



*Catholic Social Services  
of Southern Illinois*

*Strengthening Families -  
Building Community*

*Good News*  
*September 2009*

*Catholic Social Services, as an agency of the Diocese of Belleville in Illinois, seeks to be a visible expression of God's loving community and consistent with the example of Jesus Christ, Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois provides direct services to persons of all backgrounds with social and emotional needs across the continuum of life.*

## CSS Rated First in the State for Foster Care 3 Quarters in a Row

Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois (CSS) has been recognized as the top agency in the state for foster care performance by the Department for Children and Family Services for the past three quarters. The ranking was among 60 public and non-profit agencies in the State of Illinois and is based on a large group of performance measures.



Gary Huelsmann, Executive Director, said the employees have earned this achievement because of their dedication to the well being of the children in their care and in the mission of the agency.

The foster parents also have done a great job caring for the children. CSS cares for over 500 abused and neglected children in Southern Illinois.

This ranking came as we were observing Foster Care Awareness Month in May which focused on raising awareness of the many children in the community who are in need of help and to show the need for more foster care families to provide safe, loving homes. CSS foster care enables children to have a temporary home when they are unable to live with their own families due to abuse, neglect or

dependency. The agency's goal is to help the parents and family make the necessary changes in their circumstances so that children may return home to a secure environment. When returning home is not possible the agency provides alternative permanency placement through adoption or alternative guardianship.

## CSS Holds Team Workshop

Catholic Social Services (CSS) held its first ever team workshop comprised of board members, regional advisory council members, and CSS staff. The event, entitled "Discover & Celebrate Our Resources" was held in Mt. Vernon in late February. It was a great opportunity to provide an update on all the happenings in each of our four regions, and served as a comprehensive orientation for many new board and regional advisory council members. All who attended enjoyed this opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences.



*Roberta Meehan, Chairperson of the Metro-East Regional Advisory Council gave an overview of Metro-East programs & activities.*

**8601 West Main Street · Belleville, IL 62223 · (618) 394-5900 · Website: [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org)**

## CSS Holds 3 Special and Very Successful Fundraising Events

In the past several months, three of our Regional Offices have had very successful special events to raise funds to support some of our programs.

On April 18<sup>th</sup> the Carbondale Region had its annual "Charity Breakfast" and it was a huge success with participants filling the Knights of Columbus Hall in Murphysboro with more than 400 guests.

*(see **Carbondale Region** on page 4 for more)*

The Mt. Vernon Regional office had a very successful 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Golf Scramble April 24<sup>th</sup>. The afternoon was a lot of fun with 20 teams of 4 golfers supporting the Region in a variety of ways.

*(see **Mt. Vernon Region** on page 4 for more)*

The Metro-East Region hosted the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Christian Service Awards Dinner on May 1<sup>st</sup> and presented the award to three outstanding individuals who have served their parishes and communities for many years. The evening was very successful, inspiring and fun. About 240 guests supported the event in this annual fundraiser. *(see the following article for more)*

It takes many people to make these events successful, especially the Regional Directors and their staffs, Regional Advisory Council members, and many volunteers. Thanks to all the employees who contributed and participated in these events. Their willingness to help at these events and to participate speaks to their commitment and support of the CSS mission. A BIG THANK YOU to all those involved in these events. We hope that the community at large supports the work all of us do every day to help the most vulnerable!!! We do believe that CSS enjoys a very wide range of support from people of all backgrounds because of the good work we do! We want to most importantly thank all the people who participated in these events and donated their time, talent and treasure to make these events financially successful. We greatly appreciate the support.

"Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful."

