SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES (SSVF) PROGRAM

Serving Veterans who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

We know that many of the blessings we enjoy as citizens of the United States would not be possible without the dedication and sacrifice of those who have served our nation. Their willingness to put their lives on the line is a profound example of heroism and sacrifice.

Many Veterans Homeless

Many veterans return from duty with physical or emotional wounds and scars that can be long-lasting, and some of these challenges can lead to difficulty finding or keeping a home. According to recent studies:

- there are nearly 50,000 homeless vets on any given night nationwide, and
- homelessness among veterans in Missouri increased by 170 percent from 2007 to 2013.

We believe that even one veteran without a home is too many, and in January, we launched our Supportive Services for Veteran Families program.

Overview of SSVF Program

- SSVF Program Manager oversees five case managers who work from Joplin, Springfield, Cape Girardeau, Branson, Poplar Bluff and Van Buren;
- Case managers reach out to meet with their clients wherever they are, whether on the street, in a shelter, in a car or at a coffee shop;
- Focus is on obtaining or stabilizing housing as quickly as possible,
- Then we address issues that might jeopardize long-term stability, including job skills and mental health. We connect them with VA benefits and community resources; provide temporary financial assistance such as rent, housing deposits and moving costs; locate employment opportunities; educate on budgeting and managing finances; and much more.

Being there to serve those who have served us is a sacred trust, and one we take very seriously.

Thank you for helping to make this program available for our veterans!

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Reading veteran Travis is homeless and dealing with many issues related to his service days, but is making progress through our Veterans Program.

Read his story on page 2.
Thank you for caring.

YOUNG VETERAN STRUGGLES
RETURNS HOME WITH TRAUMATIC
BRAIN INJURY AND PTSD

Travis is a 22-year-old US Army Veteran. Shortly after graduating high school, he entered the Army, completing One Station Unit Training (OSUT) at Ft. Benning, GA. Following his infantry training, Travis was deployed to Zari district of Kandahar, Afghanistan, with the 1st Infantry Division's 4th Squadron, 4th Calvary.

Life has been difficult for Travis since leaving the Army. During his deployment he witnessed several members of his unit killed and many more severely wounded. Travis himself was injured in Afghanistan by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). This explosion left him with a Traumatic Brain Injury. Travis also suffers from Chronic/Severe Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and he struggles with substance abuse issues. When he returned home to his family, they asked him to leave because according to Travis, “they did not like the person I had become.” He has been homeless for over ten months.

Our case manager has been working with Travis to help get him into an inpatient treatment program. Happily, Travis left on January 21 for the ATP (Alcohol/Substance Prevention) program at the Harry S. Truman Veterans Center, and after he completes this program he will begin a stress disorder program for veterans.

Thank you for helping to support this young veteran as he gets back on his feet.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

• Developmentally Disabled Service Coordination
• Disaster Preparedness, Response & Long-term Recovery
• GoodFinds Resale Shop
• Homelessness Prevention
• Home Repair & Rebuilding for Disaster Survivors and Low-Income Seniors
• Housing and Financial Counseling
• Income Tax Preparation Assistance
• LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home
• Mental Health & Family Counseling
• Pregnancy & Parenting Support/Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Program
• SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance) Enrollment
• Support Services for Veterans and their Families
• Youth Mentoring/BUDS Program

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GoodFinds • 706 S. Main Street Joplin, MO 64801 (417) 623-2200
424 E. Monastery St. Springfield, MO 65807 (417) 720-4213

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403 E. 4th St. Joplin, MO 64801 (417) 624-3790
937 Broadway, Ste. 304 • PO Box 760 Cape Girardeau, MO 63702 (573) 335-0134

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GENERAL CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
CATHOLIC CHARITIES COLLABORATES WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO MEET NEEDS OF ELDERLY CLIENT

Jack is 91 years old and lives in Joplin. He has a prosthetic leg and only one arm. He was injured in an accident when he was 14 while trying to hop on a train, and both his leg and an arm were severed. He nearly bled to death and was not expected to live through the night. As Jack says, “By the grace of God, I survived!”

