

## Program & Services

- \* Emergency Assistance
- \* Food Pantry
- \* Women Children Infants (WIC)
- \* Prevention Education
- \* Supervised Visitation
- \* Parent Education
- \* Parent Mentoring
- \* Kinship Caregiving
- \* Caregiver Support
- \* AIDS Services
- \* Disabilities Services

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### MOVING PEOPLE FORWARD

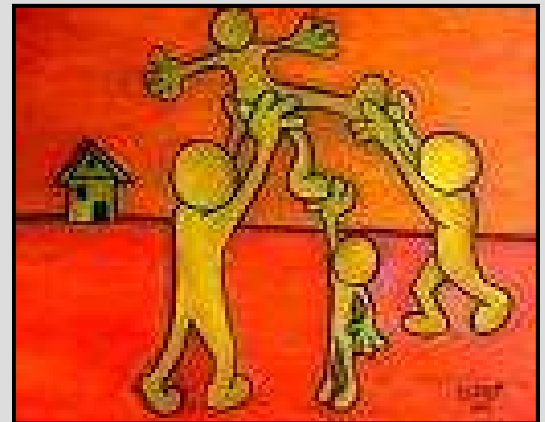
Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties relies heavily on donations to support our Emergency Assistance Program. This Program offers a wide variety of services, two of which are food pantry services and financial assistance. With the ongoing economic crisis being played out across the nation and state, Columbia and Greene Counties have been particularly hard hit. Requests to our Agency for emergency food and financial assistance have increased over the course of the last year, particularly from working families and senior citizens. Following are some of their stories...

*\*Identifying information has been changed to respect the privacy and rights of the clients.*

**Betty** Faced with the responsibility of caring for her two grandchildren, Betty is struggling with numerous family issues. Financial hardships made it impossible for her to overcome many barriers and were preventing her from focusing on the emotional and educational needs of her grandchildren. Betty and her family live in a rural part of Greene County, and the lack of transportation was a cause for many problems. Betty was unable to get her son to the preschool bus pick-up site so he could not attend school; she was unable to get to the grocery store, children's appointments, doctor's appointments, etc. Betty wants to work, attend church, and seek support in her community, but without transportation this was all out of her reach. She is receiving services from another Agency program, so an inter-agency referral was made to the Emergency Assistance Program to help Betty "get over the hump." Catholic Charities was able to assist Betty with motor vehicle fees for her vehicle's title, license renewal and registration costs. Additional financial help was provided for her to buy groceries, put fuel in her vehicle and wash her laundry. This monetary support was small in comparison to the benefits to Betty and her family's quality of life. Betty broke down and cried, overwhelmed with emotion, so thankful and grateful for the help... [Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties] "is a gift from God."

**Mary** Mary, a forty-something single woman with multiple disabilities, was still grieving the loss of her elderly mother when her mother's house, now hers, began to literally fall down around her. Receiving minimal assistance from Department of Social Services to supple-

ment her disability income, she was barely able to make ends meet on a daily basis. As one would expect, things only got worse. Mary's water bill, tax bill and several other bills arrived all within days of each other. Begging and borrowing from friends and family, Mary was able to secure funds to satisfy most of her debts. Feeling a small sense of relief she proceeded with the final steps of making arrangements for energy efficient renovations to begin on her newly inherited house.



This construction work was to be paid for through a grant which she worked long and hard at applying for and completing many steps to gain approval. Only a few days prior to the renovations start date, Mary learned that she needed to supply a large dumpster for the construction crew to dispose of the debris from preparatory demolition. Distraught, hopeless, and emotionally exhausted, Mary learned about Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties' Emergency Assistance through a friend. (cont. on page 2)

## FOCUSING ON QUALITY



The Facilitated Supervised Visitation Program has offered families unique opportunities and the ability to have visits monitored by professionals whose strengths include a strong foundation in child development, a wealth of suggestions related to age appropriate activities, and incorporating floor activities/strength building for newborns. Contracted with Columbia and Greene County Departments of Social Services, Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties provides supervised visitation for families whose children are in care; either foster care or living in another family's residence with the goal of reunification of the family. Consistent and regular visits help reduce the traumatic effects of separation for children from their parent(s) and supports permanency outcomes. Additionally, visits enhance the parent child relationship and assists in building trust, communication, and strengthening child developmental skills. Catholic Charities is a member of the Supervised Visitation Network. Our mission is to promote safe and healthy interactions between children and parents. We provide a neutral, nonjudgmental environment for families to spend time together. Our visitation rooms offer age appropriate games and activities and we encourage parents to plan their own meaningful activities that their children enjoy doing. Parents are welcome to bring snacks for their children during visits.

