



THE COMMUNITY INSIDER

OUR LADY OF MERCY COMMUNITY OUTREACH

APRIL 2021



CREATING A NEW NORMAL

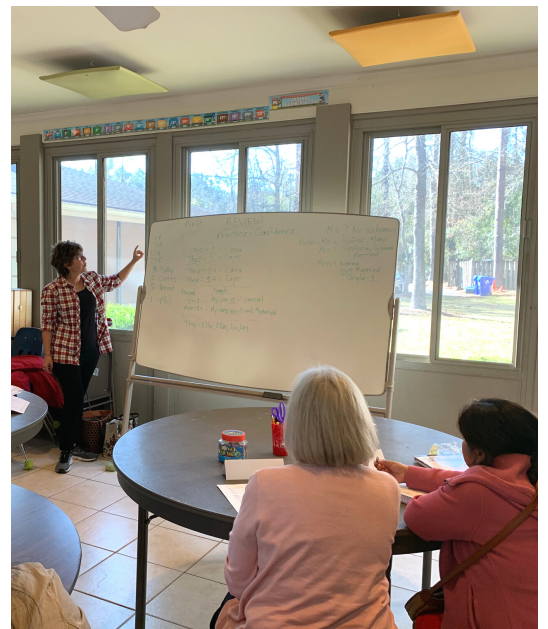
As we say farewell to March and all it brought — Women's History Month in which we paid homage to The Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy, and their vision to create a safe space for all who needed it in downtown Charleston and the Sea Islands, and Social Work Month where we acknowledged the hard work and dedication of our front line staff with social work backgrounds — we say hello to spring, a season of renewal and rebirth. One year ago, the first COVID19 case struck South Carolina. We did what we were built to do. We opened our doors even wider to assist neighbors in need. We focused on basic and emergency needs, providing an increased amount of food and financial help, unemployment and employment assistance at a time when our community needed it the most.

After adapting to meet emergency community needs, we have been slowly reopening our other core programs. We welcomed back our prenatal and GYN clients in July. We began our first virtual ESL class in September, and started the New Year with in-person classes again.

The Dental Clinic reopened in November for both emergency and regular procedures including root canals, fillings and cleanings. MUSC Residents returned for their rotation the first week of February. In February we also safely restarted our Yes, I Can! youth afterschool program in-person with a smaller group of children working hard to complete homework, Rocket Math activities, reading and a variety of other enrichment activities.

COVID19 has pushed us to find ways to innovate and rethink how we do our work to keep our doors open. Though we have had some setbacks of our own and sometimes struggle with functioning in crisis mode every day for over a year now, our staff's commitment in fulfilling our mission remains unwavering. It is the least we can do while many we serve face economic hardships made worse by the pandemic, thus making their road to self-sufficiency longer and even more difficult.

Blessings and Gratitude,



Welcome!

Say **HELLO** to our new staff members!

Stacy Flemming

Wellness Center Manager

Kalen Milford, Sr.

Social Services Manager

Grace Pfankuch

Education Coordinator

Shelli Gause

Project Coordinator



OUR FIRST VIRTUAL EVENT

For the first time in over 23 years, the Love Your Neighbor Auction was held virtually in January, and included online bidding, delivered brunch boxes from locally owned bakery Baguette Magic and a livestream event with Mikey Bakst and our very own Executive Director, Ericka Plater.

We raised over \$137,000! Thank you to everyone who donated auction items, sponsored the event and gave money toward our auction goal. You are helping change lives.

THINKING STRATEGICALLY

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2021 strategic planning sessions. We held thoughtful discussions and received critical feedback that will be included in building a new three-year strategic plan for the organization.

Your input will help shape the decisions we make as an organization to propel us forward in achieving our mission and beyond. More to come!

Volunteer SPOTLIGHT

Sister duo Berta and Sally are longtime volunteers at our Neighborhood House location, making and serving lunch on Tuesdays. They recently got all of the women in their family together to collect and pack toiletry bags that the sisters then handed out while serving lunch on the porch. When asked why they volunteer and why they went the extra mile, they said:

"I volunteer for me! I know I'm helping others but truly it is helping me so much more. I was on the board of OLMCOS and that's how I met Vonceil. I laugh because I'm not sure how it started, but soon I became a Tuesday person! It is such a great experience to get the family together and know we are helping someone else." —BERTA

"The reason I volunteer at the Neighborhood House is because I like to give back to the community. I also like the interaction with all of the clients that I see each time I am there. They truly appreciate the meals, and I like knowing they were getting them. I truly enjoy my time and the friends I have met there." —SALLY



Since March of last year:



