam Mortensen



## Wedding Celebration

*Congratulations to Madeline DiFilippo on her wedding on April 17!*