

GALA RAISED MORE THAN \$1 MILLION FOR A "MISSION FROM GOD"



Guests donned sunglasses and fedoras at the Spirit of Charity Gala as part of the Blues Brothers' theme and helped surpass the goal by raising \$1.1 million for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Inspired by the 1980s film, "The Blues Brothers," the co-chairs—Anne and David Dunlap and Gayelene and Ralph McIngvale—borrowed the theme of the film "On a Mission from God," to honor the Most Rev. George A. Sheltz, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese, and highlight the important work of Catholic Charities.

A flash mob ushered guests from the reception into dinner via a conga line. Custom fedoras by Gabriela Dror and sunglasses were given as party favors and a Blues Brothers band very much resembling Jake and Elwood Blues kept the crowd jamming to their music.

Catholic Charities President/CEO Cynthia Colbert thanked the crowd attending as she invited Bishop Sheltz to the stage, "All of you are the reason that we as Catholic Charities can help so many in the community. Last year, we assisted more than 77,000 individuals and families. Thank you all for your support."

The night was well attended and guests included His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Jan Duncan, Raye White, Deana Blackburn, Jeb Bashaw, Blanche and Charlie Morello, Ginger and John Niemann, Lisa and Tom Ganucheau, Sally and Michael Youtt, Heidi and Craig Warner, and many other friends of Catholic Charities.

The chairs, underwriters, and the leading sponsor, the Hildebrand Family Foundation, were very pleased with the funds raised to nurture and care for children, strengthen families, aid refugees and immigrants, and promote independence for seniors and other vulnerable adults.

 92¢
Ninety-two cents of every dollar goes to direct client services.



ONE MISSION, ONE TEAM

At Catholic Charities we are now implementing Year One of our three-year strategic plan. We called the planning process for this strategic plan our “bridge to the future,” as we considered past achievements and challenges and looked ahead to 2017. The plan calls for us to provide caring, compassionate services; to be good stewards of our financial, volunteer, and staff resources; to work for social justice in collaboration with the Archdiocese, parishes, and others; and perhaps most importantly—because it is the core of our vision—to create an integrated services model aimed at helping people get out of poverty.

We are currently just six months into this and already we are thinking and doing differently. We are brainstorming new and creative ways to involve volunteers. Program staff are thinking more holistically about individuals and families. We are researching and sharing best practices in services and operations. And we are purposeful in our goal to be a stronger partner with parishes. At our all staff meetings, I have a saying: “One Mission, One Team.” Even though we are 300 individual staff members and a huge corps of volunteers and donors, we are joined by our mission of charity, love, and justice. With six months behind us, we still have 30

months to go. The strategic plan is our blueprint to becoming even stronger as one team believing in one mission. Imagine all we can accomplish together.

Yet the end of the current strategic plan will certainly not be the end of our bridge to the future. When we approach 2017, it will be time to assess ourselves once again. What impact did we make? What could we have done better? What new opportunities for service exist in the Archdiocese? Where will the bridge to the future take us now?

While looking forward to the future is always exciting, it is important to also remain grounded in what is happening now. Summer is here and children are out of school, families are taking vacations, and it is a time of rest for many. But for our brothers and sisters, who suffer from the effects of poverty, summer is not a time of rest or relaxation. There is the need for food, shelter, relief from the heat, financial assistance, counseling, and other supportive services to can assist them in their journey out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.

So I invite you to pray with us, to join us and to be part of our One Mission, One Team. Thank you for all that you do to reach out your hand to children, families, seniors and others.

May God’s peace and blessings be with you always.

With Gratitude,

Cynthia N. Colbert, MSW
President/CEO
Catholic Charities
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

“LOVE IS NOT PATRONIZING
AND CHARITY ISN'T ABOUT
PITY, IT IS ABOUT LOVE.
CHARITY AND LOVE ARE THE
SAME — WITH CHARITY YOU
GIVE LOVE, SO DON'T JUST GIVE
MONEY BUT REACH OUT YOUR
HAND INSTEAD.”

—Mother Teresa



CATHOLIC CHARITIES OPENS NEW OFFICE ON GALVESTON ISLAND

Considered a beacon of hope in Galveston for years, Catholic Charities' new office is located at The Island Community Center, 4700 Broadway, Suite G-101. Catholic Charities Board Chairman Jeb Bashaw and Vice President of Strengthening Families and Senior Services Natalie Wood welcomed more than 50 supporters at a recent Open House at the Galveston office.

Galveston Chamber of Commerce President Gina Spagnola introduced other officials, including City Councilman District 4 Norman Pappous with a Proclamation from the City of Galveston accompanied by his wife, Addie. Presiding over a blessing of the office and ribbon-cutting was Rev. E.J. Stein, pastor of the Holy Family Parish of Galveston and Bolivar.

