

## Adult Education Program Inspires Family to Succeed



Back Row LR - Patricia Kennedy, Aleisha Church, Ida Roberts, Karen Atwell Front Row LR - Angela Roberts, Sandra Roberts

At the young age of 16, Sandra Roberts made the decision to leave school, get married and start a family. After 32 years of marriage, Sandra is now the mother of two adult sons and has five grandchildren. At the end of 2016, Sandra made another big decision. She decided that she wanted to start doing something for herself. She gained a new sense of empowerment when

she obtained her driver's license in October. Sandra's daughter-in-law told her about the CCWVa Adult Education Program and Sandra made the decision to enroll and begin working toward receiving her High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma. She invited her niece, Aleisha Church, to join her.

Aleisha had also left high school before receiving her diploma. Initially she felt she made the right decision, but as time passed she began to have regrets. Upon Sandra and Aleisha's first visit to the classroom, they were warmly welcomed by Adult Education Instructors, Gwenn Mayhew and Jarred Cantrell, who helped them enroll in the program and set their learning plans. Little did Gwenn and Jarred know, their class was about to become a family affair.

Later that day, Sandra informed her sister-in-law, Angela Roberts, about the new adventure they were embarking on. Angela herself had worked toward receiving her HSE Diploma eight years prior, but was unsuccessful. When they invited her to join them in the CCWVa Adult Education Program, she decided to finish what she started and to achieve her goal. The three began attending class regularly on Thursdays.

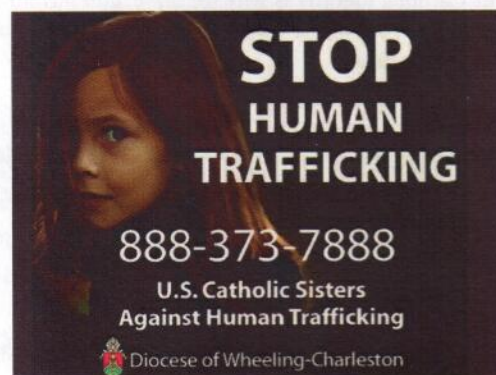
After seeing the difference it was making in their lives and how much they enjoyed learning, the group convinced Aleisha's mother, Ida Roberts, to enroll in the program. When she first began attending class, Ida feared that she would not be able to succeed. Now she says, thanks to the instructor, she looks forward to attending class. Aleisha's sister, Karen Atwell, joined the group with hopes of bettering herself and finding gainful employment.

Sandra's friend, Patricia Kennedy, has also enrolled and attends on Thursdays. She says the program has not only helped her improve her knowledge in multiple subjects, but it has also helped her believe that she can accomplish what she sets her mind to do. All six ladies are looking forward to receiving their HSE Diplomas together as a family. "This is a great program and we hope and pray it keeps going", Sandra remarked, "It has been a great help to us all."

## Resident Expresses Gratitude to CCWVa

Christopher Wallace first came to Catholic Charities West Virginia for assistance in November of 2014. At that time, he was struggling with part time employment and lack of transportation. He traveled to the Southern Region Office by bus and met Program Assistant Nancy Blankenship. That day he not only received assistance with obtaining food, but he was offered encouragement through his conversation with Nancy. Over the next two years, Christopher returned twice to CCWVa in times of need when he felt there was no one else to help him. During his most recent visit he expressed gratitude for both the assistance he has received and the motivation. "Nancy Blankenship is a great asset to your staff, having shown great customer service skills and striving to help others," he said. Mr. Wallace reports that he is now employed, has his own vehicle, and is doing well. Nancy recalled that Christopher was one of her first clients as an employee of CCWVa. "It's so great when you see people get back on their feet after you've helped them get through a hard time", Nancy said.

"It's a great honor to know businesses like this are still around helping and caring for others", he responded, "Thanks again for all that you do."



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# Southern Region Office Relocated



On September 8, 2017, the Catholic Charities West Virginia Southern Region Office moved to a new location at 203 South Seventh Street in Princeton. Earlier this year, a very generous donor purchased the new property and donated it to the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Princeton. The building was originally three townhouse apartments and renovations on both the inside and outside were extensive. The new office will provide a larger and more professional space for CCWVa to serve those in need. "We are really excited about everything that has been provided for us", remarked Matt Atwood, Southern Regional Director. "We are extremely thankful for the support." The new location is also more visible from high-traffic areas and easier for people to locate. An open house and blessing ceremony with the Most Rev. Michael J. Bransfield is slated for October 4th. The office had operated from 602 Ritchie Street since March 2012.

## How to Keep Christ in Catholic Charities West Virginia

At Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa), we partner with other faith organizations, secular organizations, and the state and federal government. But what does it mean to be "Catholic" when so many of our staff, volunteers, partners and clients do not identify as such? For us, being Catholic means we are guided by the teaching of the Church; we are called to do certain things, and prohibited from doing others. More generally, and on a day-to-day basis, we use the following values as our measuring stick. We invite you, our supporters, to join us in reflecting on these values.

**Dignity**—How do I show my family, friends, clients and colleagues that I honor them?

**Justice**—In what ways do I work for justice within my role in my family and in society?

**Compassion**—The root of the word compassion means to "suffer with." How do I care for those around me in such a way that shows my acceptance of their suffering as if it was my own?

**Hope**—What hope am I able to offer? What hope do I receive from others?

**Charity**—Charity is love. In what ways do I show generous charity to everyone I encounter?

**Quality**—How do I use and expand my knowledge, skills, and talents to carry out my responsibility to my neighbors?

So often, people involved in the mission of CCWVa are asked whether we serve non-Catholics. The answer is: OF COURSE! At CCWVa, our Catholic identity is why we serve, and has no bearing on who we serve. The root of the word "Catholic" is "Universal" --- and we strive to live this fully!



Join Pope Francis and Caritas to come together with migrants and refugees around the world on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

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## Working To Reduce Poverty in West Virginia

Our mission is to alleviate poverty, distress, and injustice by providing comprehensive social services to the poor and vulnerable, advocating for social justice, and calling all people of good will, especially those of the Church, to service.

[www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org)

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