

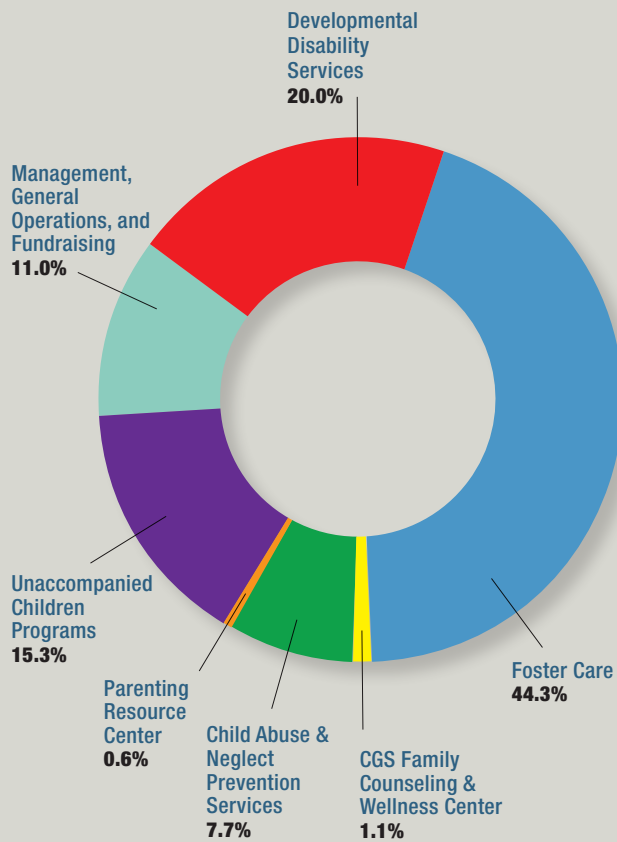
Catholic Guardian Services

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Results of Operations
Year Ended June 30, 2021

Revenues from Operations	\$65,428,532
Expenses	
Developmental Disability Services	13,018,818
Foster Care	28,813,592
CGS Family Counseling & Wellness Center	738,592
Parenting Resource Center	283,723
Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Services	4,995,374
Unaccompanied Children Programs	9,967,221
Management, General Operations and Fundraising	7,174,815
Total Expenses	64,992,135
Surplus from Operations	436,397
Investment Income	554,428
Net Surplus	\$ 990,825

EXPENSES



Financial Position
June 30, 2021

Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$10,709,795
Program Receivables	14,870,641
Other Receivables	399,518
Investments—Without Donor Restrictions	2,901,095
Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	1,313,858
Cash—Custodial Funds Held for Residents	267,734
Total Current Assets	30,462,641
Property and Equipment, Net	3,689,389
Investments—With Donor Restrictions	1,694,877
Total Assets	\$35,846,907
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 6,259,992
Contribution Payable to Mutual of America	874,330
Mortgages Payable—Current Portion	207,509
PPP Loan—Current Portion	1,422,708
Refundable Advances	3,394,253
Medicaid Relief Grant	621,823
Custodial Funds Held for Residents	267,734
Total Current Liabilities	13,048,349
Mortgages Payable—Net of Current Portion	1,727,473
PPP Loan—Net of Current Portion	7,520,029
Total Liabilities	22,295,851
Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	
Board Designated	604,592
Undesignated	11,151,587
	11,756,179
With Donor Restrictions	
Purpose	1,463,477
In Perpetuity	331,400
	1,794,877
Total Net Assets	13,551,056
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$35,846,907



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

The Catholic Guardian Services 2021 Annual Report is dedicated to our frontline heroes.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. New York City was the epicenter of the pandemic during the spring of 2020, with approximately 203,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases. The highest rates of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths were concentrated in communities of color, high-poverty areas, and among persons 75+ years of age or with underlying conditions.

The pandemic illuminated systemic inequities and vulnerabilities, as well as disparate resources and outcomes. At Catholic Guardian, we have witnessed a profound commitment to each other and those we serve. Tragically, in 2021, we lost nine foster parents and one staff member to COVID. While they are no longer with us, they remain in our hearts and prayers. Gratefully, we have not lost a single person within our care, and we feel the immensity of this great blessing.

The 2021 Annual Report is a tribute to the daily heroics of our staff members throughout our second year of COVID-19. Our workforce is comprised of 700 employees each of whom is an essential worker and contributes on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis. 50% of our workforce self-identify as Black or African American, 40% as Hispanic, 6% as white, 3% as mixed-race, and 1% as Indigenous American.

I had the privilege of speaking with Catholic Guardian staff members ranging from a wide variety of programs and leadership roles about their work and experiences throughout the pandemic. Though certain names, locations, dates, and minor details have been fictionalized to protect and honor all members of the Catholic Guardian community, the events shared in this volume are based on true stories from the experiences of Catholic Guardian's staff members.

I would like to thank our generous supporters for your courageous generosity throughout the pandemic. Your contributions, advocacy, and prayers are invaluable in bolstering our quest to safeguard and empower children and families. As partners in this sacred mission, you have entered into the very heart of sacrificial love: a fearless posture of giving and a staunch refusal to count the cost.

Please enjoy this 2021 Annual Report for Catholic Guardian Services. Heroes work here. These are just a few of their stories.

Warmest regards,

Craig Longley
Chief Executive Officer



■ RESIDENTIAL HOME, SOUTH JAMAICA, QUEENS • JANUARY 2021

Ailyn Jimenez, Catholic Guardian's Deputy Director for Family Foster Care¹, steps out of the heated interior of her car into the crisp winter air. Every exhale etches a fresh tuft of fog as she lifts the trunk lid and pulls out a clipboard. She has driven fifty minutes in her own car from her office in the Mt. Hope section of the Bronx to visit a single foster mother of two.

The mother had hoped to procure enough wipes to last until the end of the month. Ailyn, however, supplies her with facemasks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and disposable gloves. She suppresses the urge to hug the foster mother and her children because social distancing is a priority, she seamlessly resists every protest regarding the gifted supplies and she walks down the front steps empty handed.