Throughout the year, several families have benefited from our flexibility in offering double visits, for families to have increased time together. Other families benefited from our ability to monitor visits in the home environment. On a few occasions, after visits, parents have verbalized concern of financial struggles and they have been connected to the food pantry for an emergency supply of food. During the holidays, the supervised visitation program provided a free, toy give away to enrolled parents who were struggling in this tough economic time. One Saturday morning in December, several parents chose from gently used donated stuffed animals, dolls, action figures, guitars, and matchbox cars to find age appropriate toys for their children to give during their next visit. (continued last page)

## MOVING PEOPLE FORWARD (CONTINUED)

Mary immediately called and made an appointment to speak with a staff person to apply for assistance. With more than enough paperwork in hand, Mary applied and received approval for assistance the very next day. The Catholic Charities' staff member spent a couple hours with Mary, listening to her story, helping her organize some of her paperwork, and taking the time to work out all of the details before Mary left the office that same day. Mary clearly was relieved and grateful for the help, and she stated with a smile that despite her disabilities, she was leaving the Agency with a 'spring in her step.'

**Jack** A single dad of two teenage daughters, Jack had been struggling with unemployment and under-employment for quite some time. Although the income would be minimum wage, he was glad to accept a job delivering newspapers which was at least a consistent, regular schedule. Jack came to Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties with great concern regarding several financial issues. First and foremost, his car insurance was due the day before he was to begin work. A vehicle to deliver newspapers is a "must" and Jack started to panic because he knew that he would not receive a paycheck for a couple of weeks. Thankfully, his insurance payment installment was a relatively small sum and the Agency was easily able to approve payment. While listening to Jack's financial woes, it was also discovered that he had found an apartment to rent at nearly half the cost of his current apartment, however, he did not have the first month's rent *and* security to change his residence and thereby lower his monthly expenses to more manageable levels. Further review of

Jack's situation and the long term benefits for him and his family by helping him with housing costs, it was decided that Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties would approve assistance beyond our maximum allowance and provide further financial support for Jack to secure this new, cheaper place of residence. Jack found it hard to believe that such help would be offered to him and his family, and he couldn't thank Catholic Charities enough for helping him get back, and *stay* on his feet.



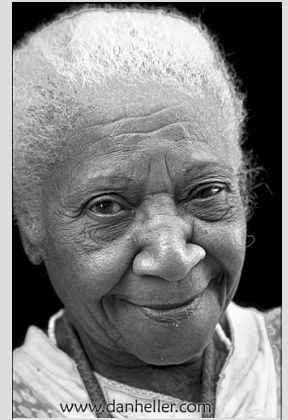
**Stewart** The staff person answering the phones at Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties said she could hear the panic in Stewart's voice when he called for information about where he could get help to pay for a fuel pump for his car so that his wife could get to work. He stated that it had been several days and his wife, who was lucky enough to have gotten a job, was in jeopardy of losing it due to no transportation. He and his wife had both lost their jobs nearly a year ago and along with their 3 children, had been living on unemployment and their savings until such funds recently ran out. Stewart provided the necessary paperwork and had researched the costs and details of purchasing this auto part at NAPA. He added that he could easily do the mechanical work on the vehicle, but just needed the help in buying the part. (cont. next page)

### MOVING PEOPLE FORWARD (CONTINUED)

Approval for a check to NAPA in the exact amount was given and the check was cut. Subsequently there was a terrible snow storm and Stewart, panicked once again, called and said he couldn't get to the Agency before closing to pick up the check. Catholic Charities' staff pulled together, called NAPA and arranged for a staff member to drop the check off to NAPA on her way home. They called Stewart then to let him know that he could go directly to NAPA and pick up the part later that evening. Stewart expressed his gratitude and said he couldn't believe that an Agency and staff members could be so generous, kind and thoughtful.

