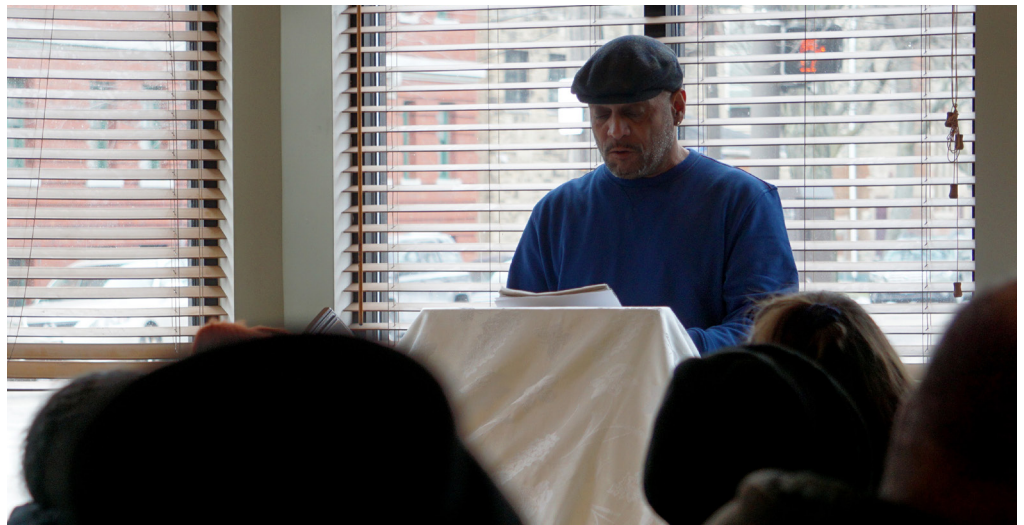




SPRING 2018

A PATH TO SELF-DISCOVERY WSCC's Expressive Arts Program

Many of our clients first come to WSCC for a warm meal and return for support, camaraderie, and to participate in our many programs. George Gonzalez is one such client. Nine years ago, George was walking down Lorain Avenue through Ohio City when he spotted a friend. This friend invited George to join him for a meal at West Side Catholic Center. Not familiar with our services, George agreed and unknowingly began a journey to self-discovery.



George presented writing pieces at the Creative Writing Mid-Year Show January 25, 2018.

George grew up in Hoboken, New Jersey with his parents, sister, and a large extended family. He graduated from high school, married his high school sweetheart, and served in the US Army. At the age of 24, he and

his wife divorced and George found himself heartbroken, confused, and angry. He eventually decided to move to Cleveland in 1996 to join his mother, who had moved here to be close to relatives.

stood out. From obtaining an ID to feeling supported by his peers, George found what he needed here.

Unfortunately, George's struggles followed him to Cleveland. He associated with the wrong crowd, got in fights, and was in and out of jail. The day his friend invited him to have lunch at West Side Catholic Center, he was resistant to accept any type of assistance. He thought WSCC was a place he did not belong—a place that served sandwiches to people much worse off than he was. Though wary to accept help, he agreed to a quick meal. Immediately, George realized he, like everyone that enters, is welcome at WSCC. "I came in, and I got everything I needed," he remembers. The helpfulness of the staff and volunteers

One day, George was having a conversation with a volunteer and followed her on her way to her next task. Little did he know, he was following her to Creative Writing Class, part of WSCC's Expressive Arts program. He decided to stay to participate; the day's prompt was "The Color of Your Mind". George had never thought deeply about his feelings, let alone written about them, so he was nervous to share his piece with the class. "I thought I would never be invited back. I just wrote what I was feeling and when I read it, everyone stood up and clapped."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- March 24** Rock & Bowl-Striking Out Poverty
- May 28** Resource Center/ Admin. Office Closed
- June 2** Pancake Run
- June 5** WSCC Night @ Platform Beer Co.
- July 4** Resource Center/ Admin. Office Closed
- July 12** Expressive Arts Program @ Saint Ignatius High School

Visit WSCCenter.org for more info!

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DIRECTOR'S DIALOGUE: *Hope Amidst Chaos*



It Was The Women Who Stayed

I decided to write this in the midst of a lot going on here at WSCC, but I guess I should just call it "Wednesday"...

