



2019: Volume I

PRESENTING: WSCC'S HEROES FOR HOPE

It is often said, only half-jokingly, that West Side Catholic Center is "Cleveland's Best Kept Secret." To those familiar with WSCC and its mission, however, there are special things happening at the corner of W. 32nd and Lorain.

What is not a secret to anyone, is the fact that all causes need champions. Without the people who lend their constant and unwavering support, it would be difficult, if not all but impossible, for difference-makers to enact positive change in the world.

That's why we've decided to highlight the people who, through their work and service, truly make our Center tick. More than just passersby on our journey, these people have been the heartbeat of WSCC for 41 years. Some of the faces are newer; some are mainstays from WSCC's earliest days. But as the awareness and energy of our organization continue to grow, there has been no better time to honor its history and at the same time look ahead to its bright future.

We cannot adequately express our gratitude to those who have been a part of our journey, but we hope that you will accept our best effort. With this newsletter's kickoff edition, WSCC is proud to present: a campaign recognizing the champions of our cause, our *Heroes for Hope*. We had the privilege of sitting down and chatting with some important members of our community. Keep reading to see what they had to say, and to learn what



The O'Malleys in a familiar spot behind the front desk of WSCC's Resource Center

WSCC means to them.

Tom & Pat O'Malley, Volunteers

West Side Catholic Center: How long have you been part of WSCC?

Pat: I've been here for nine years, and, Tom, you've been here, probably -

Tom: Six or seven years. I came a little bit after you.

Why is giving your time important to you?

Pat: I think, basically, everybody in the world has a responsibility to one another, and if we could recognize

that, we'd have far fewer problems.

Tom: Well, I think we've always talked about the corporal works of mercy, and that's what we're trying to do. So, at a basic level ... feed the hungry, do what we can. Now that we've gotten into this program here, we understand a little bit more about how the clients have to get through it.

So, it seems like you both mention a kind of responsibility or duty, but we know that you very willingly and generously give your time here for us. Why did you feel so drawn here, of all places? What sets us apart from other

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DIRECTOR'S DIALOGUE: *Minding the Gap*



As we all know, January can be a time of resolutions, as well as an opportunity to recover or regroup from the excesses of our holidays. Personally, I couldn't wait to return to routine. It felt like the kids were off of school for a month! So I, like so many of us, dove right into 2019 with a sense of urgency. We have a lot we resolved to accomplish as a center in 2019, and I didn't want to miss a beat. I also asked our staff to decide on a number (any number) that would be a reminder of their goals for the year. They have varied. I believe the highest number is something like 2.9 million. (I'll let you guess what that one means.) My number is 20, because as I mentioned in our most recent newsletter, I have the farthest walk to my desk in the building, and want to make sure I greet 20 people before I sit down every day.

I suppose another number that has been in my head is -2. Just a few moments ago (as of the time of writing), our Resource Center erupted in cheers. Why was there cheering? I'll first tell you that it wasn't because of a new program, or because St. Francis de Sales volunteers had made a delicious soup, or because of anything sports related, which is my go-to.

It is because with a projected high of -2 for Wednesday of this week, we decided that we would open at 7 am instead of the usual 9 am. We'll do the same on Thursday as well. A local shelter that opens on weekends in winter and on very cold nights actually closes every day at 7 am. By opening up our doors earlier, we've closed the gap in warmth for a large segment of our neighborhood.

Most heroes don't wear capes, but the ones I'm seeing today come to the West Side Catholic Center, either to work, to volunteer or to be a part of our community. They rise up and open early or stay open late in the face of closures and in the face of often desperate need. Further, local organizations and government entities have truly banded together this week to mind the gaps that might exist for our most vulnerable. While I have my share of challenges with the systems and bureaucracies that can exist for our friends in need (and ourselves), I think that this collaboration brought me the most joy this week. We are so much stronger as a community, together rather than separate.

Thank you, as always, for the myriad ways that you support our center so that we can keep the lights on, turn them on early when needed, etc.

You can be a hero by being a part of one of our upcoming events as well! The first is the Friends of West Side Catholic Center event on March 3rd at LaCentre in Westlake, where the prizes are simply incredible. Last year was my first and I was blown away by the 500+ who attended in support of Moriah House!

In a spirit of service,

John Litten, Executive Director

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organizations?

Pat: I knew one of the founders, Aggie Hoskin. I've known her for many, many years - she's a very loving, caring person. She had talked about this place a lot, and we brought donations down here for years before beginning to volunteer. Previously, I had volunteered elsewhere, and it didn't have the personal intimacy. The West Side Catholic Center seems to take a more personal, one-on-one type of interest in every one of the clients. It's our job to lift them up.

What is your greatest memory or story that you've experienced or gained from WSCC?

