

# SERVICE IN ACTION

March 2024



## Education program runs on volunteers!

The Adult Education program has a new Volunteer Coordinator. Her name is Joell Griswold. Joell is a mother of three, a former STEM and Specials teacher at Oologah, a small-business owner, real estate agent and has a background in medical recruiting. She came to Catholic Charities last fall when she heard through a friend about an opening in the department.

Even with a number of dedicated volunteers, both core and substitute, Joell is in dire need of additional Spanish-speaking substitute teachers for the HiSET (High School Equivalency Test) program. This program offers language arts (reading and writing), math, science and social studies classes to adults who can earn their high school diplomas when they pass the HiSET exam. No specific knowledge in any of these subjects is required, because the curriculum is pre-determined and a basic requirement to communicate the contents is all that is needed.

HiSET classes are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays, at 9am, 10:30am, and 6pm. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are offered at the same times, but on Mondays and Wednesdays. Between 30 and 35 core volunteers teach both offerings this semester, but only about 8 to 10 substitutes are available to



cover the unavailable core volunteers currently. Next semester, the program may need additional core volunteers and substitutes, as the offerings or staffing levels may change.

Volunteers spend time in the classroom and can prepare for each week's class in about an hour to 90 minutes – so not much additional time is required outside the classroom.

The semester schedule follows that of the Tulsa Public Schools – this semester goes up until the first week in May and graduation is set for May 21st.

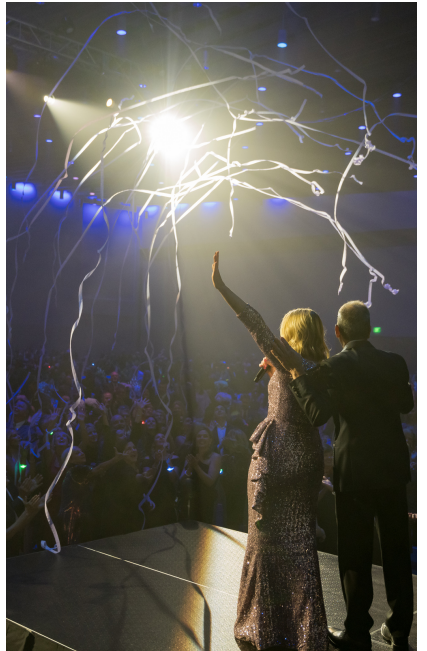
The HiSET program is really preparation for an exam – so the number of semesters and a class schedule is determined on an individual basis. Classes are offered in both English and Spanish at CC. There is a waiting list to get into the ESL classes.

Joell is trying to get the word out to parishes and through other outlets that there IS an Adult Education program at CC, to solicit additional students and... volunteers... because without a dedicated group of core and substitute volunteers, NONE of this would happen.





Thanks for a record-breaking Cooking Up Compassion!  
Every moment was filled with love and generosity...it truly is the best party in town!





# HANDS OF CHRIST

By Cheryl Huber, garden volunteer

Let my eyes be your eyes,  
sharing compassion, warmth and love.  
Let my hands be your hands,  
bringing healing with their touch.  
Let my ears be your ears,  
listening where there is need.  
Let my words be your words,  
bringing comfort joy and peace.  
Use these hands to carry the burden.  
Use this voice to carry your word.  
Use these feet to walk in your footsteps.  
Use this heart to transform the world.”

I've prayed some form of this prayer daily for many years. I googled this prayer and found it is credited to the John Birch Society.

My life in the garden is a prayer. Sometimes it is difficult work, requiring hard labor and subjecting myself to wicked weather. I call this penitence.

Sometimes the garden is alive, and I see the presence of God's creation unfold before my very eyes. I am humbled to be a witness to such beauty. I call this a glimpse of heaven.

I used to garden with my grandmother. We bonded over propagation of begonias and transplanting daylilies in her garden. My grandparents would sit with me on the porch, and we would listen to the sounds of nature. I call this the communion of saints because they are with me in the garden, always.

Most of the time, I am grateful to be in the company of great friends who I have come to know through the gardens. Others who share the love for the outdoors, and the knowledge of how to protect the home that God has provided for us all. I call them friends.

We share our time together to grow food, beautify the campus, and to teach others how to care for the environment. We do this because it feels right. We believe it is beneficial, and we believe that it is for the glory of God.

My dream is for our garden ministry to grow. I pray others will sacrifice their time to get a glimpse of heaven, to feel the creation around them and friends who will encourage them to glorify God.



A big CCEOK

≡ Welcome ≡

to all of our newest volunteers!

Benny Brumley – Auto Shop  
Irie Boss - Dental  
David Gutierrez - Dental  
Preston Patrick – Dental  
Brett Stallings, DDS – Dental  
Ashley Rincon - Education  
Phajja Nwadiie – Front Desk & Kitchen  
Jackelyne Blancas – Immigration  
Jesson Diaz – The Market  
Francheska Guccione – The Market  
Michael Henderson – The Market  
Lawrence Harris – The Market  
Robin Penner – The Market  
Sandra Penner – The Market  
Lannie Ellis – McAlester  
Nikki Chambers – Ministry of Compassion  
Inez Espalin – Ministry of Compassion  
Paula Farrell – Ministry of Compassion  
William O'Daniel - Ministry of Compassion  
Susan McBride - Muskogee  
Carol Songe - Muskogee  
Dug Songe - Muskogee  
Sheridan Burlingame – Porta Caeli House  
Martha de Verges – Porta Caeli House  
Timothy Ihrig – Porta Caeli House  
Milena Jensen – Porta Caeli House  
Patrice King – Porta Caeli House  
Harriet Kushnerick – Porta Caeli House  
Ashley Rangel – Porta Caeli House  
Ayesha Karimi – Refugee Resettlement  
Omid Mobarezpoor – Refugee Resettlement  
Debra Sanders - Sallisaw  
Mike Barrett – Warehouse  
Alisa Watson - Warehouse  
Paula Robertson - Wilburton



## CCEOK welcomes monarch migrants; and so can you!

Did you know CCEOK is a welcoming and certified waystation for the migrating monarch butterfly? Thanks to the work of Catholic Charities' garden team, milkweed and nectar plants are growing in front of Madonna House, which has been an official monarch waystation since March 2023. Monarchs can also be seen in our main garden too!

According to a recent Oklahoma City Zoo social media post, "...the overwintering population of monarchs has decreased by nearly 60% from last year." And, lower numbers mean there could be fewer monarchs during their summer migration. The zoo, and others, are asking everyone to do their part in planting flowers helpful to the monarchs so the population can rebound.

"We have to do all we can to preserve the monarchs and support their migration," added CCEOK's Garden Coordinator, Anita Mills.

Got to [www.okiesformonarchs.org](http://www.okiesformonarchs.org) for more information on what you can plant around your home or garden to help the migrating monarchs!



**192**  
Groups volunteered in 2023, totaling  
**2,688**  
volunteers!

## 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!

