



Brownson House Long-time Client is Grateful



Couple Thankful for Project Achieve

Mr. Parks and Ms. Shares became homeless when, due to rent increases and their fixed income, they could no longer afford their rent.

After leaving their apartment, they stayed with family to get by. But, this was just a temporary fix and they knew they needed their own place, eventually.

The couple began living in their vehicle before coming to Catholic Charities' Project Achieve Shelter in Long Beach. The shelter provides: sixty- to-ninety-day Bridge Housing and 24-hour shelter for adult men and women; case management services; basic skills workshops; and job and housing linkages.

During their stay at Project Achieve, Mr. Parks and Ms. Shares were very friendly to staff and other clients. With the help of the Shelter Case Manager, they were matched to an affordable housing unit. ❖

As a client of Catholic Charities' San Gabriel Region for more than 10 years, Monica Zermeño has participated in many of our community activities. And during the COVID-19 crisis, our services have become even more essential. She feels blessed to have found a place like Brownson House Community Services in her Boyle Heights neighborhood many years ago.

Monica first became familiar with Catholic Charities while raising her three children (now adults). When she needed assistance to help support her family, she turned to Brownson House for the emergency food and utility programs, as well as the nutrition classes. Her children benefited from the annual summer program, back-to-school haircut days, and Navidad con Obispo, the yearly food and toy giveaway event at Christmas time.

Monica has recently adopted four additional children. But, because of all the support she's received at Brownson



Monica is shown with her four adopted children and her grandchild.

House throughout the years, Monica knows she is not alone. She's grateful for the assistance she continues to receive and that her newly adopted children will benefit from all of the services her own children received in the past.

Brownson House Community Services was, and is, a place of support for Monica Zermeño and will always be there for families in need. ❖

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Message from the Executive Director, Rev. Monsignor Gregory A. Cox

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) recently published their 2020 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count. They reported that 66,436 people in Los Angeles County are experiencing homelessness. This is a 12.7% increase from the previous year at this time. The City of Los Angeles saw a 14.2% rise to 41,290. These numbers were reported before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reviewing the homelessness numbers more closely, there are increasing trends that are alarming. Homelessness among Transition Age Youth (TAY) and unaccompanied minors includes both individuals 18-24 and members of families headed by persons 18-24. Minor children in TAY-headed families and unaccompanied minors are 7% of the homeless population. Sadly, 14,284 of the homeless, which constitute 32% of that population, suffer from substance abuse. And 11,711 - 26% - of the homeless are reported to have long-term mental health conditions.

Los Angeles County, with Measure H, is in its third year of a 10-year plan to address the issues of homelessness. They are investing financial resources to move homeless people into housing. Government, alone, cannot solve the issue of homelessness. Faith-based groups, businesses, foundations, social service agencies and individuals need to address the many reasons people are on the streets every night.

The goal of Catholic Charities' shelters is to transition a homeless person to self-sufficiency. In addition to assisting those on the streets, we are also developing a preventative model of service for those who are at risk of becoming homeless. For example, young adults, who no longer can remain in the foster care system and have no options for housing, are able to stay in a Catholic Charities' residence until they finish school or complete a job training program.

In order to effectively address the issues of poverty and homelessness, we cannot place all the responsibility on government. We all need to create new ideas and resources to tackle this issue, which deserves our attention. ❀



Notice:

The City of Angels Christmas Gala, previously scheduled for Friday, December 4, 2020, at The California Club, has been cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.



Catholic Charities Distributes Worker Resiliency Funds

In May 2020, Catholic Charities of Los Angeles (CCLA) was selected as one of twenty community-based organizations to partner with Los Angeles County Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), to distribute Worker Resiliency Funds over a three-week period. Worker Resiliency Funds provided financial support for very low-income county residents who lost wages or jobs due to COVID-19. Funds were available to documented and undocumented individuals.

Referrals were received from many CCLA programs, including community centers, shelters, legal services, employment services and trafficking victims' support services. Three staff from the Intra-Agency Programs Department worked with clients remotely to screen for eligibility and complete program enrollment. At the conclusion of the program, 36 clients had been eligible and received \$800 debit cards to assist them with living expenses.

Clients expressed gratitude to CCLA for making such resources available. Staff working on the project also felt grateful for the opportunity to provide support to families hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. ❀



A Catholic Charities client is happy to receive support through the Worker Resiliency Fund.

Help Goes Full Circle at Glendale Loaves & Fishes

Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc.'s (CCLA) Glendale Community Center Loaves & Fishes provides emergency resources and Case Management services to bridge the gap for at-risk families and helps prevent homelessness.

Loaves & Fishes' client, "Olivia," migrated to America eight years ago, fleeing economic hardship and persecution in Kazakhstan, and searching for a better life. A survivor of domestic violence and a single mother, she studied diligently for her ESL classes while working two jobs and raising her young son and teenage daughter. She never gave up, and fought tirelessly to provide her family with a strong foundation for a better future.

Tragically, Olivia suffered health issues leading to a work injury which left her temporarily disabled and subsequently unemployed. She struggled, unable to pay her bills or rent, and eventually received an eviction notice.

