



## Msgr. Cox Named President of Catholic Charities of California

Msgr. Gregory Cox, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Los Angeles since 1993, is the new President of the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities of California, replacing Kenneth Sawa, currently the CEO and Executive Vice President of Catholic Charities of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.

Catholic Charities of California is a statewide, faith-based network of 12 Catholic Charities' organizations and provides leadership, resources, and collaborative opportunities with the aim to expand professional delivery of human services to people of all cultures and beliefs throughout the state.

Each year, this network of 12 agencies, with offices in 30 California locations, provides professional human services to people in 54 of the 58 counties in California. Services include food and clothing for struggling families, benefit outreach and enrollment for households eligible for Medi-Cal and CalFresh, and legal assistance to immigrants, as well as wraparound services to address the root causes of poverty and suffering. ❀

## AYE Partners with Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to Provide Youth Support Services



*AYE Staff working on Conrad N. Hilton Foundation grant are, standing: Elizabeth Gomez, Program Coordinator; Melissa Torres, Instructor; and Domingo Najera, Lead Instructor. Seated: Maricela Herrera, Program Supervisor; Manny Cerda, Director; and Sr. Annuncia Thu Mai, Wellness Coordinator*

In 2022, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation gave a three-year grant to Catholic Charities of Los Angeles for Archdiocesan Youth Employment Services (AYE) to collaborate with Catholic Sisters in providing 325 disadvantaged youth with career development and supportive services, as well as to measure the impact.

Recently, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation visited AYE's South LA America's Job Centers of California/YouthSource Center, at which Manuel Cerda, AYE Program Director, gave a PowerPoint presentation detailing work accomplished from AYE's partnership with the foundation.

Through this grant, 154 clients have been directly serviced in the past year: 25 clients have participated in counseling, tutoring, and supportive services with the Lovers of the Holy Cross; 29 clients attended college preparatory, mentorship, counseling, and college access workshops with the Sisters of

St. Joseph Carondelet; and 101 clients—all of whom are parolees who entered prison between ages 16 and 24—were given one-on-one job coaching, access to mental health services, and supportive services with the Daughters of Mary and Joseph.

Since 1965, AYE has provided countless young Los Angeles County residents with opportunities to gain valuable job skills and experience that will help them lead successful careers and lives. A program of Catholic Charities since 2001, AYE's robust network of community partners has only grown—especially with the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's three-year, three-million dollar grant, which has helped AYE clients achieve workforce success.

Catholic Charities' AYE thanks the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation for their continued partnership in helping to provide much needed services to clients seeking success in the workforce. ❀

### In This Issue...

- Ventura County Provides Older Adult Services . . . . . page 2
- Resource Fair Welcomes Unaccompanied Minors . . . . . page 3
- Transitional Living Program Celebrates Graduates . . . . . page 3
- Renovation Enhances Brownson House Center . . . . . page 3
- Good Shepherd Shelter Rebuilds and Heals . . . . . page 4

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

When Theodore Roosevelt was governor of New York, he learned of something that his father, Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., did that changed the life of a homeless boy in New York City.

Roosevelt was in Portland, Oregon, where western governors were meeting. There was a special dinner in honor of him at which the governor of Alaska, Governor Brady, greeted Roosevelt and shared that his father, Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., picked him up from the streets in New York, a homeless orphan, and sent him to live with western family, paying for Brady's transportation and early care.

Years passed, and Brady was able to repay the money that had been given by Roosevelt, Sr. for Brady's start in life. But Brady could never repay the senior Roosevelt for what he did for him. It was through that early care with such a wonderful foster mother and father that Brady gradually rose in the world, to the point that he could greet the senior Roosevelt's son as a fellow governor.

Governor Roosevelt later went to the lodging house for news boys in New York to relate the inspiring story to show that America presents enough opportunities that—combined with personal effort and an occasional helping hand—a homeless boy on the streets of New York could get to a governor's mansion.

Theodore Roosevelt's father reached out to assist a homeless boy, not knowing the tremendous impact his help would have on the boy's life.

We all have opportunities to impact the homeless persons in our lives. By raising our children with an education, faith and a loving home, we can prevent them from ending up on the streets. By supporting organizations like Catholic Charities, we can move people from homelessness to self-sufficiency. Or we may choose to be foster parents in order to guide young people through difficult times in their lives.

America is known as a rich, powerful nation; but, thanks to people like Theodore Roosevelt's father and others like him, America also is known as one of the most generous nations in the world. May we follow those who preceded us with the same spirit of empathy and generosity to the poor and vulnerable. ❖

## Ventura County Provides Older Adult Services

An unexpected car accident can have lasting effects on a person's physical and mental health, financial stability, and emotional well-being. This was certainly the case 16 years ago when Manuel Salvador Maldonado was in a vehicular crash that left him with long-term mobility issues. As a result of the accident, Manuel was forced to use a wheel chair and depended heavily on his wife, Alicia, to push him around from location to location.

In 2022, Manuel and his wife relocated to Ventura County where he met OASIS Client Resource Coordinator, Rafael Morales, whose office is located at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Fillmore, CA. Rafael noticed that Alicia would faithfully push her husband to Sunday Mass in the wheelchair from their residence approximately two miles away. He encouraged Manuel to become an OASIS client and, on



*Rafael Morales, on the left, and OASIS client Manuel Salvador Maldonado, on the right, reflect on Manuel's success with his power chair.*

March 20, 2023, through the OASIS Program, Rafael was able to find Manuel a used power chair that has now given Manuel a tremendous amount of freedom, no longer dependent on his wife.