Back in the driver's seat, she types "Grand Concourse" into Google Maps on her phone and taps "Directions." A faint border of frost has begun to creep into the fringes of her windshield. As she pulls down her seatbelt, she hesitates. Her eyebrows furrow as she stares at the dashboard, steeped in indecision. Suddenly aware of her breath, she picks up the phone and types in the first two digits of a familiar address. The search bar auto-fills the rest as she lifts the parking brake and drives off.

Galvanized out of his armchair by the sound of her engine, a man is already waiting for her at the door. "Ailyn, my dear," he croaks, with a slight gurgle in his sandpaper voice, "you didn't drive all this way just to see me, did you?"

She chuckles as she tiptoes around the snow-capped angel figurines guarding the quaint concrete pathway through the front lawn. "I was in the neighborhood. I'm just stopping by." She halts at her usual spot in front of the doorway, just shy of six feet from the interior welcome mat. "Is your sense of smell coming back at all?"

He pulls his mask down, lowers his nose to his left armpit, and exaggerates a deep sniff. He beams at her

beneath thick, graying eyebrows. "Not one bit." She cackles beneath her KN-95 and a hand-knit, purple scarf. "Won't you come in?" he asks.

"Mr. Fludd, you know I can't do that," she says, gazing through the translucent lace curtains at the small, lamp-lit living room inside.

He lowers his gaze and nods. Her eyes lock onto a familiar basket of disposable, blue shoe covers, and a roll of lavender yarn as her eyes fill with warm, wild tears. Mrs. Fludd was a retired nurse, a saint in the making, and she was as careful as anyone Ailyn had ever met. She and her husband had both contracted COVID-19, but only she developed a persistent fever, only she went into a coma, and only she died on Ailyn's birthday.

"She's doin' all right, you know." He had lifted his gaze. Her eyes met his. "She knows them kids are back with their momma. That's all she wanted."

"I know," she rasps through a spastic breath. She pulls a glove off and wipes her puffy eyes with her knuckle. "I'm Ok. I know she is, too." he tells her. She catches a glimpse of her watch as she wrestles the glove back on. "I have to head out. I'm glad you're doing well. Smelling or not."

"Well, I'm certainly smelling!" he chortles. She can't help but laugh, knocking yet more tears loose. "Safe home, now."

He remains standing in the doorway as she pulls away from the curb, her cheeks gleaming in the afternoon light.

¹ Ailyn Jimenez is responsible for the well-being, parental visitation, and permanency expediency of 122 foster children. On one day during the pandemic, she delivered Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to sixteen foster families, an excursion which led her across all five boroughs—in a single workday.

■ EAST 54TH STREET, MIDTOWN EAST, MANHATTAN • FEBRUARY 2021

Rosa Rodriguez, Catholic Guardian's Senior Accounts Payable Specialist¹, has been leaning against the outer walls of the post office for over an hour, battling the morning chill in her winter coat at the corner of Third Avenue. Clutched under her right arm is a large manila envelope filled with stipend checks for foster parents in all five boroughs. Every year, the New York State Office of

Children and Family Services (OCFS) sets standard subsidy rates for each certified agency with which it collaborates to reimburse foster parents for the costs of raising a child. Though the sums are rarely sufficient to cover the total expenses of their care, the standards are adjusted for those housing children in therapeutic care and those with special medical needs. Each agency's financial department dispenses

stipends for the foster homes in their purview based on these criteria as specified by OCFS guidelines, and, at Catholic Guardian Services, this responsibility has long been entrusted to Rosa.

The post office was scheduled to open at 8:45 AM, but it's past 10:00 AM and the doors are still shut. Rosa—who arrives at Catholic Guardian's Administrative Office every morning in pants and a sweater even in ►

the dog days of summer, frequently dons the blankets she stores in a shelf next to her file cabinet, and conspicuously operates a space heater beneath her desk twelve months a year—has built a friendly rapport with the post office manager over the years. Lately, she has been less than thrilled with his shift coordination over the past few months. Abundantly aware of the recent streak of late openings but unwilling to forego a prime spot in the steadily growing line, she arrived ninety minutes ago, and her daily pile of checks in need of processing continues to swell in her absence. The only thing mightier than the glacial ache in her extremities is her determination.

There's a lot more at stake than month-old grocery receipts and diaper bills. The positive correlations between sufficient, timely reimbursements and placement stability, improved permanency outcomes, and foster parent recruitment, satisfaction, and retention, have remained well-documented for decades. Many foster children are placed with (and, often, adopted by) foster parents with biological children of their own, and most of these households are of modest means. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, "even though households with foster children are larger than all households with children," the average income of the former is "significantly lower" than that

of the latter (\$56,364 vs. \$74,301 in 2008 dollars), and households with foster children are more likely to be in the lowest income category (<\$20,000 a year) and much less likely to be in the highest income category (>\$100,000). In addition, as many as 15% struggle just to stay afloat of the federal poverty line. Between heightened daily childcare responsibilities and the economic turbulence of the pandemic, reimbursements cannot wait.

Rosa, who has long been acutely aware of these trends, remains unmoved by the biting wind. Crunching snow beneath her boots to keep her legs moving, she is unusually grateful for the KN-95 mask she has had to adorn for the past eleven months. She quells her jaded boredom with warm, pre-pandemic memories of foster mothers bringing wide-eyed three-year-olds into the office to meet with a case planner or drop off their paperwork. She smirks at the UPS worker loading packages into his truck, still sporting the floppy Santa hat he has been wearing since Thanksgiving. Finally, the doors of the Post Office open, and she is first in line.

¹ In addition to her 32 years as a beloved Finance staff member at Catholic Guardian, Rosa Rodriguez serves as an Auxiliary Police Officer and an Advisor for the Law Enforcement Explorers Program for the New York City Police Department.

■ WESTCHESTER AVENUE, PARKCHESTER, BRONX • MARCH 2021

Lisa Veloz, a Social Worker at Catholic Guardian's Parenting Resource Center for pregnant women and new parents¹, is lingering in front of her webcam. Having just led a cohort of twelve new mothers through the breastfeeding segment of *The Incredible Years*, an evidence-based parenting education program she has been teaching and refining for five years, she is staying in the Zoom chat to answer

individual questions until all the participants have left.