**Albert Schweitzer**

## The CSS Metro-East Region Hosted the 19th Annual Christian Service Awards and Benefit Dinner



*Pictured from left to right: Mike Kish (2009 Christian Service Award Recipient), and his wife, Jeanne Kish; Ruth Lager (2009 Christian Service Award Recipient); Bishop Edward K. Braxton (Diocese of Belleville); Rosalie Dengler wife of Dennis Dengler (2009 Christian Service Award Recipient).*

The Belleville (Metro-East) Region of Catholic Social Services (CSS) of Southern Illinois hosted the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Christian Service Awards and Benefit Dinner on Friday, May 1st at Albert's Banquet Center in Belleville. At this year's award ceremony three outstanding recipients received the 2009 Christian Service Award, they are:

☀ **Dennis Dengler** - Member of St. Augustine of Canterbury Parish in Belleville, their long-time special events coordinator. Dennis been an active member of his parish community. He has been a Lector and a Eucharistic Minister since 1979. Dennis has done volunteer work at St. Augustine's Parish for the last 40 years. He is honest, hard working, sincere, and he volunteers over and over again. Dennis was bingo manager for about 34 years. In addition, he has managed the annual quilt bingo for the last 12 years.

☀ **Ruth Lager** - Member of St. Paul's Francis of Assisi in Aviston, Illinois, where she served as Eucharistic Minister and many other roles in her parish. Ruth is an icon in her church and community. She has been a lay minister in our parish for many years. She has been a "grief volunteer" for the local funeral home. Whenever there is an occasion that requires a speaker, Ruth is often asked to speak,

whether at the annual Memorial Day ceremony at the cemetery or to give the eulogy at a funeral. She is known and loved by everyone in the community. She "practices what she preaches." She's truly a Christian who has devoted her life to be the best role model for all Catholics.

☀ **Mike Kish** - Principal at Immaculate Conception School in Columbia, Illinois, where he also resides and is active in his parish and community activities. Even though Mike has been at the helm of ICS for nearly four decades, he tackles every school day with incredible energy. He exemplifies faith, respect and true caring for all those associated with him. He's built an incredible community at ICS. Because of his guidance, ICS has a large, devoted cadre of willing volunteers who have helped make ICS a thriving, progressive, lively setting. Because of Mike's spirit, ICS students have more opportunities to learn experience and get involved than students elsewhere.



"Voices for Illinois Children," along with over 60 private child welfare agencies across Illinois (including Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois) are leading the "[Foster Kids Are Our Kids](#)" marketing campaign to change perceptions about foster kids and to challenge the public to contribute to improving their lives. The campaign features a TV commercial, prepared radio spots, as well as print materials, a website and training support for child welfare agencies. In addition, we would welcome an opportunity to offer an interview with one of our foster care workers/supervisors.

We are asking a variety of media providers to help us promote the campaign in our local area. Please visit the coalition's campaign website at [www.fosterkidsareourkids.org](http://www.fosterkidsareourkids.org) to get more information about this program.

That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve it as well.

*Abraham Lincoln*

**Check out our website at:**  
**[www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org)**

# Save the Date

*The Belleville (Metro-East) Regional Office will host the 20th Annual Christian Service Awards & Benefit Dinner on Friday, April 30th, 2010. Mark your calendar today to reserve this date and be sure to contact your friends to do the same. We want you to be part of our program, so please join us on April 30th, 2010. Your participation helps us to support our many programs.*

*If you know someone who has served others through: faith-related service; community service; youth mentoring; advocacy; direct service to those in need; volunteerism; and/or fundraising, and wish to nominate them for the Christian Service Award, please call: (618) 394-5900 (ext. 106), or check out our website at [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org). Go to the special events page to see the nominating instructions.*



*The Carbondale Regional Office will host their 6th Annual Charity Breakfast – on the Saturday after Easter (April 10, 2010) at the Murphysboro Knights of Columbus Hall. Reservations needed. For more information please call (618) 351-0743 or send an e-mail to [Marylou@cssil.org](mailto:Marylou@cssil.org).*



*"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."*

*~ Mother Theresa*

♥♥♥ **Wanted!** ♥♥♥  
**"A Few Good Foster Parents"**

We are always looking for potential foster parents who are willing to make the commitment to help save our children who for whatever reason are unable to be with their biological parents. Let us qualify you to be a part of a greatly rewarding program not only for the children who desperately need a safe living environment and positive nurturing form caring people, but for your own intrinsic rewards.

