Helping Monroe County high school youth step back from the edge of developing addictive behaviors. Assisting children in St. Clair County to communicate about traumatic incidents they have endured. Helping married couples in Oakland County to save their marriages and families. As word spreads about these and dozens of other specialties practiced by a corps of 65 therapists at Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM), the agency has responded with new programs and hiring, expanded hours and an array of payment options ensuring counseling is available to all.

A flagship service offered at a majority of CCSEM locations, therapy offerings have expanded, especially in Lapeer, Monroe, and Royal Oak. "More people are becoming aware of the counseling services we offer in a Catholic environment and the flexibility we have in appointment times," said Andrea Foley, who joined CCSEM in 2003 and now serves as the agency’s director of behavioral health. "We are continually strengthening our community visibility and our connections with pastors, parish nurses, and Christian service coordinators. People who are experiencing emotional suffering often talk with priests and parish staff, who are increasingly aware of the range of counseling services we provide in the Lord’s name."

CCSEM recently took the lead in coordinating services in Monroe County focused on adolescent substance abuse intervention in ten area high schools. In Lapeer County, CCSEM earned a state contract to offer outpatient substance abuse counseling to residents of all ages, including the uninsured and those ineligible for Medicaid. Not long ago, CCSEM’s Lapeer office had only one counselor and four clients. Over the last year, CCSEM has hired six clinicians in Lapeer who are now seeing dozens of clients. In Port Huron and Monroe, CCSEM now provides play therapy for children who have suffered traumatic experiences as well as sand tray therapy - the equivalent for adults who have trouble expressing their emotions. “These therapies encourage our clients to use objects to help them verbalize their feelings,” said Foley. “Behavioral health, practiced in the proper setting by highly educated, trained, and committed professions, gets at the foundation to a lot of issues that people continued on page 2
Professional counseling can change painful or destructive ideas, behaviors, or relationships, and promote positive mental, spiritual, physical, and emotional wellbeing. CCSEM provides mental health services to children, teens, adults, couples, and families in a caring, Christ-centered environment. CCSEM’s Behavioral Health Services are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

GROWING DEMAND PROMPTS EXPANDED THERAPY, COUNSELING SERVICES

Continued from page 1

are experiencing. If you don’t address these symptoms and issues, they can compound over time, even eroding a person’s physical wellbeing, spiritual health, and relationships.”

CCSEM’s Behavioral Health services welcome clients of all ages, incomes, backgrounds, and faiths. “We have sliding fees based on income and family size,” explained Foley. “We offer early morning, evening and Saturday appointments which makes it really convenient for our clients to get the counseling help they need.” CCSEM also accepts most private health insurance plans, including Blue Cross Blue Shield, Health Alliance Plan (HAP) Aetna, and several others, as well as most Medicaid HMOs. CCSEM is also a provider of therapy services through Medicare. “We even have low-cost graduate practitioner clinics in Clinton Township, Monroe, Royal Oak, Waterford, and Port Huron, so we’re removing every financial and time availability barrier to ensure we serve anyone who needs counseling,” said Foley.

CCSEM’s graduate practitioners are master’s level advanced year students in social work, counseling, and psychology programs serving under the direct clinical supervision of a licensed master’s level social worker and a licensed psychologist.

All CCSEM therapists are state licensed, have master’s degrees, and are professionally trained. The agency also has four psychiatrists on staff. Learn more about CCSEM’s Behavioral Health services by calling 248-548-4044, ext. 3116 or email: foley@ccsem.org.

Andrea Foley has led CCSEM’s Behavioral Health Services for nearly three years. A member of St. Thomas More Parish where she teaches catechism classes, Foley lives in Troy with her husband and three children.

THERAPIST AND SPECIALTY PROFILES

CCSEM behavioral health clinicians bring a variety of academic degrees, professional designations, and clinical experience to their clients. A sampling of some veteran CCSEM therapists and recently hired counselors follows.

Bridget Bond, LLMSW: Joining CCSEM as a therapist in Lapeer, Bond’s specialties include borderline personality disorder, self-injury, substance abuse disorders, major depressive disorder, and bipolar disorder. She has worked with dually diagnosed adults at Lapeer County Community Mental Health and served the severely and persistently mentally ill in Hawaii.

