



Hope

CONNECTION

CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII NEWSLETTER • SUMMER 2023

TREASURED MOMENTS WITH THE PHONE-A-FRIEND PROJECT

"One moment, one time, one conversation, won't come back again...so make the most of it!" - CCH volunteer Joyce shares her translation of the Japanese adage "ichi-go ichi-e" that she has embraced in life and also applies to her friendship with her Phone-a-Friend companion Ruby.

Older adults have increased risk for loneliness and social isolation. Many face living alone, have lost of their family or friends, and/or have chronic illness. This is why CCH's Phone-a-Friend is a great project that brings hope and happiness to many kupuna in our community.

Ruby is an 85-year-old woman who was born and raised on Oahu, she is a Women's Army Corps (WAC) veteran, was never married, and has no family. Friends from school and work are long gone. She has numerous health problems, lost her vision, and has a history of falls. Yet she remains fiercely independent.

Ruby contacted Catholic Charities Hawaii's Senior Services in October 2021 to learn more about our Phone-A-Friend service. She explained that she wanted someone to call her as often as possible to make sure she was alive because she is donating her body to the University of Hawai'i (UH) John A. Burns School of Medicine Willard Body Program. In order for UH to accept her body, they would have to be notified within 72 hours after her death. She didn't need someone to talk with, she just wanted someone to make sure she was okay.

We found a Phone-A-Friend volunteer to call Ruby when she was available to receive calls. Joyce has called Ruby three times a week since December 2021. Over time, the conversations between Ruby and Joyce grew more personal, and they learned a lot about each other. They began a friendship.



The quick calls to "check in" with Ruby now last 30-45 minutes. "My friend is a historian," says Joyce. "I love her stories. She knows much about American history. I also love that we laugh a lot – that came with trust and a mutual respect for each other." Ruby feels the same way. "We covered a lot of different subjects. We have a lot to talk about. I'm having fun with Joyce."

Catholic Charities Hawaii's Phone-a-Friend project has helped kupuna rediscover the joy of shared human connection and has brought light back into their lives. Through this project, we are reminded that no matter how old we are, we can always find friends and connect with people who care.

About the Phone-A-Friend Project:

The goal of the Phone-A-Friend Project is to help prevent isolation, decrease loneliness, and provide a safety check for isolated, homebound seniors. The project provides regularly-scheduled calls for seniors who live alone or are socially isolated and have little or no contact with people outside their home. Calls are made by trained Phone-A-Friend volunteers.

If you or someone you know could benefit from Phone-A-Friend, or if you would like to become a Phone-A-Friend volunteer, call (808) 527-4777 for more information.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



ROB VAN TASSELL
President & CEO

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Catholic Charities Hawai'i, our sincere thanks for supporting our efforts to serve the community. With your assistance, we were able to impact the lives of over 100,000 individuals last year through 45 programs and services.

We are committed to making a positive impact on the lives of families and individuals. Our comprehensive range of services includes:

- assistance to help seniors to maintain their independence
- support for children and youth through community-based programs
- stabilizing and strengthening resources for at-risk families
- housing services and support for those experiencing homelessness
- counseling services for individuals, families and couples
- information and referral services to CCH and community program resources
- community based assistance programs for the neighbor islands

Through our work, Catholic Charities Hawai'i is transforming difficult situations into ones that are filled with hope. This is our primary focus and it is reflected in the stories we hear from our volunteers and staff team members. As I travel from location to location, I've seen first hand, the passion that our team has for what they do and how they inspire others to hold onto that same hopefulness that they carry with them. Each day, we strive to keep hope alive and make a meaningful impact in the lives of those we serve.

We are grateful for your support and hope that you will continue to join us in our mission to help people in need and create a stronger, more connected and resilient community. Mahalo!

Sincerely,

Rob Van Tassell
President & CEO
Catholic Charities Hawai'i

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

ROBIN METCALF

Robin's encounter with a struggling woman holding a baby with a feeding tube at church inspired her to start volunteering with Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) for over 10 years.

A maternal nurse and a lactation consultant, Robin eventually became a respite caregiver at Hale Malama, a CCH foster care program for infants and toddlers with specialized medical needs. She took a break from volunteering as a respite care giver as she raised her own family.

Around 2012, she was introduced to CCH's Mary Jane Program. The Mary Jane Program provides a nurturing, structured living environment and supportive services for pregnant women who are at risk for homelessness or in an unsupportive environment.