Jack lives alone and has a disability income (SSDI) of $750 per month. After paying his bills, there isn’t enough left over to eat well. And at the end of the year, he realized that he didn’t have enough to pay the property taxes on his small home. According to Jackie, his case manager, “He was unable to sleep at night worrying about what he would do.”

Jackie explained her role, “Part of general case management services is evaluating if there might be additional community resources that could benefit the individual. Since the tornado, our community works so well together. Because of so much heartache, so much need and so much prayer, we learned to help each other. I have worked with so many agencies and churches in our community and I am continually amazed at the love, compassion and wisdom of those working on the front lines for so long. In Jack’s case, I had the privilege to work with We Care of the Four States. They were able to help my client with an abundance of food items. The people in this organization just plain love God’s people. Another wonderful agency that has been active for so long is St. Vincent de Paul. They were able to help my client with some costs for his home. They are just amazing!”

Jackie continues to work to meet Jack’s needs. She states, “Before my first home visit with Jack, I was thinking ‘poor guy’. Now I describe Jack as ‘My Hero!’ He has overcome so many obstacles and turned what could have been a tragic outcome into an opportunity to thank God for his life. I’m so grateful that I work for an agency that cares about people.”

We are able to care for people only because you care enough to make it happen. Thank you!

HOME REPAIRS FOR LOW-INCOME CLIENTS
HEAT RESTORED IN WIDOW’S HOME BECAUSE YOU CARED!

Jean is an elderly widow who had not had heat in her home for eight years. She had used very small space heaters and told no one about her problem. Her sister discovered the cold house and alerted us. We were able to confirm the details and add Jean as a case management client. We were then able to install a new HVAC system in her home, and Jean could not be more thankful.

Andrea Minor, her case manager, stated, “This is one of those clients who just melt your heart. Approximately forty years ago her son was killed in an accident at work. He was 24. Her husband died the morning of their son’s funeral. Jean had never received help from others and had a hard time accepting our help at first. I knew her deceased husband was a veteran so I told her it was a thank you for her husband’s service. This seemed to make her feel better.”

Thank you for putting heat into Jean’s home this winter!
MENTORING PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK RURAL YOUTH
BUDS (BUILDING UNDERSTANDING, DEVELOPING SUCCESS)
MENTORING HAS THE POWER TO FIGHT POVERTY - ONE CHILD AT A TIME

Sevrin, a nine-year-old boy in Stoddard County, is being raised by his grandparents. He has a big, contagious smile and he flashes it often. Sevrin's biological mother and father send him an occasional card or present, but the relationship is strained. At school, his grades have improved since coming to live with his grandparents but he continues to have difficulty making friends. Sevrin struggles to stay focused and he has fallen behind in developmental milestones such as tying his shoes.

When Sevrin began meeting with Crystal, his mentor, in October, he initially showed no desire to learn to tie his shoes. But Crystal persisted, and after several meetings Sevrin was successful. He was thrilled and ran into his grandparents' home to tie his shoes in front of them! Crystal has focused on increasing Sevrin's attention span, and improving his manners and listening skills. Through simple activities such as painting, card games and crafts, Sevrin has begun to show great progress.

The BUDS program gives at-risk children the tools they need to avoid bad decisions and to grow into self-sufficient adults. And with your help, we can mentor even more children! Not only do we need financial support, but volunteers to mentor are critically needed. Thank you!

HOW YOUR DONATIONS ARE WISELY USED

- SERVICES 89%
- ADMINISTRATION 8%
- FUNDRAISING 3%

DISASTER RESPONSE AND HOME REBUILDING PROGRAMS
COUPLE'S HOME SEVERELY DAMAGED BY FLASH FLOOD

Last year, Fremont, Missouri was a small town in dire need of assistance with flood damage recovery. Fremont is located ten miles west of Van Buren on Hwy 60. A flash flood from nine inches of rain damaged many of the homes in this small rural community. CCSOMO joined other relief organizations to provide supplies and materials to rebuild, and provided a trained disaster case manager to help in the recovery. Our Construction Manager also became involved.

One of our clients, Mr. and Mrs. Jones could not afford to rebuild, and had no flood insurance. They simply lost everything. We were able to provide extensive repairs to their home, installing new flooring, beams and joists and repairing the bathroom. The Jones's were so grateful, noting that their grandchildren stay with them often, and the house is now safe.

