

Catholic Charities

Tompkins/Tioga

ANNUAL REPORT 2025









Help that works. Hope that lasts.

Catholic Charities
Tompkins/Tioga

2025 was a year of exciting growth at Catholic Charities Tompkins / Tioga. Our Food Recovery program increased by leaps and bounds last year, as we expanded our partner locations and overall pounds of food donated. We are very proud of the choice and variety we are able to offer the community. Big things also continue to happen with housing. A major focus of our work in 2025 was developing a new scattered sites housing program with the Office of Mental Health in the two counties we serve. We are seeing a lot of success with this program.



None of this would have been possible without the amazing efforts of our staff, volunteers, donors, and Agency Council members. The stories you will find here in our 2025 Annual Report are a testament to their hard work. On behalf of the thousands of people who turn to Catholic Charities for assistance each year, we thank you for your support!







Renee Spear
Executive Director

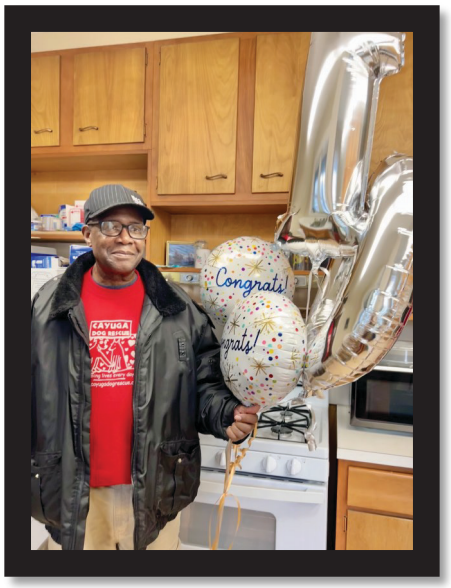


Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga Mission:

We support all people in need and advocate for social justice and human dignity in partnership with the Diocese of Rochester and the greater community

2025 Agency Council

Sue Hyatt, *President*
Joe D'Abbracci, *Vice-Pres.*
Marney Thomas, *Secretary*
Bob Pochily, *Treasurer*
Charlie Ross
Simone St. Anne
Kelly Kelley
Keenan Miller
Cheryl Myers
Renee Spear, *ex officio*
Karen Dehais, *ex officio*



Feeding Our Neighbors In Tioga County

The big theme in Tioga County in 2025 was fighting hunger. We continued our remarkable success at food recovery, offered hot meals and job training through our community kitchen, formed exciting new partnerships, and launched new events to strengthen food security in our region.



Serving up some soup at our Empty Bowls luncheon

We began the year with an Empty Bowls luncheon in February, which is a new venture for us. Guests took home a ceramic bowl, made by local students (including some from our very own YESS program!) as a reminder of those facing food insecurity. A meal of donated soup and bread, accompanied by music and raffle items, contributed to a lovely afternoon, and all proceeds raised went to support our anti-hunger efforts in Tioga County.

Our food rescue program continued to see major growth in 2025. We launched this program a few years ago with the goal of filling food insecurity gaps and minimizing food waste, and it's fast becoming an integral part of the services that we provide in Tioga County. We are fortunate to have a dedicated crew of staff and volunteers who pick up, weigh, and distribute this food all over the area. To date, thousands of pounds of food have been rescued and offered to the community rather than ending up in the landfill.

The numbers are quite striking. We have doubled our partner locations since 2023, with a total of **12 partner locations in 2025**. In 2025, we recovered **87, 748 pounds of food, which is an increase of 17, 231 pounds over our 2024 totals.** Our average monthly food donation in 2025 was **a whopping 7,312 pounds!** Another important priority for us is supplying the community with nutritious food. In 2025, according to data collected by the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, we **provided 90% or above of nutritious food** for our customers based on the Food Bank's criteria.

In the fall, we tried out a new event: in recognition of September being Hunger Action Month, we launched a "Stuff the Truck" community food drive, and we received an incredible response! Our truck, generously loaned by State Line Auto, was parked at Sweeney's Plaza in Apalachin for the week, where our staff, Agency Council members, and volunteers collected donations. Thanks to the generosity of our community we collected a little over **1,900 pounds of food and raised nearly $2,300 to help fight hunger locally.**



Our truck in Apalachin, stuffed with food!

Lastly, we'd be remiss if we didn't mention our amazing community partnerships. This year we established new collaborations with Guthrie and the Tioga County Food Council. We are blessed by this support!

