



## Housing, Services & Property Management

Sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany

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**Deborah Damm O'Brien**

Fiscal Director:  
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Catholic Charities Housing Office  
Director of Operations:  
**Thomas Coates**

DePaul Housing Director of  
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CC Senior Services  
DayHaven & Transportation  
Supervising Director:  
**Rhonda Finchout**

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Administration &  
CC Senior Services Administration,  
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## Housing, Services & Property Management

Catholic Charities Housing Office • Catholic Charities Senior Services in Schenectady  
DePaul Housing Management • McCloskey Community Service

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## Dayhaven: New York State Respite Program of the Year!

On November 17, Dayhaven, a program of Catholic Charities Senior Services in Schenectady, was recognized as New York State's "Respite Program of the Year 2011." The award is given by the New York State Caregiving & Respite Coalition, which selected Dayhaven from many programs throughout the State. The award was accepted by Dayhaven Manager Carrin Swanson, along with Joan Richardson and Ricky Melendez from her staff.

Dayhaven is an adult day program which specializes in the care of disabled seniors and those with cognitive and/or memory impairments, including Alzheimer's Disease. The program allows caregivers to manage other aspects of their lives work, hobbies, family and friends—knowing that their loved one is in a safe environment where their needs are taken care of. For some, Dayhaven is the perfect alternative to nursing home placement. The professional and compassionate staff assists participants with personal care, meals, and hosts a string of activities throughout the day—from exercise to arts and crafts, live music and dancing. The joyous spirit of the participants is plain to see when you walk through the doors of Dayhaven, thanks to the energy and dedication of staff and volunteers. Congratulations and thank you to Carrin and her team!



Joan Richardson, Carrin Swanson & Ricky Melendez

## Hope for the Homeless a Success!



Honoree Michael G. Breslin, Deborah Damm O'Brien & Thomas Coates

Catholic Charities Housing Office (CCHO) honored "Partner in Hope" Albany County Executive Michael G. Breslin at the annual *Hope for the Homeless* fundraiser on November 7. The event, held at Albany's Brown Derby, raised much needed funds for CCHO's homeless housing and services programs in Albany, Troy, and Oneonta, New York. Bishop Howard J. Hubbard, CCHO Executive Director Deborah Damm O'Brien, and CCHO Director of Operations Thomas Coates all brought the evening's focus to the compassion and unfaltering dedication of the night's honoree who spoke of the area's continued need for programs like those of CCHO.

Deborah began the program by recalling the young mother who walked to our office looking for shelter. She was in tears and in disbelief at having no place to go. She carried with her a backpack and a duffel bag of her belongings. Her circumstances were heart-wrenching; she had been newly diagnosed with cancer and was fleeing an abusive boyfriend. *Continued on page 2...*

## Flooded Schoharie Public Library Gets a Helping Hand

Residents of Schoharie lost many things destroyed by Hurricane Irene's flood waters, not the least of which were hundreds of books from the bottom two shelves of the Schoharie Public Library's collection. Residents at Franciscan Heights Senior Community, a DePaul community in Rensselaer, responded to this tragic loss by donating 14 boxes of assorted books last month to help replenish the lost stock. The boxes included everything from fiction to non-fiction, children's books, hard covers and paperbacks. The books were drawn from the Franciscan Heights community library, as well as private donations from residents. Thank you to the residents of Franciscan Heights for this caring support to your neighbors in need!

Our sincere thanks to the generous volunteers who went all out Thanksgiving Day at CCHO's men's and women's emergency homeless shelters in Albany! The 19 men staying at Lwanga Center were served a lavish meal prepared by Donna Purnomo of Yono's Restaurant (Chef Purnomo's wife), and volunteer Fred Tibbitts. Case Manager Stephen Archer added home-baked pies and peach cobbler to the feast.

St. Thomas Parishioners prepared an entire meal for the 21 women at Mercy House—turkey with all the fixings, including homemade cranberry sauce and pies. Intern Felicia Lloyd made the guests personalized placemats, and the dinner table was set with matching seasonal accoutrements for an especially festive flair. Intern Melanie Karmatzyn and her three daughters served and shared in the meal with guests and staff.

Overall, Lwanga and Mercy House guests thoroughly enjoyed the special dishes prepared and the company of volunteers who cared so much to spend the holiday helping their neighbors in Albany.