Thank you for helping this couple rebuild their home and make it safe both for them and their grandchildren!

Message from Maura Taylor, Executive Director

We at Catholic Charities seek to bring the Lord's compassion and understanding to all those we touch. Each service we provide offers us a grace-filled opportunity to do so. These pages document those moments and give witness to the beautiful human connections that your kindness makes possible.

We are so grateful for your support. We couldn't do it without you!
CELEBRATING OUR SUPPORTERS—
WITHOUT YOU, WE COULDN’T EXIST.

Below, our friends, Rick and Rhonda Cuba, share their personal reasons for supporting Catholic Charities and in particular, LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home.

"Ministries to pregnant women in distress have been very dear to us as we were blessed with adopted twin boys from a woman who had been in a similar situation over 30 years ago."

We were quite impressed with what we heard and decided to support this program financially. We were pleased to hear this program was accredited to provide Missouri Tax Credits, which allowed us to quadruple the amount we felt we could afford to give.

Not long ago we had the opportunity to visit LifeHouse and to see firsthand the facility and the work being done by and for these women. It was impressive!

We have also investigated other programs that Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri is doing for people in need. Home repair/modification for poor, elderly and handicapped people, rent and utility assistance and financial counseling to prevent homelessness, helping veterans, etc.—these programs are making positive impacts in people’s lives.

By supporting Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri, in some small way, we are trying to follow Christ’s teachings to be good stewards of our blessings, to care for those less fortunate and to help people become all that God created them to be.”

At five months, Grace is the “big sister” to the other nine babies currently living at LifeHouse with their moms and the other expectant moms. Grace’s mom is doing remarkably well, has a job, and is making great progress in saving money towards a car and future housing. The ladies are required to save at least 70% of their earnings, and learning to budget and save has been an eye-opener. They never knew saving money was possible!

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” JEREMIAH 29:11
Variety of Programs Help Pregnant Mom Laid Off from Work

Mindy, a single mom, had given up on college after two years on a volleyball scholarship in order to provide for her daughter. However, life became a struggle when Mindy discovered she was pregnant, and a few months later, she was laid off from her full-time factory job. The baby's father was not involved, and Mindy could no longer pay the bills.

For the first time in her life, Mindy turned to others for help, and because of your support, Catholic Charities was there.

Through our Homeless Prevention Program, we were able to help with rent and utilities (and down the road we helped her find more affordable permanent housing). We helped her enroll in SNAP for food stamps. And Mindy immediately began our Healthy Moms/Healthy Babies program to ensure proper health care, nutrition, and child development classes. She then worked with our Financial Counselor to learn budgeting and money management. Happily, Mindy delivered a healthy baby boy, and today Mindy is employed full-time and plans to start school again, this time specializing in early childhood development.

Thank you for helping this family keep its home, and for giving this baby boy a healthy start in life.

Developmental Disability Services

Taylor is 13 and musically talented. She teaches herself to play songs from the radio on her guitar. She dreams of going to college and creating music for video games which she really enjoys playing. However, Taylor has autism and that affects everything in her life.

Taylor has a hard time interacting socially. When nervous, she will hum, rock back and forth, or blurt out a word such as “Ducks.” She breaks out in hives when someone touches her. She is bullied at school.

Taylor's Developmental Disabilities Support Coordinator connected her with an Autism Specialist. They began going to a gaming center that connected her with other kids who shared her interest in video games. Taylor also started music therapy, and her parents were connected with a workshop for parents with autistic children.

Because Taylor struggled to complete her school work and forgot to bring her books home, it was arranged for the school to provide additional books for Taylor to keep at home.

Today, Taylor's social interactions and self-esteem have improved. She is beginning to feel more accepted by her peers. And her teachers report improvement in almost all areas of her academic performance.

Thanks to your support of our programs, Taylor's life has been enriched and improved!

You’re a vital part of our stories!

To ensure that our stories of help and hope can continue, please donate today.

Whose life will you help make better today?

YES, I want to help our neighbors in need. Here is my gift of $ ____________.

You may use this form and mail your donation in the envelope included with this newsletter.

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☐ I prefer to donate by credit card. Please charge my __Visa __MC __Discover __AmEx

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