

# CONNECTIONS

A quarterly publication of the Christian Community Service Center

Fourth Quarter 2019

## Construction Begins on New J. Dean Robinson Building

A little rain and mud from Tropical Storm Imelda didn't stop a small contingent of Christian Community Service Center Board, Endowment Board, Building Committee members, and staff from gathering to commemorate and bless the ground breaking of the new J. Dean Robinson Building—some joked that the weather was symbolic of the need for a new building as the original buildings had been damaged by flooding on multiple occasions.

In January, CCSC will host a beam signing event. "It will be a day for supporters, volunteers, donors and friends to come tour the site and grab a Sharpie and write a message, be it scripture or a personal thought or prayer, on the beams of the building," CCSC Executive Director Michelle Shonbeck said. "We want to bathe the building in prayer for all those who will step through its doors in the coming years."



*Pictured from left: Executive Director Michelle Shonbeck, Fundraising Chair Judy Agee, Board President Jo Ann Fry and Building Committee Chair Chris Martin.*



*Artist's rendering of the new J. Dean Robinson Building slated for completion in late 2020 or early 2021.*

The new 4-story J. Dean Robinson Building, designed by Studio Red Architects and constructed by Arch-Con Corporation with Forney Construction as the Project Manager, will take the place of the two original structures on CCSC's main campus on Branard Street. The new building will house Emergency Services-Central, JobNet, and the administrative offices all in one location, making it more convenient for clients needing multiple services.

Construction is expected to be finalized in late 2020 or early 2021. The final phase will be the demolition of the 3230 Mercer

building that once housed the administrative offices and is now the temporary location for Emergency Services-Central. In that spot a new, more spacious parking lot will be created for CCSC staff, volunteers, and clients.

"CCSC's vision is to serve more and serve better," Shonbeck explained. "This strategic expansion will house the work done every day and position CCSC to continue to achieve its mission for the next 25 years."

Over \$11 million of the \$14 million Capital Campaign goal has been raised. CCSC is appreciative of the support from everyone who has donated to the campaign. For more information on CCSC's mission or to donate to the Capital Campaign visit the website at [www.ccschouston.org](http://www.ccschouston.org) or call Traci Bocock at 713-961-3993 x217.

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# CAPITAL GIFTS

Gifts received June through September 2019

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Gifts received June through September 2019

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CCSC Memorial Endowment  
United Way of Greater Houston

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Donors continued on page 7

Dear CCSC Friend,

This past summer, we moved our staff offices into temporary space and then moved the food pantry into our offices so we will be able to serve people during construction. On August 23rd, demolition of two of our old buildings began, and construction followed. We are now a giant step forward, living into the vision cast in the summer of 2015: growing our programs and providing more opportunities for volunteers, providing greater integration of the existing programs, expanding the vocational training initiatives, and deepening the impact we have on clients.

Thank you to all who have invested financially and to those who have shared their talent in making so many important steps achievable. When I think about this project, I think about the people we help. People like:

- Darren, who flooded during Hurricane Harvey, but did not receive assistance to repair and rebuild until this past August. He and his wife are the providers for three granddaughters, and Darren told me our food pantry and Back To School program allowed them to feed and provide

for their needs. God willing, he hopes to be back in his home some time in 2020.

- Margie, who needs a full-time job, but can only accept something on the bus lines or near her home because she doesn't have a car. This restriction was a challenge, but thanks to her tenacity and the support of the JobNet staff and volunteers, she persevered and began work in September.
- And finally, a young mother came to us needing help in paying her apartment rent because her husband was laid off. Their modest but stable existence was rattled until they came to CCSC.

If you are a believer in our work and have not yet made a financial commitment to the new building, please prayerfully consider making a gift. Our website has information, and you can always call our office to talk to one of us. We'd love to share our hopes and dreams for how this building will impact the mission.

In Christ,



Michelle Shonbeck, Executive Director

## Capital Campaign Update

CCSC appreciates your support of *A Time To Build Capital Campaign*. We are edging closer to our goal of \$14 million. For more information about the campaign, or information about ways you can contribute, please visit our website [www.ccschouston.org](http://www.ccschouston.org) or contact Traci Bocock at [tbocock@ccschouston.org](mailto:tbocock@ccschouston.org).

## Thank you, Baker Botts!

As CCSC has undertaken each step needed to envision, plan and fund the new building, I want to take a moment to thank Baker Botts L.L.P. for their exceptional support. Their attorneys helped us purchase additional land, design contracts to protect the ministry, clarify our tax-exempt status with Harris County, and gave advice on various aspects of this project.

The attorneys who directly worked on these projects are listed below, with much gratitude:

Caroline Carter  
Dan Kruger  
Chris Tutunjian

Whitney Crayton  
Munir Saadi  
Sarabeth Westwood

Michael Hawes  
Connie Simmons Taylor  
Derek Young

Michael Hawes, a member of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, is CCSC's primary attorney who guides us to the specialist who can help with the particular need CCSC has. Baker Botts has provided legal expertise to CCSC for 40 years, writing the organization's original articles of incorporation and then providing wise counsel throughout the years. CCSC is the grateful recipient of the firm's commitment to community service and engagement.