♥ **Have a heart and become a Foster Parent**

**Interested???** Call us in:  
**Belleville:** at (618) 394-5900  
**Carbondale:** at (618)351-0743  
**Mt. Vernon:** at (618) 244-0344



## Knights of Columbus Support CSS Carbondale Region Counseling Program

For the past three years, local councils of the Knights of Columbus have contributed dollars from their annual Tootsie Roll Fundraiser to support counseling services for the emotionally and mentally disabled in the Carbondale region. The Knights have contributed the following amounts: \$2,244 in FY 2007; \$3,082 in FY 2008, and \$4,196 in FY 2009. These local councils include: Anna/Cobden, Carbondale, Carterville, Du Quoin, Harrisburg, Herrin, Murphysboro, and Ridgway.

In addition, the Christopher, Marion, Murphysboro, Carbondale and Herrin councils donated a combined \$1,000 this year from other fundraising events.

The Murphysboro Knights of Columbus prepared and served a delicious breakfast at our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Breakfast on April 18, 2009. They also donated the use of their hall for the event. By popular demand, these Knights will be cooking for us again at our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Breakfast on the Saturday after Easter, April 10, 2010. Mark your calendar! You don't want to miss this breakfast!!

NOTE: Other CSS regions have received support from the Knights of Columbus Councils for counseling programs in their regions. The Enfield Council contributed to the Mt. Vernon Region; in Breese and Trenton Councils have contributed to the Belleville Region.

## Mt. Vernon Regional Office Partnership in Action "FOR KIDS' SAKE"

Fund-raising, friend-raising, education, information-sharing and support: these are the simple but powerful words that set the tone for the Mt. Vernon Regional Advisory Council (RAC) in FY09. Members of the RAC set out to develop practical goals for the year: reinvigorating the Council and setting clearly defined goals; establishing annual fundraising events that can meet or exceed previous years' totals; taking action on a CSS Staff suggestion to benefit the foster children in our program. Collaboration and partnering with the CSS Staff, and the communities served by this regional office would be important in achieving these goals.

Two major fundraising events were sponsored by the Regional Advisory Council in FY09: A Raffle for a 42" Flat Screen TV was the first, and it was held in the fall, 2008. The raffle proceeds were earmarked for the STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) Classes which are also funded, in part, by the United Way of South Central Illinois. It is free of charge to class participants.



*Shown drawing the winning ticket are: Pam Flota, Regional Director, Vickie York, RAC Chairperson, & Jeff Klein, Mt. Vernon TV & Appliance representative.*

The second major fundraising event for the RAC was a golf scramble, "Tee-off for Kids' Sake", held at Green Hills Golf Club in Mt. Vernon, Illinois on April 24, 2009. The day was declared a great success: Community businesses showed support by sponsoring a golf hole or cart; RAC members and CSS Staff worked together as hosts/hostesses on the day of the event; eighty golfers enjoyed an early spring round of golf. Proceeds from this fundraiser will help to fund a spring outing for the foster children.

*Taking a breather between Registration and the 19th Hole Celebration are RAC members Pat Rettig, Deb Shaver, Vickie York, and Roberta Lynch (Roberta is also a member of the CSS Board of Directors). Plans are already in place to host next year's event on April 23, 2010.*



**Check out our website at: [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org)**

## Secret Santa 2009 Needs Your Support

The **Secret Santa** program provides Christmas gifts for hundreds of foster children and other needy children of all ages and backgrounds in the Diocese of Belleville. Call us if you are interested in supporting this program. It is really fun, simple and rewarding!

When you sign up, you receive sponsorship information in early November with a "**Letter to Santa**," which includes a short wish list from your sponsored child. You purchase 1-3 (or more if able to) new items for the child. You will be asked to deliver your gift by a predetermined date in early December. Simple as that.