**Edith** Edith is a senior citizen who couldn't afford to live solely on her retirement income. She took a part time job to boost her financial security, but not before some of her expenses got away from her and she was no longer able to keep her head above water. Edith came in to meet with a staff member and talked about her situation. Staff spent a lot of time with Edith, listening and helping her organize and prioritize her bills, paperwork and expenses. Edith

was visibly overwhelmed and hopeless, feeling that the situation was far too big for her to resolve. Based on her available budget and what some of Edith's priorities were, the staff person was able to explain and organize her paperwork into an understandable and comprehensive manner for Edith. A clear list of income and outgoing expenses was prepared for Edith's reference each month. Edith was clearly more calm and said she was feeling less stressed. Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties was able to provide her with some financial support to help her overcome her initial financial distress and free up some of her money to be applied to additional bills. Edith has called several times since to thank the Agency and staff, and to tell us we are in her prayers.



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**Special Series:** Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties is one of fourteen Catholic Charities agencies within the Diocese of Albany. There are a number of other valuable services offered to our residents through the other agencies therefore we asked them to share some information with our communities in our agency newsletter.

### DISABILITIES SERVICE COORDINATION THROUGH CATHOLIC CHARITIES DISABILITIES

Catholic Charities Disabilities Services Has A Dedicated Team Of Service Coordinators Who Can Assist You In Determining What Services You May Be Eligible For And How To Access Those Services. We Use A Person Centered Approach To Develop Supports And Services Based On Your Wishes And Needs.

**Your Service Coordinator Can Help You With:**

- \* Advocacy
- \* Support
- \* Linkage And Referral Of Services
- \* Assistance With Benefits: SSI- Medicaid- Food Stamps
- \* Family Support Services
- \* Parent Support Group
- \* Respite
- \* Assisting With The Guardianship Process
- \* Adaptive Equipment
- \* Obtaining Necessary Supports And Services To Help You And Your Loved One, Lead The Life You Choose!

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SERVICE COORDINATION, CALL US AT 783-1111 EXT 1225.**

### ROUND UP YOUR RESUME OR COLLEGE APPLICATION

There are many benefits to joining a community organization as a volunteer. Volunteering can help provide an opportunity to gain work experience in a future field of study or to engage with your community, builds skills, develops well rounded student, and can fill a gap on a resume if unemployed.

We are currently looking for volunteers to assist with light maintenance, receptionist duties and to aid in the Food Pantry. Other opportunities exist for potential educators and child care professionals, social workers, those in human service fields of study. **Contact the Agency at (518) 828-8660 for more details.**

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Phone: 518-828-8660  
Fax: 518-828-4016

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CATSKILL, NY 12414  
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Fax: 518-943-9054



An affiliate of United Way

## FOCUSING ON QUALITY (CONTINUED)

Another component to the program is the availability of the Family Services Director to provide counseling intervention to families who present with roadblocks in communication during visits. One family whose mother frequently used negative talk and informed the children what they were doing wrong rather than right, learned to change her approach during visits and highlights her children's positive behaviors which has led to improved relationships and communication. Another family has learned how to listen to one another rather than talk over each other. A few parents have also benefited from the parenting classes offered by Catholic Charities. These parents have displayed increased skills in the area of appropriate discipline (i.e. using time outs) and age appropriate discussions throughout visits.

In connection with supervised visitation, we offer one on one parent mentoring sessions to strengthen parenting

skills in biweekly, hour long meetings with a monitor. Mentoring goals are connected with observations of parent child interactions made by the monitor during supervised visitation. Parents may also choose goals from a variety of topics such as healthy snacks, involvement in their child's education, and activity planning.

Each goal and interaction with the families is tailored to fit the children's' emotional, mental, and physical needs while empowering the parents.



## REDUCE YOUR 2011 TAXES WHILE HELPING OTHERS

Tax season is a great reminder of the financial benefits of donating to Catholic Charities. Donating to help our Agency and staff do the work of helping others also leads to great personal satisfaction.

You may mail your contribution by check or money order to:

**Catholic Charities of Columbia & Greene Counties**

431 East Allen Street, Hudson, NY, 12534

Or go to <http://www.ccrda.org/donate.htm> to contribute by credit card either by a one-time donation or by setting up a recurring donation monthly, quarterly or annually. Identify Columbia/Greene in the comment line to direct your donation to our agency.

Your donation empowers Catholic Charities to serve people of all faiths each year. Catholic Charities is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization. Your donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law. Thank you for your role in helping the residents of Columbia and Greene Counties.