Michelle Shonbeck, Executive Director



*Back To School 2019 Chair Sue Zinni helping parents pick up school supplies for their 9-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter.*

## Volunteer Spotlight: Sue Zinni

Sue Zinni has always worked with children so CCSC’s Back To School program was a natural fit for her, and her commitment to the program over the last six years made her a natural choice for Back To School Committee Chair this year.

“I felt blessed to work with such a dedicated and caring Back To School Committee,” Zinni said. “Because of this program thousands of children were better prepared to start the school year.”

Sue was born in Ohio and received her degree in Education with a minor in Social Work from The Ohio State University. She moved to Houston from New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and joined Bellaire United Methodist Church, where she first heard about CCSC from a member of her Sunday School class.

“CCSC is an amazing agency in so many ways,” Zinni said. “Every staff member I have met or worked with seems truly committed to helping those in need.” Sue has been a regular volunteer at CCSC’s Emergency Services-Central since 2011. She conducts client interviews and also pitches in at the food pantry and clothing closet.

“I cannot wait for the new building to be complete so we can serve our clients bigger and better!” Zinni adds. “I am so excited for the future of CCSC and feel so blessed to be a part of such a wonderful organization.”

## *In Remembrance*

The Christian Community Service Center has a tradition in conjunction with All Saints’ Day in which we honor those volunteering in our community who have passed away over the previous year. It was our privilege to serve alongside these caring, hardworking, faithful individuals. They made a discernable difference in our community.

This year we remember the following **CCSC Saints**:

*Gertie Beutel*

*Sylvia Dorman*

*Mary Lou Krickenberger*

*Lance Olinde*

*James Bratton*

*Mary Lou Hall*

*Martha Loyd*

*Barbara Rathgeber*

*Morgan Lee Copeland*

*Joan Kelly*

*Mary Jane McBride*

*George Soutter*



### Spread Christmas Cheer with Jingle Bell Express!

You are invited to donate new, nonviolent unwrapped toys or books for children, age newborn to 15 years old. Primary gifts (versus stocking stuffers) are especially appreciated.

There are two giving methods:

1. Order from our WISH LIST by visiting [www.ccschouston.org](http://www.ccschouston.org). Click on the red “Jingle Bell Express Wish List” button on CCSC’s home page. Gifts can be shipped directly to our office from Amazon.

2. Purchase items from your favorite store and bring them to the program site on the three dates below:

**Bellaire United Methodist Church - 4417 Bellaire Blvd. (77401)**

12/9, 6 to 8 p.m. (Moving Night)

12/10, 6 to 8 p.m. (Food Assembly)

12/11, 6 to 8 p.m. (Toy & Book Sorting)

IF NEEDED, ITEMS CAN BE ACCEPTED EARLIER THAN 12/9

at the CCSC Administrative Office: 3501 W. Alabama - Suite 101 (77027).

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For additional information contact

Cathy Brown at 713-961-3993, X215 or [seasonal@ccschouston.org](mailto:seasonal@ccschouston.org).

## EMERGENCY SERVICES—CENTRAL

In an average month, Emergency Services-Central assists 400+ families with hygiene kits. These much-needed supplies help clients stretch their limited budgets as each kit includes deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Church and school groups often help CCSC by creating hygiene kits on their

campuses and then delivering the kits to us for distribution to clients. A hygiene kit project is a fun and meaningful way to be involved with CCSC's ministry. If you would like more information on how to host a hygiene kit project, please contact Nolonda Jones at [emergency\\_1@ccschouston.org](mailto:emergency_1@ccschouston.org).

## EMERGENCY SERVICES—SOUTHWEST

In the first three quarters of 2019, Emergency Services-Southwest provided 194 households with financial assistance for rent or utilities. This assistance is one of the primary ways CCSC helps families on the financial edge avoid homelessness or substandard living conditions. CCSC is grateful to be able to answer the call when clients encounter unexpected hardships like medical issues, expensive car repairs, and job loss. Emergency Services-

Southwest has increased the number of households served with financial assistance by 20% compared to 2018.

Several months after a family receives financial help, staff members call to find out if the family sustained stability. Staff also offers information on other CCSC programs and community resources. In one of those recent conversations, a client remarked, "Your services are awesome! You all treated me like family—thank you."

## JOBNET

JobNet works with a broad range of clients to support them in their job searches. For example, Elaine, who updated her computer skills through JobNet classes, found work with her church after 39 years with an oil and gas company. Victor, a young engineer from Venezuela, obtained a position in procurement for an oil field services company after a resume review and mock interview with a JobNet coach. Dina learned

about networking and was subsequently hired as a human resource administrator for a law firm. Angela completed a cooking course with support from JobNet and now works in the food service department at a local school. In 2019, more than 110 job seekers reported gaining employment with the help of JobNet.

## MARTHA'S WAY

Martha's Way graduates recently gathered for the program's semi-annual reunion event. Among the 20 attendees were recent graduates as well as participants who completed the program up to 10 years ago and continue to run successful housekeeping businesses.

