As I flip the calendar over to the month of October, I realize I’ve reached my one year anniversary date. I’m grateful for my first year at CSS and pray for guidance from God our Father for the chance at another year of service to His people at this remarkable organization. Things don’t slow down in the world of nonprofits. In fact, they can’t. It’s the anticipation of another project or season that keeps us ticking. We’ve just completed a successful Project REACH where we filled backpacks full of school supplies for well over 550 students from low income families. And that leads right into the holiday season and our ever popular Christmas Sharing Program. Peggy Peterson has her volunteers ready for their training on October 15 in the newly formatted intake process. Even CSS has to keep up in the digital age. Stella Knight will be hosting another event for the Mexican Consulate the week beginning November 4. The mobile team will be here helping immigrants process foreign passports, which are accepted as identification by local law enforcement, banks and government agencies.

Robin Suggs met with local community leaders in September to kick off her BRIDGES of Baldwin program. The group is the advisory committee for her “Getting Ahead in a Just Getting’-By World” project, which she hopes to launch in January. Donyale Rawson and Annette Hicks were busy networking with others in their field in September as they hosted a meeting at St. Patrick’s Parish hall. Their guest speaker, Laurie Kittrell, the executive director of the Alabama Free Clinic, was quite informative about her agency and what it provides at its three Baldwin County locations. Connie Plemmons continues to fill the vacancies in her homeless programs. At this writing, she has 15 of her 16 apartments occupied. Our business would be incomplete without counselors Jeannie Fleek and John Finch who do so much good in their roles as therapists for our clients. We’re grateful to have their expertise and their compassion. The Thrift Store hums right along with the help of Linda Farrell, Sherry Ball and Rose-Ann Tuck, who is retiring at the end of December. Carol Chandler is taking some time off to be with a family member who is ill and in need of our prayers. Plus, we’re fortunate to have a wonderful cadre of Thrift Store volunteers who have been faithful to the cause, always willing to step up to the plate. Phyllis Beam maintains our financial picture so we don’t lose sight of land. She’s rock solid when it comes to numbers-crunching. Lynn Bingert is a steady beam of light at our front door, welcoming clients and visitors. If you haven’t been to see us in a while, perhaps it’s time to treat yourself to one of her smiles.

We welcome all who grace our doorway.
The clinic relies on support from businesses, congregations, foundations and individual donors for its funding.

Dr. Tara Wheeler, who practices in Loxley, has partnered with AFC, and offers dental cleanings, extractions through prescription assistance programs and medical monitoring. Patients are seen by appointment only.

The Alabama Free Clinic is the only clinic in this area that is free of charge for those who qualify.

FROM THE CASE MANAGERS

Laurie Kittrell, executive director of the Alabama Free Clinic, was the guest speaker for the quarterly case managers’ meeting sponsored by Catholic Social Services on September 26, where 23 attendees were able to network and share information.

Laurie’s talk was direct and informative. She talked about how the clinic offers medical management and assistance for those living in Baldwin County who have previously been diagnosed with blood pressure problems, diabetes and/or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. At all three sites in Baldwin County - Bay Minette, Robertsdale and Gulf Shores - uninsured patients can receive laboratory testing, diagnostic imaging, drug assistance through prescription assistance programs and medical monitoring. Patients are seen by appointment only. The Alabama Free Clinic is the only clinic in this area that is free of charge for those who qualify.

Dr. Tara Wheeler, who practices in Loxley, has partnered with AFC, and offers dental cleanings, extractions and fillings to patients referred by the AFC.

Tips for the holidays

At the mention of the word “holidays,” many people begin to feel stressed. Here are some tips to help make your holidays less stressful and more enjoyable.

Make plans now. Where and with whom will you spend Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day?

How many guests will you invite to dinners, parties, get-togethers? What food will be on the menu for your holiday meal or other holiday activities you may be attending? Make a grocery list of each of the holidays. Prepare ahead of time items that can be frozen.

Keep a master calendar for everyone’s holiday activities to help minimize conflicts. Make your Christmas card list now. Address envelopes and begin writing cards.

Above all, remember, celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus. Enjoy your family, friends and blessings.

Holiday cheer is worth protecting

Here we are facing a gauntlet of the 2013 holiday seasons, with an ever increasing demand from our picture perfect expectations to do more and more. This financial and emotional marathon can leave some of us a burned out, irritable mess when the time arrives to actually enjoy the moment. Protect your holiday cheer by capturing a moment of clarity.

Start by asking yourself some basic and profound questions. What am I celebrating? Hold on to this answer. It should have a major influence on how you want to celebrate your holiday.

What values do you think of when you think about your holiday? Do your celebration plans reflect these values? Let the answers to these questions influence you in your gift giving, entertaining and family time. Your house can be a little less clean; your gifts can be a little less expensive; and you can prioritize where you invest your social commitments.

