At a recent Rotary Club of Honolulu meeting, Terry Walsh, Catholic Charities Hawai‘i (CCH) President & CEO, met a young woman named Taylen. She had received an award for an anti-bullying video she had created at school. Taylen shared that her family had recently been homeless and Catholic Charities had helped her family find a home. She thanked Terry and CCH during the award presentation.

Taylen’s mother Summer said “by sharing our story, I feel that I have come full circle.” About three years ago she found herself in a situation where she needed to take steps for the well-being of not only herself, but also her six children. Not wanting to be a burden on other family members, she sought assistance from a shelter for women and children. Eventually they were able to find temporary transitional housing in Waimanalo. During this period, she had the foresight to slow down and take care of her mental health. It was challenging, as she was deeply depressed and stopped working to care for her children. “I was in a bad place emotionally… I was lost and lonely, there were so many uncertainties, but I had to do something to be able to be in the right place for my kids.”

Two years at the transitional housing went by quickly. Through a friend, she heard about Catholic Charities Hawai‘i’s Housing Placement Program that helps families with children find and secure housing, case management services and rental assistance or security deposit payments to avoid homelessness.

With the added help, she rolled up her sleeves and worked toward finding a new home and prepared herself and her family with the tools needed to move forward. Her CCH case manager, Stephanie Kon, helped her assess and build a budget based on her family’s needs and provided her with a list of affordable housing options.

The hardest part of the experience was finding a job, she shared. She recalls filling in many housing applications while at the same time looking for employment. Stephanie encouraged her and made sure that her paperwork was in order. It was overwhelming but eventually she found a job that had great future possibilities for growth. They were able to find a four-bedroom apartment in a safe and well-kept building. CCH’s Housing Program assisted with their rental deposit. That was three years ago. Summer and her children, now ages 16, 14, 12, 4, and 3, are doing well and are moving forward. “I am so blessed to have such great kids. They are so supportive of each other and keep me going,” she shares. “I told my children that there are other families in similar situations; count your blessings.” Her weekends are packed with her kid’s activities. She loves to watch her children, whether it be a sports activity, church or school project. It gives her so much satisfaction and reinforces that it was all worth it.

Summer and her family share their story to let others know that lives can be changed during tough times. It is never too late to try to turn things around and while things may not be perfect, it can get better. “I am proof of the work that Catholic Charities does.”
Meeting the Changing Needs of Our Community
A Message from Dave Shanahan, Chairman of the Board, and Terry Walsh, President & CEO

Aloha!
As Catholic Charities Hawai‘i celebrates 70 years of service, we are filled with a deep sense of gratitude for the support we have received to be a beacon of hope for Hawai‘i’s people.

Life in Hawai‘i has changed significantly over the past 70 years. Following the devastating impact and upheaval from World War II, social services for local families became important priorities. In the midst of the turmoil, the arrival of our founders, the Maryknoll Sisters, brought hope and help to the community.

Over the past 70 years, Catholic Charities Hawai‘i has served as a champion of the downtrodden, the voiceless, and the forgotten. We helped to strengthen immigrants struggling against abuse as plantation workers. We expanded our scope to provide services for low-income families.

We changed and evolved with the community. In the 1970s and 1980s, in response to the evolving needs of the community, we developed programs to provide services to the elderly, immigrants and refugees, women with unplanned pregnancies, troubled youth in foster care, and families experiencing problems of child abuse and neglect. We began residential programs for kūpuna and others in need of supportive living assistance. During this period, we also expanded our programs to Hawai‘i Island, Kaua‘i and Maui.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Catholic Charities Hawai‘i added specialized programs to serve medically complex babies and homeless families and created a program gateway for intake, information and referral to our programs and services and also to our community partner agencies. In addition, we addressed prevention of child abuse and neglect, money management, and long-term care for disabled persons and the elderly.

Today, we continue to address social challenges in Hawai‘i, including poverty and the need to find solutions for those without homes. Catholic Charities Hawai‘i is at the frontlines of these issues. Altogether, we have more than 40 programs that serve over 40,000 people each year. We alone cannot resolve these complex issues. We greatly value our long standing partnerships and collaborations with government and community agencies and others who help us provide the services Hawai‘i needs.

As we look beyond the horizon, Catholic Charities Hawai‘i will continue to play an important role in serving as a guardian of social justice for Hawai‘i’s people for this and future generations. We are truly grateful for your generous support of donations, resources and time as we work together to make our island home a better place to live for people of all faiths.

Mahalo for partnering with us to bring hope to Hawai‘i’s families.

