

KNOWING WHO YOU ARE

Outside of Addiction

Robert Brooks recently celebrated six months of addiction recovery and is determined to make this change lifelong. He credits his experience at Catholic Charities Partners in Recovery program for helping him take this immeasurable step.

OPENING UP

“Coming to Partners in Recovery was the best decision I ever made,” Robert says. He attends counseling groups every day and wants to participate. “Let the help, help” is a phrase Robert repeats to himself when the compassionate staff encourages him to open up and express his concerns.

Partners in Recovery, “the help”, supports men and women who have a mental health diagnosis and a co-occurring substance abuse disorder build their skills and resources through recovery planning, group therapy, and pre-vocational services. This comprehensive approach promotes healthy living.

UNDERSTANDING THE “WHY”

Part of Robert’s journey, prior to coming to Catholic Charities, involved time spent in jail. “As soon as I was released, I would start using again,” shared Robert. “It never dawned on me to ask why I was using or why I kept getting incarcerated, because I had normalized both.”

Catholic Charities “gave me a safe place to share my experiences and helped me understand and respond to the causes of addiction.” In addition to helping him maintain his recovery from addiction, the program also helped him manage symptoms related to his PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder).

“We help people develop hope and encourage them to get to know who they really are,” says Brittani Gaskins Roberson, LSW, the Program Supervisor of Partners in



▲ Robert Brooks sharing his recovery journey with staff at Catholic Charities Partners in Recovery.

Recovery. “Robert bravely opening up, and sharing his abuse experiences and subsequent incarcerations, has allowed other men to feel safe doing so.”

He inspired the creation of a new men’s trauma support group at Catholic Charities and has written a book about his journey. Robert plans on returning to college to pursue a counseling degree.

FOR INFORMATION about Catholic Charities Partners in Recovery program, call 800-360-7711.



A Message From the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Watching the devastation left behind by hurricanes this fall I found myself comforted by the words of an elderly veteran whom Catholic Charities had rescued from his flooded apartment following Superstorm Sandy. I was amazed by his resilience and positive outlook, even after losing his home and most of his personal belongings. "The storm was horrible and I was afraid for my life," he started. "But before I had time to panic, people came to my rescue. It felt like the storm brought all the angels out."

Our efforts after Superstorm Sandy provided us with invaluable insight, and we have fostered those partnerships throughout the years in order to continue responding to disasters with the highest caliber of support. Since the recent hurricanes we've collaborated with national and state organizations in order to help those in Texas and Florida.

Within these pages, you'll see firsthand the resiliency of a mother and her young children as they transform

into survivors; you'll read about a determined man, who has taken the steps to overcome addiction; and you'll hear from a young girl that was able to build effective coping skills while navigating through a crisis. Time after time, we move forward in the face of devastation — "the storms of life", demonstrating the courage and strength of the human spirit.

In this season of giving thanks, let me express my heartfelt appreciation to you, our donors, who affect positive change in the lives of so many. You make it possible for our staff and volunteers to continue providing hope for over 100,000 individuals each year, regardless of religious affiliation.

I wish you and your loved ones a blessed and beautiful Thanksgiving.

Warm regards,

Marlene Laó-Collins,
Executive Director



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Special thanks to our donors - together, you help us write the enclosed stories.

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton, inspired by our Catholic faith and shared values, restores dignity and independence to individuals and families, especially the poor and vulnerable; through service, advocacy and community building.

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Looking For a Volunteer Opportunity Where You Can Make an Impact?

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton is looking for volunteers on our Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean County Boards. Board members learn about the courage and resilience of people who come to Catholic Charities as a result of trauma and adversity, and explore ideas for ways to support the programs in their county. Each of the County Boards meets five times a year.

If interested, please contact Ann-Marie Casperite, Community Affairs Manager, at 609-394-5181 ext. 1149, or ACasperite@cctrenton.org.

Together, we can change lives!

