



FACES of HOPE

Providing Help, Creating Hope

Brother Francis Shelter |
Clare House | Charlie Elder House |
Family Disability Services |
Homeless Family Services |
Pregnancy Support & Adoption Services |
Refugee Assistance & Immigration Services |
St. Francis House Food Pantry

A publication of Catholic Social Services

Fall 2015

Tackling homelessness is 'profoundly concrete' love



Lisa Aquino,
Executive Director

Catholic Social Services play a critical role in reducing homelessness in our community. We operate the two largest emergency shelters in Anchorage. Brother Francis Shelter sleeps up to 240 adults age 18 and older every night. Clare House, our shelter for women with children, serves over 100 individuals every night. Both of these facilities are often at capacity.

CSS offers more than emergency shelters though to address homelessness in Anchorage. Critical support is offered to those experiencing homelessness through our Homeless Family Services program. This program is made up of case workers who help individuals who are currently homeless or in immediate danger of becoming homeless. These case workers are working at both of our shelters and throughout the community. Case workers meet with each individual to find out their specific needs. It may be medical care, mental health treatment, substance abuse services, support in finding a job or help finding an apartment. The primary goal of our case managers is to secure permanent housing for our clients. We work to get them in apartments around town, and then continue to stay connected with them to help

them keep those homes. It's challenging work, but it has shown to be a proven practice in reducing homelessness.

The tragic deaths and hospitalizations this summer among our homeless community demonstrate the changing population and the urgent need for action. Reducing homelessness in Anchorage will require coordination, communication and teamwork. CSS has a nearly 50-year history of demonstrating those three characteristics, and I know we are up to the challenge now. I hope to work with all of you in a larger effort to end homelessness in Anchorage. There are great ways to get involved by volunteering or donating to CSS. You can find more information about that at www.cssalaska.org.

On October 4th, Brother Francis Advisory Council will be holding a candlelight vigil for those in our homeless community who have died in the past year. We hope you will come and join us as we celebrate their lives on the Feast of St. Francis in the Park Strip. We hope you will join us there.



COMM



Meet DAVID RITTENBERG, *St. Francis House Food Pantry* NEW DIRECTOR

CSS WELCOMES David Rittenberg as the new St. Francis House Food Pantry Director.

Originally from Boston, Massachusetts, David moved to Alaska in 2010 working as an AmeriCorps Vista for Big Brothers/Big Sisters and then working as a case manager and operations manager for the Brother Francis Shelter for 4 years.

An avid hiker, hunter (caribou, bear), fisherman, and bow hunter, David also is a big time Red Sox and Patriots fan and plays the guitar. He promises to serenade staff while at work someday.

We sat down with David to ask him a few questions about his new job and his passion to help others.

Q Why do you enjoy working at St. Francis House Food Pantry?

A I think we are seeing people at an entry point for social services, we are seeing the face of the working poor. The help we provide is a tangible for them and the community because now they can pay bills instead of worrying about food. Also I love how much the community supports SFH.

Without our volunteers (average 4-10 a day) we would not be able to run so smoothly.

Q What's surprised you about working at St. Francis House Food Pantry?

A How much food is put out on a daily basis. We give out up to 5,000 pounds a day.

Q How can we help?

A You can volunteer at St. Francis House Food Pantry (a day, a week, once a month). You can donate money or food (we are always in need of fresh fruits and vegetables). You can learn about the federal food programs and get involved in legislation that keeps food pantries open.

If you'd like more information about St. Francis House Food Pantry, or if you would like a tour, please email cyoung@cssalaska.org

We are open Monday through Thursday from 9 AM to 1 PM, and the last Wednesday of every month from 4 PM to 6:30 PM.

September is Hunger Action Month.

You can take action by donating food or donating online at cssalaska.org

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UNITY

MAKING *the DASH* for *Clare House*

FOR 23 years and counting, Marie's Beauty Salon and Supply has supported Clare House through Marie's Insomnia Night and Care for Clare Campaign.

As part of the campaign, awesome supporters Dawn Brower (Marie's Mad 3 Minute Dash Winner) & Cindy Weber (1st Prize Winner) came in to claim their prizes, which you can see was a lot of fun!

Because of Marie's, \$5,552.17 was donated to Clare House and will help close to 100 homeless women, children, and expectant mothers who stay there every night get back on the road to success!

Thank you Marie's and Alaskans who support them and us! We appreciate you!



Marie's Mad Dash Winner Dawn Brower & 1st Prize Winner Cindy Weber



Marie's and CSS staff celebrating the Clare House donation



cssalaska.org

CLIENT success

Pathways to INDEPENDENCE



THE AK FUGEES are showing that it doesn't matter where you come from. Because through the game of soccer, this team is bringing athletes together in Alaska. The AK Fugees

sponsored by BP Alaska Youth & Education Foundation and led by coaches Brendon Ashby and Kash Kinder participated in the Far North Invitational in July.

Going up against 63 Alaskan teams in the 13-20 age group, the AK Fugees are made up mostly of refugee

teens from countries like Somalia, the Congo, Iraq, Bhutan, Burma, Eritrea, and Sudan.