"No, Ms. Angeles, there's no evidence that viral transmission occurs through breastmilk. I'm not sure where you heard that, but you certainly do not have to—what was it?—'pump and dump.'"

Although she teaches three distinct educational modules simultaneously year-round, Lisa emphasizes the essentials with every cohort she leads: safe sleep practices, breastfeeding, child-proofing a home, and accessing Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) assistance, with public entitlements, and domestic violence support groups when appropriate. She adores the babies in her classroom as though they were her own.

"Yes, there are many health benefits. Breast milk fed babies are less likely to suffer from ear infections, meningitis, and gastrointestinal illnesses, and mothers who breastfeed are less likely to develop non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular illness, breast cancer, and Type 2 Diabetes."

Last week, Lisa and her coworkers tied their own record by throwing three baby showers for three expectant mothers in a single week. As always, each mom-to-be received a considerable assortment of

handmade layettes, essential childcare supplies, and a safe, new crib. As usual, all three moms confessed that this was the only baby shower they had—indeed, the only one they would have—received. There is a strong possibility that each mother will be reliant on these supplies for the first several years of their newborn's life.

"No, te lo puedes quedar. All these gifts are yours forever."

Sadly, their surprised reactions do not surprise Lisa in the slightest. In New York City, the child poverty rate among the children of single, Black mothers and single, Latina mothers—who account for the overwhelming majority of the women Lisa takes under her wing—are 46% and 56% respectively, compared to just 17% among those of married, white couples.

"Absolutely! Invite her to our next class. We're just about to start talking about positive parent-child relationships and promoting early social and emotional fluency. Y no, ella no tiene que hablar inglés."

Though nearly all of Lisa's mothers exhibit significantly reduced levels of anxiety on the Parenting Stress Inventory after graduating than they did before joining the program, disadvantage looms large. Meta-

analyses have revealed that the U.S.-born daughters of Black immigrant women deliver a significantly higher percentage of low birth weight infants than their foreign-born mothers, despite the advantages of the U.S. healthcare system to which they have had access for their entire lives. Even second-generation Black mothers with high socioeconomic resources exhibit twice the rate of low birth weight and three times the rate of preterm delivery as their white counterparts. COVID-19 has also exacerbated these challenges; Lisa has noticed sharp upticks in toxic stress, anxiety, depression (including post-partum depression), and unemployment since the outbreak of the pandemic. "No, you don't have to worry about that. There's a

■ UNDISCLOSED LOCATION • APRIL 2021

Claire Stiglmeier, Educational Coordinator for Catholic Guardian's Unaccompanied Children Program¹, is cleaning up her classroom, organizing sensory tools one might find in a special education classroom.

As she and her coworkers have long observed, trauma can generate similar responses to sensory inputs as Autism in children and teens. Having created

trauma-informed educational modules and curricula to guide her programming, Claire is seeing encouraging results in her own classroom and receiving high praise from her team members.

Sensory toys such as scented dough and fidget tools fill colorful bins beneath the window. A pair of noise-canceling headphones sits atop a pile of books in the quiet reading corner. Weighted blankets and sensory vests lie tucked and folded in shelves near the coat closet. The walls are adorned with posters illustrating controlled breathing techniques, and the overhead lights have been softened by custom blue light filters.

Catholic Guardian Service's Unaccompanied Children Program assists migrant children who have made the perilous immigration journey alone to the United States, or who have been separated from parents or relatives at the southern border. The Unaccompanied Minors in our program, who spend varying lengths of time in Claire's classroom, have often experienced trauma in their home countries, their migration north, and after they cross the Southern border. Most have traveled long distances on foot with guides called "coyotes," carrying with them little more than the phone number of a relative living in the U.S. 49% of Claire's students were forced to drop out before they reached high school due to poverty or violence, and 20% speak an indigenous dialect such as K'iche' or Q'eqchi' as their primary language.

Among Claire's goals is to minimize the frequency of the "Fight, Flight, or Freeze Response," a common symptom of childhood trauma. The quiet reading corner has become a favorite spot of her students as a refuge from the stresses of overstimulation, especially for one sixteen-year-old boy who stayed at one of Catholic Guardian's shelters for most of the pandemic.

federal law called the Pregnancy Discrimination Act which forbids employers from discriminating against someone who's pregnant when it comes to any aspect of employment, from hiring to fringe benefits. They can't hold that against you."

A full hour has passed since the end of class as Lisa finally closes her laptop—unusually brief for a Q&A session.

¹ In Fiscal Year 2021, Catholic Guardian Services served a total of 242 women and gave out 157 safe, new cribs at our Parenting Resource Center. If this population were to be embodied in one, representative individual, it would be a single, pregnant, Latina mother-to-be in her mid-to-late twenties living in the Bronx.

During his time in Claire's classroom, he slowly built confidence, completed an entire English textbook, and discovered hidden artistic talents.

The centerfold of a graphic novel he drew by hand chronicling his journey through the Mexican desert to the U.S. hangs on a strip of mounting putty on the wall. The bottom-right panel depicts two of his traveling companions being ushered into steel cages by Border Patrol Agents. It takes quite a bit to break Claire's sharp, clinical focus, but she has had to forbid herself from gazing at it during work hours. The positivity and resilience he exhibited in our shelter was rivaled only by his creativity—tucked in the sleeve of Claire's jacket next to a tiny, ladybug raincoat in the closet is a hat he crocheted for her from scratch.

In the early months of the pandemic, Claire secured a donation of eight acoustic guitars for use in her classrooms. Fine, repetitive motion calms the nervous system, and hands-on artistic activities can be highly therapeutic. She had never so much as strummed a chord before COVID; now, her colleagues often jest that she should begin teaching a Master Class in tuning and replacing strings, fishing lost picks out of sound holes, and discovering new chords as she teaches songs to her students. She turns off the lights and locks the doors on her way out, the hat defiantly snug on her head despite the warming weather.

¹ The Catholic Guardian Services' Unaccompanied Minors Program Education Department completed initial educational assessments for 757 children ages 0-17 in 2021. Though these boys and girls spend varying lengths of time in our Residential Shelters and Transitional Foster Care Program, we reached a total bed capacity of 177 in our shelters and foster homes this year, up from 48 in 2018.