Darlita Paulding, MA, LPC: A new therapist working from CCSEM’s Clinton Township office, Paulding has worked in community mental health as a clinical case manager, therapist, and supervisor. Her areas of expertise include intensive family therapy, working with children, adolescents, and adults. Paulding has an extensive background helping those with persistent mental illness, depression, anxiety, ADHD, parenting skills, conflict resolution, anger management, low self-esteem, and family conflict.

Kim Hazel, LMSW, ACSW, RPT-S: CCSEM’s new clinical supervisor/reviewer for the Children and Youth program in Port Huron, Hazel has more than 23 years of experience working with children, adolescents, and families. She specializes in therapy for the separated and divorced, as well as those with blended families. Hazel is a registered play therapist and supervisor, and a certified group leader for the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting program. She has also worked in foster care management in Wayne County.
The seminarians at Sacred Heart Major Seminary (SHMS) in Detroit didn’t have to wait long this year to see the results of their efforts from a fundraiser on behalf of CCSEM’s Project Hope. Eight months after the annual Dinner for Life at SHMS, Project Hope opened its first office and service center in Detroit’s Corktown neighborhood, just over five miles from the Seminary.

Patrick Setto, a Troy native and in his seventh year of studies at SHMS toward becoming a priest, helped organize the Dinner for Life and select Project Hope as the beneficiary. “This was the sixth year that we’ve put on the Dinner for Life, and all the glory goes to God – we had over 450 attendees and raised more than $15,000 for the prolife cause – both records for us,” said Setto. About 50 seminarians are typically involved in the dinner, choosing everything from the prolife organization for which they will raise funds to invitations, decorations, the kitchen work, and cleanup.

As to choosing CCSEM, “We prayed about it and asked the Lord to place in our hands who he wanted to receive the funds. A friend of mine then suggested we consider Project Hope, and we took it from there.”

Individual and organizational support like the Dinner for Life makes it possible for CCSEM to expand and supply Project Hope, including now in Detroit. Even before the dinner, Charlotte Webster was searching for a location to establish Project Hope services in the city. A potential collaboration was discussed with the St. Frances Cabrini Clinic of the Most Holy Trinity Church, located in the historic Corktown neighborhood near downtown Detroit, and in mid-October, Project Hope opened an office under the clinic’s roof. Open to uninsured adults since 1950, the Cabrini Clinic is the oldest free clinic in the nation, where volunteers provide primary care, prescription assistance, and mental health care.

“It’s a perfect combination for the Cabrini Clinic, Project Hope, and our clients,” said Webster. Women who are, or think they might be, pregnant can receive coordinated health care services and support in the same location. “We expanded Project Hope to serve Detroit because, with so many abortions happening in the city, we knew it was essential to put Project Hope right on the front lines.” Project Hope offers free pregnancy testing, crisis pregnancy counseling, support groups for parenting, financial literacy, and child development, as well as a free baby closet stocked with diapers, clothing, formula, and baby food. For Project Hope clients, crisis pregnancy counseling includes wrapping supportive services around the mother and father so their unborn child will experience life. Adoption as an option can be explored and assisted by CCSEM’s adoption and foster care services.

A pro-life initiative of CCSEM, more than 150 women since 2013 have recognized the inviolable dignity of the human person through Project Hope, which supports women who give life to their unborn children. Project Hope also operates baby closets in Lapeer, Monroe, Pontiac, and Warren. Learn more about Project Hope by calling Charlotte Webster at 248-334-3595 ext. 3811 or emailing: websterc@ccsem.org.
For more than ten years, Eugenia Kempski invested up to 20 hours a week as a Catholic Charities senior companion volunteer, visiting and spending time with residents in the Memory Unit at The Village of East Harbor in Chesterfield, Michigan. In 2005, the Detroit News published a story on Eugenia, a New Baltimore resident at the time, who was continuing her volunteering efforts when she was 82 years of age. At the time Eugenia recalled a promise she made to God after her mother died. “I told Him, ‘If you can give me my health, I want to come here and help these people,’” she said. “If I can get out of bed then I’m happy I can come here and help.”

