



# CELEBRATING *success*

FALL NEWSLETTER 2021



Beatitude House staff setting up at the Lora Avenue location July 1

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**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

MARIE VOITUS

# BEATITUDE HOUSE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

ARTICLE BY MICHELE RISTICH GATTS

Beatitude House's Barnyard Bash brought country fun to inner-city kids at its Lora Avenue, Youngstown, location July 1. About 120 clients and staff attended the event, which marked the beginning of their 30 year anniversary and made up for celebrations cancelled because of COVID-19.

"Several times a year we celebrate the children's birthdays with parties and cake," said Keshia Bales, director of Beatitude House. "Since we were unable to during pandemic restrictions, we wanted to have one big birthday event."

The party featured Zoo-2-Go Mobile Petting Zoo, Kona Ice, In the Truck Eatery, cake and gifts for the children provided by Project MKC and private donors.

"The community support we have received over our 30 year history has been part of the key to our success," said Sister Patricia McNicholas, donor relations director. "We have been blessed with the support of churches, foundations, individuals as well as government. We are ever grateful."

Jenne Battaglia, Child Wellness coordinator for Beatitude House, said the party was especially welcome given the pandemic-related difficulties the children encountered.

"During this past year our kiddos demonstrated resiliency and perseverance -- in ways that we could not have imagined -- due to COVID," Battaglia said. "The kids in our programs rose above challenges and still completed work, met with tutors, and were able to achieve academic success."

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Sister Darla Vogelsang and two guests



Children enjoying the petting zoo

**"This also begins a year of celebrating the long-term stability Beatitude House has provided for over 7,500 individuals, along with the success of so many who have come to Beatitude House seeking refuge and hope over the years."**

-Keshia Bales, Director  
Beatitude House

# Then

## REMEMBERING OUR FIRST CHILD ADVOCATE

A STORY WRITTEN BY NANCY BEEGLY WITH SISTER MARY ALYCE KOVAL

Sister Margaret Scheetz realized that the children of the mothers living in the housing program were especially vulnerable. It took nine years for her dream to be realized in the creation of a new position - a Child Advocate.

In 1991, Betty Schuster was working on Long Island, NY, as a health and physical education teacher. "She taught physical education classes until her life journey brought her to the home of the Ursuline Sisters in Youngstown, when she responded to an invitation to become a Companion in Mission at Beatitude House," said Sister Mary Alyce Koval.

Betty became immediately enmeshed in the mission and worked closely with her mentor, Sister Margaret Scheetz. They transformed the house on Fifth Avenue into four shining apartments for the first four homeless families in the transitional housing program.

Following her two years of volunteer service, Betty started the process to become an Ursuline Sister and professed her vows to become Sister Elizabeth Ann Schuster, OSU, in 1997.

During her years of formation, Betty continued to volunteer at Beatitude House while ministering at Immaculate Conception and Holy Family schools and New Hope Academy. In those schools, many called her "the child whisperer," as she could calm the most troubled child and help them develop self-confidence.

In 2001, Sister Betty returned to Beatitude House as the first Child Advocate. She created a comprehensive Child Advocacy Program that is still used today. Her program provided five broad areas of development with specific goals for mothers and their children: Child Development, Family Structure, Discipline and Behavior, Health and Safety, and Education and Enrichment.

Sister Betty mentored over 100 families in the six years she worked as Child Advocate. But even outside of her work, she found time to arrange a choir of 40 children to sing carols at St. Columba Cathedral, supply memories of winter expeditions to Mill Creek Park, and let children run care-free through sprinklers on hot summer days.

Sister Betty lost her battle to ovarian cancer in October 2013. Sister Mary Alyce writes, "In the course of her illness over seven years, Betty never wavered in her belief that God was her constant companion and support through the ups and downs of her journey. She walked with God at Beatitude House for 21 years."

Today, her legacy of the Child Advocacy Program continues through the Immigrant Outreach and Housing programs. And her memory is honored with the Sister Betty Schuster Outstanding Youth Award that is given each year to a child from Beatitude House who has demonstrated significant growth through leadership, achievement, or personal success.



# & now

## THE CHILD WELLNESS PROGRAM TODAY

AN ARTICLE BY JENNE BATTAGLIA

Service has been a common thread woven throughout the fabric of my life. Growing up in Boardman, Ohio, I volunteered within the community beginning in middle school and throughout high school.

Upon graduation, I continued the call to service by joining the military. In 2012, I returned home to finish my degree in Early Childhood Education at Youngstown State University, where my connection with Beatitude House began.

In college, Sister Norma Raupple came to speak, looking for volunteers with the Immigrant Outreach tutoring program. Little did I know when I raised my hand to sign up, I would be embarking on a decade long journey with Beatitude House.

Despite a variety of life changes over the past 10 years, I have always come back to Beatitude House. Being involved with the children's program has enabled me to understand the positive impact lifelong relationships have on children.