Richard Santana, Catholic Guardian's Career Development Supervisor, is gathering his things after back-to-back, one-on-one job coaching sessions over Zoom. Having led virtual classroom discussions on soft skills for job interviews with the Agency's most recent Youth Employment Services (YES!) Program cohort for the past eight weeks¹, he is heading downstairs to meet

Alyna Brown and a group of ten students who responded to their invitation.

Last week, Alyna secured a donation of ten desktop computers to create an in-house computer lab for YES! students to study, submit job applications, and conduct virtual interviews. This week, she established a fully stocked clothing closet with both men's and women's business attire, an envelope full of Dunkin' Donut's gift cards, and professional headshots with a photographer downtown. This will be the Program's first in-person event since the inception of the pandemic.

"Ladies, over here with me: you can try on anything on these two racks. Gentlemen, meet Richard down the hall: there are two more across from the men's room. You can take your time and try on a few things, but we're leaving to meet the photographer in one hour!"

Greilyn, a YES! alumna who just completed her first year at CUNY Hostos before her eighteenth birthday, bolts straight to the first rack, grabs a steely gray suit with a silk shawl lapel, and marches into the women's room. Having switched from pre-med to pre-law between her fall and spring semesters, she is trying to upgrade her internships this year after splitting her time last summer between a retail job on 34th Street during the day and the City's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) in the evening.

Richard smiles as he locks arms with a young man holding a white stick. "Here we go, Julian, let's get you all dapper." The latter smirks as they glide in tandem down the hallway. A soon-to-be high school graduate, Julian spent the past nine weekends funneling the YES! curriculum into a text-to-speech software and

completed all the online modules to near perfection with shocking speed. Legal blindness is not an excuse to take things slowly.

"Alyna!" a resonant voice calls from the bathroom. "Come here and tell me how gorgeous I look."

Two hours later, they file into the photographer's studio, bellies full of coffee and donuts beneath impressively stylish attire. One by one, they strut in front of the reflector umbrellas, smiles widening with every whoop and cheer from Richard, Alyna, and the rest of the cohort, a few of whom have begun vying for the best view into the photographer's camera.

Though the turnout was unprecedented, it was far from the whole cohort. One sophomore at Providence College completed the online modules from his dorm in Rhode Island, another participated from SUNY Brockport near Lake Ontario, while one high school freshman tuned in every week from Illinois. Inspired by Julian's resilience, Richard has been working with an accessibility specialist to open the online curriculum to hearing- and visually-impaired students.

Alyna beams with unbridled elation, gushing affirmations to each student as they make last-second adjustments. "They are ready!," she proclaims. "They are worthy."

¹ Catholic Guardian's YES! Program provides current, transitioning, and former foster youth ages 14-25 with holistic job training, coaching, placement, and retention services. Catholic Guardian also employs college and housing specialists to guide and support youth throughout their transitions into higher education and independent living.

■ RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT BUILDING, BUSHWICK, BROOKLYN • JUNE 2021

Stephanie Whiskey, a Nurse Care Manager in Catholic Guardian's Special Medical Foster Care Division¹, steps into a familiar elevator. She carefully transfers her sopping umbrella to her left hand to slide her Metrocard back into her purse, and with her right she pushes the silver button for the 10th Floor. Muscle memory guides her back to the side pocket of her purse as she automatically extracts her

hand sanitizer. The porous gel appears tinged with pink inside its magenta rubber case. The doors close and the elevator ascends.

For the past sixteen years, Stephanie has been directly responsible for the well-being of 20-35 foster children with special medical needs. The children under her supervision exhibit a wide variety of diagnoses, from chronic conditions such as diabetes and seizures

to life-threatening disorders such as sickle cell anemia and cancer. The child she is visiting suffered a stroke last month, and her motor control, diet, and energy level have all been affected.

Before the incident, the child had been fortunate enough to be placed with a foster mother who Stephanie has known for more than five years, and although the road to recovery has been slow, the little

girl has made steady progress. Stephanie has been making two home visits a week since the day after the child was released from the hospital. In the interim, the girl has regained her ability to walk, chew, and use the restroom on her own. Her next milestone will be showering.

Among the many things for which Stephanie is beloved by her colleagues and patients, none evoke her essence more vividly than what she describes as "her philosophy: the story of the starfish." "All these starfish were washed up on the seashore," she tells family members and coworkers. "And a little boy came along and started throwing them into the ocean, one by one. And a man came by and said 'What are you doing? You can't save them all.' And the boy said 'I know. But I saved this one. And I saved this one.'"

The elevator doors open. She steps off automatically, almost absentmindedly. Her umbrella traces a trail of dark spots on the fraying carpet as she adjusts her KN-95 mask and re-slings her purse across her shoulder. As she turns right and approaches the apartment doors, an urgent intuition jolts her. She is on the wrong floor. 10 is never this silent. She turns around.

Another foster mother with whom Stephanie has worked for several years, adopted three autistic children. The mother declared that the greatest satisfaction she had ever experienced was in devoting herself completely to children who would never be able to repay her in any way. The mother affirmed that this

conviction was the direct result of Stephanie's example of selfless service.

Stephanie presses the Up button, and the doors open immediately. She walks in and presses 10 once again. A pause. The doors slowly close, a ding is heard, and they open right back up without any vertical movement. She stares in bewilderment beneath a furrowed brow. Stepping out, she hastens to the first door on her right, Apartment 10-A.

She is confused because the 10th Floor is never this silent. She always hears the foster mother's voice from the elevator, and sometimes she can even make out the little girl's voice as well. They always greet Stephanie as she steps off the elevator.

The custody transfer papers are in a manila envelope in Stephanie's purse. The final steps of the adoption process had halted at the last minute. The mother was adopting the little girl, and then COVID claimed the mother's life. No one greeted Stephanie's elevator because no one was waiting for her on the 10th Floor.