Now 93 with dementia and Alzheimer’s, Eugenia resides in the same unit at The Village of East Harbor, and is herself visited by another dedicated CCSEM senior companion volunteer, Christine Berger. Gene Kempski, one of Eugenia’s three sons who also visit her regularly, said Christine provides extraordinary love, compassion, and care week after week – just like his Mom once did. “Chris is a precious woman who lovingly provides conversation, friendship, and fellowship. She fills in the gaps when our family is not there,” said Gene. “She plays cards with Mom and gets her talking and laughing. No matter how many times Mom repeats the same question or starts the same conversation, Chris always acts like it’s the first time she’s hearing it. How loving is that? Chris is our hero.”

Berger enlisted as a CCSEM senior companion volunteer 12 years ago after seeing an article in the Macomb Daily. “They needed volunteers, so I called and there you go,” said Berger. She now visits Eugenia and another lady, seeing both twice a week. Her other client is 80, blind, and lives at home. Berger takes her for medical visits and grocery shopping. Christine has been visiting Eugenia for three years. “It is really a needed thing and it keeps you going – people need you, and you have to go – they’re like friends and family,” she said. “I’m retired, my house and car are paid for, so I’m blessed to do this service of love. That’s how I think of it.”

CCEM operates the senior companion program in Oakland and Macomb counties. The four decade-old program currently enlists about 65 volunteers and 200 clients. Each volunteer has a minimum of two clients, some visiting three and four seniors twice a week. Generally each visit is four hours. “We do this because there is an overwhelming need for people who need this personal comfort and involvement, especially the homebound and frail,” said Herschell Masten, CCSEM’s Director of Senior Services. “One purpose of the program is to help the elderly remain in their homes or where they are most comfortable. This also helps our senior companion volunteers to keep active.”

CCSEM senior companion volunteers have to be 55 years of age and commit from 15 to 40 hours per week. One current senior companion volunteer is 89 years of age. The program is funded through CCSEM donors as well as federal and state funding that totals around $300,000 per year.

CCSEM needs about five additional senior companion volunteers in both Oakland and Macomb counties. The program offers income eligible people age 55 and older opportunities to volunteer one-on-one with adults with special or exceptional needs, including those with emotional, physical, and developmental disabilities. Others who receive help include seniors in need of assistance and companionship and who are homebound and generally living alone, and those who have difficulties with day-to-day living tasks. Senior companion volunteers receive a non-taxable stipend per service hour, mileage reimbursement, paid sick and vacation days, a daily meal reimbursement, a yearly physical, ongoing paid training and formal recognition events.

“Special thanks to senior companions for your ministry and dedicated work in our community," said Gene Kempski. “CCSEM cannot even begin to understand how important you are to families like ours. Keep up the great work and may God bless you for all you do to make a difference in the lives of our seniors.”

"Spanning Generations with the Gift of Sharing Love"
Regardless of the highs and lows of the regional economy over three decades, parishioners at Sacred Heart Parish in Dearborn have always responded to the call of their pastors and parish staff to remember immigrants and refugees when they do their Christmas shopping. For the last several years, the faithful at Sacred Heart have annually donated between $8,000 and $10,000 in household items to help hundreds of families resettled in the region by Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan. Many of the same parishioners also donated nearly $4,500 to CCSEM through the annual archdiocesan-wide collection to benefit agency clients.

“Our people have been so supportive because our pastors over the years have been very supportive,” said Kathleen Brichta, Sacred Heart’s Christian Service Coordinator (CSC). “They will hear it announced from the pulpit, they see the Christmas Giving Tree in the church, and it’s not long before the gifts begin to appear. We move them to the rectory, where they accumulate for up to a month, filling an entire room.” Brichta, Sacred Heart’s volunteer CSC for more than three years, says the volume of gifts narrows the hallway from the rectory into the church, but the pastor, Rev. Kenneth Chase, and the parish staff never complain.

