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Issue #4 · Summer 2010

Heartbeat

volunteer news at Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Boston

CROSS YOUR HEART

In May, we kicked off the Cross Your Heart campaign, highlighting volunteerism and support of the agency's 140 programs and services across Eastern Massachusetts. Catholic Charities

is fortunate to have so many committed and loyal volunteers and friends. Each is dedicated to caring for those we serve and to our mission.

We have asked these employees, volunteers, funders, and clients of Catholic Charities to share their stories of how their commitment of time, energy, and skills has impacted an individual, family, or community.

They have joined us in front the camera for a print campaign which was launched in our 2009 annual report, *Crossings*, as well as for a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign that will be aired on television, beginning with Catholic TV. You can view the PSA's on our web site's multimedia page - <http://www.ccab.org/media.html>.



“

Although it is rare, it is possible for a business enterprise to have a staff free of contentious individuals who are instead kind and considerate of each other. What a blessing and a joy to be a part of it all and to know that when you walk through the door each week that you are appreciated.”

– Beverly Sinatra
front desk volunteer at Catholic Charities North



Volunteering Is Good for Your Health!

The UnitedHealthcare/VolunteerMatch Do Good. Live Well. Survey of more than 4,500 American adults found that 68 percent of those who volunteered in the past year report that volunteering has made them feel physically healthier. The survey also found that volunteering appears to correspond with higher levels of life satisfaction – including a greater sense of meaning and purpose and higher levels of optimism. Complete survey results can be found at www.dogoodlivewell.org/OurCommitment.html.

80s Party – Health and Wellness Drive

By Tayo Adjapon-Yamoah

Charity begins at home, or so they say. On May 5th, however, it found other roots in the popularity of the 80s, which sent professionals of all ages to The Redline Bar and Restaurant for an 80s Party – Health and Wellness Drive. Over fifty guests gathered to mingle, enjoy delicious food, and celebrate the best dance music of the decade.

The cover charge for this party was not your usual set dollar amount. Guests could bring health and wellness items such as toiletries and first aid supplies, cash donations, or both. Hors d’oeuvres and space were generously provided by the Redline Bar and Restaurant in Cambridge, meaning that all proceeds went to support the cause of the party – the Refugee & Immigration Services program at Catholic Charities. At the end of the night, donations totaled \$470 in cash and \$840 in-kind, adding up to over \$1300 dollars. The cash donations will go straight to the Refugee & Immigration Services, where they might finance, for instance, a few months of subsidized rent for a newly arrived refugee trying to make ends meet. The donated self-care items will be

available for refugees to pick up from Catholic Charities as needed.

Many thanks go to the four Lesley graduates who volunteered to create, organize, and sponsor the event through their own organization, the Refugee and Immigrant Resource Collaborative: Kathryn Hamm, Frances Shimakage, Tamara Suttle, and Amy Wooldridge. We are also grateful to Redline Bar and Restaurant, who made this event possible through their generous donation of food and space for the party.



PETER ROBY

Peter Roby has volunteered at the **Teen Center at Saint Peter's** since October of 2009. He began as part of a service learning program at Northeastern University, where he is pursuing a degree in Philosophy and English, with a minor in Education. The class that led him to volunteer ended with the semester, but his time at the Teen Center did not. He now is available for homework help and tutoring to the teens nearly every day during the academic portion of programming. Some teens ask for him as soon as they sit down and open their books.

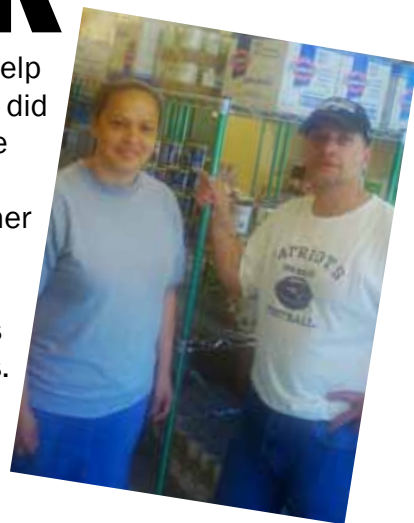


In addition to academic tutoring and the adult ESL classes he helps teach, Peter led a multi-session workshop for Black History Month which culminated with a film showing and pizza party at the Amilcar Cabral Center at Northeastern University. Peter, who is partially of Cape Verdean descent, is also improving his Creole skills. In his pocket he carries a small notebook with phrases and vocabulary written in it. "I know most of the numbers and the verbs for addition and multiplication," he says. "I am really focusing on the vocabulary for math, since that is what I primarily help them with."