¹ Although virtual conferencing has proven to be a viable alternative to traditional home visits for some foster families, many placements require in-person visitation in order to effectively monitor a child's well-being. This is often the case for children enrolled in Catholic Guardian's Special Medical Foster Care program, which requires Case Planners and Nurses such as Stephanie Whiskey to continue navigating their way through the City on a daily basis.

■ WESTCHESTER AVENUE, PARKCHESTER, BRONX • JULY 2021

Peter Trivisonno, Catholic Guardian's Director of Clinical Services & Strategic Initiatives and co-founder of the CGS Family Counseling & Wellness Center¹, is quietly wishing he had chosen a more breathable button-down. The temperature has officially broken 90 degrees and the blessed shade of the Cross Bronx Expressway has not yet crept across the street to blanket the balloons, yellow

ribbon, and expectant onlookers gathered on the sidewalk in front of the Family Center.

The distant figure they are eager to spot is the sweaty, sunbaked form of Catholic Guardian Board Member Patrick J. O'Sullivan, Jr. Patrick, a seasoned marathoner, is finishing mile twenty of his "20 for 21" fundraising run. Having pledged to match every dollar raised by the event up to \$10,500, leading to a grand total of \$26,100, he began his trek on Staten Island, ran through Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan, and will soon burst through the ribbon, roaring into the arms of his children, wife, and enthusiastic YES! alumni.

Peter, meanwhile, is keeping his eye on the clock. In 15 minutes, a twelve-year-old will arrive, referred directly to Peter over the phone by the boy's Vice Principal. The child had been acting out in school, and, from what the Vice Principal said, Peter has begun to suspect that the child is at considerable risk of being misdiagnosed and overmedicated unless someone goes out of their way to advocate for the child. Though Peter has already received some medical records, given the boy's recent erratic behavior, Peter will be administering a PHQ9 Depression

Severity Assessment and a TESI Trauma Index to begin examining the roots of the boy's symptomatology.

The exuberant cheers sharply crescendo as the marathoner zips into view three blocks away. Peter cannot help but grin as Patrick's ten-year-old daughter bellows a raucous battle cry behind the ribbon, impatiently demanding a super heroic finish. Peter claps loudly as she bear-hugs him and laughs.

Peter heads inside, unlocks his office door and grabs a copy of each form. Poking out of the corner of a thin manila folder at the edge of his desk is a blue watchlist with a small grid of names and Patient ID numbers. There were times last year when the grid bled onto a third page, but this week, he treated his entire team to a fresh Krispy Kreme donut of their choice; they had reached a new record-low number of kids on the High Risk of Self-Harm list in the middle of a pandemic.

Peter couldn't have been more proud of his colleagues. He and his team had gotten used to staring childhood depression and PTSD in the face multiple times a day for years, only to be suddenly asked to conduct clinical psychotherapy sessions through a

computer screen without yielding any losses in remedial efficacy. They taught parents how to install routers and log into HIPAA-compliant tele-mental health conferencing software. They trained eleven-year-olds in webcam setup and Wi-Fi troubleshooting. They had to remain diligent about their own mental health to ensure they were ready and able to assist their patients. 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM, six days a week, chronic isolation and ubiquitous anxiety notwithstanding.

The last tween boy with whom Peter worked decided to bring his suicide note to the CGS Family Center instead of simply leaving it for his mom. This decision, inspired by a promise the boy had made privately to Peter, was the only thing standing between him and unspeakable tragedy. The boy is now back in school,

playing trombone in the honor band. Peter cannot afford to dwell on either half of the story: fifteen minutes have passed.

Peter sits down in an examination room and pulls out his laptop as a nurse ushers the young man in. "Ethan!" he booms. "Welcome. I hear you've been torching those Queens kids on the basketball court."

¹ The CGS Family Counseling & Wellness Center has been certified by the New York State Office of Mental Health to continue offering HIPAA-compliant tele-mental health services such as Doxy.me indefinitely to extend the accessibility of our services. This could not have come at a more crucial time; there are 89% fewer Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists per 100,000 children ages 0-17 in the Bronx as compared to Manhattan.

■ DRESDEN PLACE, TODT HILL, STATEN ISLAND • AUGUST 2021

Denise Gibson-Phipps, Catholic Guardian's Senior Director of Residential Support and Services¹, is thanking her staff members for their endurance. Each one commuted through the sweltering heat to Catholic Guardian's residential facility for persons with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and dressed in a full spacesuit's worth of Personal Protective Equipment as soon

as they arrived. For eighteen months, they have upheld exhaustive operational modifications to minimize the risk of viral transmission without surrendering the slightest lapse in services. They have restructured everything from sleeping arrangements to recreation room furniture; scrutinized everything from their shift schedules to their daily commute; and continually sanitized everything from doorknobs to board game tiles.

The Dresden residents suffer from chronic conditions that leave them acutely susceptible to infectious diseases, and many have multiple conditions and/or complex presentations that exacerbate this vulnerability. Unfortunately, the very conditions that heighten their susceptibility also increase the breadth and magnitude of their daily support needs. Individuals who require twenty-four-hour supervision and assistance with even the most basic mechanical tasks cannot be left in isolation under any circumstance, so whenever a high-needs resident tests positive for the COVID Virus, staff members suit up to spend entire shifts in a closed-air bedroom providing hands-on assistance to a person with an active infection.

Though her confident, professional tone fails to betray it, Denise is worried. Vaccines have become widely available to all age groups in New York City, but the Delta variant is just beginning to rage. Staff and residents of long-term residential care facilities, who represent only 0.6% of the U.S. population, accounted for 31% of its COVID-19 deaths during the first twelve months of the pandemic. The COVID-19 mortality rate among New Yorkers with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities is nearly eight times that of the state overall, and they are four times as likely to contract the virus. Denise and her staff, acutely aware of these trends, find it

tragically intuitive to remain militantly scrupulous.

Fortunately, their efforts have been effective. Thanks to hundreds of thousands of pieces of Personal Protective Equipment, vigilant sanitation, in-house quarantine procedures, and vaccination, every individual in the Agency's Developmental Disabilities Services Program who tested positive for the virus was successfully isolated without hospitalization and made a full recovery. Given the Agency's location in the heart of New York City and the national context with respect to residential facilities of this kind, this qualifies as a miracle.