Tom: The clients come in and you get to know them, like, "you're the lady who always gets hot water for tea," for example.

Pat: Over in the [Moriah House Family] Shelter, every summer, a whole bunch of kids go to camp, and it was just so rewarding to me - something as simple as that, which all my kids would take for granted. They're some of the nicest, nicest little kids, and so resilient - that's so admirable.

What do you hope to see for the

future of WSCC?

Pat: I just hope it can continue. I think it would be wonderful if we could solve all the world's problems [laughs], but you know, we are, one step at a time.

Rome wasn't built in a day, right?

Tom: There you go, yeah. We *are* attempting to solve problems. We're doing it one step at a time, and that's about it, yeah. As far as what I'd like to see in the future here, I think there has to be more emphasis on getting more volunteers to come in here. It's important to train them

so that they want to stay, because in our observation, people come in and they think everything is roses, that you'll be doing all this great work, and everyone will say "thank you" [laughs].

Pat: Well, exactly. You've got to train volunteers to understand that it's the real world, not to expect... You have to be thick-skinned. They need to get more people, more volunteers, in here. I think Veronica [Favela, Advancement Manager] is doing a great job. Veronica, I think, is outstanding. One of the things I like about her is that she's here,

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Dean Lisowski preparing a meal for our clients



Rock & Bowl
A FAMILY EVENT AT SPINS BOWL INDEPENDENCE
SUNDAY, MARCH 31ST, 1:00-3:00 PM

Bowling
Laser Tag
Arcade Games
Raffles
Silent Auction

MORE INFORMATION AT:
WSCCENTER.ORG/ROCKANDBOWL

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she's with us all the time.

Tom: She comes and says hello, and that's important to volunteers. Volunteers have to be rewarded in some way, and a thank you is the best reward you can get.

Dean Lisowski, Former Associate Board President

When did your involvement with WSCC begin?

I started my involvement with WSCC back in July 2015. Over my three and a half years of involvement, my role with the center and the clients has grown immensely through volunteering and participation on the Associate Board.

You're obviously a believer in giving your time to others. Why do you believe service is important?

Simply enough - people need to help people. We're fortunate to have not-for-profits such as WSCC to help our community by providing important services, but even more importantly, hope. Organizations like this one need volunteers, financial assistance, and a dedicated staff in order to fulfill their missions. It's essential that we interact with our community and I'm lucky to have this amazing outlet through which to volunteer.

What's your greatest memory or story from your time with WSCC?

I came to know one of the volunteer/clients. Over time, we'd have conversations about his aspirations in the restaurant industry. He went to a restaurant training program and I had the pleasure of taking my family to the restaurant and introducing them to him. This past fall, I was ecstatic to hear he completed the program and will be starting his career as a sous chef here

in Cleveland.

What do you hope to see for the future of WSCC?

WSCC has grown immensely in the past three years since I've been active. In that time, they have transitioned executive directors, expanded their footprint, started new programs, and renovated several facilities. WSCC has adapted to these changes, and I hope to see them continue this trend - continually reinventing themselves to best fit the needs of their clients.

Any parting words?

Every person I've met here - volunteer, Board member, client, or employee - has had a profound understanding of the mission of WSCC. They are some of the best people I've met and I'm so grateful for everything they do. It's a truly humbling experience to be around so many caring, dedicated people.

Janice Lopez, Intake Coordinator, Zacchaeus Housing Solutions

How long have you been at WSCC?

I've been at WSCC since July 2010.

How do you advocate for the people you serve?

When Zacchaeus [Housing Solutions] families come in for intake, they may have questions about their current living situation. For example, I've spoken with clients who had utility bills which were extremely high because the landlord had their electricity services rigged with the lights in the hallway. What I do as the intake coordinator is try to assure them that I will let their new ZHS case manager know of these concerns so that they can follow up. I've seen that just listening to them during this time of transition seems to relieve stress and anxiety that they

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Janice Lopez (seated, left) and the rest of the Zacchaeus team

THE CLEVELAND FOUNDATION

Ensuring Greater Accessibility for All WSCC Programs

West Side Catholic Center, and the great work accomplished by this organization through our dedicated staff and volunteers, is dependent upon the support of our local community. We are eternally grateful for the partnerships with organizations and individuals on whom we rely to provide us with the means and resources to fulfill our mission of service.

The **Cleveland Foundation** has been one of these partnerships for which there are not appropriate words to convey our appreciation.

In December, the Cleveland Foundation announced its board of directors approved a \$190,000 grant to complete West Side Catholic Center's Campaign for the Future. The award is part of \$12.3 million in total grants awarded by the foundation in December, bringing its annual grantmaking to more than \$100 million for the second consecutive year.