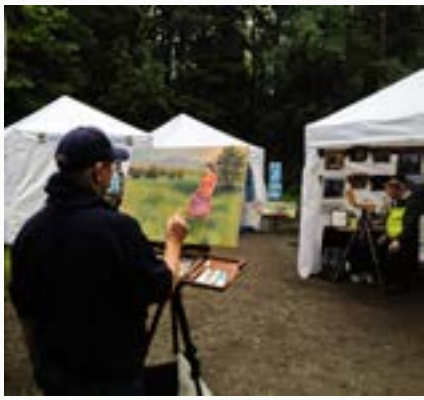
The team is part of CSS's Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services (RAIS) program that provides a bridge for refugees from their former life experiences to the new skills required for success in the United States.

RAIS resettled 188 new arrivals last year.

Communication was a challenge, but the team was able to get on the same page to win the Far North Tournament championship beating Kenai 4-2.

Team members say getting the opportunity to play a sport they love in their new home has made the transition easier in being successful in school and Anchorage.

Congratulations to the AK Fugees. We are proud of you!



Thank you to everyone that painted, worked, and supported the annual Plein Air Painters of Alaska Weekend that goes to support Clare House! Because of you the close to 100 homeless women with children and expectant mothers received \$8,863 that will go to helping them find permanent housing and employment.

VOLUNTEER Opportunities



Thank you to Partusch Plumbing & Heating for your awesome support and donations every year. From turkeys to refrigerators to volunteers

your support helps us help Anchorage's most vulnerable.

This fall please consider volunteering at CSS. For more information please contact Kara Casanova at 222-7335 kcasanova@cssalaska.org



As part of the "Share the Love" program, this year, Subaru of America, Inc. will donate \$250 for every new Subaru vehicle sold or leased from November 19, 2015 – January 2, 2016 to a "Hometown Charities."

Continental Subaru has chosen two Catholic Social Service's programs: Clare House and Charlie Elder House to participate for 2015. Customers who purchase or lease a new Subaru vehicle from Continental Subaru will be able to select from the list of national charities – or select our 'hometown charities' to receive a donation of \$250 from Subaru of America. We are striving to meet and beat last year's total of \$48,000! We know that the funds generated from this campaign will greatly benefit both Clare House and Charlie Elder House under the Catholic Social Services programs.

By supporting both Clare House and Charlie Elder House through the "Share the Love" program, you can help make an impact for those in need.

Mark your Calendar

September 2015

Hunger Action Month

You can help please go to cssalaska.org

Saturday, September 26th

Run for Beans & Brother Francis Shelter
Snow Goose Restaurant 8:50am

Sunday, September 27th

Ending Hunger One Step At A Time Crop Walk
2610 E. Northern Lights Blvd. 12:45pm

Sunday, October 4th

Light for the Homeless Vigil
Delaney Park Strip Between G & E 6pm to 7pm

Saturday, October 24th

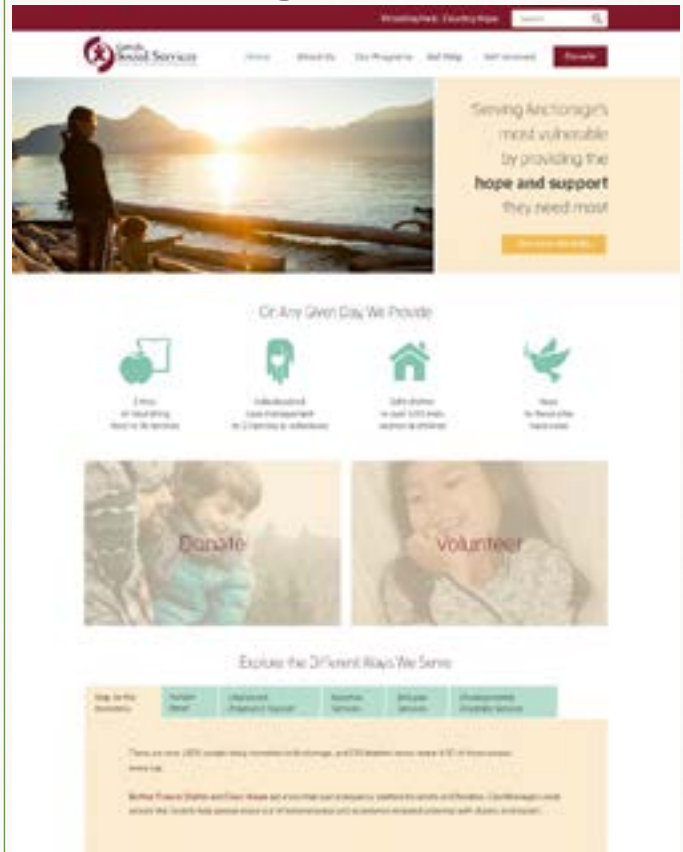
Brother Francis Shelter Open House 2pm-4pm
BFS Advisory Council Will Provide Tours & Refreshments

Thursday, December 17th

Helping Holidays-Contact Dorothy Lazar to sponsor a family in need at 348-8789 or dorotheyeileen@alaska.net

For more info, go to the Events page at cssalaska.org

Coming This Fall ...



Our New Website