HEADING HOME

One Step at a Time

When housing costs rise, families cannot put aside enough money for child care, health care, transportation, savings and other essentials. For some, balancing the costs becomes an impossible task. They find themselves feeling dejected and with nowhere safe to stay. Fortunately, for the homeless families in Monmouth County, there is the Catholic Charities Linkages program.

"I was an emotional wreck with no job, no money, and no place to live," says Mary Ann. "I felt like I couldn't take care of my family." Mary Ann went to the Monmouth County Division of Social Services who referred her to the Linkages program.



KEY TO SUCCESS

"What Catholic Charities gave us first was safety," says Mary Ann. "I was given a key to a door that locked and the staff helped me understand that I now had a support system."

Staff met with Mary Ann and her family as they adapted to the new residential environment. Together, they developed a plan to address the family's vocational, medical, and essential needs. Mary Ann began attending counseling sessions, learned about money management, and was offered assistance in applying for eligible benefits.

"The Catholic Charities staff were like training wheels on my life and as I got better at balancing on my own, they slowly pulled back to let me manage on my own," says Mary Ann.

MANAGING ON HER OWN

Mary Ann went through the Work Force New Jersey Community Work Experience program and was hired under a grant to work for the county.

"I'm on my way to moving into my own apartment and I no longer fear that I'm going to fail in some way," says Mary Ann. "I'm going to be okay."

FOR INFORMATION about Catholic Charities Linkages program, contact Stacey DePoe at 732-922-0400 x2702.

Monmouth County Board Clam Bake

The Monmouth County Board of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton hosted a Clam Bake on September 30th to raise funds that will allow Catholic Charities to provide vital services to hundreds of individuals and families throughout Monmouth County. The dinner was held at the Belmar Fishing Club and was attended by over 150 guests.



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS:

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SO MANY ANGELS SUPPORT OUR WORK

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton's 28th Annual Guardian Angel Dinner Dance (GADD) was a heavenly hit! This elegant affair — held at the Princeton Regency Hyatt on September 23rd — raised nearly \$300,000.

Tom and Judi Keefe, Co-chairs for the 28th Annual GADD commented, "We accepted the opportunity to co-chair because Catholic Charities is a remarkable organization that provides assistance to 100,000 people each year, regardless of religious affiliation. Also 90 cents of every dollar goes directly to programs and services. We encourage other people to become involved with Catholic Charities – it's a very rewarding volunteer experience knowing that we significantly impact the lives of those in need."

The Guardian Angel Dinner Dance is an annual celebration of the men, women, and community partners who have positively impacted Catholic Charities' abilities to meet the needs of individuals and families in the communities we serve.



"It is the dedication of our honorees, sponsors, and supporters that makes what we do possible. The Guardian Angel Dinner Dance is not only a celebration of these generous individuals—it is a testament to their devotion to our mission of promoting recovery, strengthening families, and reducing poverty," said Marlene Laó-Collins, Executive Director of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton.

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Providence House Domestic Violence Services
Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer, P.A.

ARCHANGELS

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Central Jersey Rifle and Pistol Club
Co-Cathedral of St. Robert Bellarmine
Georgian Court University
Daniel and Janice Haggerty
Investors Bank
J. Knipper and Company, Inc.

Phoenix Group
St. Catharine-St. Margaret Parish,
Spring Lake
Stark & Stark
John and Nancy Tesoro
Teton Advisors
David Toner

GUARDIAN ANGELS

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Moorestown

Hill Wallack
Parker McCay
Robert and Karen Tanzola

ANGELS

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NJ Natural Gas
Occupational Safety Services, Inc.
OceanFirst Bank-Red Bank
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TD Bank



▲ (from left to right) Mary Ann Saville, Light of Hope Award for Burlington County; Daniel Haggerty, Light of Hope Award for Mercer County; Mary Lou Oliva, Light of Hope Award for Monmouth County; Most Rev. David M. O'Connell; John Tesoro, Light of Hope Award for Ocean County; Lauren Cieloscik, Client Achievement Award; Stan Koreyva representing Amboy Bank, Corporate Citizen of the Year Award; Sister Rosemary Jeffries, Richard J. Hughes, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton Humanitarian Award.