When the Child Wellness Coordinator position came available, it was an easy decision to take the steps to come into that role. In March of 2020, I started my new role, where I began working on our six-week summer programming for the children to take place virtually. We met with 21 children in our program three times a week, took them on virtual field trips, did science projects, art projects, music lessons, and social-emotional learning.

Throughout the past year, the Child Wellness Program has extended beyond after school tutoring program. We saw the importance of continuing relationships with our high school and college aged students. We exposed our teen group to a wide variety of post-secondary options, the paths available to them, and the steps required to bring their future to fruition. Our college group focused on financial aid, loans, scholarships, career tracks, and general guidance on balancing work, life, and school.

We focused summer learning programs on entrepreneurship and partnered with the Youngstown Business Incubator to teach children what it means to be an entrepreneur. They learned marketing, advertising, financial literacy, consumer relations, and how to collaborate with a team.

After-school tutoring has expanded to include both online and in-person options to best accommodate the needs of the kids. This upcoming year we are including more one-on-one counseling, family counseling, mentoring, and a new SNAP-Ed program that promotes healthy eating and active living.

As we look at then and now of the Child Wellness Program at Beatitude House, we see the importance of ensuring the children feel seen, heard, valued, and cared for above all else. The relationships developed and maintained allow the children in our programs to thrive and see a greater vision for their lives. Looking forward to the next 30 years, we hope to carry on the mission and charism pioneered at Beatitude House's inception.

To read a full verison of Sister Betty's Story and Jenne's article, please visit [beatitudehouse.com](http://beatitudehouse.com)



# 30 YEARS OF SUCCESS

## THE IMPACT OF BEATITUDE HOUSE IN OUR COMMUNITY

In 1991, Sister Margaret Scheetz had a vision to provide housing and educational opportunities for single mothers and their children. Her inspiration, coming from the film "God Bless the Child," led her to establish the nonprofit organization and provide transitional housing for four families at a donated Tudor house on Lora Avenue in Youngstown. She believed the best way out of poverty is education and that offering these women the opportunity for stable housing gave them the resources to land on their feet and start overcoming the cycle of poverty.

"As a news reporter/producer, I remember seeing Sister Margaret being interviewed about Beatitude House. I was very moved by her passion," said Teresa Boyce, who came to Beatitude House as Development Director over 20 years ago.

Throughout the years, Beatitude House has evolved into an active member of the Youngstown community. The housing program, which started as the pillar of Beatitude House, now offers permant supportive housing as well as transitional housing at over 30 sites. Immigrant Outreach has evolved since its beginning in 2008 to provide English classes, tutoring, and case management to families in need. Most recently, Ursuline Sisters Scholars was established in 2017 to assist college students of low-income achieve their acadamic goals.

After the passing of Sister Margaret in 2001, her legacy lives on in the ministries she began 30 years ago. Beatitude House, its employees, board members, and donors are committed to the advancement of its programs in order to transform even more lives over the next 30 years.

"Our wonderful and dedicated staff are always willing to go above and beyond what is expected of them to help the people we serve," said Boyce, who now serves as Government Programs administrator. The future is exciting as those living out Sister Margaret's mission remain committed to inspiring hope, transforming lives and strengthening our community.

### WHAT PROGRAM ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT?

The Scholars Program is an amazing opportunity for women, especially single mothers, to take their next step in higher education and provide the neccessary resources that a lot of students take for granted.   
 -Alison Turner, Beatitude House Board Member

### WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THE FUTURE OF BEATITUDE HOUSE?

The fact that we continue to provide all of the current services to people and that we are looking into collaborating with other agencies to be able to help out even more people.   
 -Kisha Pierce, Property Manager, Beatitude House

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY AT BEATITUDE HOUSE?

My wife and I attended the Cornerstone Dinner in 2019, and to meet some of the young women who overcame so many obstacles to graduate from college was very inspiring.   
 -Dale Fronk, Beatitude House Board Member



### Continued feature article from page 01

Battaglia works with children in the ministry's Housing and Immigrant Outreach programs, some of whom go on to be part of the Scholars program, which helps them attain post high school certifications, training in trades and college degrees.

Bales, who's worked at Beatitude House for 10 years, said the nonprofit's board members, leadership team and staff are all "talented and committed to making a difference in our clients' lives. We are blessed to be a part of the transformations that occur here every day."



Angie and Pat Moran (center), of Window World, with guests and staff, visting the petting zoo



30th Anniversary Cake



Owners of "In The Truck Eatery" who served burgers, fried veggies, and chicken tenders

"We really believe that if we can help tell the story that you can rule the world, while we're really not trying to rule the world... we're trying to give people the ability to tell their own story.   
 -Sister Mary McCormick, General Superior Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown

# events

## WINE TASTE APRIL 30, 2021

This year our Wine Taste event looked a little different by offering a Drop-In or Drive-Thru format, in honor of staying within COVID guidelines. Attendees received their choice of a full course meal and a full bottle of wine. Guests also had the opportunity to participate in a raffle for a Muirfield Memorial Golf Tournament package and the wine pull. Despite the unique set-up for this year, over \$41,000 was raised.