Robin volunteers at the Mary Jane Home where she provides support to mothers, especially young parents, who face the challenges of parenting. As a lactation consultant, she helps mothers learn about breastfeeding and offers support before and after they come home from the hospital. Robin goes above and beyond by also providing rides, accompanying them to appointments, and as a baby holder while the women attend classes. She is motivated to give back because she was fortunate



to have an amazing family support while raising her own children.

"I love Catholic Charities...it nurtures the whole family and the mission is just beautiful." Volunteering is a great passion and especially rewarding for Robin that she often shares her experience with others and delights in recruiting her friends to also volunteer at the Mary Jane Home. "You can give a lot of time if you have a lot or a little if you have a little. I highly encourage for anyone to volunteer." She is amazed and inspired by the women of the Mary Jane Program who never gave up through their difficulties fighting for themselves and their babies and went on to be successful.

WAYS TO GIVE

Our mission is to provide a wide range of social services to all people especially those in greatest need, regardless of their faith and culture. Our vision is to be your trusted partner in advocacy.

With your support we can make a difference! Here are ways you can make your gift:



Make a gift online:
www.CatholicCharitiesHawaii.org/donate



To make a gift by phone:
(808) 527-4820



Make checks payable to Catholic Charities
Hawai'i and mail to:
1822 Ke'eumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822



For more information and options, scan the QR
code with your mobile device.

CELEBRATING JOY AND PERSONAL GROWTH FOR FOSTER YOUTH

The Catholic Charities Hawaii's Nā 'Ohana Pulāma (NOP) Foster Family Program celebrates our foster families and their dedication to providing a safe and nurturing environment for children in need. Their selfless love and support positively impact children's lives, providing a foundation for healing and personal growth.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i provides intensive training and 24/7 support to NOP foster families to provide therapeutic care to traumatized youth, empowering them to become confident, strong individuals. Through the Teaching Family Model, foster families receive ongoing support and training that further their capacity to make a positive impact on the children's lives. The program inspires compassion and personal growth, strengthening family connections. Foster parents involved in therapeutic care affirm the power of love and support in changing lives and bringing joy to the children they nurture.

If you are interested in becoming a Nā 'Ohana Pulāma foster family, please call us at Oahu (808) 527-4941 or Hawaii Island (808) 961-7016 or email fostering@catholiccharitieshawaii.org.



HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS

Catholic Charities Hawai'i's reach extends across Hawai'i, with offices on O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i and Hawai'i Island. We are a member organization of Catholic Charities USA, a national network collectively working to build bridges of hope, mercy and justice.

CELEBRATING MILESTONES

75 years
of unwavering
commitment
to service and
advocacy



2022 IMPACT

104,446
lives
touched by
our services
and programs



OUR TEAM

300+ staff
members
statewide who
are passionate
about our
mission



TEAMWORK ACROSS HAWAII

700+ volunteers
assisted our
mission and
programs
statewide



DIVERSE SERVICES

45+ programs
aimed at serving
and empowering
our communities



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS

CCH Around the Community



The Catholic Charities Statewide 'Ohana participated in the 2023 Hawaii Visitor Industry Charity Walks held in May on O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i and Hawai'i Island. Mahalo to our walkers, volunteers and donors for supporting Catholic Charities Hawai'i through this effort! Special shout outs to Kaua'i Realty as our Kaua'i Walk sponsor and to Hawai'i Island's Rev. Lio Faletoi for leading the West Hawai'i parishes challenge! Our 'ohana enjoyed an amazing day of walking, food, fellowship and fun!



A special mass with Bishop Clarence Silva and the Maryknoll Sisters was held at the Co-Cathedral of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus on December 9 to celebrate CCH's 75th Anniversary.

CCH's Counseling Center team completed certification training for Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT), a trauma sensitive, culturally competent, strength-based approach.



CCH's Rob Van Tassell, president and CEO, was the guest speaker at this year's Red Mass, service and sharing about our work of service and social justice.

CCH's Stella Wong, vice president - programs, was recognized as a 2023 honoree at the YWCA Leader Luncheon held at the Sheraton Waikiki Ballroom.



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OUR MISSION:

We are a community of hope that promotes the dignity of each person by helping others empower themselves. We provide a wide range of social services with compassion and a commitment to excellence. Through our programs and our advocacy for social justice, we lovingly serve all people, especially those with the greatest need.