Brichta took over CSC duties from longtime parishioner Betty Plasters who led CSC efforts at Sacred Heart since the 1970s. “Betty started the Christmas giving tree for immigrants and refugees in the 1980s, and it’s now a tradition,” said Brichta. “Parishioners expect to see that tree and start shopping for gifts. They’re very generous people and it makes them feel good to know their gifts are going to people new to America with basic needs like bedding and kitchen goods.”

“I think the longevity of the project is definitely a key part of its ongoing success,” said Mary Beth Oravec, a Sacred Heart parishioner, member of the Sacred Heart Alumni Association, and long-time volunteer for the parish Christian outreach program. “We create ornaments with the need right on them. It gives people a feeling of ownership to that particular gift. Our people like to purchase something concrete and there is a great selection for many income ranges. We have parents get their kids to participate in the project, picking out ornaments that they themselves can get with their allowance, money they earn from chores, or after school jobs.”

Jeralda Hatter, CCSEM’s Director of Immigration and Refugee Services, was recently invited to speak to Sacred Heart’s Tabernacle Society, a group of parish women whose goal is to beautify the sanctuary and raise funds for the church. Hatter has also presented to the parish Las Posadas (“the inns”) group, a Spanish and Mexican Advent tradition in which the faithful go from home to home reenacting the travels of Mary and Joseph as refugees looking for a place to stay. Parish youth learn about the tradition, bring gifts, and assemble them into baskets for immigrants and refugees served by CCSEM.

Interested in starting a Christmas Giving Tree at your parish, school, business, or professional office on behalf of CCSEM clients? Call Farrah Shammas at 248-548-4044, ext. 3322, or email: shammasf@ccsem.org.

Above: Last Christmas, parishioners completely filled a CCSEM van with donated household goods from the Sacred Heart Parish Christmas Giving Tree. Left to right: Kathleen Brichta, Julie Wieleba-Milkie (Sacred Heart’s Director of Religious Education and Young Adult Ministry), and Mary Beth Oravec.

Right: For more than 30 years, Sacred Heart Parish has annually offered parishioners the opportunity through a Christmas Giving Tree to help immigrants and refugees resettled by CCSEM and its predecessor agencies. The Dearborn parish has more than 1,200 registered households. Each ornament on the Christmas Giving Tree represents a specific need, generally household items needed by those new to the country and southeast Michigan.
Several years ago, adolescent substance use rates in Monroe County were higher than the national average. Since then, the efforts of a local coalition, including Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan, have pushed the rates of alcohol, marijuana, and prescription drug abuse among county high school students below national the average. These prevention efforts, initially started by the Monroe County Substance Abuse Coalition, have been coordinated by CCSEM since October 1. In addition to pursuing prevention efforts, CCSEM successfully pursued $38,382 in funding from the Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan for adolescent and family substance use support programming. The funds are enabling direct services for up to 50 Monroe County adolescents and their families.

In Monroe County, adolescent substance abuse primarily involves alcohol, marijuana, and prescription medications. Access to these substances is typically from their own home, family members, or friends.

Local adolescents are referred to CCSEM through the Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan after being identified by probation officers, educators, or parents as at risk or needing substance abuse treatment. “CCSEM’s Monroe office has a lot of expertise in this field,” explained Wendy Klinski, Clinical Supervisor and Operations Manager for CCSEM in Monroe County. “When the kids are referred, they meet with a CCSEM counselor specializing in adolescent therapy. Then the parents meet with a CCSEM case manager to begin a family support component that includes in-home family counseling and adolescent addiction-specific parenting education groups.” The resulting family team meets monthly and each family is followed for 12 months by a CCSEM case manager.

CCSEM became involved in the Monroe County coalition because of the agency’s substance abuse therapy expertise and to meet a gap in community services. “Previous to the coalition, Monroe County did not have solid alcohol and drug intervention programs for adolescents,” said Klinski. “If you are seeing early signs of abuse, don’t write it off as typical youthful experimenting behavior. Occasional use can lead to ongoing use, then addiction. If alcoholism runs in the family, even if it doesn’t personally affect parents, kids need to be aware of a potential genetic predisposition. In short, they need to know if alcohol or other addiction problems run in the family, and it should be addressed upon the first warning signs. If you are concerned, make an appointment at CCSEM, get your child assessed, and we’ll find out together what’s going on.”