Also never forget the freedom that saying “no” at the right moment provides. Taking time to reflect prepares you for a most wonderful season of distractions and entertainment. Hold fast to the reason for the season. Don’t allow it to be lost to the demands of holiday culture.

BRIDGES OF BALDWIN

BRIDGES of Baldwin is well underway. Getting Ahead curriculum logistics, such as participant meals, childcare, transportation and incentives, are being planned.

The first GA group will consist of six-eight individuals/families served by CSS. Recruitment will take place in October and November.

GA orientation is scheduled for Jan. 9, 2014 with the first class to launch on Jan. 16, 2014 at St. Patrick Catholic Church. We are excited to offer a power-based program that will serve to facilitate transition out of poverty and transform lives in our community.

The first advisory committee meeting was held Sept. 27 at the conference room of CSS in Robertsdale. The following were in attendance representing their particular entity: Sonya Connor, for the City of Robertsdale; Kathy Dupre, representing townspeople; Marita Johnson, for the local Hispanic community; the Rev. Patrick Madden of St. Patrick Catholic Church, for the religious community; and Lt. Shawn Miller of the Foley Police Department, for local law enforcement.

A second meeting is scheduled for Oct. 11 at 1 p.m.
IMMIGRATION

Among Stella Knight’s many duties as an immigration specialist is working with people in the community who can help her immigrant clients overcome certain challenges.

One such challenge is that which her high school-age clients face when they’re ready to leave school and apply for entrance to college, specifically when they apply for scholarships.

Local banker Chase Schmidt, a recent volunteer recruit, came to Stella’s rescue with his offer to head up a mentor program. The program will help students maneuver their way through the paperwork maze. The committee will be able to work with the students and their parents to make sense of the scholarship application process from beginning to end.

A start-up meeting was held for this mentoring program in early September where CSS staff members, volunteers and community leaders got together to initiate the process. Along with Stella and Chase were CSS volunteers Marita Johnson, Mindy Jones, Kim Edgerton, Dixie Grout, Mike Grout and Karen McDermott; Janna Schmidt, a teacher at Christ the King Catholic School; Dana Wolff of Faulkner State Community College; and Rose Metzger, a local attorney.

The group talked about the need for staying in touch with the students electronically; reporting procedures; inviting the parents to the sessions and keeping them informed; individual development accounts for the students; goals; DACA students; and mentoring the students.

A second session for the mentoring program is scheduled for later this fall when the students and their parents will be invited.

VOLUNTEERS ARE THE GOLD STANDARD AT CSS

During the third quarter of 2013, 70 volunteers contributed 2,026 hours to our ministry.

In the Thrift Shop, 17 volunteers provided 1,457.5 hours.
In the Food Pantry, seven volunteers gave 142.75 hours.
In the Bread Ministry, nine volunteers served 83.75 hours.
Two Emergency Food Assistance volunteers contributed 46.25 hours.
Six Immigration Program volunteers furnished 69 hours.
Helping with mail-outs was one volunteer who worked 9.75 hours.
Twenty-five volunteers logged 189.5 hours for Project REACH.

Catholic Social Services staff members, donors and board members have a special place in their hearts for the tireless efforts of these awesome volunteers.

We thank them most assuredly and ask God to bless them richly.

DISABLED HOMELESS PROJECT

We are getting close to the end of our first year with Baldwin Community Housing. This grant began Oct. 1, 2012 and allowed us to lease an additional eight units. These units are for disabled homeless individuals or families that meet the HUD definition of chronic homelessness. As with our current grant, the head of household must have the disability.

To be considered chronically homeless, one must have been continually homeless for one year or more or have four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. We have filled half of these units with participants that meet these criteria. These are proving to be difficult cases, but we are seeing some amazing successes.

For our original grant, the Permanent Housing for the Disabled Homeless, we have submitted a grant amendment request to push our census from eight to 10 units to try and meet the increasing needs of the homeless in Baldwin County.

Of the persons we are serving in the DHP:
- Three of our clients have been approved for subsidized housing and are on the waiting list for affordable housing;
- A client who came to us from Mary’s Shelter celebrated her child’s sixth birthday;
- A teenage son of a single mom made his high school football team and we were able to give him cleats and other needed items so he could pursue his dream.

We are getting close to the end of our first year with Baldwin Community Housing. This grant began Oct. 1, 2012 and allowed us to lease an additional eight units. These units are for disabled homeless individuals or families that meet the HUD definition of chronic homelessness. As with our current grant, the head of household must have the disability.

To be considered chronically homeless, one must have been continually homeless for one year or more or have four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. We have filled half of these units with participants that meet these criteria. These are proving to be difficult cases, but we are seeing some amazing successes.

For our original grant, the Permanent Housing for the Disabled Homeless, we have submitted a grant amendment request to push our census from eight to 10 units to try and meet the increasing needs of the homeless in Baldwin County.