-Sean Wiedemeier

IRIS SANTOS DENNIS FOSTER

Early this year, **Dennis Foster** and **Iris Santos** both offered to help out a little at the **Catholic Charities Food Pantry in Lowell**. Little did they know what they were getting themselves into! Dennis, whose wife Kathleen works part time as the receptionist at the Lowell office, started offering to help put food away while he waited for her to get off from work. Iris, who used to go to the Food Pantry when it was located on Central Street, came by the new location one day and offered to help out for a couple of hours. Several months later, Dennis and Iris are the Pantry's two most critical volunteers. Both arrive each morning to help unload boxes of food, put it away, and prepare bags. Both also stay during the Pantry's open hours, handing food out to clients. And both can be seen at the end of the day, cleaning up, re-stocking the shelves, and getting things ready for the next morning. Without Dennis and Iris, the Lowell Food Pantry would not be running as efficiently and effectively as it is. They truly are two volunteers who make a difference for Catholic Charities and for the residents of Lowell.



- Scott Stolze

OUR SOCIAL MISSION: There Is No Egg in Eggplant

by Judy Whitmarsh

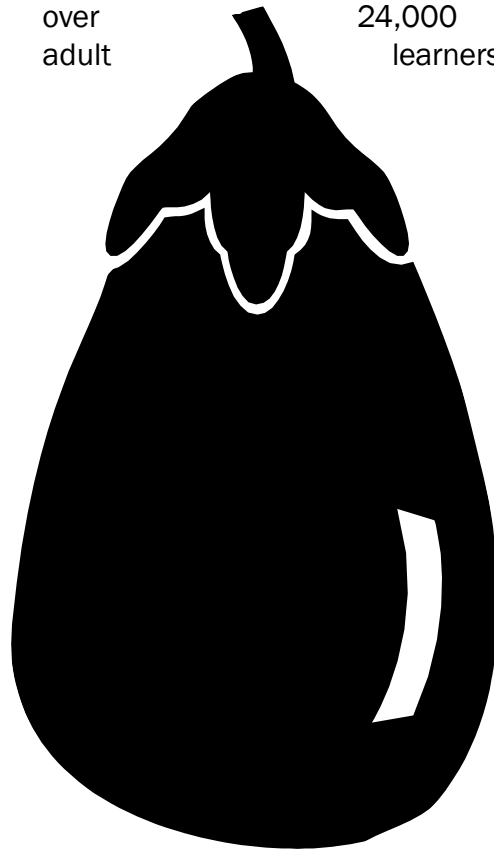
I read an Internet article (English: A Crazy Language) recently that told me that while English doesn't have the most speakers; it is the official language of more countries than any other language. Its speakers hail from all around the world, including the U.S., Australia, England, Zimbabwe, the Caribbean, Hong Kong, South Africa, and Canada. One in every seven humans can speak it and 3 quarters of international mail is in English.

Nonetheless, it is a bizarre language. There is no egg in eggplant and no ham in hamburger. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat. Quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig. And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth beeth? One goose, 2 geese so one moose, 2 meese right? Wrong. If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If you get rid of all but one of a bunch of odds and ends, what do you have left? How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

And check these out – We polish Polish furniture. A farm can produce produce. The dump was so full it had to refuse refuse. A dove dove into the bushes and the bandage was wound around

the wound. And my personal favorite, I spent last evening evening out a pile of dirt (which I actually did by the way).