I write this just days after being completely overwhelmed by the Friends of the West Side Catholic Center's annual "Women Helping Women" event to benefit Moriah House. This event welcomed over 500 guests and offered the opportunity to buy and bid on everything from baked goods to getaways to gift baskets and more! It was a place

overflowing with unconditional love and support for those we serve. That afternoon, I quoted a Sr. Helen Brancato painting (*below*) of the crucifixion which reads, "It was the Women Who Stayed." I believe this sentiment defines the continual dedication of the Friends Group, our founding Sisters of St. Joseph (including Sr. Kathleen Kilbane), many of our volunteers and staff, and many of my predecessors. Thank you to Evelyn Allen and all of the Friends members who helped make the day what it was.

I write this days and weeks after volunteers contend with our continued clothing distribution in a double wide trailer a block away, and as they adjust to a brand new Resource Center. I am thankful to all who have shared their feedback to make this process even better. Everyone's experience and ideas are valuable. Keep your ideas coming—I know it is because you care!

I write this just weeks after the start of our new Director of Advancement, Michael Bernot. He brings with him ideas, energy and a love for those we serve. He and I had lunch together in the new Resource Center during his first week, and later, he proceeded to run the shop vac when a room was cleared for renovation, so I can safely say he is at home here. As you interact with him, please share what makes WSCC an important place for you. Together, we will honor our great past and assure our future. We expect great things from Mike, and he can't do it without our collective support.

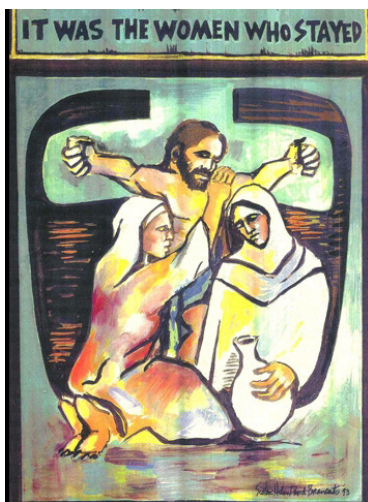
I write this as the lights are out in my office - workers from Krueger are prepping the room for painting, relighting, and new carpet as part of our renovations. I can hear sawing underneath me, as the new clothing distribution area is being created, and boxes are everywhere as offices are being refreshed or moved. Everyone has been flexible and thoughtful of one another during this chaotic process, jumping in to help others with packing up their offices. When staff has suddenly found themselves without a space to work, their next reaction was to ask where they can help others instead. I owe a lot of lunches (or perhaps an adult beverage if the opportunity arises).

Finally, I write this as all of this tumult pales in comparison to the many challenges our clients face on a daily basis. This process will be worth it so long as it enhances our mission and benefits our neighbors in need. I find that our Friends, staff, volunteers and benefactors will do just about anything for our people and all of the above proves it!

If you're receiving this newsletter, you have shared yourself with us in some way. I thank you for that giving of self. Know that we are working to honor your time, talent and treasure every day, week and month – now and for many years to come.

In a spirit of service,

John Litten, Executive Director



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:

West Side Catholic Center's Expressive Arts program is designed specifically to encourage creativity and facilitate healing. Funded generously by Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, the program offers a variety of classes including art classes, drumming circle, yoga, and creative writing. Research indicates creative activities can be helpful in improving communication, reducing feelings of isolation, promoting self-esteem, and addressing consequences of trauma.

George continued to attend the Creative Writing class and became more and more comfortable expressing himself through writing. He has written pieces on homelessness, death, birth, feeling out of place, and many other pertinent topics. He has found writing, as well as hearing the writings of his peers, has allowed him to open his mind to a new way of thinking and a new way of seeing the world. "Since I've been here, I've discovered how to live with a little more peace. I hear the birds and I stop and watch them—they're beautiful...I didn't know that before!"

Through Creative Writing Class, George found a way to connect with himself. He has gained the

confidence and support to seek independence from the chaotic life he once lived. With the support of WSCC staff, George recently applied to and was accepted into EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute, which gives formerly incarcerated adults a foundation in the hospitality industry while providing a support network necessary for their long-term success.