Manuel has since put hundreds of miles on the power chair as he uses it to get to the Senior Center in Fillmore for lunch and to hop on and off public transportation to and from the city of Ventura. In fact, he uses the chair so much that Rafael recently assisted Manuel in replacing all four wheels and several batteries to keep it in working condition.

Manuel's story is just one example of how the OASIS team in Ventura County works tirelessly to provide for the basic needs of seniors in the community, and most importantly, give them their independence! ❖



## Esperanza Hosts Welcome Fair for Unaccompanied Children and Their Families

Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project recently hosted its second Welcome Fair for Unaccompanied Children and their families at Los Angeles City College. With over 40 organizations present, the resource fair welcomed over 400 immigrant youth and their families to Los Angeles County.

Attendees enjoyed food, art activities, entertainment, and more. On-site services included legal orientations for custodians of unaccompanied children, legal screenings, change of address assistance, Medi-Cal enrollments and food resources. Three unaccompanied minor clients of Esperanza's Opportunities for Youth program shared stories of their experiences adapting to Los Angeles and the services they have received from Esperanza and other agencies that have helped support their adjustment to their new life.

The Welcome Fair event was a true collaboration of multiple partners who share a desire to make Los Angeles a welcoming community for immigrants. Partners which supported the planning of the event included the Los Angeles County's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Los Angeles Mayor's Office, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, CARECEN, Program for Torture Victims of Los Angeles, and Casey Family Programs. ❖



*Courtney Mosley, Esperanza's Opportunities for Youth Program Manager, Jack Le Grone, CCLA staff, and Kimberley Plotnik, Esperanza Program Director, enjoy the Welcome Fair.*

## Transitional Living Program Celebrates College Graduates

Jobe proudly announces four college graduates for the Class of 2024: Kamau, Erick, Emmanuel, and Clara.

Kamau is a former resident who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Africana Studies in 2022, during his time at Jobe. He just graduated with a Master of Arts in Diverse Community Development Leadership.

Erick graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation Management. He has applied for graduate school to pursue a Master of Arts in Diverse Community Development Leadership.

Emmanuel graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology.

Clara graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Arts in Child Development. She has applied for graduate school to pursue a Master of Arts in Student Affairs.

Graduating from college is a remarkable accomplishment that reflects years of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. With Jobe providing stable housing and a plethora of services, the youth are able to reach their potential and become pillars of the community.

Graduating from college also gives hope to the other youth at Jobe, as well as to those in the community, that they, too, can have successful futures. ❖



*Celebrating the college graduations are, left to right: Associate Program Director Teshee; former resident Kamau; resident Erick; resident Emmanuel; Counselor Virna; and resident Clara.*

## Brownson House Community Center Renovation

Brownson House Community Center has been providing emergency services in the Boyle Heights and surrounding areas for over 100 years. Thanks to the wonderful generosity of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the center underwent a renovation in the spring of 2023.

From July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, Brownson House Community Center served nearly 3,000 unduplicated clients with over 19,000 services that include emergency food, utility and rental assistance, CalFresh



*The renovation included a full makeover of the pantry area to allow for improvement in the daily emergency food distribution.*

and MediCal enrollment services, and CalFresh Healthy Living nutrition workshops. In addition, the center runs a monthly diaper distribution program.

The renovation of the community center allows the San Gabriel Region the opportunity to add services and programs to further provide help and create hope in the San Gabriel Valley. New programs to come in 2025 are a thrift store and an OASIS program for seniors, announced Xochitl Zendejas, San Gabriel Regional Director. ❖

# Good Shepherd Shelter Family Reaches for Tomorrow

One of the most common impacts domestic violence has on victims is the complete destruction of one's self-esteem and self-confidence. Abusers break their victims down to maintain power and control. When "Allison" arrived at Good Shepherd Shelter (GSS) nine months ago, her self-esteem was completely shattered. She often shared in group sessions that she did not believe that she would be able to survive and provide for her two children without returning to the relationship. She struggled with depression and anxiety but worked closely with the GSS mental health department to rebuild her self-confidence and to heal from the trauma she endured for so long.

After graduating from the classes in the GSS Adult Learning



*A family, healed from their trauma, now head toward Tomorrowland.*

Center, Allison enrolled in a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program. She had worked in the medical field briefly before fleeing from her abuser and felt drawn to return to that field. Her self-confidence still wavered from time to time as the exams to gain her certification loomed. But she focused on the tools she learned at GSS to believe in herself, studied for the exams, and passed with flying colors.

Upon receiving her certification, she fielded four job offers. Today, she is employed full-time and actively working with PATH (People Assisting the Homeless) to secure affordable housing before the family completes the GSS program this summer. She shared her certificate with the staff with a huge smile. She said, "I didn't think I could do it, but I did! Our future looks very bright, and I am so happy! I really did it!" ❖



**Catholic Charities**

of Los Angeles, Inc.

1531 James M. Wood Blvd.

Post Office Box 15095

Los Angeles, CA 90015-0095

[www.CatholicCharitiesLA.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesLA.org)

*Address Service Requested*



*At Catholic Charities of Los Angeles' food pantries, clients are provided with nutritious and culturally-sensitive meals, bags of groceries, and sack lunches free of charge.*



Please, like us on the CCLA Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Catholic.Charities.LA>