Samaritan Center (Tompkins County)

In Tompkins County, the Samaritan Center is widely known as a place where people can get support to cover basic necessities like food, clothing, and housing assistance. In 2025, we served thousands of individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some highlights of our work:

- **Security Deposit Assistance** remains a high impact service. **In 2025, $66,500 supported 59 households**. The average rent among all applicants was $1,300 per month and the average tenant share for households with Section 8 was $575. Nearly half the applicants (42%) were entering public or income-based housing, and 21% were experiencing homelessness at the time of application.
- Now in its second year, the Interfaith Assistance Fund received over **$6,500 in contributions from seven faith communities** in 2025 and continues to be a consistent, flexible source for unique or urgent needs. A total of **$3,038 was distributed to 15 households**. In 2025, requests shifted away from rental and other higher-cost needs toward more one-time assistance, with the majority going to utility costs (60%), followed by car repairs, storage fees, and smaller expenses such as car insurance and temporary hotel stays.
- **A total of 98 transportation services** were provided over the year: 5-day bus passes (48%), gas cards (36%), car repairs (15%) and car insurance payments made up a very small portion of services (1%) and are typically reserved for special circumstances if funding allows.
- Our annual spring drive to collect personal care items, Soap for Hope, ran for six weeks in 2025 and **brought in over 10,000 items!** As in past years, the indefatigable Ryan family were the lead organizers.



Our annual Soap for Hope Drive collects donations of personal care items and distributes them to households throughout Tompkins County

Assisting with SNAP



Our Tompkins NOEP staff doing outreach at the Mac 'N Cheese Bowl in Ithaca

In 2025, the Coordinators of our Nutritional Outreach Education Program (NOEP) helped low-income households in Tompkins and Tioga counties connect to SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly called Food Stamps).

In Tompkins County, we had an unusual amount of staff turnover in 2025, with three people serving in the position. Still, despite these challenges, we conducted outreach throughout the county and helped **145** people with SNAP benefits.

In Tioga County, we helped **196** people complete SNAP applications in in 2025. From helping a busy single mother of two get a SNAP application submitted, to attending the annual Owego Strawberry Festival and getting 21 people signed up to SNAP, our NOEP staff in Tioga County went above and beyond the call of duty in 2025.

Providing Homes & Hope

Housing Programs

A big focus of our work in 2025 was the continued development of the scattered sites housing program we run with the Office of Mental Health in the two counties we serve, including securing and furnishing units, supporting residents as they adjust to permanent housing, and assisting residents with independent living skills and responsibilities within the home. By the end of 2025, **six out of seven of our units in Tioga and 10 out of 11 of our units in Tompkins were occupied**, a big success for the program.



A former resident of A Place to Stay (our women's house in Tompkins County) was a guest speaker at our 2025 fall pasta dinner

Our transitional housing also saw significant growth in 2025. In addition to relocating our women's house in Tompkins County (a big task!), we added a third men's house to the two transitional houses for men and women we are already running in Tompkins. Altogether, **17 residents were served through these houses in Tompkins County in 2025**. In Tioga County, we provided over **20 women, multiple children, and 17 men with transitional housing services in 2025**, and we had several participants transition into permanent housing.



We had a big move in 2025! We changed the location of our women's house in Tompkins County

We aim to take a holistic approach with our support services, offering fun activities that foster personal growth, like cooking and art workshops, while also providing assistance with job searches and referrals to other agencies and organizations. Our residents also participate in regular house meetings and group activities focused on topics such as goal setting, healthy relationships, boundaries, self-care, nutrition, employment resources, and much more.

Y.E.S.S.

(Youth Empowerment Support Services)

YESS (for Youth Empowerment Support Services) is a youth engagement program that runs in three school districts: Candor, Spencer-Van Etten, and Newark Valley. The goal of the YESS program is to boost high school graduation rates and strengthen school attendance, academic performance, and life skills.

2025 was an incredible year for our YESS students. Our 2025 group was especially closeknit and they have shown remarkable resilience. Some highlights of our activities in 2025 include: a STEM collaboration with (and a field trip to!) Cornell University, a monthly program on financial literacy with Tioga State Bank, a wide range of cooking and baking activities, career workshops where our students learned about carpentry, photography, policing, software engineering and more, and a variety of community service engagements. We are so proud of these youngsters!



YESS students from Spencer Van Etten visiting with the Ithaca Police Department

Immigration Services

In 2025, the Immigrant Services Program provided a total of **339 clients with over 2,900 services**. Integrating immigrants into the community is a long-term process, and key areas of focus often involve legal and citizenship services, language acquisition, employment, education, and healthcare access.

Thanks to the amazing skills of our multilingual staff, we have a very strong language capacity at Catholic Charities, and approximately **500** of the services we provided in 2025 required translation and interpretation to overcome language barriers for clients. These situations could involve everything from navigating teacher / parent conferences, to obtaining drivers' licenses, to securing affordable housing.



One of our older clients, Josefa is a Honduran national who needed to get her passport renewed. Our staff took her on a road trip to Boston, and we got it done!



Eh Say, one of our clients, getting her photo taken with the judge that swore her in as a US citizen.



We helped Judith, another of our clients, find a job with a flexible schedule so that she can care for her young child.

