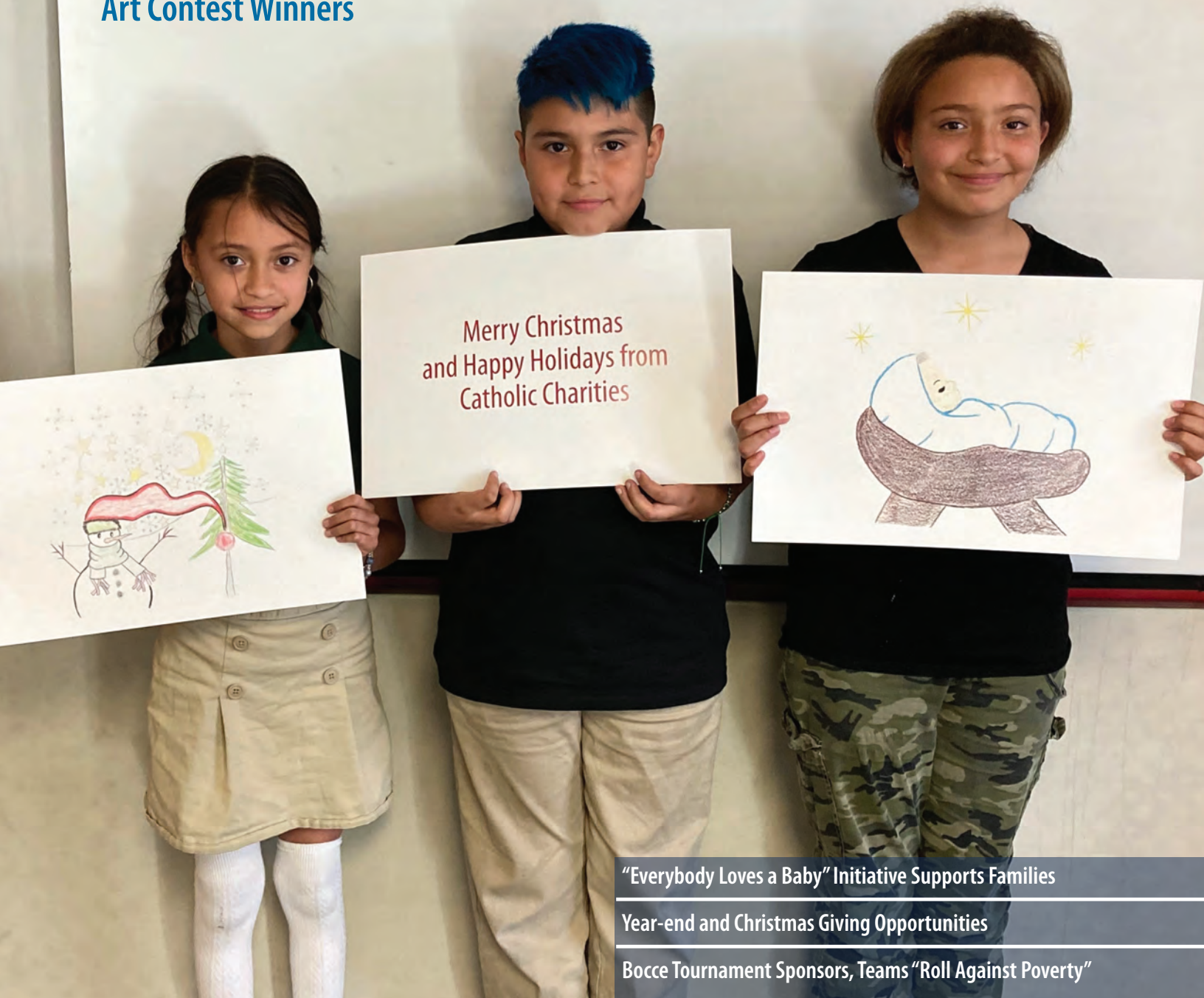


Voices of Hope

WINTER 2022

Congratulations to
Christmas Card
Art Contest Winners



"Everybody Loves a Baby" Initiative Supports Families

Year-end and Christmas Giving Opportunities

Bocce Tournament Sponsors, Teams "Roll Against Poverty"

FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

During this holiday season I am so grateful for the blessings we have received. And at the same time, I am very aware of the families in our midst who struggle as they face the anxiety of daily survival and poverty.