## Message From Deborah

"The circus arrives without warning.... It is simply there, when yesterday it was not."

These are the opening lines describing the magical circus that is the centerpiece of the novel, *The Night Circus*. They also seem to describe the arrival of Christmas. For, while we know that Christmas comes every December 25th, we are still surprised in these days of Advent waiting by the unexpected gifts of the season. Like the Night Circus, we are never sure when a bit of Christmas joy will enter our days... or from whence it will come.

Our newsletter once again shares a little bit of our experiences of the surprising gifts of the season... the support of our dedicated partners, the commitment of our extraordinary staff, the simple thoughtfulness of our residents, the new hope of a family with a home... all examples of God's love breaking into the sometimes tough and dark days.

We are happy to be able to be part of God's work in the world... each day there are so many and such unexpected ways that we see God's love present and shared. We are thrilled to be able to be part of making God alive in our world. And when all is said and done, isn't that what we celebrate in this season?

May your Advent waiting and your Christmas days be filled with the unexpected arrival... over and over again... of God's love! Happy Christmas to all!

*Deborah Damm O'Brien*, Executive Director

Reflections

**DEPAUL HOUSING  
MANAGEMENT**

- St. Vincent's Apartments  
Albany, NY
- Bishop Broderick  
Apartments  
Albany, NY
- Bishop Hubbard  
Senior Apartments  
Halfmoon, NY
- Carondelet Commons  
Senior Apartments  
Watervliet, NY
- St. Jude Apartments  
Wynantskill, NY
- Branson Manor  
Senior Apartments  
East Greenbush, NY
- Cabrini Acres  
Senior Apartments  
Watervliet, NY
- Sanderson Court  
Senior Apartments  
Watervliet, NY
- Marie-Rose Manor  
Slingerlands, NY
- Fontbonne Manor  
Senior Apartments  
Watervliet, NY
- Delhi Senior  
Communities I & II  
Delhi, NY
- The Lawrence Commons  
Schenectady, NY
- Father Leo O'Brien  
Senior Community  
Rotterdam, NY
- Franciscan Heights  
Senior Community  
Rensselaer, NY
- Ávila Retirement  
Community  
Albany, NY
- Eastwyck Village  
North Greenbush, NY

*Special Thanks from a Mom — New to CCHO's Apartments*

**“AS A MOTHER who knows what it’s like to be homeless, I must say I am very blessed to be in my own home for the holidays. It is a great feeling knowing that if I can’t give my children anything else for the holidays, we do have a safe, warm place to call home. We are very grateful and truly blessed for everyone who made it possible for my children and I to be in this beautiful place. . . We know there are people who are still in the shelter. From my family to everyone who works, donates, and in any way helps make Catholic Charities possible: thank you very much for everything and God bless you.”—Ms. A**

**Sharing Our Stories . . .**

On the beautiful autumn evening of October 6, members of the community gathered with staff, clients and their families at the Lighthouse Restaurant for the annual celebration of Catholic Charities Senior Services in Schenectady (CCSSS). “Sharing Our Stories” was an opportunity to hear from our remarkable volunteers: Arlene Merrick, who spends many hours assisting seniors with health insurance issues and other needs, day and night. Rit DiCaprio, a deacon in training in the Albany Diocese, shared moving stories about seniors he met while working in all of the CCSSS programs. Carrin Swanson, our Dayhaven Manager, spoke on behalf of Dayhaven participants whose impairments make it difficult for them to be home alone.

The strength of spirit, the resilience, and the beauty of each person came through in their sharing, and reminded all of us that everyone has a story to tell. 🙏 Kathy Conboy



CCSSS Aging Services Program Volunteer  
Arlene Merrick “Sharing Our Stories”

*Hope for the Homeless, continued from page 1 . . .*

With the help of Omima, one of our case managers, we were able to help her secure emergency shelter. She has since searched daily at our drop-in center for both employment and a permanent place to call home. We are happy to report she has found both and will be reunited with her daughter in the coming days.

*Hope for the Homeless* attendees included United States Congressman Paul Tonko, Senator Neil Breslin, Rensselaer County Executive Kathleen Jimino, and many of our grass-roots partners including Catholic Charities AIDS Services, Clearview Center, Community Maternity Services, Equinox, Joseph’s House and Shelter, and United Tenants of Albany.

