



# The Mission

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington

Spring 2010

## Single Mother Demonstrates Courage In Spite of Adversity

A mother of three recently visited the Western Regional Office (WRO) in Leesburg, asking for financial assistance with her gas bill. Throughout the interview process, she was quiet and reserved, but presented all the necessary documents to qualify for emergency financial assistance. When asked for family information, she shared that her husband had left her and the

children in December 2009. Her mother had moved in to help make ends meet, but an accident unexpectedly took her mother's life. Thereafter, her 12-year old son assumed the role as the man of the household.

First, he gladly gave his mother the money he received for Christmas to help out with the bills. Then, in mid-April, he began to work around the neigh-

borhood, cutting lawns for extra money. The mother continues to work as a part-time bus driver so that she can have the flexibility to be home with her other small children.

In spite of all of her adversity, this woman displayed admirable courage despite the many losses in her life. It is stories like these that remind us of how little it takes to help someone so deeply in need.

## Hogar Legal Services Helps More Than 70 Immigrants Move Toward U.S. Citizenship

Hogar Immigrant Services legal team recently partnered with the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyer's Association (AILA) to host a Citizenship Day Workshop at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church. The event was a resounding success, helping more than 70 individuals complete their applications to become U.S. citizens.

Dozens of volunteers from AILA, Hogar and the community were on hand to assist. As Hogar Director John Odenwelder noted, "Our partnership with AILA on



Hogar Citizenship coordinator Kristin Gasimov (second from left) with AILA site coordinator Miriam Reidmiller (second from right) and volunteers at the April 17 Naturalization Workshop.

this workshop is an excellent example of collaboration between local attorneys and a nonprofit with access to applicants. We were extremely pleased with the high turnout and are grateful to AILA for underwriting the workshop and for recruiting so many volunteers."

Hogar's next Citizenship Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Arlington County Department of Human Services (DHS), 3033 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 300 in Arlington, VA. Call (703) 534-9805 for more information.



Stephen Luteran

## FROM THE DESK OF **Stephen Luteran**

*A note of thanks to volunteers, the business community and our parishes.*

Though I cannot adequately thank everyone, I would like to share my appreciation for the many volunteers, businesses and parishes that aid us in our ministry.

We are blessed to have hundreds of volunteers working across the diocese. Everyday, a cadre of volunteers is supporting our programs by serving meals to the homeless, tending to the elderly, fielding phone calls for emergency assistance, loading trucks of food destined for rural parishes and pantries, mentoring homeless families, teaching English and managing large-scale events such as the Annual Catholic Charities Ball and Golf Classic. Our

volunteers are examples of faith in action. We are especially grateful for all that they do to serve those in need.

The presence of the business community is also witnessed on a daily basis through their generous in-kind and financial donations. An extensive list of donated services and goods includes food, internet access, computers, credit counseling, free office space, bicycles for children, floral arrangements, and more.

Most vital to this work are our parishes. Parishes are the center of our diocesan-community, and within each parish we strive to make our services available to better serve the needs of the parish and the

entire community. Throughout the diocese, parishes conduct food drives, operate ESL classes, provide space for family counseling services, and host events and activities for our programs. And every year, parishes support the Christmas Collection to benefit the work of Catholic Charities within the diocese.

So, thank you all—our individual volunteers, businesses, and parishes—for helping Catholic Charities live the Gospel. To all of you, we are eternally thankful for your support.

## **Exercise Class Improves Health for a Senior Citizen at St. Martin de Porres Senior Center**

“Ms. C” recently began attending a weekly, instructor-led yoga class at St. Martin de Porres Senior Center. She has been coming to the Center for years, relying on an umbrella to help her keep her balance as she walks. “I am too conceited for a cane,” she says with a grin.

A yoga program at St. Martin de Porres Senior Center has helped her strengthen her knees and improve her balance

so much that she no longer needs her umbrella for short indoor trips. Ms. C completes self-taught yoga classes a few times a week by watching the Center’s DVDs and attends an instructor-led class on Friday. The classroom instructor gave her tips for the self-taught yoga classes on DVD and personalized an exercise routine for her to do at home. The classes and personalized attention of the instructor are improving both

her physical and mental well-being, motivating her to come to the Center.

Ms. C said, “I look forward to the class all week. It makes me happy and takes me into the weekend with a positive outlook. My knees can’t do everything, but I try.” The Center’s focus on wellness through personalized instruction and group exercise has greatly improved the quality of Ms. C’s life.