As with many other organizations and residencies, Catholic Charities had to evacuate after Hurricane Ike flooded its Galveston office in 2008, although staff returned

to the island in the aftermath to help distribute food and water to residents.

Galveston Program Coordinator Norma Roche relocated to share space with St. Vincent's House temporarily and continued assisting clients. Now this new office space at The Island Community Center was recently secured. During the time period between 2012 and 2014 so far, Roche has helped 320 family households with basic needs assistance, totaling 622 individuals.

"I am an Islander by birth, Islander by choice. Galveston truly is and always has been HOME. Over the past 27 years of service, I have proudly seen Catholic Charities become its beacon," Roche said.

LOTUS PROJECT FOR WOMEN VETERANS WINS SOCIAL INNOVATION AWARD

The office telephone number has remained the same and is 409.762.2064.



Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston's Lotus Project for Women Veterans, which fights homelessness suffered by military veterans, won a Catholic Charities USA "Social Innovation" Award and \$5,000 to reinvest back into that program. In the photo, CCUSA President Fr. Larry Snyder presents the award to President/CEO Cynthia Colbert and the staff of the winning Lotus program, Olivia Bush and Maria McIntyre, who have helped 30 women veterans and their 40 children out of homelessness by providing apartments, job training and employment/education opportunities.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

VOLUNTEER LAW STUDENT HELPING IMMIGRATION SERVICES

Miguel Cervantes, a second-year law student from South Texas College of Law, was searching for an internship. But he did not want the copying jobs and minor duties usually relegated to interns at most law firms.

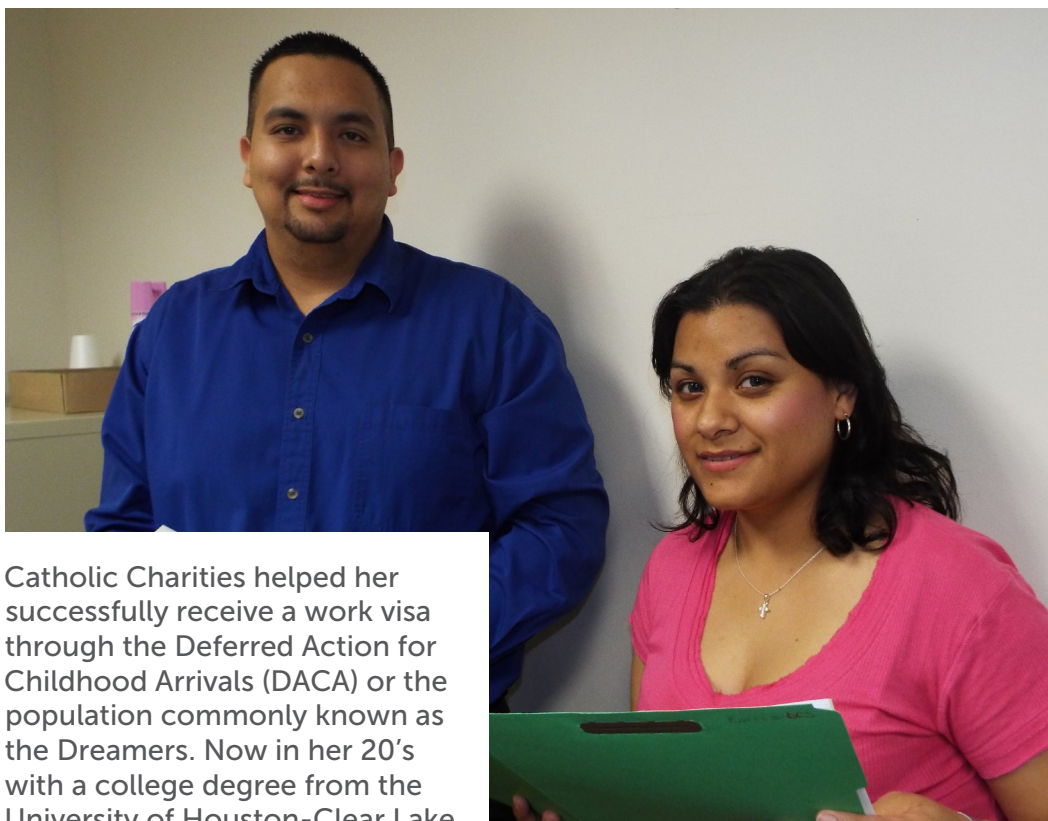
"I wanted more of a purpose and the ability to help the community out," Cervantes said. A school bulletin posting requesting volunteers for Catholic Charities' Cabrini Center for Legal Immigration Services caught his eye.

The first-generation college student, born in San Antonio, knew of the struggles by his parents, who emigrated from Nuevo Laredo. Now his summer internship experience at Catholic Charities has him assisting cases managers and attorneys with preparing paperwork ready for filing.