Learn more about adolescent and adult substance abuse services in Monroe County by calling Wendy Klinski at 734-240-3850 ext. 2001 or email: klinskiw@ccsem.org.
ANNUAL SPELLING BEE NETS OVER $11,000 FOR CCSEM

About 150 CCSEM supporters gathered in February for some grown-up laughs and a spelling contest that raised more than $11,500 in net proceeds for CCSEM programs and services in Monroe County. Rev. Brian Hurley, pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Temperance, emerged victorious at the third annual event.

Spelling Bee Special Thanks
- Amy Cook: Volunteer
- Bill Sunderland: Volunteer
- Carolyn Morrin: Volunteer
- Crysti Esper: Designer, volunteer
- Greg Schafer: Volunteer
- John Patterson: Emcee, volunteer

Initially administered by the Monroe County Substance Abuse Coalition, CCSEM is now continuing the mission to establish student-led substance use prevention teams at 10 high schools in Monroe County.

Monroe County Substance Abuse Coalition
- Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM)
- Salvation Army Harbor Light
- Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan
Caregivers with adults in need of constant supervision will have a new option for day services when CCSEM opens an adult day services location in St. Clair Shores. The 1,500 square-foot, fully accessible facility off Harper Avenue in St. Clair Shores is now being renovated to open by the end of this year. The parking lot was recently repaved and interior upgrades are underway.

The new Adult Day Services center will accommodate up to 12 participants per weekday from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm. Clients can be any adult over the age of 21 in need of constant supervision, including those with dementia or Alzheimer’s, cognitive disabilities, or other conditions that require constant supervision. “This is where they will be welcome to enjoy social and stimulating projects with professional and personalized care,” said Herschell Masten, CCSEM’s Director of Senior Services. “Their caregivers will have an extended break during the day to handle other responsibilities or simply for rest.”

The St. Clair Shores center will have a ratio of one staff member to four participants, a certified therapeutic recreation specialist, wheelchair-accessible transportation will be provided in the immediate area, and participants will enjoy lunch and two snacks per day. “After lots of research we concluded there’s a strong need for adult day services in the St. Clair Shores area for people with ongoing cognitive challenges and their caregivers,” said Masten. Local volunteer opportunities will also be available when the St. Clair Shores location opens to assist participants with activities and meals.

The new center is CCSEM’s first location in St. Clair Shores. The facility is being funded by CCSEM donors and a three-year grant of about $200,000 annually from Area Agency on Aging 1B.
Recognized for their tireless work on behalf of those with physical or cognitive challenges, Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan presented six awards following an annual Mass for those with special needs September 20 at Divine Child Parish in Dearborn.

“I recently came across a quote, “Children with special needs aren’t sent to special parents – they make parents special,” said Joyce Hyttinen, Director, of CCSEM’s Office of Christian Service and Health Care Ministries, which oversees an expanding regional special needs ministry. “Those with special needs really make everyone around them special. The real honor is being among people who have worked for years – even decades – to bring Christ into the lives of our special needs brothers and sisters, and to work on their behalf in parishes, schools, and their communities.”

SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRIES – 2015 RECOGNITION AWARDS

Parish Program – St. John’s Deaf Center, Eastpointe
Rev. Michael Depcik, Director of St. John’s Deaf Center, oversees several pastoral services and programs for the deaf community in southeast Michigan including celebrating Masses in American Sign Language at the Deaf Center in Eastpointe, as well as at Our Lady of Loretto Parish in Redford, and Holy Innocents – St. Barnabas Parish in Roseville. The St. John’s Deaf Center is part of St. Mary, Our Lady Queen of Families Parish in Warren. The center hosts weekly gatherings for hearing-challenged seniors and Alcoholics Anonymous for the deaf. Advent and Lent Bible study classes, marriage preparation classes, visits to the deaf homebound, and retreats are also part of the center’s ongoing program offerings.