How do we pass our blessings on to those who need our help? How do we help them move from crisis to sustainable self-sufficiency?

The daily poverty that families in our valley face weighs on the soul. Too many of our families face daily hunger and the constant threat of homelessness as the cost of food and rent rises faster than their incomes. Both our drive-through and walk-in food distribution sites are surging with demand, with some parishes seeing more than 1,000 families in one day. We urgently need your help to feed the hungry and to break the cycle of poverty.



We need to address the immediate crisis of hunger and threat of homelessness and develop holistic solutions to prevent poverty and promote greater economic mobility. Thanks to our generous donors, Catholic Charities makes a difference in *alleviating* the immediate crises—through food, housing and mental health assistance—and in *disrupting* the cycle of poverty through education, employment, and wrap-around supports.

In this season of hope, I invite you to invest through Catholic Charities to help our neighbors in need. Through your generous gift, you can truly change lives for good.

God bless you.

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads 'Gregory R. Kepferle'.

Gregory R. Kepferle
CEO



Our Cover Photo

For the fifth year, Catholic Charities held a contest giving students in our CORAL after-school program an opportunity to design the agency's annual Christmas card. With more than 100 art entries this year from students at multiple CORAL program sites, our 2022 winners were from Spartan Keys. Our three winners who worked together to create the winning artwork are: Ahaleah Caudillo, grade 4; Dorian Aranda, grade 6; and Olivia Rodriguez, grade 7.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Family transformed by support through Parish Engagement and its new initiative, “Everybody Loves a Baby”

Feeling persecution in their native Russia, Zarina and her family — husband, Jonny, and their young daughter— traveled on the backs of shipping barges all the way to the Bay area. Today, the family has made great progress in achieving self-sufficiency due to their own hard work and the support of Catholic Charities and its Parish Engagement Program.

“Their amazing story really highlights the importance of a community-based, multi-service approach to addressing a family’s needs so they can thrive,” said Bridget Balajadia, the Program Director of Parish Engagement, which helped the family navigate through other Catholic Charities resources to meet their needs including food, housing, education, employment, legal counseling, and material goods.

After their initial arrival, Zarina reached out to Catholic Charities to get clothing for her daughter and was connected with the Parish Engagement Office at Our Lady of Refuge Parish in San Jose. Our staff managed to help her through a translation app and learned the family was living in a storage container with no access to electricity or running water. And Zarina was unexpectedly pregnant with their second child.

Through the “Everybody Loves a Baby” initiative, a group of volunteers from Santa Teresa Parish in South San Jose quickly sprang into action and assembled a list of what



Zarina’s family needed. Meanwhile, the Parish Engagement team worked with a local generous landlord who rented the family an apartment at a much lower rate than what he would typically charge. Catholic Charities provided initial rent support while the volunteers from “Everybody Loves a Baby” gathered not only clothing and items needed for Zarina’s pregnancy, but also furniture, cooking and cleaning supplies. Volunteers helped enroll the family’s eldest daughter in school and signed up for childcare.



Zarina and Jonny’s daughters will have a new sibling arriving in December.

Jonny began working at a job in the moving business while Zarina accessed Pathways, an Employment Network program at Catholic Charities. When Jonny got COVID last year and was unable to work for a month, our Housing department was able to cover the rent for them so that they would stay housed. The family also received groceries from our food distribution and met with our Immigration Legal Services team for legal advice regarding their asylum process.

Zarina is currently expecting their third child and the family is joyfully awaiting the baby’s arrival in December. “Everybody Loves a Baby” continues to support her and her children with diapers and formula as needed when money runs tight for the family.

“We couldn’t have done it without support from Catholic Charities,” Zarina said. ■

“Everybody Loves a Baby” is based at Santa Teresa Parish and provides essential baby needs, support for maternal care, breastfeeding support, and limited financial assistance. Learn more by calling 408-829-7104.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Five Ways to Support Catholic Charities this Christmas and Holiday Season

1 Sign Up for AmazonSmile

With AmazonSmile, your online holiday shopping can support Catholic Charities at no cost to you.

Visit smile.amazon.com to learn more.



amazon smile

2 Donate Gift Cards for Season of Sharing

Donations of gift cards make the holidays brighter for Catholic Charities clients. We recommend Target, Walmart or Visa gift cards. For information, email Nick Ingoglia, ningoglia@catholiccharitiescc.org or call (408) 325-5250.