Still, Denise finds herself lost in anxious thought. Her stoic contemplation is suddenly broken, however, by the familiar sound of a longtime resident bragging to yet another staff member about how Denise had shown him how to FaceTime his sister using his phone last week. His sister could see his face and hear him talking and everything, and he was going to call her again tomorrow. Denise's smile escalates into a chuckle and her shoulders begin to loosen and sink.

"I guess you're just telling everybody about your sister now, huh Mr. Harkness?" Denise quips as she marches down the hallway toward the recreation room.

¹ Catholic Guardian Services operates homes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) throughout New York City. Each home in the Agency's network is staffed with rotating clinical teams of direct care professionals who provide each resident with individualized, around-the-clock care and support, and each team maintains staffing ratios that ensure the safety, health, and well-being of every individual in our care. Our residents exhibit conditions such as Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder, among many others. 45% of our residents exhibit a severe or profound degree of disability, 63% are over the age of 40, and 67% have limited or no mobility.

■ VIRGIL PLACE, CASTLE HILL, BRONX • SEPTEMBER 2021

Kay-Ann Mitto, a Nurse Care Manager in Catholic Guardian's Residential Foster Care division, yearns to hear a crying infant. She has passed six empty rooms in a row on the way to her office, each of which oozes a harrowing disquietude despite the unprecedented silence of the lifeless hallway¹. Her phone vibrates in her pocket: a welcome interruption.

"Hello?" she eagerly inquires.

"Hi, Ms. Mitto, this is Chinomso. I just wanted to let you know that the nurse saw Marisa, Uzama, and Yesenia this morning. The mothers and the babies are all doing much better. Yesenia was still running a low-grade fever last night, but her temperature normalized this morning, and the baby's appetite is coming back. They've each got at least eight days left, though."

"Oh, thank God," she sighs. "That's great to hear. Thank you for the update. Call me with any news." They hang up. Kay-Ann reaches the end of the hallway, enters her office, and slumps into her chair. She closes her eyes and sinks into the leather, surrounded by photos of young women holding radiant, tiny babies. In the wake of the events of the past three weeks, it does not even occur to her to remove either of her masks.

Of the six teenager-infant pairs living at Catholic Guardian's Mother-Child Congregate Care Residence, eleven people needed to be quarantined at the LaGuardia Plaza Hotel in East Elmhurst. Frightened for the infants' developing immune systems but unwilling to separate petrified teen moms from their newborns, Kay-Ann has worked long hours and weekends in collaboration with Catholic Guardian Case Planners and Youth Care Workers to ensure that each affected mother-child pair was isolated and closely monitored.

The outbreak has taken Kay-Ann right back to Nursing School: furious hand hygiene, ubiquitous, daily disinfection, and defiant refusal to lift her mask

for even the itchiest of noses. After three weeks playing whack-a-mole with one positive test result after another, she is simultaneously determined and discouraged—the virus seems unconcerned and unencumbered by her and her team members' every effort to stifle its spread. The accompanying stress and apprehension seem as contagious as the pathogen, an unwelcome development for a cohort of young women battling PTSD, anxiety, and depression.

She ponders, perhaps the Delta variant has taken after the inexplicable acoustics of the building. Though the very walls were designed to minimize the transmissibility of sharp, piercing noises (one cannot allow a sleeping mother to be awoken by the sound of a different crying infant), the newborns' tearful demands for attention seem to permeate every corner of the residence at some point or another. She longs for those sweet wails to grace her ears once again.

Three weeks later, her prayers are finally—sometimes deafeningly—granted. Six rooms are once again filled with anxious yet healthy new mothers, and six cribs are once again graced with the angelic scent of sleeping babies.

¹ Catholic Guardian Services operates three group homes for older foster youth whose background and needs orient them toward communal living in lieu of traditional family foster care. Kay-Ann Mitto oversees the medical needs of the residents of all three homes, including the infants in Catholic Guardian's Mother-Child Congregate Care Residence.

■ WEST 134TH STREET, CENTRAL HARLEM, MANHATTAN • OCTOBER 2021

Melissa Pearson, Social Work Supervisor for Catholic Guardian's Therapeutic Case Management Program, and **Rita Alvis**, the Agency's Director of Preventive Services in the Family Support Services Division, are driving out to Melrose to visit the mother of a nonverbal, autistic girl. Rita doesn't need to consult her phone for directions; Melissa, a South Bronx native, guided her across the Madison

Avenue Bridge and up Morris Avenue with characteristic acuity.

"The little girl doesn't speak, but her favorite thing in the world is fruit. She especially loves mango and papaya." Melissa often catches herself subconsciously forgetting the boundary between her own children and those under her professional purview. This blurring is obvious to all who hear her gush about them, but she usually takes a bit longer to realize it herself. Rita doesn't seem to mind.

They squeeze into a parking space on Elton Avenue, walk down to the corner, and take a left on 157th Street. They stop in front of a five-story walkup with a tall,

black gate flanked by two rusting dumpsters and buzz for the second floor. A moment later, a small woman with weary eyelids descends the staircase and opens the door. It seems to require considerable effort.

"Hello, Ms. Pearson. Hello, Ms. Alvis. How are you?" She wraps her plain, black shawl tightly around her waist to warm herself in the chill of the doorway.

"We're hanging in there, Ms. Anderson, thank you for asking! How are you doing today?" They step in and begin ascending the staircase. Melissa's grin slowly dampens underneath her mask as she watches the young mother ►

climb; she seems even wearier than during their last visit.

The mother turns to them as they approach her apartment door. “It’s been really hard this week,” she confesses with a strained voice. “I have no more food and I ran out of diapers.” Her eyes have already begun to grow puffy and she seems mildly winded from the sole flight of stairs.

“Oh, my goodness!” Melissa cries, wrinkles of concern erupting like fissures across her forehead. “Ms. Anderson, I’m so sorry!” Melissa closes her eyes in thought, a determined furrow replacing the wrinkles. “There’s a supermarket on Melrose Avenue. It’s just around the corner. Rita, let’s go.”