73,570

LBS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED
FROM OUR FOOD
PANTRIES



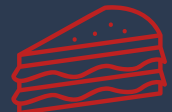
673

CASE MANAGEMENT
MEETINGS CONDUCTED
OVER THE PHONE



\$113,665

GIVEN FOR UTILITY
OR MORTGAGE / RENT
PAYMENTS



22,166

BAGS MADE FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD
HOUSE LUNCHES

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Let your legacy live on. Your thoughtful, planned gift helps people who are seeking ways to move out of poverty and into more stable circumstances. Whether through our health and wellness programs, educational classes for adults and children or by providing direct services to those in need, your generosity helps our mission of encouraging and supporting self-sufficiency and self-worth for people in need. Please consider adding OLMCOS in your will or set up a donor advised fund.

If you are an owner of an individual retirement account and are at least 72, we would love for you to consider contributing a portion of your required minimum distribution to OLMCOS.

Have questions? Contact Kristin Raymond at Kristin.Raymond@olmoutreach.org or 843-559-4109 x112.



GIVING A HELPING HAND

Our second food and dental kit distribution held on March 6, was a great success. We served 219 households, and gave out over 500 dental kits. The Saturday distribution is a contact-less, drive-thru model designed to keep staff and patrons safe. We chose to incorporate a Saturday distribution to fill the gap of those community members who need help, but do not have the availability to come during our regular assistance hours throughout the week. When we held our first distribution in October, more families and individuals came to get necessary staples than we had initially plan for, so we know that this is something that is needed.

Therefore, we are planning to do a food and dental kit distribution once a quarter. If you are interested in helping us prepare for the next event, or would like contribute in some way to help keep our Food Pantry shelves stocked, contact us at 843-559-4109.

We ♥ Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are at the heart and soul of what we do here at Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach.

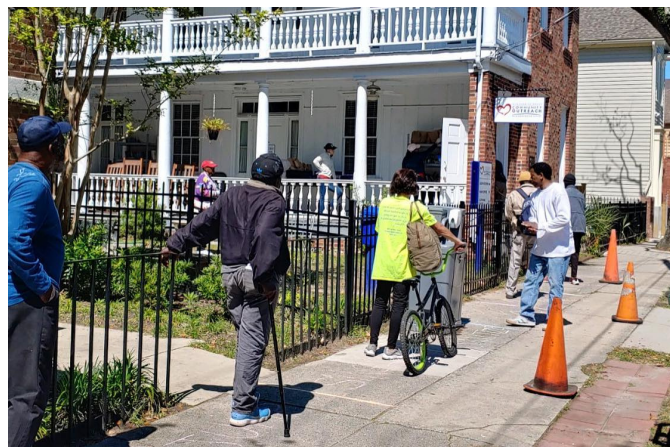
Volunteer Appreciation Week is April 18 -24!

We want to show you how much you mean to us, so we have some things planned that we hope will make you smile! Be on the lookout for a save the date!

We currently are looking to fill the following volunteer opportunities:

Dentists
Front Desk Reception (+ if Bilingual)
Clothing Room Assistants

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering, contact our Volunteer Manager, Jennifer Meshanko at 843-559-4109 x106.



Mark Your Calendars! May 10, 2021

Join us for the 28th annual golf tournament at the exclusive Country Club of Charleston. Registration ends April 30, 2021.

All proceeds from the tournament will go directly to our mission. Tickets are going fast!

Purchase your tickets today at www.olmoutreach.org/golf. Questions about the tournament or would like to sponsor the event? Call us at 843-559-4109 x112.



OUR LADY OF MERCY

COMMUNITY
OUTREACH

PO Box 607 • Johns Island, SC 29457

Connect With Us!

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NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE
79 AMERICA ST.
CHARLESTON
843-805-8064

THE OUTREACH
1684 BROWNSWOOD RD.
JOHNS ISLAND
843-559-4109

A sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy



How You Can Help



VOLUNTEER AND SHARE YOUR TALENTS AND TIME WITH US!



PURCHASE SOME OF OUR MOST NEEDED ITEMS. VISIT OUR AMAZON WISHLIST AT: OLMOUTREACH.ORG/COMMUNITYNEEDS



MAKE A MONETARY DONATION ONLINE OR BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT: OLMOUTREACH.ORG/DONATENOW



CONTRIBUTE FROM DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS OR STOCKS.



TRANSFORM LIVES FOR YEARS TO COME WITH A BEQUEST, ESTATE CONTRIBUTION, TAX FREE IRA DISTRIBUTION OR OTHER LEGACY GIFT.



CREATE ONLINE FUNDRAISERS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS LIKE BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES OR JUST BECUASE!