A Safe Place to **LEARN AND HEAL**

Sometimes the hardest step to take is the very first one. For survivors of domestic violence, Catholic Charities Providence House can be there every step of the way.

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Lena came to Providence House with her children, ready to put the physical and emotional abuse she'd faced behind her. Her strength and determination to live violence-free with her children led her to the safe house.

Initially reluctant to seek help, Lena eventually chose to enroll her children in the PALS program (Peace: A Learned Solution). Lena says Providence House helped her children understand that the abuse was not their fault, and how this knowledge has helped her children — and her family as a whole — begin to heal.

STRENGTH TO DIG DEEP

Lena says that Providence House and the women she met in counseling helped her find a way to identify and talk about the abuse she faced. Now, she says, she has found the strength to dig deep and rescue the woman she



was before the abuse began. Of her recovery, Lena said, "Every day brings a new opportunity. I love my life and I am grateful to Providence House for opening the doors to a new beginning. I am a Survivor."

Catholic Charities Providence House continues to provide survivors of domestic violence with a safe place to learn, to heal, and to begin the journey from victim to survivor — one step at a time.

FOR INFORMATION about Catholic Charities Providence House, call 800-360-7711.

A SWEET SUCCESS

Nearly 500 guests enjoyed a sampling of gourmet offerings from dozens of local restaurants at the 23rd Annual Taste of Burlington County. The evening raised nearly \$50,000 for Catholic Charities Providence House Domestic Violence Services.

"I continue to be in awe of the support we receive from our community partners and the positive energy our guests bring to our vision for peace," said Mary Pettrow, Associate Director of Providence House.

Long time Taste volunteer and donor, Sallie Degler, shared: "While speaking with a store manager about being a donor for the Taste, an employee approached and asked 'Did I hear you say you are from Providence House?' I explained that I was a volunteer, to which she responded, 'I love Providence House... they saved my life!'"

The annual event aims to support the counseling, advocacy, sheltering, and specialized children's services that Providence House provides at no cost to those in need. If you missed out on this year's Taste, there's always next year!



FOR INFORMATION about the event, sponsorship or gift donation, contact Treina Fletcher, Community Affairs Coordinator at 856-824-0599 x8622.

GIVING BACK AT TAX TIME

Tax season can take an emotional toll on anyone. But for those who have experienced a setback — such as loss of employment, or injury or illness that reduced household income — it can become a terrifying prospect. Thankfully, Community Services in Burlington County has a dedicated group of volunteer tax prep counselors who are ready to help.

MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

“I enjoy working with numbers and find it rewarding to have gotten to know the families whose taxes I’ve helped prepare over the last 13 years,” said Ann Cammus, a retired state accounting analyst. “It’s much easier to do taxes once you’ve done them for the same family year after year. I also get to know more about them than most people do and have been able to help them get other needs met through Community Services.”

Last year, the volunteers prepared nearly 300 tax returns, including Tim’s. Tim became unemployed after his company was downsized, and health issues have kept him from returning to work. He has been coming to Catholic Charities Community Services since 2012, and had this to say about working with the volunteers: “Prior to 2012 I had an accountant that prepared my taxes. But



◀ Two of our tax volunteers, Margaret and Joe.

Catholic Charities and their volunteers have been such a big help. I really appreciate what they’ve done for me.”

FEELING GREAT THIS TAX SEASON

As tax season approaches, this devoted group of volunteers is bound to be busy. But they’re up to the challenge! “It gives me such a great feeling to provide tax services for those who cannot afford to pay to have them done. It’s my way of giving back,” said Ann.

FOR INFORMATION about becoming a volunteer tax preparer contact Nancy Tompkins, Director of Development and Marketing, at 609-394-5181 x1161 or at ntompkins@cctrenton.org.