So I think we can understand why English is one of the most difficult languages to learn. Adult learners seek literacy skills for countless purposes. According to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website, over 24,000 adult learners



attend adult basic education programs and an additional 23,000 adults wait for services so that they can acquire the literacy skills needed to achieve their goals. Whether their goal is to get a job or a better job, help their children with homework, or become a citizen, the ABE system

assists adult learners.

Just as the ABE system serves individual learners, it also serves the public interest. From bridging the gap between workers in need of good jobs and employers in need of skilled workers to closing the academic achievement gap between poor and minority children and their middle class counterparts, the ABE system supports public policy priorities.

Despite the challenges of serving many purposes with limited systemic resources and a demand for services that far exceeds the supply, the ABE system and its stakeholders are unified in their determination to keep the door of opportunity open to all adult learners in need of literacy and language skills.

And at Catholic Charities, we keep that door open through programs at El Centro del Cardenal, the Haitian Multi Service Center, Catholic Charities North, Catholic Charities South, and Refugee and Immigration Services. I have much admiration for the teachers within our organization that so adeptly teach such a crazy language. Thank you.

So, when I wind up my watch I start it but I am winding up this article so I am ending it. Go figure.

Judy Whitmarsh is the Director of Public Policy at Catholic Charities of Boston. She can be reached at judy_whitmarsh@ccab.org.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF



Catholic Charities North Catholic Charities North staff very wonderfully volunteered with their families to hold a yard sale on Saturday, May 22nd. Special thanks to Bob Pelchat, our Education Center Driver, who volunteered much of his time to put on the sale, which raised \$1,800 for North programs. *- Sarah Bartley*

Catholic Charities South On March 18th, volunteers from the Catholic Charities South Volunteer Parish Outreach program came together for a day of prayer, reflection, and sharing at the Father Peyton Center in Easton, MA. A reflective and spiritual energizing program put together by Susan Wallace was enjoyed by all those who attended. This program has approximately 30 volunteers from two parishes, St. Michael in Avon and St. Joseph in Kingston. These volunteers not only provide support to elders in their own parish communities, but to the community at large by supporting the mission of Catholic Charities to build a just and compassionate society rooted in the dignity of all. These compassionate and caring volunteers engage with those elders in need either in person, by telephone, or in writing. They provide transportation, meals, and opportunities for recreation; and provide spiritual comfort and support through communion, prayer, presence, and faith sharing. Parish Outreach volunteers reach out to 1,600 plus people each month and are truly living their faith daily. *-Debbie Mayer*

Central Office Many thanks to all those who helped out at Catholic Charities annual Spring Celebration.

Our guests had a great evening – due in large part to the warm welcome by staff and volunteers. It’s exciting to be able to announce that Catholic Charities raised more than \$1.3 million to support the programs and services we provide, and equally important that our friends and supporters enjoyed their evening. Many hands helped make the evening a great success for Charities including Christopher Abell, Mary Ann Anthony, Sheila Corkhill, Jessica Davidson-Sawyer, Virginia Doocy, Allison Kroner, Michael O’Brien, Katie Sullivan, and Judy Swanson. *-Kathrine Hastings*

Greater Boston On Saturday, April 24th, St. Ambrose Family Shelter had the pleasure of hosting a service day



with three different groups. We worked with Emmanuel College, Comcast, and City Year and had 30 volunteers in all. The volunteers painted the dining room, resident stairwell, staff office, and staff bathroom and also pulled up old carpet and tile in the staff office. They weeded all of our gardens, did grounds clean-up, and planted flowers, as well as put away food from the food bank and organized our food pantry. We thanked them with a cookout, which was also attended by current and previous residents of St. Ambrose. *- Meghan Creighton*



Labouré Center Volunteers Ed Casey, left, and Harry Brett enjoy the Labouré Center Spring Reception. They were two of 28 volunteers serving on the planning committee. Labouré Center’s chair, Jennifer Roberts, far right, has led the

volunteer committee for the past 8 years planning Labouré’s Spring event. *-Judy Swanson*