3 Matching Gifts through Your Employer

Please visit our donation page at ccsc.org/donate where you may search your company's name and get information and documentation on your employer's matching gifts.



4 Donate a Car or Boat

We accept working or non-working vehicles with free towing of your donated vehicle. For information, please visit ccsc.org/car-donations or call 408-209-1924.



5 Support for our Neighbors in Need

During the holidays and throughout the year, Catholic Charities provides support for families and individuals on their journeys to self-sufficiency. Our integrated services meet families' multiple needs—food, housing, mental and physical health, employment and education—to ensure economic mobility. Please visit ccsc.org/donate to make your gift today.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Sharing Inspiring Stories from our Clients

Catholic Charities supports youth, adults and families with a focus on where they are – and where they want to go. In all of our programs, our staff and volunteers prioritize “client self-determination” as each individual and family decides what they want for their own lives. Then we provide the tools, resources, support, and opportunities with a focus on hope for their individual journeys.

Meet Brandy and James, two amazing individuals who were served through Catholic Charities programs and realized their dreams for a successful future.

Living on the streets, James would come to The Window at John XXIII for his mail, toiletries, sandwiches, service navigation, and emotional support. Through The Window’s service navigator, Richard, he was referred to our adjacent program, Bridges of Hope, which supports individuals rebuilding their lives after incarceration. His case manager there, Jesse, worked with James to connect him to resources and compassionately listened to his struggles.

James had a setback, violating his probation and briefly returned to jail. Reflecting from his jail cell, he remembered Catholic Charities’ staff members: Jesse’s kindness had made an impression on him, along with words of wisdom from Richard. He reconnected with Bridges of Hope after his release in early 2022, saying: “This time, I will make it.” He told Jesse he wanted to put God

first so that he could finally live a life that is honest, productive, drug free, and centered around his family.

“For the first time in my life, I had a support team and a plan rather than coming out of jail lost. I hit the ground running,” James said.

Under Jesse’s guidance, James graduated from trucking school and now works as a truck driver, which was a goal he set for himself. He also is living independently, now in his own apartment, focusing on positive activities such as cooking and reading books from the library in his time off. James also has repaired broken relationships with his mother, father and 13-year-old daughter—and is now paying child support. Today, James has successfully graduated from Bridges of Hope and gives his thanks to all who supported his journey.



James and Jesse

“I want to share my tremendous gratitude for Catholic Charities donors,” James said. “Their support is truly felt and it really does make a difference.” ■



Brandy

As a high school junior in 2020, Brandy started helping out at Washington United Youth Center’s late-night gym program serving teens and young adults. Staff members relied on her maturity and saw her transform from a shy teen to a leader. She also assisted at the Franklin-McKinley Children’s Initiative summer drop-in program. Brandy loved coming to the Center because of the encouraging staff who supported her college application process.

“The love and support I got at Washington United Youth Center helped prepare me for the future,” Brandy said. “They became like a second family to me.”

Today, Brandy is a freshman at Utah Tech University with plans to become a pediatrician. The oldest of seven children and first in her family to attend college, she expresses heartfelt gratitude to the Catholic Charities staff that motivated and pushed her to be successful.

Brandy’s mom said her success positively impacts their entire family: “She is a great example for her younger siblings. Her graduating and going off to college means everything to our family, especially for me. I had Brandy at the very young age of seventeen and didn’t finish high school or college. I told her to go to college and enjoy it for both of us!” ■

SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Munisha Vohra

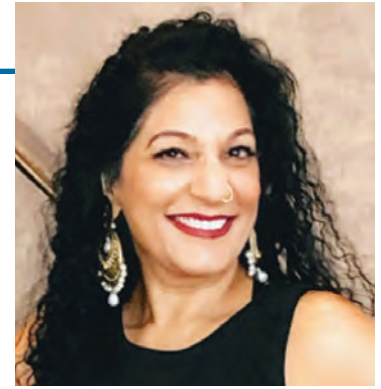
Dr. Munisha Vohra joined the management staff of Catholic Charities in early 2022, bringing 30 years of experience in providing mental health services and support for vulnerable populations.

"I have been blessed to have a career focused on serving and empowering people who have experienced profound trauma," said Munisha, who is the Senior Director of Clinical Services & Wellness. "Through my previous work at other organizations, I knew of the excellent reputation of Catholic Charities and its wide scope of services. I consider myself to be very mission driven and am committed to delivering on Catholic Charities' mission of 'whole-person care' as we identify and meet the real and changing needs in our communities."