While reflecting on his time at WSCC, George expressed, "I've done things I never thought I would do...I consider this my second home. I think it's heaven on earth."



George (top center) served in the US Army for 4 years after graduating high school at the age of 17.



George (second from the left) with fellow Creative Writing participants and Jesuit Volunteer, Catherine Larsen, at the Expressive Arts Showcase July, 2017.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

National Volunteer Week, April 15-22, is an opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers who lend their time, talent, voice and support to causes they care about in their community. Their stories can serve to inspire others to find ways to take action that creates change.

At WSCC, volunteers faithfully serve with love and respect for our clients. This week captures the power of changemakers to come together to build stronger, more vibrant programs through service. WSCC is blessed to have caring volunteers who have a well-deserved reputation for going the extra mile to assist our clients.

We would like to thank our volunteers for their support and patience throughout our Campaign for the Future renovation process. Despite new challenges arising daily, our volunteers continue to be outstanding in their work serving Clevelanders in need. Thank you.



CAMPAIGN FOR THE FUTURE

Progress Update

WSCC's Campaign for the Future was initiated in August of 2015 to raise funds to renovate Moriah House, our family shelter, and the Resource Center. Improvements to these spaces were necessary to provide functional spaces for our volunteers, staff, and clients.

Moriah House renovations included improvements to the lower level to allow for more programming options for clients, updates to kitchen appliances and space, a new roof and windows, new exterior decking, and much more.

Construction on the Resource Center began in June of 2017. The second floor was expanded to create new office space and WSCC staff moved into the new office space in January. A new conference room was also added on the second floor. In addition to new office space, the first floor is also seeing a lot of

change. A brand new kitchen was created including new appliances, a walk-in freezer, and an expanded pantry. The dining area was relocated to the back of the building to allow for more seating for our clients.

In the coming months, the front half of the Resource Center's first floor will be transformed into a sorting and shopping area for the the Clothing

and Household Item Distribution (CHID) program.

We anticipate a late Spring grand opening of the new space. We would like to thank all of our volunteers and clients for their patience during this transition and look forward to better serving Cleveland with your support.



The Krueger Group, who is managing the renovation, served the first meal in the new Resource Center kitchen February 2, 2018.



The Krueger Group gave WSCC staff a tour of the second floor expansion; October, 2017.



New office space on the second floor of the Resource Center; February, 2018.

COMMUNITY WEST FOUNDATION

Advancing the Health and Well-Being of Our Community

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 whom we rely on to provide us with the means and resources to fulfill our mission of service.

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

Every year, for nearly 20 years, Community West Foundation has been a significant contributor to WSCC. Their support enabled us to launch Zacchaeus Housing Solutions to assist homeless individuals and families in securing and maintaining housing. This program currently serves over 100 families each year by providing rent subsidies, case management, and family services

to assist them in becoming self-sufficient.

Community West Foundation recently awarded WSCC a \$45,000 grant to support our Resource Center programming. Open six days a week, the Resource Center provides meals, day shelter for the poor and homeless, as well as outreach, wellness and self-sufficiency programs.



Community West Foundation

Illuminating Hope

We thank Community West Foundation for their ongoing support of WSCC, as well as their dedication to supporting organizations that provide the necessities of food, clothing, shelter and medical care to the most vulnerable in and around western Cuyahoga County.



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:

- 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

As building renovations continue, our donation drop-off location has moved back to the Resource Center. 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 Items

Monday - Friday
8:30AM - 2:30 PM

We ask that you bring only season appropriate clothing that is new or gently used and clean. **Please note:** our space is very limited; we can only accept 2 bags per delivery.

Thank you for your patience as we transition into our new spaces.

FRIENDS SUPPORTING FAMILIES:

Friends of WSCC 30th Annual Luncheon

For nearly 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. This year, the group celebrated their 30th Anniversary event with 530 attendees.

The event features a shopping boutique filling many rooms with jewelry, fabulous theme baskets, linens, a variety of art and wall decor, baked goods, floral arrangements, and more--all donated by members of Friends.

Friends of WSCC founder, Evelyn Allen, spoke of the hard work the group has put in over the years. She never expected this event to continue this long and year after year, the generosity and support of the community exceeds all expectations.