WALKERS RAISE HOPE AND SUPPORT



Catholic Charities’ Fourth Annual Walk of Hope took place on September 30th at Mercer County Park, where supporters, friends, and family gathered to participate in the event. The weather was lovely and contributed to the success of the event! The walk raised close to \$19,000 to help Catholic Charities continue its mission of reducing poverty, promoting recovery, and strengthening families.



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS:

The Bank of Princeton
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Denis and Elaine Michel
Creative Signcrafters

FOR INFORMATION about the event, contact Jenn Leip, Development and Marketing Manager, 609-394-5181 x1137.

Navigating a Crisis AND BUILDING COPING SKILLS

Deeply affected by the suicide of a school friend, 15-year-old Natalie experienced overwhelming sadness and told her guidance counselor that she felt “out of control.” She was referred to Catholic Charities Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) who sent a trauma specialist out to establish in-home counseling with Natalie. Mercer County MRSS is currently the first and only program in the state to have a Trauma Specialist position created to identify and work with youth with varying stages of trauma. The program provides assistance to youth and families in crisis.

GAINING PERSPECTIVE AND MOMENTUM

“Using a trauma-informed lens allows young people to process their trauma in a trusted therapeutic relationship and safe setting,” said Melissa, Trauma Specialist at MRSS. Melissa met weekly with Natalie and discussed her feelings, taught her coping skills and ways to manage her feelings of depression.

“This was Natalie’s first experience with therapy so she was nervous initially but we quickly developed a good rapport and she was able to share many of the things that had been weighing on her mind,” said Melissa. Natalie reported that “I was able to finally talk about things I had never verbalized before and learned a lot about myself in the process.”



A POSITIVE COMBINATION

By the end of the eight week stabilization period, Natalie was feeling better and more able to manage her emotions. Subsequently, MRSS referred Natalie to a therapist in her community and she was able to make a smooth transition due to the positive work she had begun with Melissa.

FOR INFORMATION about Catholic Charities Mobile Response and Stabilization Services contact PerformCare at 877-652-7624.

Year End Giving Can Help You... and Catholic Charities

At the end of the year it is a good time to ask yourself if you have fulfilled your stewardship commitments for the year – or if you can go beyond what you thought possible.

Below are tax advantages for giving before year end. All gifts to Catholic Charities are tax deductible.

- If you itemize deductions on your tax return, cash gifts or gifts of appreciated stock may benefit your tax return.
- Credit card gifts may be made on-line.
- If you are 70 ½ or older, it may be to your advantage to send an IRA Charitable Gift Rollover.

No matter the size, it comes from deep within your heart — you make this donation out of love to help a neighbor in your community. We need your help to make sure those in need are served and that we begin the New Year on a solid financial foundation.

On behalf of all we serve, may you and those close to you receive many blessings in the New Year!



To discuss year end giving, please contact Nancy Tompkins, Director of Development and Marketing, 609-394-5181 x1161 or ntompkins@cctrenton.org.

If you’ve included Catholic Charities in your will, please let us know so we can thank you today.



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Toy Drive

Wish List

(newborn to 12 yrs of age)

- ☒ Disney Character Dolls
- ☒ Sports Items
- ☒ LEGO®
- ☒ Sesame Street Elmo *(anything)*
- ☒ Nick Jr Paw Patrol *(anything)*
- ☒ Play Appliances
- ☒ Trucks, Cars and Trains
- ☒ Learning Toys
- ☒ My Little Pony Items
- ☒ Winter Hats, Scarves and Gloves
- ☒ **Gift cards are always accepted**



This Christmas Season help bring smiles to the children of Catholic Charities Community Services!

Bring **new, unwrapped** gifts from December 11 through December 15, 2017 to the drop-off locations below.

BURLINGTON COUNTY

801 Burlington Avenue, Delanco, NJ 08075
856-764-6945
Monday to Friday: 9 AM to 4 PM

MERCER COUNTY

132 N Warren Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
609-394-8847
Monday to Friday: 9 AM to 4 PM

OCEAN COUNTY

200 Monmouth Avenue, Lakewood, NJ 08701
732-363-5322 x3225
Monday to Friday: 9 AM to 4 PM