Munisha brings extensive experience in program management, staff development and supervision, interagency collaboration, child welfare, and the juvenile court system. In her role, she supervises a team of more than 20 professionals and four graduate-school interns serving the mental health needs of youth, adults and elderly clients

through several Catholic Charities programs at multiple sites, including school-based sites, in Santa Clara County. Specifically, the Behavioral Health staff provide outreach, therapy, case management, and medication support. Client demographics include families on public assistance, geriatric population, and youth on probation. Munisha also supervises a team of 12 Supportive Housing Coordinators.

Munisha holds a Doctor of Psychology degree from JFK University, Master of Social Work from CSU East Bay, and a Masters from Sikh National College in India. She is also a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. In addition to English, Munisha—who immigrated to the U.S. from India as an adult—is fluent in Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu. In her spare time, Munisha enjoys jazzercise, badminton, hiking, meditation, traveling abroad and spending time with her children. ■



Dr. Munisha Vohra

Community Recognition Spotlight: Behavioral Health, First Five

The Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits, during its annual October awards event, recognized two networks Catholic Charities is proud to be a part of: the Behavioral Health Contractors Association (BHCA), Recipient of the 2022 Nonprofit of the Year Award; and the First Five

Family Resource Centers, Recipient of the 2022 Collaborative Impact Award.

Our collective advocacy as a member of BHCA led to improvements in the system of care. Our intensive and ongoing work through the Family Resource Centers (FRCs) helped so

many families with young children survive the pandemic with diapers, formula and food distribution, creative virtual education classes and more.

Congratulations to our awesome partners and Catholic Charities staff from these divisions!



A community resource fair was part of the Shirakawa Family Resource Center's grand opening late last year. A network of FRCs—operated by Catholic Charities in partnership with First Five—support families of all backgrounds throughout Santa Clara County.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Thank you to our amazing sponsors, teams and volunteers who made our 14th Annual “Roll Against Poverty” Bocce Tournament in October a great success!



With the support of our Presenting Sponsor Republic Urban Properties and our Bocce Committee, the tournament raised \$116,000 to support our neighbors in need in our community.

Additional supporters included Title Sponsors Berliner Cohen LLP and Charities Housing, and Tournament Sponsors Swenson Builders and HMH Landscape. Our winning team this year was sponsored by JJ Albanese

and players were (pictured left to right) Aaron Taylor, Marie Franich, Blake Jaciow and Brent August. Pictured with the winners are Catholic Charities staff members Deanna Sisneros, Special Events & Individual Giving Manager, and Susan Lucas Taylor, Chief Development Officer; along with the second place team members (pictured left to right) Mike Ingoglia, Mike Cordoni, Dan Sexton, and Andrea Tarantino.

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities for Catholic Charities' events, please contact Deanna Sisneros (dsisneros@catholiccharitiesscc.org, 408-325-5191). ■



Welcome Cecilia Bynum

Catholic Charities welcomes Cecilia Bynum to the agency's Office of Development staff. Cecilia joined the team in September as Senior Director of Planned Giving & Corporate Relations. She encourages you to call and email your planned giving questions or to learn more about corporate giving opportunities: cbynum@catholiccharitiesscc.org, 408-325-5248

Consider making a tax-wise IRA rollover gift to Catholic Charities

Act now to get 2022 tax benefits while supporting our work.

For more information, visit ccsc.org/planned-giving

The Annual Caritas Society Celebration will be held on Thursday, February 9 at Santa Teresa Parish. For more information, call 408-325-5288.

Address Service Requested

 **Catholic Charities
of Santa Clara County**

 @CatholicCharSCC
@GregKepferle

 @CatholicCharitiesSCC

Catholic Charities Volunteer Opportunities

TAX EZ

Help low income families file their 2023 tax returns and claim their earned benefits. IRS-certified training provided.

TIME COMMITMENT: Three–four hours per week during tax season

MORE INFORMATION: Visit ccsc.org/tax-ez-program or email taxez@catholiccharitiesscc.org



FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Help distribute boxes of food and groceries to families and individuals in a drive-through setting.

Opportunities are also available to help with traffic control and registration.

TIME COMMITMENT: Four hours at one site weekly and volunteers may sign up for additional shifts at other weekly parish sites.

MORE INFORMATION: Visit bit.ly/volunteerccsc