Fr. Eric Garris led the attendees

in prayer and expressed his belief that helping others is God's work. Sister Kathleen Kilbane, WSCC founder, also addressed the crowd, highlighting the value of supporting our neighbors in need and telling the story of WSCC's humble beginning.

Closing out the program, Bishop Anthony Pilla spoke of the importance of uplifting our community by treating others with dignity.

For more information on this event, or to join the Friends membership, please call 440-871-6681. 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.



Bishop Anthony Pilla



Guests enjoyed a variety of boutique items for sale, raffles, and auctions.

2018 EVENT DATES

- June 2** WSCC Pancake Run
@ WSCC through Ohio City
- June 5** WSCC Night
@ Platform Beer Co.
- June 14** WSCC Meet & Greet
@ WSCC Gibbons Garden
- July 19** WSCC Meet & Greet
@ WSCC Gibbons Garden
- August 16** WSCC Meet & Greet
@ WSCC Gibbons Garden
- September 15** Sips & Swigs
@ RedSpace
- September 20** WSCC Meet & Greet
@ WSCC Gibbons Garden
- October 20** St. Joseph 5K
@ St. Joseph in Strongsville
- November 2** 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 or info@wsccenter.org.



13TH ANNUAL PANCAKE RUN

5K RUN, 1 MILE WALK & PANCAKE BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 2017

Pre-Registration By June 1
 Individual [\$20]
 Group of 4 [\$70]
 12 and Under [\$10]
Day of Registration for All [\$25]

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.

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 honor/memory of the following:

IN HONOR:

Dee Adinaro
George Angelato
David and Elaine Betz
Faith Conroy
Jim and Pat Cuglewski
Ken Davis
Rebecca Dessofoy Bennett
John Doheney
Pat Ferrara
Judge Donna Fitzsimmons
Rick Gareau
Judy Foley Gawronski
Laura Frank
John and Pat Harknett
Dick and Judy Herman
Jack Jusko
Catherine Kovanda
Kathleen LaPorte
Kevin and Colleen Lenhard
Rick and Shelley Mack
Michael Moroney
Liz Niehaus

John and Eileen O'Brien
Lisa Russo
Maureen Ryan
Joe and Marilyn Siekeres
Jerry and Kathleen Skoch
Pat Strauss
Lillian Tovtin
Fr. Ralph Wiatrowski

IN MEMORIAM:

James Anghilante
Margaret Bunevich
Anne Englehart
Carol Gross

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 42nd annual Cleveland International Film Festival. As a **Community Partner**, WSCC will support the film, *Life and Nothing More*.

Standing on the edge of adulthood, Andrew yearns to find his purpose as a young African-American in today's America. With his mother longing to find more to her life than parenting, Andrew is forced to take on the mounting pressure of family responsibility. His search for connection with an absent father, leads him to a dangerous crossroads.

Catch a CIFF film April 4-15 at Tower City and other locations. Visit clevelandfilm.org for details.



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.

2018 MEET-AND-GREET DATES:

Thursday, June 14
Thursday, July 19
Thursday, Aug. 16
Thursday, Sept. 20

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.

PROVIDE 40 DAYS OF HOPE

During this Lenten season, let us be grateful for the privilege of being in a position to emulate the sacrifices made for humanity by Jesus. We embrace simple living to understand our community's most vulnerable people.

Thanks to our supporters, we do great things every day for the most vulnerable in our community. In making a Lenten gift to uplift those among us who are poor and homeless, your act of benevolence will truly embody the spirit of the season by serving to do good to others.

Join us to honor the 40 days of Lent by providing 40 days of hope. **Make a special Easter gift today in the enclosed envelope.**

\$0.25 a day is \$10 – Provides 4 meals
\$0.50 a day is \$20 – Provides 8 meals
\$1.00 a day is \$40 – Provides 16 meals
\$5.00 a day is \$200 – Provides 80 meals



DID YOU KNOW?

52.5% of Cleveland's children are living in poverty.

U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey



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FAX: 216.631.2379
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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.

"You guys are amazing - thank you for all you do and for helping me and my family in times of need. I will forever be grateful...God bless you all!"

~ WSCC Client



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