Of the persons we are serving in the DHP:
- Three of our clients have been approved for subsidized housing and are on the waiting list for affordable housing;
- A client who came to us from Mary’s Shelter celebrated her child’s sixth birthday;
- A teenage son of a single mom made his high school football team and we were able to give him cleats and other needed items so he could pursue his dream.

IMMIGRATION

Among Stella Knight’s many duties as an immigration specialist is working with people in the community who can help her immigrant clients overcome certain challenges.

One such challenge is that which her high school-age clients face when they’re ready to leave school and apply for entrance to college, specifically when they apply for scholarships.

Local banker Chase Schmidt, a recent volunteer recruit, came to Stella’s rescue with his offer to head up a mentor program. The program will help students maneuver their way through the paperwork maze. The committee will be able to work with the students and their parents to make sense of the scholarship application process from beginning to end.

A start-up meeting was held for this mentoring program in early September where CSS staff members, volunteers and community leaders got together to initiate the process. Along with Stella and Chase were CSS volunteers Marita Johnson, Mindy Jones, Kim Edgerton, Dixie Grout, Mike Grout and Karen McDermott; Janna Schmidt, a teacher at Christ the King Catholic School; Dana Wolff of Faulkner State Community College; and Rose Metzger, a local attorney.

The group talked about the need for staying in touch with the students electronically; reporting procedures; inviting the parents to the sessions and keeping them informed; individual development accounts for the students; goals; DACA students; and mentoring the students.

A second session for the mentoring program is scheduled for later this fall when the students and their parents will be invited.
**HAPPY RETIREMENT, DEAR FRIEND**

Rose-Ann Tuck has been a fixture at Catholic Social Services for many years. Clientele who frequent the Thrift Store will recognize her right off as one of our friendly faces on Saturday. Well, she is on the track to retire from CSS on December 31, one month after reaching her 70th birthday. She hopes to do some traveling and visiting with relatives that she hasn’t been able to do these past few years.

Rose-Ann started life in a military family, and has done significant traveling because of the combined service of her father and step-father, both of whom were in the U.S. Armed Forces. Those travels took her to Europe and Central America and various parts of the United States, primarily centered around military bases.

She stayed for quite some time in Huntsville near Redstone Arsenal, where she worked in the nonprofit and for-profit venues. She was a pioneer in her day, defending the causes of the underprivileged long before it was a popular notion or even before she had the idea to come work for CSS in Baldwin County.

Rose-Ann holds an associate’s degree from Faulkner State Community College, a paralegal certificate and is currently working toward a Liberal Arts degree from the University of South Alabama in the Adult Degree Program.

Rose-Ann has given birth to five children: Sam, John, Catherine, Petty and Sharron. Catherine has passed away, but Rose-Ann is active in the lives of the rest of her children, her nine grandsons, four granddaughters and seven great-grandchildren.

She lives on a large piece of property in the Loxley area with her son John and his family on one side of her and her daughter Sharron and her family living on the other side. She shares her home with three elderly Jack Russell terriers and six Chihuahuas.

Also on the grounds are a garden, which is maintained by her son-in-law, a fish pond and a shooting range.

Upon retirement, Rose-Ann will continue a Sunday afternoon tradition she has established with family and friends of sharing dinner under the oak trees on the family compound, but she cautions that if you don’t show up for the meal, they might just talk about you.

Stop by the Thrift Store any Saturday before the end of the year to wish Rose-Ann a fond farewell. We'll miss her pearls of wisdom and sage advice. God bless you Rose-Ann. You’ve done good work for Catholic Social Services.

---

**2013 ADVISORY BOARD, CSS BALDWIN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob Barnett</td>
<td>President, Orange Beach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommy Cain</td>
<td>Vice president, Spanish Fort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne Laurier</td>
<td>Secretary, Orange Beach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Barnett</td>
<td>Orange Beach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Duryea</td>
<td>Bay Minette</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starr Flynn</td>
<td>Spanish Fort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne Franz</td>
<td>Gulf Shores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nita Kaiser</td>
<td>Elberta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Kaufman</td>
<td>Daphne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally McKinney</td>
<td>Lillian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Murphy</td>
<td>Robertsdale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Pignataro</td>
<td>Orange Beach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacque Odom</td>
<td>Daphne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Roszkowski</td>
<td>Fairhope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valery Smith</td>
<td>Daphne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Steve Spining</td>
<td>Robertsdale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne Stewart</td>
<td>Magnolia Springs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordy Drollinger</td>
<td>Lifetime Honorary, Foley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Ex-Officio Advisory Board**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most Reverend Thomas J. Rodi</td>
<td>Archbishop of Mobile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn D. King</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catholic Social Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Archdiocese of Mobile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Catholic Social Services of Baldwin County**

**United Way**

A United Way
Community Partner