David Shanahan, Col. Ret.  Terrance L. Walsh Jr., MBA, MSW
Chairman of the Board  President & CEO
In our fast-paced world, we sometimes forget that effectively meeting the needs of others starts with listening.

Catholic Charities Hawai‘i (CCH) President & CEO Terry Walsh recently took time to meet face-to-face with CCH’s neighbor island leaders, their advisory boards, and other neighbor island residents to learn more about the challenges they are facing in their own communities. “No one knows the needs of the neighbor island residents better than those who live on those islands,” Terry said. “Every island is different, and it was an important priority and learning experience to hear their concerns first-hand. Our neighbor island leaders address a broad range of issues and there are some common threads throughout our state, such as homelessness.”

Terry praised the directors on the islands for being so well integrated in the community and for working collaboratively with the vicariates and community volunteers to support neighbor island families. Mahalo to Rebecca Yonamine, Neighbor Island Community Administrator; Beth Murph, Hawai‘i Island Community Director; Thelma Akita-Kealoha, Maui Community Director; and Debra de Luis, Kaua‘i Community Director.

“We’re off to a good start, but we know there needs to be ongoing communication among our various offices. As a statewide organization, we want to continue to engage and support communities across our islands,” Terry added.
The Friends of Catholic Charities held its annual gathering on June 14 at Royal Garden Restaurant to celebrate 30 years of giving and to kick off their continued efforts to support Catholic Charities Hawai‘i (CCH).

Friends of Catholic Charities Hawai‘i (FCC) was founded in 1987 by three former CCH board members: Gerry Ching, Thomas Huber and Robert Tsushima. They had two purposes in mind: to provide additional support for CCH’s program needs and to make new friends for CCH and broaden its community outreach and network. From this trio of believers, FCC has grown to a faithful group of “friends” who support the work of CCH. Since its inception, FCC has raised more than $740,000 that provided direct support to CCH programs. In addition, another $1 million has been accrued in a CCH investment fund.

To continue the good work of FCC into the future, the Friends of Catholic Charities “Next Gen” is led by Melissa Benjamin, Doug Smith, Roger Wall and Tracy Wong. All have been friends of CCH, as volunteers, board members and donors, and are now expanding their efforts on CCH’s behalf.

Mahalo to Friends of Catholic Charities!

Welcome Our New Vice President – Philanthropy

Leaders with a heart of compassion who are committed to serving the community are important to advance the mission of Catholic Charities Hawai‘i.

Mary Leong Saunders recently joined Catholic Charities Hawai‘i as Vice President – Philanthropy in charge of fund development and community engagement. She is responsible for helping to obtain the necessary resources to support our current programs and meet future needs of the community.

Before joining Catholic Charities Hawai‘i, Mary served as Executive Director of Family Promise Hawai‘i, a nonprofit organization that helps homeless families find long-term housing. She was familiar with Catholic Charities even before joining the organization. By partnering with Catholic Charities Hawai‘i and other social service agencies, Family Promise Hawai‘i was able to help nearly 500 families find long-term housing.

Mary also previously served as Executive Director of the Rotary Club of Honolulu and State Supervisor of the National Assessment of Education Progress, a congressional program for the U.S. Department of Education. She earned a degree in English literature from the University of Colorado.

“It is a privilege to be a part of the Catholic Charities ‘ohana,” said Mary, a Kailua resident and Maryknoll School graduate. “I am impressed with the breadth and depth of services Catholic Charities Hawai‘i offers the community. I look forward to bringing my experience to support these valuable programs.”
Consider remembering Catholic Charities Hawai‘i in your will, making a gift directly from your IRA or establishing a charitable gift annuity.

Your legacy gift can be tailored to meet your own financial needs while at the same time providing a lasting legacy of support for Catholic Charities Hawai‘i’s programs and services. For more information, please contact our Development office at (808) 527-4820 or development@catholiccharitieshawaii.org.
OUR MISSION:
Helping people in need to help themselves, regardless of their faith
of each person calls us to reverence the God-given life and
dignity of each person at every stage and condition of life.

OUR CORE VALUES:
Social Justice calls us to be a community of hope that works to achieve
the common good, promotes individual rights and responsibilities,
and advocates on behalf of those with the greatest need.

Compassion calls us, as sisters and brothers, to be present with others
in their suffering and need and to serve with a caring spirit.

Dignity of each person calls us to reverence the God-given life and
dignity of each person at every stage and condition of life.

Commitment to Excellence calls us to serve competently and collaboratively.