## Some recent in-kind donations from businesses and agencies

- Accenture - strategic planning services
- Arlington Florist - volunteer fair sponsor
- Balmar Publishers - reduced printing costs
- BB&T - computers
- BJ's Wholesale Club - volunteer fair sponsor
- Capital One - financial coaching
- Comcast Cable - internet services
- Conklyn's Florist - volunteer fair sponsor
- Costco - volunteer fair sponsor
- Del Ray Baptist Church - volunteer fair sponsor
- Exxon Mobile Corporation - 150 bikes and helmets for Christmas
- Firehook Bakery and Coffee House - volunteer fair sponsor
- Food Donation Connection - food donations for seniors
- George Washington Masonic National Memorial - volunteer fair sponsor
- Great Harvest Bread Company - volunteer fair sponsor
- Harris Teeter - volunteer fair sponsor
- Hire Strategy - food drive
- Kentucky Fried Chicken - food donations for seniors
- M&T Bank - monthly meals at Christ House
- M.E.Flow Inc. - free office space, utilities and monthly donation
- Magruder's Supermarkets - volunteer fair sponsor
- Maple Leaf Rain Gutter Service - gutter cleaning services
- PNC Bank - financial coaching
- Red Lobster Seafood Restaurants - food donations for seniors
- Safeway - volunteer fair sponsor
- Shamrock Enterprises of VA - maintenance
- Sheehy Auto Stores - employment internship
- Shoppers Food Warehouse - volunteer fair sponsor
- Starbucks Coffee Company - food donations for seniors
- Tempo Restaurant - volunteer fair sponsor
- The Olive Garden - food donations for seniors
- The Perfect Pita - volunteer fair sponsor
- Today's Cargo - volunteer fair sponsor
- U.S. Army - construction and cleaning
- Virginia Commerce Bank - credit counseling
- Zero Company - food cards

# Hogar Immigrant Services Helps Unite A Salvadoran Family

Years ago, through a series of carefully staged departures, a family of six fled their native country of El Salvador to escape the violence and hardship of civil war. While the mother was able to establish permanent residency in the United States, the children's legal status remained in limbo, first in deportation proceedings followed by Temporary Protected Status.

The family recently came to Hogar Immigrant Services, anxious to renew the children's Temporary Protected Status. Hogar's legal team of experts researched the case to see what more could be done to remedy the uncertainty regarding their future.

The team determined that the children were eligible for

lawful permanent residence under the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) and worked to reopen their case in immigration court. All family members are now lawful permanent residents of the U.S., happily ending a long and difficult chapter of flight and reunification.

The children are hard-working, family-oriented, and well-respected in their communities and at their parish. Hogar Staff Attorney Chelsy Weber, who represented the family in court, noted, "Having gotten to know this wonderful family, I was incredibly thrilled that they were finally able to conclude their long journey to permanent status and reunification in the United States."

## St. Margaret of Cortona Transitional Program Needs Apartment Furniture

Our newest program, St. Margaret of Cortona Transitional Residences in Woodbridge, provides transitional housing and comprehensive life-skills training for families who have been living in homeless shelters. St. Margaret's is in need of apartment furniture, diapers, baby wipes, baby food, and feminine hygiene products.

To make a donation, contact Program Director Amy White at (703) 910-4845 or [awhite@ccda.net](mailto:awhite@ccda.net).



St. Margaret of Cortona Transitional Residences in Woodbridge, VA

# Iraqi ESL Student Gives Back by Volunteering at Hogar Immigrant Services

Tariq Hussein is originally from Baghdad, Iraq. His entire family immigrated to the United States between 2007 and 2009. Tariq arrived in Northern Virginia in August 2009. A college graduate with a B.A. in Commercial and Banking Science, he has held a wide variety of jobs ranging from a computer programmer to customer service to a mechanic. Tariq currently is both an Advanced ESL student and a volunteer at Hogar Immigrant Services.



Tariq Hussein

Learn more about Tariq Hussein in the following interview:

***When did you become a Hogar ESL student?***

“I started classes at Hogar in September of 2009. I began with the intermediate ESL class, but am now taking the

advanced course. I really like the classes and feel comfortable with the teachers and the people who work in the office.”

***Why did you decide to become a volunteer at Hogar?***

“I began volunteering in February 2010 because I like to help people.”

***What type of volunteer work do you do at Hogar?***

“I started out fixing up the computer lab to make sure that all the computers are up

to date [for the English classes]. And now I am working on the student database. I enter in all the student information and I will be making a database to upload all of that information, too.”

***What are the most rewarding aspects of volunteering at Hogar?***

“Everything!! I like the people and the work that I do.”

***What do you like to do when you are not volunteering or taking English classes?***

“I like to watch movies, play football (soccer) and swim in the summer.”

Thank you, Tariq, for all of your hard work at Hogar Immigrant Services. You are an excellent student and dedicated volunteer.

## Leading Jazz Artists Perform Christ House Benefit Concert

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Women’s Council of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Annandale hosted a jazz concert to benefit Christ House. Gifted Virginian songstress Nancy Scimone

joined guitarist Steve Herberman and bassist Victor Dvoskin for a special “Swing Into Spring” program that featured songs by Gershwin, Jobim, Ellington, Berlin and many more popular favorites.

Many thanks to Nancy, her fellow musicians, Church of the Holy Spirit, and all who attended this uplifting event to benefit the homeless and hungry.



Songstress Nancy Scimone, bassist Victor Dvoskin and guitarist Steve Herberman perform at Church of the Holy Spirit in Annandale on April 22, 2010.

*The Mission*, Spring 2010  
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Executive Director.....Stephen Luteran  
 Communications  
 Director .....Michelle Trosset

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington  
 200 N. Glebe Road, Suite 506  
 Arlington, VA 22203  
 703-841-3830  
 www.cdda.net