After standing outside for over an hour, the checkout line snakes through two aisles, so they decide to divide and conquer. Melissa grabs two packs of Pampers, four papayas, a cantaloupe, and a bag of dried mangoes before snagging a spot in line. A few minutes later,

Rita finds her and deposits a large armful of cold cuts, canned soup, baby wipes, diaper cream, and a bottle of multivitamins into her handcart.

“Ok, I think that should be enough to last her until we can get her enrolled in WIC!” Rita says, pulling on her gloves. “I’ll head back to the house: call me after you check out and I’ll get the door for you. Just make sure to keep the receipt so you can get reimbursed.” She turns toward the exit.

“Oh, yeah, that’s right!” Melissa cries, a grin growing on her face.

“What?”

“We can get reimbursed for these things.”

¹ The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides federal grants to states for supplemental food, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant women.

■ WEST 54TH STREET, MIDTOWN, MANHATTAN • NOVEMBER 2021

Floor lights pour upward into the cavernous folds of royal blue curtains behind a pedestal of white lilies. Porcelain plates of citrus and goat cheese bon bons surround curated centerpieces of white hydrangeas and purple orchids at each dinner table. Well-dressed attendees set down their cocktail glasses and cautiously fold their masks as they settle into their seats, many still nibbling on

hors d’oeuvres from the reception¹.

Xochitl Flores Chavez, a nineteen-year-old alumna of Catholic Guardian’s YES! Program and Guardian’s in-house Mentored Internship Program, stations herself behind the microphone of a sleek, mahogany podium. The youngest emcee in the history of Catholic Guardian’s Annual Child of Peace Awards Celebration, she pierces the gentle murmur of conversation with gracious opening remarks. A second-generation, bilingual, Bronx-born Mexican American and the eldest of five, she is hoping to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA).

Next at the podium is Executive Director, Craig Longley, who lists some of the Agency’s accomplishments during 2021. Five excellence awards for Catholic Guardian’s Foster Care programs from the New York City Administration for Children’s Services. Zero residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities have been hospitalized because of the virus. 350 foster parents opening their hearts and homes to the most vulnerable children in the country. More than 700 dedicated staff members braving the frontlines of service. Nine of the former and one of the latter who lost their lives in the process.

Seated in a navy blue suit in the front-left corner of the ballroom is John W. Tietjen, the evening’s esteemed recipient of the Agency’s Humanitarian Award. A native New Yorker, a distinguished banker, and former Chief Financial Officer of Sterling Bancorp, John has been steeped in Catholic education and charity since his youth. A seven-year Board Member for the Agency, his extensive financial expertise is surpassed only by his benevolent zeal in serving on the Agency’s audit and finance committees.

Stationed two tables to the right in a steel-blue dress

and an anchor-gray suit are Gail and Joseph Berardino, co-recipients of the 36th Annual Child of Peace Award. Gail, former Vice President of Advertising and Promotion and Publisher of Vogue Patterns Magazine, and Joe, a Managing Director at Alvarez & Marsal, joined the Order of Malta American Association in 2004, co-chaired the Order’s 25th Annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 2010, and co-chair the Order’s “Called to Serve” capital campaign. At Fairfield University, Joe’s alma mater, Gail serves on the advisory board for the School of Nursing, Joe serves on the board of trustees and chairs the advancement and finance committees, and both serve as mentors for the University’s Ignatian Residential College for Sophomores.

It is courageous generosity that makes these honorees abundantly worthy of awards, and courageous generosity that brought each and every attendee into the ballroom. Personal philanthropy leads to real, life-changing impacts in the lives of children and families in greatest need. Craig’s illumination of the Agency’s sacred mission and Denise Gibson-Phipps’ description of the heroes with whom she works alongside everyday testify to the compassion and innovation central to Catholic Guardian’s community of care.

Craig Longley closes the evening by thanking everyone who helped make the 2021 Annual Child of Peace Awards Celebration a memorable and inspirational evening.

¹ The 36th Annual Child of Peace Awards Celebration took place at the Ziegfeld Ballroom on Tuesday, 9 November 2021. More than one million dollars was raised to support Catholic Guardian’s programs to build stronger families and healthier communities, including the Parenting Resource Center, the CGS Family Counseling & Wellness Center, and the Youth Employment Services (YES!) Program.

■ COLUMBUS AVENUE, LINCOLN SQUARE, MANHATTAN • DECEMBER 2021

Santiago Perez, Catholic Guardian’s Office Manager, opens the trunk doors of a large white van with a sliding passenger door, a high top, and a rosary draped over the rearview mirror. He is parked next to a honey locust tree on the west side of Columbus Avenue in front of the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, and for the past forty minutes, he has been carrying boxes of toys, coats, and pajamas down

the salt-stained front steps and packing them into the van¹.

Santi pulls his glasses down to his nose and scrutinizes a dense grid of text fastened to a brown clipboard. He turns over his right shoulder, still scanning the sheet. “Did I get everything, Father?”

A slender man in a roman collar with short, graying hair appears in the doorway. “Yep, I think you got it all! This was one of our best years in recent memory, Omicron notwithstanding. We didn’t have a single card left on the giving tree.” He saunters down the steps, flattening small clumps of crystallized salt with his shoe and spreading them evenly across the length of each step.

“Perfect. Muchas gracias, Father.” They shake hands, share a hearty squirt of hand sanitizer, and depart.

Back at Catholic Guardian’s Administrative Office, Santiago wheels a fourth hand truck’s worth of gifts out the elevator door, around the corner, down a hallway, and into a conference room filled with Tonka Trucks, American Girl dolls, wrapping paper, and coils of crimson ribbon. He unloads a stack of Lego kits and wheels the hand truck back out.

“How many more, do you think?” Margaret Rodriguez, Catholic Guardian’s Executive Secretary (also affectionately known as Mrs. Kringle), asks, swiftly cutting pieces of tape and carefully hanging them off the edge of the table.

He shakes his head. “I’m not even halfway through. I let Manny take the big cart to Harlem this morning, so we gotta make do.” He catches and replaces a bow falling off the edge of the table. “But that’s a good problem to have.”

“You’re the best, Santi!” an animated voice cries from down the hallway.