Catholic Education – Support Our Unique Learners (SOUL)
Driven to inspire every child to achieve their academic and social goals, SOUL helps children with special needs in Catholic academic settings. Linda Luchi, a longtime SOUL volunteer, organizes an annual 5k run/walk in Walled Lake to raise funds and awareness. “Sometimes they need extra learning materials, occupational therapy, and speech therapy – each child is different,” said Luchi. This year SOUL sent five special needs children to Willoway Day Camp in West Bloomfield Township for two weeks during the summer. “Everyone was so excited. All the kids participated together and had an experience that may not have been afforded them if SOUL hadn’t reached out to one of the most popular camps in the state,” added Luchi, who is committed to helping SOUL provide funding so more children with special needs will have this opportunity.

Religious Education Program – Center for Exceptional Children
Denise Swalec at St. Joan of Arc Parish in St. Clair Shores has been volunteering as a lead catechist in this weekly formation program for more than 20 years, now assisting in planning and preparing the center’s curriculum. The Center for Exceptional Children primarily works with adult students who have learning, physical, social, and emotional challenges. Most students have received the sacraments, experience ongoing formation, and prayer and fellowship activities. A safe environment has been established where challenged adults can pray uninhibited and speak freely about their love and relationship with Jesus without being ridiculed, questioned, or stared at. A program emphasis is open communication with parents and family members, who are welcomed to join classroom activities, retreats, Masses, prayer services, and other activities.

Individual Leader with Special Needs – Amy Knight, St. Lawrence Parish, Utica
Amy has volunteered since 1995 with the Continuing Religious Education program at St. Lawrence. She demonstrates loving God through her devotion to assisting students with special needs and helps them grow in faith and understanding. Amy carefully prepares and customizes her lessons and resources for each of her special needs students, personally accompanying them on their faith journey from kindergarten through the 9th grade.

Individual Leader – Clare Brick, Divine Child Parish, Dearborn
Serving Divine Child as a catechist and special needs mentor for other catechists and parishioners, Clare Brick currently serves on the Governor’s Michigan Interagency Coordinating

Continued on page 10
DETROIT MARKET OWNER HELPS CCSEM FEED THE HUNGRY

Shortly after the All Saints Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry became a ministry of CCSEM in July, the owner of a nearby market heard from a friend about the ongoing need for food donations at the All Saints location in southwest Detroit. Over the next two months, Joe Gappy and Prince Valley Market donated nearly 3,000 pounds of meat, bread, canned goods, and other groceries to help feed the hungry at the soup kitchen and food pantry.

“I’ve learned the more you give, the more you get,” said Gappy, who, with his father Hani, have owned and operated Prince Valley Market since 1975. Hani arrived in Detroit from Iraq in 1967.

“Joe has been very generous and the donation of meat in particular is extraordinary,” said David Allen, Outreach Director at All Saints. “Since July, we have been picking up food from Prince Valley on a near-weekly basis. Each Monday morning I give Joe’s butcher a call to see if they have any donations and he almost always does.” Gappy family members are parishioners at St. Regis in Bloomfield Hills, St. Owen in Bloomfield Hills, and St. Thomas Chaldean Catholic Church in West Bloomfield.

The soup kitchen and food pantry alleviates the hunger in Detroit’s Springwells and Delray neighborhoods by feeding 100 to 200 people daily. No one is turned away from the food pantry, which offers fresh produce and canned goods as well as refrigerated and frozen food. The food pantry serves approximately 550 households each month.

Learn more about the All Saints Soup Kitchen and Food pantry by calling David Allen at 313-841-1428, ext. 5, emailing outreach@allsaintsdet.org or visiting http://askdetroit.org/.

Bloomfield Township residents Joe and Anna Gappy with their children Jennifer and Evan. Beyond their support of the All Saints Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry, The Gappy-owned and operated Prince Valley Market has given hundreds of pounds of baked goods to area parishes for special events and after-Mass treats.