If you prefer, we also welcome monetary donation for this program where we will purchase gifts to fulfill the children's wish lists. Please see the "**Special Events Page**" on our website for more details about **Secret Santa** at ([www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org)). If you are not already on our mailing list for this program, you may call us at (618) 394-5900 in Belleville, (618) 351-0743 in Carbondale, or (618) 244-0344 in Mt. Vernon.

We help in excess of 600 foster children and other needy children and dozens of families each year throughout Southern Illinois through the generosity of hundreds of "Secret Santas." We also need volunteers to help with the collection, sorting, and distribution of the thousands of gifts we receive.

## Eastern Region

The Catholic Social Services' Eastern Region Regional Advisory Council (ERAC) received a proclamation from the City of Mt. Carmel declaring the week of August 23-29 as Catholic Social Services Week.

This is part of the city's effort to help publicize the August 24<sup>th</sup> CSS Open House/Information Sharing event. This program as sponsored by the Eastern Region's Regional Advisory Council and the local Eagles Club took place from 6:00PM to 8:00PM at the Eagles club facilities in Mt Carmel. By all accounts, it was a great success.



**CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES**  
of **SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**  
*A Member Agency of*



## United Way Campaign Begins in September

The 2009 United Way fundraising campaign began in August and runs through the end of October. Contributions generated from the campaign help support the programs of Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois and nearly 200 additional local health and human services organizations. You can be sure your gift is used wisely because more than 400 experienced community volunteers carefully distribute donations to charities that demonstrate high quality standards and results. A United Way contribution is cost-efficient. That's because more than 90 cents of every contribution dollar is strategically invested to help people in the community. Many of our clients receive services from more than one United Way-supported agency. It takes a strong system of quality agencies that provide a variety of programs to help our clients. That's why a contribution to the United Way is important.

**Please support the United Way and help us build a stronger community.**

"Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me."  
Matthew 25: 35-40

## Volunteers are Welcome

Volunteers are needed for: clerical work; special events (Secret Santa, fundraisers, etc.); mentors at St. John Bosco Children's Center, in our foster care program; and other projects. If you would like more information about volunteering, please contact one of the following.

In Belleville call Kelly Le Chien, our volunteer coordinator, at (618) 394-5900 (ext. 199) or send her an e-mail at [kellyl@cssil.org](mailto:kellyl@cssil.org).

In Carbondale call Mary Lou Loos at (618) 351-0743, in Mt. Vernon call Pam Flota at (618) 244-0344, & in Mt. Carmel call Don Goff at (618) 263-3863.

We also offer intern opportunities in a number of specialties.

Please check out our website to get more specific information about Catholic Social Services and our programs.

Please check our website for more details about our volunteer opportunities.

"That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve it as well."

- - - **Abraham Lincoln**

## CSS Says Farewell to Departing Board Members

We want to thank the following departing Board Members for their dedicated and valuable service to Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois, and wish them well in their future endeavors:

**Al Miller** - serving since 1999

**JoAnn Pisel** - serving since 2003

**Norm Jacob** - serving since 2003

**Kevin McCarkel** - serving since 2003

**You have given us your time, talent and treasure.  
Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!**

## Welcome New Board Members

We want to welcome the following individuals who have just joined the Board of Directors:

Welcome: **Barbara Calandro**

Welcome: **Roberta Lynch**

Welcome: **Consuelo Munoz**

Welcome: **Kenneth Nance**

Interested in being a board or regional advisory council member? Call us at (618) 394-5900 (ext 205).

