

# SERVICE IN ACTION

September 2023



**Mary Martha Outreach**



Catholic Charities Mary Martha Outreach (CC-MMO) Bartlesville is in a warehouse building on the west side of town, across the street from a big complex of modern buildings that house the Conoco-Phillips labs. The juxtaposition of the labs and CC-MMO couldn't be more striking. Who knows what sort of cool projects that might affect millions are being considered in the labs, but also who knows the impact CC-MMO makes on both the less fortunate people of that city, and the volunteers that work there?

CC-MMO provides food, clothing, diapers, housewares, sundries, furniture and bedding, and sometimes haircuts to clients who have signed up for their services. Everything MMO provides to clients are from donations. Housewares must be in working order, clothing must be clean, and bedding and furniture is vetted.

CC-MMO is staffed by only two full-time, and four part-time employees. The bulk of the work is handled by a dedicated group of volunteers – in fact, the scope and breadth of the operation in Bartlesville simply could not function without volunteers.

An interesting aside about the volunteers: about 30% of them are also clients. You can't identify who is who,

but clients who have expressed an interest in volunteering – to give back or to pay it forward – are seamlessly integrated into the operation. The fact that some of the volunteers are clients makes absolutely no difference to anyone there.

Employees and volunteers at CC-MMO are a tight group. Everyone knows one another, joke and tease each other, and work well with each other. No regular volunteer schedule is maintained, but somehow the number of volunteers on site is always enough to get the work done. Occasionally, local civic and church groups are scheduled.

CC-MMO volunteers also staff special projects – like providing clothes for kids in foster care, the Afghan resettlement, a Day of Blessings, sorting large food and clothing donations, and the annual ShamRock the 'Ville run.

If you're in the area on a weekday morning (except Friday) you really should drop in and watch the well-oiled machine that is CC-MMO. You'd be amazed at what can be accomplished with the dedicated employees and volunteers who make it all happen.



## Disaster Outreach

Catholic Charities of Eastern Oklahoma (CCEOK) offers a range of services to individuals in the 31 counties of Eastern Oklahoma affected by natural disasters – tornadoes, floods, strong winds, and wildfires, as well as house fires. Disaster Outreach receives grants from Catholic Charities USA to help folks partially recover from house and apartment fires, but for larger-scale natural disasters, they partner with other faith-based and secular organizations as well as with FEMA. These organizations assist individuals in recovering from a disaster event. And, as it turns out, those local organizations are members of a group called “VOAD” – or Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters.

The OK VOAD chapter includes 14 organizations; each group having specific specializations. For example, the Baptists are known for being good at debris and tree removal, the Lutherans fund, Latter Day Saints contribute food and other supplies, the Mennonites build houses and make repairs, and CCEOK provides case management. When a natural disaster becomes federally declared, we work with FEMA to get federal funds to eligible disaster survivors.

Case management is much more involved than just identifying and tracking people who were affected by an event. Once the required documents are gathered, case managers connect the disaster survivors with the resources that will help them recover and get their lives back to a new normal. Part of disaster case management involves maintaining case files and inputting survivor information into an online database.



As with other CCEOK programs, the time and effort that volunteers contribute is key to delivery of these services. Volunteer roles include outreach callers, performing ongoing case work, providing furniture pick-up and delivery, performing minor repairs, manning special events, assisting with public presentations, data entry, creating and filing paperwork, and staffing special projects, all of which is organized by volunteer coordinator Robin Abbott, who is a volunteer herself. While disaster services training is a plus, it is not required. We realize that all our volunteers have experience and skills that would transfer and greatly benefit Disaster Outreach! Training will be provided.

Prospective volunteers are encouraged to contact Robin Abbott at [aavolunter@cceok.org](mailto:aavolunter@cceok.org). Helping those who have been affected by disasters is challenging, but very rewarding!

# HANDS OF CHRIST

## Debbie Glasco, Catholic Charities Ministry of Compassion volunteer

I have been at Catholic Charities Ministry of Compassion (CC-MOC) for many years as a resource volunteer. It is a heartwarming experience to know that you can make a difference for the people who come for help. Making a difference for these people, no matter how small, is a blessing. Many of our clients have very little and live day to day with incredible stress, sadness and fear.

Every once in a while, a client comes to our ministry for help which is beyond what we can accomplish in our short day. Not long ago, one such client asked me to assist him in getting his birth certificate. He was well known to us as he would come by frequently for coffee and snacks after he attended Mass. He was homeless except for an occasional hotel stay after panhandling money to afford a warm room. He shared with me that the cold weather made his back pain worse since his back surgery years ago. I prayed and asked our Lord to help me help this delightful man with his request. If he had a birth certificate he could apply for Social Security, which would provide him with a guaranteed income and allow him a place to live away from the streets.

We started to complete the application but quickly realized there were many areas he could not remember. After many phone calls to relatives, I was able to submit his application. It was initially rejected due to the wrong parent's middle name. However, it was finally accepted, and he received his birth certificate within a week. Shortly thereafter, he applied for his Social Security and should receive his benefits within a few months. After learning he would receive his benefits, he came to CC-MOC to share his good news. It was an emotional moment to see him smiling and verbalizing his excitement to finally know his benefits were soon to be on their way. I feel so blessed to believe Christ placed me in this client's path to be "His Hands" to assist him in improving his living conditions. He has endured so much but always has such faith and joy, and he loves our Lord. He is truly someone to admire. Thank you, Jesus.



A big CCEOK

WELCOME

to all of our newest volunteers!

Cathy Campbell – Education  
Russell Lawson – Education  
Kate Lyon – Garden  
Owen Baumgartner – Immigration  
Lorena Garcia – The Market  
Grey O'Rourke - Muskogee  
Jordan Datson – Muskogee  
Elizabeth McClain – Porta Caeli House  
Annalyn Sullivan – Porta Caeli House



Thanks Cascia Hall and St. Pius X staff for volunteering with us!



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Oct. 7th - MOCtoberfest for CC Ministry of Compassion

Oct. 13th at 11:30AM - Day of Remembrance Mass for the Unborn



Thanksgiving Day of Blessings is coming up on Nov. 18th!

**THE MARKET**  
AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES

**ALTERED HOURS**

**CLOSED**  
Labor Day, Monday Sept. 4  
& Friday Sept. 8

**CLOSING EARLY**  
Friday Sept. 29  
9am - noon

## GET INVOLVED



Volunteer with us! [cceok.org/volunteer](http://cceok.org/volunteer)  
Join our Facebook Group!  
For story ideas, feedback, etc.,  
email: [volcommunications@cceok.org](mailto:volcommunications@cceok.org)

MAKE A DONATION!