Merrimack Valley On Sunday, March 21, Holy Family Parish’s High School Religious Education Program held a Bowl-A-Thon in support of Catholic Charities Lowell Food Pantry. They donated 25 bags of food and raised money by bowling three strings. This was the sixth Bowl-A-Thon for Holy Family; over six years, they have raised over \$6,000 and donated hundreds of bags of food to organizations in the Greater Lowell area. *-Scott Stolze*

The Grandparent as Parents (GAP) Program welcomes our two new volunteers: Kirsten Barrick and Michelle Dolan. Kirsten Barrick is a bank teller by day, and she is volunteering to assist our long-time volunteer Isabel Smith in working with children and teens during the Lowell GAP group. She would like to be a teacher, and she brings her experience as a childcare volunteer to our program. She lives in Lowell with her husband. Kirsten is very friendly and outgoing, and her face lights up when she is spending time with the grandchildren during the support groups.

Michelle Dolan brings 12 years of experience working in the social service field with high risk children and families and the Hispanic Community. She has a Bachelor’s degree in Spanish and a Master’s degree in Education and School Counseling. She is fluent in Spanish and is eager to practice her Spanish with

the participants in the Lawrence support group, as well as to be able to share information about child development with the participants.

-Dotty Duval

Experience, Service, Reflection: Ignatian Volunteer Corps

By Gini Parker

As an Ignatian Volunteer, I feel both lucky and blessed to be placed at Catholic Charities in Brockton where I now teach at the English Transcultural Center. Under Lara Herosy's supervision, I work with Haitian and Cape Verdean immigrants who are either beginning to learn English or are ready to transition out to more advanced classes at the Brockton Adult Learning Center or even Massasoit Community College.

Lara was kind enough to arrange an internship of sorts for me to prepare me for the challenge of doing what I had never done before, teach English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). I'll always remember how touched I was at the first class I visited. Before many of the students left the classroom, they stopped to thank their teacher, Sr. Helen Poirier, SUSC. And since I had tried to give them some personal help, they also paused to remember me with words, "Thank you, Teacher." I don't think I had ever been addressed as Teacher with a capital "T" before! Fathers, Mothers, Sisters, Brothers, Doctors, and Officers are, but not teachers in our culture. It shows the great respect paid to this profession by other cultures, a respect not always evident in our own American culture. Some students even say, "I love you." Learning English is immensely important to them, a passport to a world they cannot thrive in if they don't master the language of their host country.

And it is because of Lara's warm and caring leadership and the inspiring example of love and generosity of service her staff and volunteers render, our students always find welcome

and hospitality at the English Transcultural Center (ETC), a little host country of its own. This is what I imagine St. Ignatius would call a manifestation of the Magis, an always striving to achieve the greater good. Both in grade school and high school, I was taught by the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth who made very certain to remind us of the motto of their own religious community: "Caritas Christi Urget Nos." The love of Christ urges us on!

As a Catholic Christian trying to live out her faith in the Ignatian discipline of seeking God in all things, I probably shouldn't have found it too great a surprise when I learned that ETC began in the basement of St. Patrick's Church, before it transferred to its present site at Catholic Charities South, and that it was the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth who founded the program. Knowing this is a great reminder that just as they felt and responded to the call, "Caritas Christi Urget Nos, Christ's love impels us," it is the same Christ, our Teacher with a capital "T," who inspires me now as an Ignatian Volunteer to pass on the love.



OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP

Graduation Volunteers

Catholic Charities Young Professionals Group (YoPros) will be volunteering at the Catholic Charities North Education Center graduation on Tuesday, June 24th at 6:30 p.m. in Lynn. This volunteer opportunity will allow YoPros to interact with students who are graduating from Education Center Programs in Lynn and Salem. Volunteers will welcome and check-in students, hand out caps and gowns, welcome and seat guests, and hand out programs. If you would like to volunteer at this event, please contact Annie at YoPros@ccab.org.

Comments? Ideas for the next newsletter?

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Help us save paper (and trees)! If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please email volunteer@ccab.org.

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