"This month's grants emphasize the importance of providing crucial services and opportunities for our youth and marginalized residents," said India Pierce Lee, Cleveland Foundation Senior Vice President for Program. "As the year comes to a close, we're grateful to be able to support so many wonderful organizations that are making such a difference in Greater Cleveland."



The funds will support construction of an elevator in West Side Catholic Center's Economic Opportunities building, completing its Campaign for the Future which began in 2015 and featured renovations to the organization's Resource Center, Moriah House and administrative offices. The project enabled by

the Cleveland Foundation grant will provide for the expansion of workforce development services and ensure that all clients have access to program spaces.

"This gift is truly amazing. It is one of the largest grants of its kind in our center's recent history, and will be used to help us offer a path to self-sufficiency to all who come to us in need," said West Side Catholic Center Executive Director John Litten.



GIVING COMES IN ALL FORMS:

In-Kind Requests

In an effort to meet all the needs of our clients and programs, we ask for in-kind donations from you and the community.

UPCOMING REQUESTS:

- Fitted twin sheets (new)
 - Air mattresses
 - Towels
- Full-size toiletries
 - Pillows
- Small appliances (toasters, electric skillets, coffee pots, etc.)
- Cleaning supplies

To organize a donation drive or large donation drop-off, contact the Advancement Department at 216-631-4741 extension 122.

DONATE TO WSCC VIA AMAZON
WSCC is an **AmazonSmile** nonprofit partner. Purchase items for yourself at bit.ly/WSCCAmazonSmile and Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase to WSCC.

If you would like to donate a specific item to WSCC, visit our Wish List at bit.ly/WSCCAmazonWishList and ship items directly to WSCC.



DONATION DROP-OFF

Please drop items off at the double doors on W. 32nd Street marked WSCC. A staff member will be there to assist you.

Drop-Off Hours
Monday - Friday
8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

If you bring clothing, we ask that you bring only seasonally appropriate items that are clean, and either new or gently used. **Please note:** our space is very limited; we can only accept two bags per delivery.

Thank you for thinking of us!

FRIENDS SUPPORTING FAMILIES:

Friends of WSCC 31st Annual Luncheon

For over 30 years, the Friends of WSCC have hosted an annual March event, which has generated over \$1,000,000 to benefit WSCC's family shelter, Moriah House. Last year, the group celebrated their 30th Anniversary event with 530 attendees.

Friends of WSCC founder, Evelyn Allen, spoke of the hard work the group has put in over the years. When she created Friends of WSCC in 1986, she never imagined that she would raise seven figures - even after a successful run of events which saw her raise thousands for well-known Cleveland nonprofits. In fact, her first-year Friends of WSCC fundraising goal was just \$1,000, which she surpassed, raising a total of \$13,000! Now in its 31st year, she never expected this event to continue this long and year after year, the generosity and support of the community exceeds all expectations.

Were it not for Evelyn's vision, WSCC would not have been able to touch quite so many lives over these past 30 years.

The 31st Annual Friends of WSCC Shop for the Shelter will be held Sunday, March 3rd, 2019 at LaCentre in Westlake, Ohio.

For more information on this event, or to join the Friends group, please visit bidpal.net/shop4friends. New Friends are always welcome year-round.

Moriah House provides a full range of transitional services that assist families in moving from homelessness to stable housing and employment through interim housing, case management, and trauma-specific interventions.



Friends of WSCC founder Evelyn Allen



530 guests attended the 30th Anniversary event in March 2018.

2019 EVENT DATES

March 3	Friends of WSCC Luncheon @ LaCentre
March 31	Rock & Bowl @ Spins Bowl Independence
June 1	WSCC Pancake Run @ WSCC through Ohio City
June 20	WSCC Meet & Greet @ WSCC Gibbons Garden
July 18	WSCC Meet & Greet @ WSCC Gibbons Garden
August 15	WSCC Meet & Greet @ WSCC Gibbons Garden
September 7	Sips & Swigs @ The Madison
September 19	WSCC Meet & Greet @ WSCC Gibbons Garden
November 8	Warm Hearts Winter Nights @ Marriott Downtown Cleveland

For information regarding sponsorships, donations, or attendance, contact WSCC's Advancement Dept. at (216) 631-4741 ext. 132



14TH ANNUAL PANCAKE RUN

5K RUN, 1 MILE WALK & PANCAKE BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 2019

Pre-Registration By May 31
 Individual [\$25]
 Group of 4 [\$80]
 12 and Under [\$15]
Day-of Registration for All [\$30]

Register online at
hermescleveland.com
 or contact Hermes Cleveland with questions at (216) 623-9933.

Sponsorship levels start at \$250 and are important to the success of this event. To become a sponsor, visit wsccenter.org/PancakeRun or contact WSCC's Advancement Department at info@wsccenter.org or ext. 132.