SIX HONOURED FOR EXEMPLARY WORK IN SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY

Continued from page 9

Council for Infants and Toddlers with Developmental Disorders. Clare and her husband have four children, including their youngest son who has Down’s syndrome. Clare shares her personal experiences and her knowledge about raising a special needs child with parish families while advising the Michigan Department of Education in the evaluation and continuous improvement of the support system for special needs children statewide.

**Life Time Achievement Distinguished Service Award – Sr. Mary Choiniere, CSJ**

A pioneer in special education in the Archdiocese of Detroit and throughout Michigan, Sister Choiniere has lobbied in Lansing and worked with clergy, lay people, and families to ensure equal and appropriate educational opportunities and resources are available to all with special needs. Sister worked for the Archdiocese of Detroit as the Director of Special Education, ensuring programs were in place and resources available. She also sat side by side with directors of special education in public schools, pouring over individualized education programs and ensuring services were provided to the students in neighboring Catholic schools. Sister Choiniere started religious education classes in the basements of churches where classrooms were unavailable for students with special needs. She also trained catechists, provided learning materials and made the classrooms a joyful place. Sister Mary Choiniere created special needs religious education classes at the former St. Alan parish in Troy and other parishes, with a ratio of one catechist to one pupil and lessons tailored to suit each student. Relying on prayer, education, and service, the students under Sister’s guidance learned about God, the Church, and how faith and prayer can sustain all - parents, children, and teachers alike.
About 275 attendees enjoyed an evening of magic at CCSEM’s Mad Hatter-themed annual gala in April, generating nearly $62,000 in net revenue, all of which was allocated to CCSEM programs and services. Of that total $19,075 was specifically pledged through Fund the Mission auction to support CCSEM’s Crisis Navigation program and for upgrades to the agency’s information technology infrastructure. Special thanks to student volunteers from Brother Rice High School, Bloomfield Hills who helped throughout the Gala, assisting with set up, the auction, and the check-out process.

Volunteer Committee

Belinda Hughes          Linda Luchi
Farrah Shammas          Mary Hines
Irene Lis-Planells      Sue Bixler
John Doyle              Trish Mervine
Joyce Janowski          Vicki Iagnemma
Kathy Murnen

Table Sponsors

Archdiocese of Detroit  Lourdes Senior Community
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Lis-Planells              Our Lady Star of the Sea
David and Mary Hines     Parish, Grosse Pointe Woods
David and Trish Mervenne St. Regis Parish, Bloomfield
Holy Name Parish,        Hills
Birmingham                William and Jacalyn Goforth
Lawrence and Linda Luchi

Flagship Sponsors and Friends

Above: Detroit Archbishop Allen Vigneron with Gala committee members and other volunteers.
Left to right: Linda Luchi, Lori Zoulek, Donna Rudofski, and Liz Riehl
Below: Kathy Murnen and her sister, Amy Odom

Above: Dr. Miguel and Irene Lis-Planells. Dr. Miguel is a CCSEM board member and Irene served on the Gala volunteer committee.
Right: In Memoriam Barbara J. Lanahan, a former Catholic social services board member and generous Gala committee member, passed away at 81 years of age in July. Barbara was predeceased by her husband James and is survived by four sons and their families.
Approved by CCSEM board members in June, the agency’s updated mission, vision, and values statements define the agency, the context and principles through which the organization operates, and serve as the primary reference points for strategy and decision-making.

MISSION
Compelled by the love and teachings of Jesus Christ, Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan provides compassionate, quality, professional services and support to people in need.

VISION
Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan strives to be the organization of choice for people in need, transforming lives, encountering Christ, and mobilizing hope in our community.

VALUES
Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan holds foremost that all our actions and efforts are modeled after Jesus Christ and in conformity to the teachings and values of the Catholic Church.

Dignity of Human Life
We act with respect, kindness, and hospitality to all persons who come to us for assistance.

Compassion
We hold a deep awareness of the suffering of others, accompanied by the desire to relieve their pain.

Integrity
We can be trusted to deliver our services with conviction, courage, and transparency.

Professionalism
Our professional staff and volunteers conform to the highest ethical standards and quality of services measured by the licenses and accrediting of our employees and programs.

Transformational
We endeavor to transform the lives of the people we serve by tracking measurable outcomes of improvement.