**Please will you consider Catholic Social Services in your estate planning? Call us if you're interested (618) 394-5900 (ext. 106).**

**Yes! I want to help Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois to continue to strengthen families and build community.**

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: Catholic Social Services

**Or**

Please charge my  Discover  Master Card  Visa

For a one-time donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly/Quarterly (circle one)

- In installments of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- For a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

My donation should go: \_\_\_\_\_ to the area of greatest need **or** the one of the following CSS Offices: \_\_\_\_\_ Belleville \_\_\_\_\_ Carbondale  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mt. Carmel \_\_\_\_\_ Mt. Vernon

Please bill me

For a one-time donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly/Quarterly (circle one)

- Installments of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- For a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My gift will be matched by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Company name (please enclose company form))

In addition to my financial gift, I would like to volunteer. Please send me an application.

**Please return this portion with your donation.**



## Director's Corner

*Gary R. Huelsmann*

Dear Friends and Supporters:

Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois (CSS) is very alive and doing well! That might be a surprising starting sentence given the serious recession and the severe State of Illinois Budget crisis. CSS needs to be doing well because there is an increase in demand for our services and our Christian Faith requires us to respond to human needs.

Some of you might have heard rumors of some CSS offices or programs closing because at the start of the Fiscal Year (July 1<sup>st</sup>) the agency was lacking State contracts on such important programs such as Foster Care and Assisted Living for low income seniors. We did eventually get all of our contracts and all of our funding restored. Thank you to all of you who helped in lobbying for needed services to the most vulnerable in our society. Many of you also contributed financially in order for us to continue our services, thank you! The agency managed to retain all of our approximately 170 employees with no lay offs. We in fact have plans for modest growth in employees and services.

According to "2009 Report on Illinois Poverty" 24 of the 28 counties we serve are on the watch or warning list on "The County Well-Being Index", which provides a standard for localities to use as they monitor their county's progress on poverty issues. We all have much work to do and we need your help to improve our "Well-being."

We have an important mission and story to tell. In coming months we plan to go out into our communities and parishes to tell the story of the needs and the many ways of the local Church of Southern Illinois is providing direct service to those most in need. Please visit our website [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org) for more information about our services. Again thank you all for your support whether in resources, time or in prayers!

Sincerely,

Gary R. Huelsmann, MSW, LCSW  
Executive Director

## Did You Know?

Catholic Social Services (CSS) serves the people of the Southern-most 28 counties of Illinois by offering a variety of human services. We have been committed to "strengthening families and building community" for over 60 years.

CSS provides comprehensive individual, family, and school counseling; adoption services; birthparent services; foster care services; senior employment and senior assisted living management services; operates a children's center for abused and neglected children under the age of 12; and we offer referral services to other agencies as may be required.

- ◇ Catholic Social Services currently case manages 445 children in traditional foster care and 68 in specialized foster care in Southern Illinois.
- ◇ The St. John Bosco Children's Center served 19 special needs children in 2008.
- ◇ CSS provided 8,228 counseling hours to approximately 1184 clients this past year.
- ◇ CSS enrolled 104 seniors in the Seniors Aids job training program who provided more than 62,000 volunteer hours of service to 54 local host agencies in their Eastern Illinois communities at an estimated value of \$1.26 million for services rendered.
- ◇ The Fox River Assisted Living Facility provided a home and appropriate care for 41 seniors.

## CSS Producing Promotion Video

The CSS Board of Directors has approved the production of a promotional video of the agency which is expected to be released some time in the Fall. The purpose of this production is to tell our story through the stories of people who have been helped by our agency. The video will be professionally prepared and will be available for a variety of marketing opportunities. We will have copies of this DVD available for groups or agencies who might be interested in showing it to their members. Please check our website for more information once the video has been completed.

Please go to our website ([www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org)) to get more detailed information about Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois.



*Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois*

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**Belleville, Illinois 62223-1719**

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(618) 244-0344

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Belleville, Illinois 62226  
(618) 688-1150

*Fox River Apartments  
(Assisted Living Facility)*

1016 Parker Street  
Olney, Illinois 62450  
(618) 392-6168

We invite you to visit our website at:  
[www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org) to learn more about Catholic Social Services and our programs. We earnestly hope you will consider a donation to our agency.