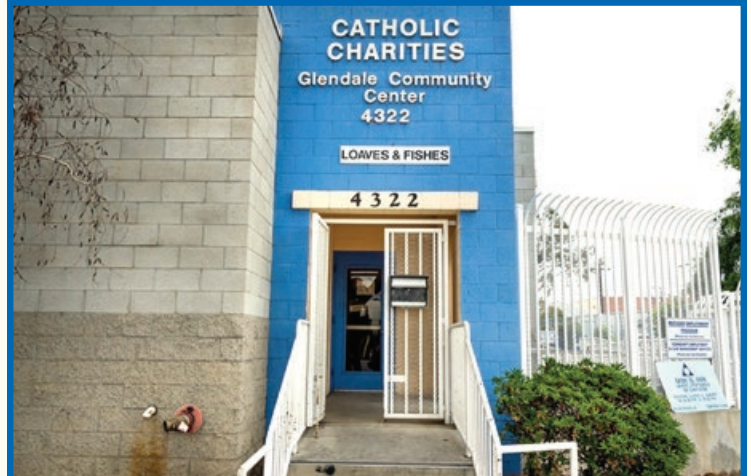
Overwhelmed, Olivia turned to Glendale Loaves & Fishes seeking emergency help. To her great relief, the Glendale Center Team assessed her situation and evaluated which programs would best suit her family. She qualified for immediate food assistance to maintain proper nutrition for her family, and Glendale Center Director, Sayed Hamidy, quickly intervened to help solve her housing dilemma and try to put a halt to the pending eviction. Unfortunately, the property owner refused to assist and proceeded with the eviction.

However, thanks to CCLA's continual collaboration with supporting agencies to help women facing severe hardship, Sayed was able to coordinate financial assistance for Olivia through Case Managers at the YWCA rehousing program in Glendale. To Olivia's relief, she found placement in a new housing situation, and the looming threat of homelessness was averted.



Olivia's daughter Millie is happy in her new home, thanks to the Glendale Community Center.

As a result, she gained stability and emotional strength, enabling her to begin her search for employment. Her story continued to come full circle as CCLA Glendale Case Management Services nurtured and cultivated her "life skills" by connecting her with the



Catholic Charities' Glendale Community Center is the site of the Loaves & Fishes food pantry.

Verdugo Job Center, a partnering community employment program that actually was able to provide funding for temporary employment positions at the Glendale Center for both Olivia and her daughter, Millie. Glendale Center provided the connection to necessary resources for this



Olivia enjoys her new job at Glendale Community Center's Loaves and Fishes.

family, and they consider the Center to be their place of refuge and help.

When asked about her experience, Olivia shared that she "...felt supported and encouraged through the caring staff at CCLA Glendale. Each meeting has been like seeing a good friend. They go above and beyond and actually care about our

situation...they introduced us to this new community that still helps us move ahead, step by step, day by day. When we first came to this country, my Father urged me... 'don't be afraid to look for people who can help you.' Here at Catholic Charities, I looked and I found my people!"

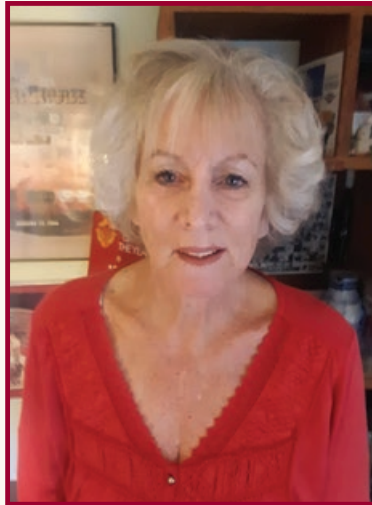
Olivia continues to pursue new career opportunities and her daughter is furthering her education by enrolling in college courses. The staff at CCLA Glendale Center are proud to have had the opportunity to be a part of this process, and cannot wait to see what else this incredible family accomplishes. They will continue to walk with them hand-in-hand to see them through to the next chapter in their lives. ❀

A Good Idea Can Have Great Consequences.

Victoria McGowan has supported Moorpark Pantry Plus for more than 25 years, in different ways ranging from raising funds, to painting and furnishing the original pantry trailer, to gathering beautiful Christmas dresses for the little girls of client families.

During the past two years, she has conducted a Neighborhood Food Drive from her home to help the pantry overcome shortages of their most popular items. She also coordinated several Food Drives at Vons market.

When the coronavirus shutdown started, Victoria wanted to find a way to help the pantry while remaining home. As word of the \$1,200 stimulus checks began to circulate, it occurred to Victoria that people might be willing to donate some of their check to the pantry. A 1% gift would cost only \$12 and would still leave the donor with \$ 1,188.



Victoria McGowan's great idea brought many benefits.

She posted her idea as a 1% challenge on her Facebook page and suggested that people mail \$12 checks to the pantry. As more and more people responded, many asked if they could use Venmo to donate. Another Moorpark resident, Lyn Garrett, offered to let them use her account, which she had originally set up as a Charity account anyway.

Victoria also posted the 1% Challenge on the Moms of Moorpark Facebook, Next Door and a couple other social media sites. Initially, she was hoping to get \$1,000, but after a month, it had produced

\$15,000, which will be used for healthy and delicious foods for the pantry clients. The challenge also raised awareness in the community that there is a wonderful organization in Moorpark which helps families in need and that the pantry can always use donations. ❀



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Address Service Requested



Catholic Charities' food pantries, with proper safety measures in place, continue to provide access to nutritious food for at risk populations experiencing high levels of hunger due to COVID-19.



Please, like us on the CCLA Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/Catholic.Charities.LA>