“Santi?” Margaret hollers, “¿Quién es Santi? Ése es Santa.”

He chuckles, crow’s feet deepening at the corners of warm, magnanimous eyes. They fade slightly as he passes the now-familiar gamut of bare, unoccupied cubicles. He knows they’re silent, having been left uninhabited for nearly two years, but they still feel loud and imposing. At least he never has to wait for an elevator anymore with so few people working in the building.

After depositing truck load number eight, Santi pauses in the conference room to watch Margaret wrap a dozen Chronicles of Narnia collections which he stacked next to a crate of onesies in the corner of the

room. He points to a pile of H&M, Target, and Best Buy gift cards lying on the table next to her. “Are those for the teenagers?”

“Yes,” she replies, her scissors gliding through glossy, red wrapping paper with entrancing dexterity. “I’m just hoping we won’t have to give all the toys to the case workers to deliver to the kids by hand one by one. Annette already ordered the food and pulled out the decorations from the closet, but it’s not looking good as of yesterday.”

He frowns, his cheeks sinking with disappointment beneath his mask. Though he didn’t take a single day off throughout the first ten months of the pandemic, he needed a vacation after the virus eviscerated the plans for what would have been his twenty-seventh Children’s Christmas Party last December.

“Well, if you need me to come back and load the van up in reverse, let me know,” he implores.

“Oh, no, don’t w—” she stops herself. That’s a real possibility, and they might not have a better option. “Thank you,” she sighs.

A week later, five boroughs’ worth of foster homes fill with ecstatic shrieks as masked, tightly bundled social workers emerge from five boroughs’ worth of bus and subway stations to deliver hundreds of immaculately wrapped presents to children whose whole week was dampened by the sudden cancellation of what many relentlessly describe as their favorite event of the year.

Santi Claus, as his coworkers have begun affectionately calling him, has managed to quell his disappointment with the resolution that, as long as the kids got their presents, he can rest easy.

“I wasn’t afraid,” he serenely muses when asked about the dangers of roaming through every corner of the city for eight hours a day during a pandemic. “I had God on my side.”

¹ Each year, Catholic Guardian Services partners with New York City schools and parishes such as the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Brendan School, St. Barnabas Church, Blessed Sacrament Church, and countless individual donors to donate Christmas gifts to the children in our Foster Care Programs. In a typical year, the gifts would be distributed at Catholic Guardian’s Annual Children’s Holiday Party in the cafeteria of Cathedral High School, but COVID-19 protocols forced the party’s cancellation in 2020 and 2021. Nevertheless, the Agency’s dedicated teams of Case Planners made certain the gifts are given to the children.

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- Every day, Catholic Guardian serves more than 2,000 individuals and 900 families throughout New York City.
- 93% of the individuals in Catholic Guardian's community of care are persons of color, as are 94% of our staff members.
- 71.6% of the Catholic Guardian Services' staff are Black or Latina women.
- Catholic Guardian Services produces fully functional online education, treatment, and outreach platforms for our Parenting Resource Center, Youth Employment Services (YES!) Program, and the CGS Family Counseling & Wellness Center.
- Catholic Guardian Services hosts a dedicated baby shower for each mother at our Parenting Resource Center, gifting the new family with an assortment of hand-wrapped parenting supplies, handmade layettes, and a brand-new, child-safe crib.
- Although there were more than 40,000 children in foster care in New York City in 1997, thanks to the work of the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and agencies such as Catholic Guardian Services, that figure hit a historic low of 7,800 in 2020.
- Catholic Guardian has one of the highest percentages of young adults in college of any foster care agency in New York. You can establish a scholarship award to help these students.
- Catholic Guardian Services hosted Agency-wide COVID-19 vaccination clinics for our staff members as well as for teenagers in our Unaccompanied Minors Program.
- The primary languages of the Unaccompanied Minors whom Catholic Guardian sheltered and served in 2021 included 15 distinct, indigenous dialects (excluding English and Spanish).
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, an evidence-based psychotherapy modality for children and adolescents struggling with anxiety which Catholic Guardian Services clinicians administer at the CGS Family Counseling & Wellness Center, has been shown to offer long-term macroeconomic returns of up to \$23.57 per dollar invested.



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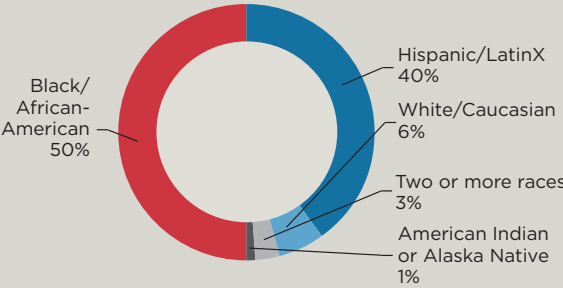
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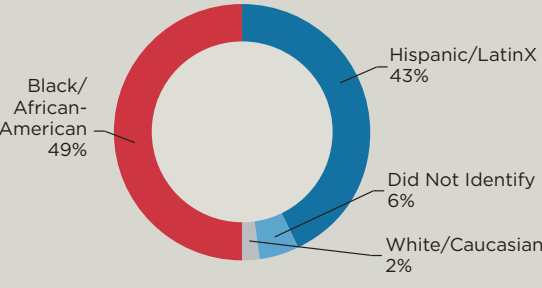
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WHO WE ARE



WHO WE SERVE



OUR GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT





CATHOLIC GUARDIAN SERVICES

It is our vocation to serve those in need, to aid those who desire help, and to guide those who seek better lives. Through supportive interventions, we provide help, create hope, and preserve dignity.

We provide help
by offering an array of services for underserved families and individuals with special needs. All that we do is delivered with care, compassion, and respect to address fundamental challenges, improve well-being, and increase self-sufficiency.

We create hope
by strengthening and empowering families and individuals in need. By providing shelter, care, treatment, rehabilitation, counseling, training, and connection to high-quality allied services, we produce holistic solutions that enhance each person's physical, mental, and social well-being as well as their positive connections to family and community.

We preserve dignity
with a faith-based commitment to recognizing the value of each person we serve, regardless of race, religion, creed, or life circumstance.