SUMMER MEET & GREET AT WSCC

The WSCC Board will be hosting a series of casual meet-and-greet opportunities this summer in the Gibbons Garden at WSCC.

These socials are open to parties interested in learning more about WSCC and ways they can become involved in our mission.

2019 MEET-AND-GREET DATES:

Thursday, June 20
Thursday, July 18
Thursday, Aug. 15
Thursday, Sept. 19

See wsccenter.org or our Facebook page for event times.

For more information or to receive an invitation, contact the Advancement Department at: info@wsccenter.org or ext. 132.



DONOR GRATITUDE

You can make donations to WSCC to celebrate a special occasion, to ask “in lieu of gifts” or to honor someone special. WSCC expresses gratitude for the recent donations made in memory of the following:

IN MEMORIAM:

Daniel R. Brodnik
Dennis Cekaitis
Helen DiNardo
Rosalie Elliot
Suzanne Englehart
James Faragher
Martin Galvin
Miriam Johnson
Edgardo Katigbak
Edward Miller
Kevin Moran
Mary Morella
Skip Richlovsky
Christine Rose
William Schmidt
Elvira Wieland
Lillian Wirtz

To learn more about giving, contact the Advancement Department at info@wsccenter.org or ext. 132.

CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

WSCC is pleased to announce we are a **Community Partner** for the 43rd annual Cleveland International Film Festival. Our sponsored film will be announced after March 1. Stay connected with us on social media for updates.

Catch a CIFF film March 27 - April 7 at Tower City and other locations. Visit clevelandfilm.org for details.



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may be feeling.

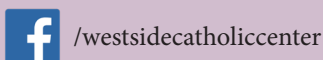
What's your greatest memory from your time working here?

In 2017, I noticed a family (grandmother, adult daughter, and 11-year-old grandson) in my parking lot where I live. Every morning, their car would be parked not far from mine, and the windows would be a little foggy. After seeing the car for a couple of weeks, I thought they might be homeless, and it really bothered me, as the woman looked to be around my age and the adult child looked to be around my son's. I wanted to approach her but wasn't sure how, as I didn't want her to feel

a sense of shame. I thought about the fact that this was the time of year that we gave out backpacks with school supplies. I figured this would be a good way to make contact. I spoke with Jeanette [Mazzola, Family Services Manager] so that I could get one, and the next morning, I approached the car and gave it to the young boy and told him that where I work, we give school supplies to people in the community. I also gave her my business card. She was so appreciative and she called me the next day to tell me that she was homeless. I told her I understood and that everything would work out and that we would help her. She shared her story and I just listened. I was so

moved by this woman's experience. Whenever I would see her in the morning when I left for work, I would smile and wave. Getting to know this family reaffirmed to me that being here at WSCC is truly my mission. Someday, I hope we can acquire an apartment building where we provide safe, affordable housing that's well-maintained. We need to continue approaching the people that come to us with respect and dignity - they deserve to know that they matter.

Stay tuned to our social media channels for subsequent editions of *Heroes for Hope*.





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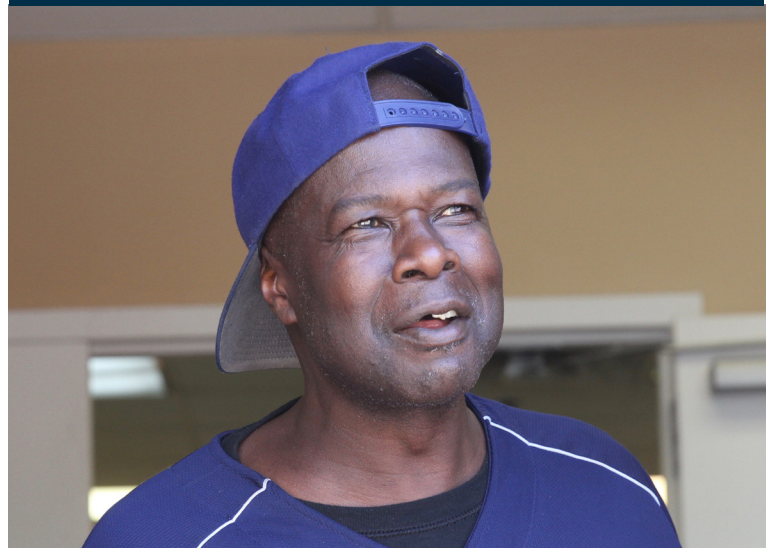
IT IS OUR MISSION :



West Side Catholic Center is grounded in faith, hope, love and respect for those we serve. We assist all who come in need of food, clothing, shelter, advocacy and a path to self-sufficiency.

"I have been helped many times in many ways by West Side Catholic Center. After sleeping outside, I was able to get food, clothes, medical help. I may not have survived without the help of volunteers and unselfish donors."

~ WSCC Client



If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please email info@wsccenter.org.