It is not too late to participate in the fundraising—if you would like to contribute to our work to shelter and support a homeless individual or family in need, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to Catholic Charities Housing Office, 41 N. Main Avenue, Albany NY 12203. CCHO has two homeless shelters, 21 affordable family apartments, 164 single room occupancies, and a wide variety of emergency and support services including refugee resettlement, support for victims of human trafficking, Hispanic outreach services and a community drop-in center staffed by case workers, resource advisors, and volunteers who help with housing and employment searches. Your help is greatly appreciated during this holiday season and all year long! 🙏 Emily Pethic

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
HOUSING OFFICE**

**Center for Community  
Collaboration**  
326 Clinton Avenue  
Albany, NY 12206  
(518) 462-6829

**Emergency Housing**

- Mercy House  
Albany, NY
- St. Charles Lwanga Center  
Albany, NY

**Family Apartments**

Lexington Avenue,  
Third Avenue,  
Clinton Avenue &  
Broad Street in  
Albany, NY

**Single Room Occupancy  
(SRO) Residences**

- DePaul Residence  
Albany, NY
- Waldorf Residence  
Albany, NY
- Swyer Residence  
Albany, NY
- St. Peter’s Residence  
Troy, NY
- SRO Residences  
Oneonta, NY

**Emergency Services for  
Refugees & Victims of  
Human Trafficking**

**Support Services for  
Hispanic & Latino  
Individuals & Families**

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
SENIOR SERVICES IN  
SCHENECTADY**

**Aging Services  
Information &  
Assistance**

**Dayhaven Adult Day  
Services**

**Meals on Wheels**

**Nutrition, Education &  
Outreach Program**

**Senior Dining Centers**

**Senior Transportation**

Contact (518) 372-5667  
for more information  
about these programs  
*Visit us on*



**Join our Team of Holiday Elves!**

Would you like to spread some cheer this season? We’re making holiday preparations for **275+ men, women and children** in our homeless housing and refugee resettlement programs, as well as for the **thousands of seniors** assisted by Catholic Charities Senior Services in Schenectady and those who are residents in our DePaul Housing communities. Join in our efforts by volunteering or purchasing a gift!



Volunteer

- Holiday crafting and parties at Dayhaven
- Deliver Meals on Wheels Christmas Day in Schenectady County
- Wrap gifts for shelter guests and formerly homeless families

Give a Gift

*Purchase or fund a gift for an adult, child or senior with very limited income this holiday.*

- Gift cards (\$25 denominations) for grocery stores, Target, Wal-Mart, pharmacies, and Stewart’s Shops are requested to provide gifts and help fund holiday meals.
- Winter coats, accessories, boots, children’s bedding, and toys are also requested to provide gifts for individuals and families in our homeless housing programs.

**For more information please contact Kathleen Ide at (518) 459-0183 or [idek@reda.org](mailto:idek@reda.org)**

**Walk to End Alzheimer’s**

On September 24, families, caregivers and seniors affected by Alzheimer’s Disease gathered at the Saratoga Casino & Raceway for the Capital Region Walk to End Alzheimer’s. Carrin Swanson, manager of Dayhaven, formed a team to represent Dayhaven along with Jenah Harris-Jones of Sematech, Cheryl Gardinier, and Vicki Hoshko from Schenectady County Long Term Care Services. Carrin was asked to be part of the opening ceremony (pictured at right); her personal and professional experiences of the struggles faced by caregivers and those afflicted by the disease deepened the sense of solidarity felt by those in the crowd. The 3.6 mile walk not only bolstered the great resilience and dedication to the fight against Alzheimer’s Disease amongst participants, but also raised funds for the Alzheimer’s Association for Alzheimer’s care, support and research efforts. Recruiting efforts for Dayhaven’s participation in next year’s event are already underway. 🙏



**Veggie Mobile Visits DePaul Communities**



This summer and fall the Capital District Community Gardens Veggie Mobile, sponsored in part by CDPHP and Senior Whole Health, made bi-monthly visits to the parking lots of St. Jude Apartments and Branson Manor—two of DePaul Housing’s subsidized communities for seniors and mobility-impaired adults. The mobile produce stand vends locally grown fruits and vegetables at

near-wholesale cost, and offers tastings and even cooking demos on-site. Shoppers are also able to use food stamps for their purchases. The regular visits were a big hit with DePaul residents, who relished the convenience and wholesome taste of fresh, locally-produced, affordable foods available right outside their front door. 🙏