"I am also going to court with our attorneys so I am getting first-hand experience," he said.

He also assists and shares an office with staff case worker Rosalba Gallardo, who first started with Catholic Charities as a client. Her grandfather tried to petition for her and her family in 1996 to come legally to the United States. But while they waited, the crime and corruption in Mexico City finally pushed them to come across the Rio Grande illegally in 1999.

"I was 12 years old, but when we were crossing over, I was just worried about my 8-year-old brother, who was with us," Gallardo said.



Catholic Charities helped her successfully receive a work visa through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or the population commonly known as the Dreamers. Now in her 20's with a college degree from the University of Houston-Clear Lake, she educates undocumented children apprehended while coming across the border about what to expect in court.

"I can relate a lot to what they've been through. It is tough leaving your home country behind. Many of them had to leave family, friends, their school," she said.

Miguel and Rosalba represent the heart of Catholic Charities, both as a volunteer and as a staff member working together.

Catholic Charities is preparing welcome kits for children arriving in our St. Michael's Homes. We are asking for in-kind donations such as backpacks; bus tokens; reading materials in Spanish such as Bibles, books, teen magazines; first aid kits and toiletries as well as monetary donations. Items and gift cards can be dropped off Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at our main office at 2900 Louisiana.



HOME

REFUGEE FAMILY SURVIVES CONGO AND CALLS HOUSTON HOME

Refugee pastor Pirachel Dieudonne, who preached hope at refugee camps in Africa while his family waited for the chance to come to the United States, says God blessed him with a "heart of patience."

It took 10 years for him to get U.S. State Department approval last year, but now Catholic Charities is helping Pirachel, his wife, and eight children to resettle in a Houston four-bedroom apartment.

"As refugee, it is very hard because you don't have a job and need to get one, but you don't know the language. But many people help, including Catholic Charities, whose workers made us feel happy again and help us hope again," Pirachel said.

He now works as a stocker in a Food Town store while his children, for the first time in years, attend school.

His adopted nephew, Eli Pirachel, whose father was killed and mother lost in the Congo wars, said, "I like it here in Houston because I go to school. In Uganda, I never go to school."

They left their homeland of the Republic of Congo in Africa after 2002 because of brutal civil strife, militia and tribal wars over the past years that have killed millions of people, according to the United Nations.

His family was interred in Ugandan refugee camps and also lived on the streets of Kampala where they were beaten with police batons by officers trying to clear the streets. But journalists wrote reports about those beatings that prompted the attention of UN officials, who in turn granted them official refugee status.

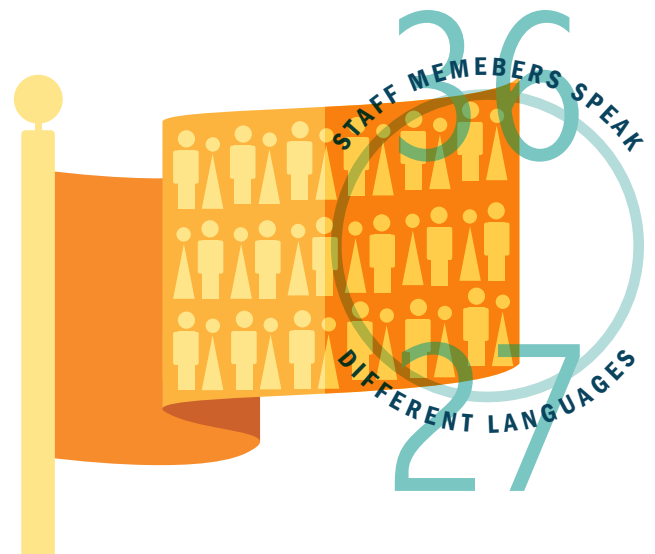
Refugee Resettlement has 36 staff members who speak 27 different languages. They are receiving clients mostly from the Republic of Congo, Iraq, Cuba, Afghanistan, Burma, Bhutan, Somalia, and Eritrea. This past year, they helped resettle 500 refugees and 150 Cuban entrants. The strategic plan over the next three years estimates 1,950 refugees to be successfully resettled.



After multiple meetings with U.S. Embassy officials and a lengthy vetting process, Pirachel received a precious letter from U.S. officials granting permission for them to move to the United States. His refugee camp followers and church members packed into a bus and followed him and his family to the airport to make sure they really did get on an airplane and fly to freedom.

"I had to have a heart of patience. So whatever problems I had—I had to let God lead me. He is my leader, praying and preaching to my people. No matter how I suffer, I am example of wanting to reconcile people," Pirachel said.

Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement case supervisor Margaret Ayot said most refugees, within their first year here, are working, driving cars and speaking on cell phones, and "building a life."





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