

# CHRISTMAS IN JULY VIRTUAL AUCTION

## JULY 24 - JULY 31

CATHOLIC CHARITIES GAINESVILLE REGIONAL OFFICE\* [WWW.CATHOLICCHARITIESGAINESVILLE.ORG](http://WWW.CATHOLICCHARITIESGAINESVILLE.ORG)



While Mr. S. Claus is currently vacationing in our beautiful state, he has authorized us to auction off some of his favorite things. We are working with his team to create fabulous gift ideas that are sure to make your summer sizzle! The auction opens on July 24th at 10am and will close promptly at 8pm on Saturday, July 31st. Follow us on Facebook to get updates and more event information.

Phone 352-224-6442  
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Our Board Members represents various faiths and business partners all working together to meet a our mission. Please join us in welcoming our 2021-2022 team!

### Board Members 2021—2022

**Bishop Felipe J. Estévez, President**

**Anita Hassell, Diocesan Director**

**John Barli, Regional Director**

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# CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Transforming Lives

Summer 2021



Bishop James Dixon began coordinating the “Bridges to Prosperity” Program in 2011. Over the past ten years he has witnessed profound changes in the lives of many of his clients. Graduates of this program have purchased their own home, started successful business, and two even became published authors.

The Bridges program begins with Financial Fitness, a four week educational course that teaches money management, budgeting concepts and establishment of a savings strategy. Individuals are taught how to create a workable spending plan and how to avoid falling into money and credit traps. Financial Fitness moved to a virtual format during the Covid 19 crisis and will continue to be taught that way for the foreseeable future.

The Bridges program continues with “Getting Ahead In A Just Getting by World” a twenty week course where participants dig deeper into the causes of poverty and how it impacts their lives. Participants look at personal and social relationships and examine the influences they have on maintaining poverty levels or unstable situations and the long term effect these relationships have on their own personal circumstances. Participants are taught to take charge of their own futures and stabilize their lives. They are instructed on how to build their financial, educational and social resources. They learn to become

problem solvers in their own lives. They set goals and establish a plan on how to achieve them.

*“I facilitate in helping my clients to discover the barriers that keep them from being their best selves. I don’t judge and I don’t give up when they stumble. Failure creates a learning opportunity and encourages growth. I do however hold them accountable for their choices. Bridges is about building that bridge between who they are and who they want to be and bring others along with them.”* Bishop Dixon.

“Bridges to Prosperity” has also grown to include “Getting Ahead While Getting Out” a specialized program that is designed to prevent reincarceration and is a part of the Alachua County Jail transition program. *“I am particularly proud of this program where I work with the inmates to establish employment and life goals. We work together to form a strategy to help them re-enter and become a productive member of our community.”* Bishop Dixon. In keeping with our mission, Bridges to Prosperity is Transforming Lives!



Online donations can be made at [www.catholiccharitiesgainesville.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesgainesville.org)  
Checks can be mailed to:  
1701 NE 9th Street  
Gainesville, FL 32609  
Thank you for your support!

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Regional Director John Barli

I usually start my message with how “time has flown by since the last newsletter”, I can not say the same with 2020. It has been fourteen months since the pandemic struck and

the effects on our Country and on this Agency have been unimaginable.

The issues facing the Agency like so many other businesses were formidable, can we stay open, how do we serve our clients and how do we protect our Staff and Volunteers? So many social service agencies curtailed services, cut back hours or days of service, eliminated volunteers, laid off staff, many closed.

With the support of a dedicated Staff and equally dedicated group of volunteers we made the decision to modify, but not eliminate any services or programs. We found that many of our staff could work from home and still get their work done; other worked hybrid schedules, part time in the office and part time from home. We continued to serve the needs of our community, keep roofs over people’s heads, utilities running and food in their pantries.

None of this could have been done without Amazing Community Partners. We have to start with Evan Pitts from Florida Credit Union who made sure we could get our PPP loan, because of PPP we were able to keep our whole staff work-

ing with no interruptions or lay offs. Catholic Charities USA made sure we had face masks within days of the lockdown, United Way of North Central Florida provided sanitizer in five gallon buckets when there was none to be found, Cottonelle made sure all our Staff and clients had toilet paper when every store was out. Bank of America provided disposable masks, gloves and sanitizer so our staff could feel safe at work.

Catholic Charities USA send funds within the first two weeks so we could begin paying rent and utility bills to clients who had lost work, this was followed by similar funds coming from United Way and the Community Foundation of North Central Florida. Our great Friends at TV-20 WCJB organized a virtual Covid Relief Telethon that brought in more funds than we could have imagined, and still does a year later. Paige Beck and Matt Hunter made “Christmas in July” a reality. All of these partners enabled us to say YES to all the clients calling and walking in, not knowing where to turn for assistance.

Covid made us cancel our major fundraiser, but that loss of that event was more than made up for by support from our amazing community partners, volunteers, donors, vendors and friends. We will be eternally grateful to everyone in our community for all they did that enabled us to help so many families thought out this most difficult time!

In closing I would like to thank Jackie Crews, our Board Chair Emeritus, as she completes her term this month. Many thanks for all your years of service to the Gainesville Office.

Stay Well.....John

## 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Snap Shot of Your Gainesville Regional office

# 130,965 LBS



Pounds of food distributed through our food pantry and Rural Outreach Program

We work hard to serve the people living in our community. We reevaluate our programs annually to ensure they are providing the best practices and highest standards of care. We are able to help so many of our brothers and sisters in need thanks to the generosity and support of those who believe in our mission.

# 336 People



Assisted by our Caring Choices Programs (Pregnancy and Adoption)

OUR OFFICE HELPED

# 26,615

Individuals in the five counties we serve



# 762 Children

Fed through our Weekend Hunger Backpack Program



# 417 Families

Received financial assistance due to hardships related to the COVID 19 pandemic

## Spirit of Charity Golf Tournament And Amazing Give Workday Edition News

## Conference Room At Catholic Charities Dedicated In Tribute To Dr. Brenda Williams



### Dr. Brenda C. Williams (1950- 1921)

In honor of Dr. Brenda Williams the Catholic Charities Gainesville Board of Directors have voted to name and dedicate the conference room in our client service center to her memory. Dr. Williams worked as the Family and Consumer Services Agent in Alachua County for 17 years, she received many awards for her programs during that time including the Florida and National Distinguished Service award and continued Distinguished Service in Family and Consumer Services. The last 5 years she was especially proud to teach Financial Fitness with Catholic Charities where she helped many individuals learn how to manage their finances.

“Dr. Williams contributions to the Bridges program has been foundational since its inception in 2011 and to her we give our most heartfelt thanks!” Bishop James Dixon



We held our first Spirit of Charity Golf Tournament on April 17th at the Mark Bostick Golf Course at the University of Florida.

Adam Lee Law and W.W. Gay Mechanical Contractors

were our generous Tournament Sponsors.

We were delighted to have ninety-four golfers participate in our tournament. We started the event off right with breakfast sandwiches provided by David’s BBQ. The shotgun scramble started at 9am just as the sky cleared for what turned into a beautiful day. We ended the event with a delicious lunch sponsored by Texas Roadhouse. Pepsi and Burkhardt Sales and Services provided the refreshments. Check out our Facebook page for more details about this fun day!

### THE AMAZING GIVE WORKDAY EDITION

We were thrilled to participate in the Amazing Give hosted by the Community Foundation again this year. The event took place on April 22nd beginning at 7am and finishing with a 7pm wrap party at Celebration Pointe . Thanks to our hard working team and generous donors, we raised over \$45,000 for our programs.



Amazing Give Workday Edition Wrap Party