

SERVICE IN ACTION

May 2023



Trang Coulon – 2023 CCUSA Volunteer of the Year!

Who is CCUSA? Catholic Charities USA is a nationwide umbrella organization tying individual Catholic Charities across the US to the universal mission of the Church. They provide advocacy, training, and support/guidance to their member agencies. There are more than 168 Catholic Charities member agencies under CCUSA, each able to nominate 3 volunteers. **That's over 500 volunteers from which Trang was selected!**

Trang and her husband Tim are also CCEOK's Volunteers of the Year. Trang has served at CCEOK since 2014 and holds a lead role in The Market. Trang, with Tim's help, started the Matthew:25 Closet to help homeless people that come to The Market in need of items like coats, socks, toiletries or other items.

"Our mission at Catholic Charities is carried out by dedicated volunteers who seek Christ in the poor," said Deacon Kevin Sartorius, CEO of CCEOK. "This is so evident in the humble service provided by Trang. She shows dignity to her coworkers and to everyone who graces our door."

Congratulations also to Felix Cuellar and Mickey Butler for being CCEOK's 2023 Volunteer of the Year nominees.

Felix Cuellar, a longtime volunteer in The Market, spends countless hours volunteering with Afghan

Refugee Resettlement and as a support team ensuring several families transition successfully to life in the U.S. and Tulsa. Felix has also volunteered for many years wherever there is a need, including Adult Education, The Kitchen, Disaster Outreach and in The Garden.

For more than three years, **Mickey Butler** has devoted herself to launching CCEOK's Grief to Grace program, a 5-day overnight retreat that provides integrated psychological and spiritual healing from the aftermath of abuse. Grief to Grace's first retreat was just this month. Mickey was selected as one of the five 2023 Volunteer of the Year finalists by CCUSA!

CCEOK has incredibly dedicated volunteers across all programs and outreach locations. "Choosing just three people from among our many, many amazing volunteers across all of CCEOK is very hard," said CCEOK Volunteer Engagement Director, Kelly Cassidy. "If it was up to us, we could easily submit many names."

Day in and day out, we see that CCEOK volunteers are passionate about making a difference in our community. They're generous with their time and talents, and they are truly showing the world how by working together, we can make a bigger difference in the lives of those we serve."

Healing After Abortion

Rachel's Vineyard is a national program that helps anyone who has been affected by an abortion (not just mothers; for example, fathers, grandparents, husbands, boyfriends, etc) to face and deal with their grief, and by acknowledging those feelings, exhibit fuller relationships with God and the other people close to them.

The confidential, non-denominational, and non-judgmental program integrates social, emotional, psychological, and foundational Catholic spiritual components into a two-and-a-half-day retreat where participants who have applied and have gone through an interview/counseling process are invited to spend a long weekend taking part in rituals, group activities, prayer, therapy. The retreat space is converted into a welcoming, home-like atmosphere with carpets, curtains, flowers, and warm lighting.

Catholic Charities (CCEOK) holds retreats in English and Spanish



each year and teams with the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City to promote retreats across the state of Oklahoma.

Volunteers are key to the success of this program. There is a small group of 'core' volunteers who help run the program itself. Up to five weeks of preparation is required for each retreat. These core volunteers facilitate the group activities, prayers, and scripture readings during the retreat. There is another group of volunteers who work to prepare the retreat environment, cook meals in the kitchen, and clean up and pack everything up at the end.

The manager of Rachel's Vineyard, Irene Maldonado, is a licensed Professional Clinical Counselor. She is always looking for volunteers that can help with the retreats. About 20 volunteers are needed for each retreat. She publicizes both the program and the need for volunteers through church bulletins, engagement with pastors from other faiths, and on St. Michael's Catholic Radio (94.9FM).

For more information on Rachel's Vineyard, visit cceok.org/healing or visit the national website at rachelsvineyard.org. To volunteer, contact the Catholic Charities Volunteer Office at volunteer@cceok.org.



CCEOK celebrated our incredible volunteers during National Volunteer Appreciation Week, April 16-22. Programs made and displayed special posters celebrating their volunteers. The Volunteer Office hosted an ice cream social on Monday, April 17, and a BBQ on Friday, April 21.

A big THANK YOU to all of our CCEOK volunteers!



HANDS OF CHRIST

By Sr. Lucy Marie Fitzmorris

My job at Catholic Charities means that I mostly work behind the scenes. I don't interact directly with our clients very often compared to most of you. I do have the blessing, however, to be able to work with and alongside staff members (employees and volunteers) from all of the CCEOK locations. This community of people is one of the main reasons I love working at Catholic Charities. I think it can be easy to forget that those who suffer are not just our clients, but us serving them, too. I make Christ's merciful love present to those clients I happen to meet, but I hope to do the same for our staff, too. I want to be Christ's hands while I am in a meeting, in the warehouse, or sitting at my desk writing emails.

As Christians, we are called to imitate Christ. For me, I often forget in practice that Christ is both divine and human. I try to imitate his divinity and forget that I am also called to imitate his humanity. It seems like Jesus could have held out hands to the Apostle Thomas that were miraculously and divinely healed from the marks of Good Friday, but he didn't. He held out his wounded and human hands and let Thomas touch them and so Thomas believed.

Christ's wounded hands call me to the humility to hold out my own self, wounds and all to my coworkers and to humbly share in their wounds too. None of us is perfect, but that shouldn't stop us from serving others. In fact, it lets us serve better. All of us bear wounds and all of us have been forgiven and redeemed by the wounds of Christ. Let us serve one another as we continue to serve our clients daily.



Barbara Huff

marks 35 years of dedicated service to Catholic Charities Sallisaw. We love you Barbara and hope you'll be around for another 35!!!



to all of our newest volunteers!

- Grace Welch – Dental
- Kathy Owens - Kitchen
- Brennie Gregg – MMO
- Margarita Barbosa – Muskogee
- Joyce Husen – Porta Caeli House
- Irene Mecionis – Refugee Resettlement



Kansas City's Bishop Miego High School baseball team visited Tulsa for a tournament, which meant the students would miss the school's day of service. So, these high schoolers decided to volunteer at CCEOK in our Market, garden and warehouse. What a great spirit of service!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May - Mental Health Awareness Month
- May 3 - May Crowning at 3:15 Tulsa Campus
- May 23 - Adult Education Graduation
- May 26-28 - Rachels Vineyard Retreat in Spanish
- May 27 - The Market will be closed for Memorial Day
- May 29 - All CCEOK locations closed for Memorial Day



SAVE THE DATE

The Annual Volunteer Appreciation Party will be Friday, June 23rd!

Volunteer Info Sessions

Looking for new ways to get involved? Scan the QR codes and come to an information session for our Refugee Resettlement and Culinary Training Programs.



May 11 - Refugee Resettlement Volunteer Training and Info Session



May 16 & 18 - Culinary Training Program Volunteer Informational Session

GET INVOLVED



Volunteer with us! cceok.org/volunteer
 Join our Facebook Group!
 For story ideas, feedback, etc.,
 email: volcommunications@cceok.org

MAKE A DONATION!