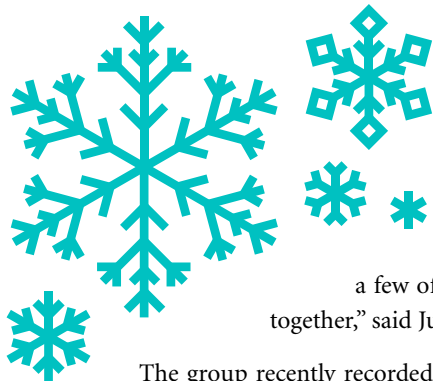
The entrepreneurs networked, shared best practices, and learned about overcoming domestic violence from guest speaker Concepción Miranda from the Houston Area Women's Center.

There are many Martha's Way graduates eager to build their businesses by filling your housekeeping needs. Contact Ana Tappan at 713-961-3993 x210 or [training@ccschouston.org](mailto:training@ccschouston.org) for more information.



## MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of Christian Community Service Center (CCSC) is to serve the poor, hungry, disabled and otherwise needy while respecting their religious, ethnic or cultural differences. CCSC was created out of faith, and founded in the belief that we are called to help all God's children heart to heart and hand in hand.*



## Christmas Cheer CD Benefits CCSC

Jubilee is an eight-person Christian singing group that got its start at Bellaire United Methodist Church over 20 years ago. Four- to six-part close harmonies define the group's distinctive sound. They've sung in churches, retirement communities, entertained for private parties, and performed a concert benefiting Christian Community Service Center.

"Members have come and gone over the years, babies have grown up and gone off to college, a few of us have added a bit of 'character' to our hair and faces, and here we are—still making music together," said Jubilee member Joyce Woodward.

The group recently recorded its first album, titled *Christmas Cheer*. It contains traditional seasonal favorites, both sacred and secular, from a jazz arrangement of "Silent Night" to a pop-styled "Jingle Bells" arrangement. The album was slated to release November 1 and will be available as a physical CD or individual songs in MP3 format from [store.cdbaby.com](http://store.cdbaby.com).

The majority of the proceeds of the album will go directly to CCSC. The cost of producing the album was underwritten entirely by Jubilee. Shop now to benefit CCSC and give the gift of music!



#GIVINGTUESDAY

**December 3, 2019**

Support CCSC on this global day of giving by donating on our secure website at [www.ccschouston.org](http://www.ccschouston.org)

## CCSC Respects Your Privacy

Many contributors to nonprofit organizations are asking about donor privacy, mailing lists and fundraising policies. CCSC has never sold, shared or rented our mailing lists, nor will we. We request funds because of immediate program support needs. We pledge diligent stewardship of your gift as well as deep gratitude for your support of CCSC.

## TACKLE HUNGER



Thank you in advance to the CCSC churches and youth groups who will select our ministry as your recipient for the 2020 Souper Bowl of Caring! These donation drives are an important part of CCSC's ongoing efforts to feed the hungry in our community. Please let us know about your event plans so we can help arrange logistics on delivery and storage. Simply contact Nolonda Jones at [emergency\\_1@ccschouston.org](mailto:emergency_1@ccschouston.org).

## THANKS TO IN-KIND DONORS

A donation of goods or services is an excellent way to help Christian Community Service Center achieve its mission. Here is a list of CCSC's recent in-kind contributors. (If we missed your group, please let us know so we can recognize you in the next newsletter.)

*A special "Thank You" also goes to all churches and organizations that provide CCSC with gifts from organized food, clothing, hygiene, and/or shoe drives on a regular basis.*

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Gifts received June through September 2019

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**P. O. Box 27924**  
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Connections, CCSC's quarterly newsletter, is designed to keep you in touch with CCSC's mission, ministries, events, member churches and volunteers.

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CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER  
IT'S OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY!

*Save the Date!*

THE AZALEA GALA

APRIL 29, 2020

THE POST OAK HOTEL AT UPTOWN HOUSTON

*Honoring*

THE REVEREND LARRY HALL

*Co-chairs*

CANDY & TOM KNUDSON | DANA & DON MILLER

*For information* [www.ccschouston.org](http://www.ccschouston.org)

## ***CCSC to Honor The Reverend Larry Hall***

The 2020 Azalea Gala will celebrate the 40th anniversary of CCSC and honor The Reverend Larry Hall, retired rector at St. John the Divine. The Gala will be Wednesday, April 29 at The Post Oak Hotel in Uptown Houston—a new venue for this annual event.

The Reverend Hall has supported and nurtured CCSC almost since its inception. CCSC was created in 1980 and The Reverend Hall was called to be the Rector of St. John's (a founding CCSC church) in 1981. He led St. John's until his retirement in 2014 and, throughout those years, he was a leader and advocate for CCSC, including most recently helping with the *A Time To Build Capital Campaign*.

2020 Gala Chairs are Candy and Tom Knudson and Dana and Don Miller. Reservations, tables and sponsorship opportunities will be available starting mid-November.