Sister Mary McCormick at the Inspiring Hope Campaign press conference

## INSPIRING HOPE MAY 20, 2021

The three-year Inspiring Hope Campaign ended this past spring. "Through generous donations, we actually exceed our goal by more than \$200,000, bringing our total to almost \$3.7 million," said Ellen Tressel, the campaign's co-chair, during the press conference held at Youngstown State University's Pollock House.

Sister Mary McCormick said that extra money raised will help "provide stable housing, programs for scholars, people who are first generation college students, and first generation immigrants by helping them assimilate into our own culture."

## GOLF OUTING JULY 26, 2021

Bigger and better than ever - the 25th Annual Window World and Beatitude House Golf Outing took place at The Lake Club. The 18 hole scramble sold out weeks prior and over 25 local businesses sponsored the event. Title sponsors included Jones Wealth Management and Associated Materials, LLC.

Following the scramble, golfers enjoyed dinner where Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini sold donations for his signature bourbon. The Live Auction items, featuring Ohio State and 49ers football tickets, brought in close to \$7,000 of the total funds raised.



Brigid Kennedy, Ursuline Sisters Chief Mission Officer, Sister Patricia McNicholas, and friend of Beatitude House, Chris Witt



Fred Moran, president of Window World, and Brigid Kennedy at the start of the outing

## URSULINE SISTERS SCHOLARS

# graduates

2020 - 2021



**DESIRAY HAMPTON**  
Graduated from Akron Children's Medical Lab Science Program & received a Bachelor's in Medical Lab Science from Youngstown State University



**CHRISTINA RIVERA**  
Graduated as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) from Ashtabula County Career & Technical Center



**AMANDA GOOD**  
Graduated with her Associate's Degree in Human Services from Kent State Ashtabula



**TYMIRA STENSON**  
Graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Ursuline College



**KARA UREY**  
Graduated as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) from Choffin Career & Technical Center



**YASMEEN CORTEZ**  
Graduated with her Associate degree in Paralegal Studies from Eastern Gateway Community College and is pursuing Political Education at Youngstown State University



**CHONDIA BARNES**  
Graduated as a Licensed Practice Nurse (LPN) from Choffin Career & Technical Center



**YASMEEN CORTEZ**  
YSU MCNICHOLAS SCHOLARSHIP



**ASHLEE MACORMAC**  
COMERFORD FUND



**KATHLEEN GROMLEY**  
GLORIA ANDERSON FUND



**CASSANDRA SINGH**  
URSULINE SISTERS FUND

# scholarship recipients

## mentor of the year

**MARY LOU THACKER**  
NOMIATED BY HER SCHOLAR, RASHA ALI

In fall of 2019, Rasha Ali joined the Immigrant Outreach Program to work on her English, where she was paired with Mary Lou Thacker. After months of studying together, Mary Lou took Rasha to the ASPIRE office at Eastern Gateway, where it was determined that Rasha's English was good enough for her to begin college.

Before Rasha's fall semester, Mary Lou was asked to be Rasha's mentor in the Scholars Program. Mary Lou was a lifeline for Rasha, who was alone with her two girls during the pandemic, by helping her continue her studies, establish stronger ties to the community, and secure housing.

Recently, Rasha was asked to write what her mentor meant to her: "[Mary Lou], you are an amazing person and I am so lucky to have you in my life. You are not only assisting me with college, you helped me find an apartment, and have been generous and kind towards me in so many different ways."

Mary Lou helped her receive a Google/IT Certificate as these two continue to stay in touch. Rasha still attends Eastern Gateway, where she is working on a second degree in Health Information Management.

It is mentors like Mary Lou Thacker that make the Ursuline Sisters Scholars Program thrive as we continue to inspire the next group of college students.



Rasha Ali (left) with her mentor Mary Lou Thacker (right)

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS



**BEATITUDE HOUSE**  
Ursuline Ministries, gospel service

238 Tod Lane  
Youngstown, Ohio 44504  
330.744.3147



**URSULINE  
MINISTRIES**

4280 Shields Road, Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330.793.0434

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

### CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

Looking to donate and help our families in need this holiday season?

Our Christmas Wish List will be filled with items that our families are in need of. Information on our Wish List and online registry will be available after October 15th.

Information on how to donate to or adopt a family will also be included.

For all of the latest information, visit our Facebook page and keep checking our website at [beatitudehouse.com/donate](http://beatitudehouse.com/donate) for information on Christmas donations.

### YOUNGSTOWN FOUNDATION

As of May 2021, The Youngstown Foundation made some changes in its funding programs and will no longer require donations for Beatitude House to pass through the foundation. The Youngstown Foundation will now award Beatitude House a yearly grant.

Any donations sent to Beatitude House made out to The Youngstown Foundation cannot be accepted after June 1, 2021. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Donations can be made out directly to Beatitude House and sent to:

Beatitude House  
238 Tod Lane  
Youngstown, Ohio 44504