Justice & Peace Ministry



The Justice and Peace Ministry Director, Laurie Konwinski, joined a delegation of congregations from Ithaca, to deliver letters to Congressman Josh Riley's office through Bread for the World's Offering of Letters (May 2025)

The Justice & Peace Ministry educates and activates local Catholics and other members of the community on issues of Catholic Social Teaching. Some highlights of our work in 2025 include:

- We continued our involvement with the local chapter of Bread for the World, a national, ecumenical, anti-hunger advocacy organization, and we lobbied federal officials on these issues.
- We formed a grassroots group called "Immigrant Solidarity" to protect immigrant rights through activities such as disseminating "know your rights" materials, raising money to provide financial support for legal aid and bail for people in immigration detention, and distributing bumper stickers and lawn signs with pro-immigrant messages.
- We continued to lobby on NYS legislation that would encourage recycling and reduce trash in landfills.

Employment & O.P.W.D.D. Services

(O.P.W.D.D = Office for People With Developmental Disabilities)



A group of individuals participating in Movement Class at Boys and Girls Club

At Catholic Charities, we offer a range of services for people with intellectual disabilities. These services help people develop job skills, find employment, and achieve independent living. In 2025, our Community Habilitation division of OPWDD enrolled **50 people**, our Pre-vocational Program enrolled **12 people**, and our Supporting Employment Training Program enrolled **nine people**.

Thanks to the hard work of our participants and staff, we had multiple success stories in 2025. We had a participant who received his green belt in karate and attended a martial arts tournament and won three gold medals. Another participant was hired on to a paid position at Tioga Downs after proving herself through an internship. Yet another participated in his very first real job interview. In 2025, we also painted pumpkins, went to the movies, sang at an open mic night, learned how to make pizza, and played bingo!

We are so thrilled at all that our participants were able to accomplish in 2025, and we are looking forward to more stories of their future success.

Family Empowerment Services

The Family Empowerment Services Program of Catholic Charities Tompkins / Tioga is a collaborative effort to assist parents, families, and individuals involved with Child Welfare Services, Mental Health Services, and Family Treatment & Felony Treatment Courts. In 2025, FES served **47 parents and 78 children** through the Community Connections program and **34 fathers and 72 children** through the Fatherhood Participation program. One participant of the Fatherhood Participation Program offered these words of appreciation to the FES Director, Tommy Miller:

I wanted to thank you for taking on the challenge and being there for me. While I'm not at the finish line yet, your mentoring has helped urge me on to pick up that baton every time I drop it. It's my sincerest hope to see my children again and be able to introduce them to both the new me, and the one who gave them that. Little by little we move forward...always forward!



FES Director Tommy Miller

2025 Major Funders

Community Foundation for South Central NY
Community Foundation of Tompkins County
Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers
Excellus Blue Cross / Blue Shield
Fidelis Care
Floyd Hooker Foundation
Food Bank of the Southern Tier
Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County
Hunger Solutions New York
Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency
M & T Charitable Fund
Mildred Faulkner Charitable Foundation
NYS Education Dept.
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
NYS Office for New Americans
NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities
NYS Office of Mental Health
Park Foundation
Tioga County Department of Health
Tioga County Dept. of Social Services
Tioga County Senior Citizens Foundation
Tioga United Way
Tioga County Veterans' Service Agency
Tompkins County Dept. of Social Services
Tompkins County Whole Health
TSB Foundation Inc.
United States Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
United Way of Tompkins County
Waverly Community Chest

2025 Individual and Organizational Donors

$5000+

Chris and Clara Barrett
Paul Feeny and Mary Berens
Tioga Downs
Hans Fleischmann Estate
John and Judy Hopcroft
Barbara Hulbert
IBEW 325 and Southern Tier NECA
Nicholas Jungers
Joe and Marney Thomas
Vector Magnetics
Nick Whitmer
Orville and Carolyn Wright

$2500-$4999

Curt and Ann Ashman
Julia Berens
Dean Casterline
Philip and Marsha Cox
Will and Carol Cooke
Mary Pat Dolan
First Presbyterian Church
Haven of Rest Ministries Inc
George and Nadine Hayduchok
M & T Charitable Fund
Peter and Ann Martin
Dr. Karl Pillemer
Robert and Marnee Pochily
Bruno Schickel and Amy Dickinson
St. Catherine of Siena Church
Kathy Yoselson Fierce Determination Fund

$1000-$2499

Mary Baldwin
Stuart and Jean Berg
Peter and Beth Brennan
Joel and Susan Brock
John and Patricia Clark
Joseph and Tami D'Abbracci
Eileen Driscoll
Jeffrey and Jane Doyle
Cornelius and José Drost-Noah, Zach and Hannah Feldshuh Fund

$1000-$2499 contd.

First Baptist Church
First Congregational Church
Joanne Florino
Jeff Fredrickson
Lee and Sherry Haefele
Joan Hass
Ithaca Monthly Meeting of Friends
Paul Johnston
Thomas and Mary Jones
Judith Kennison
Jeanne Lange
Edward Machak
Thomas Mesler
Susanne Morgan
Siena Oliverio
Perfect Painters/Heritage Builders Inc
Arthur and Kathryn Pearce
Deb Roe
Peter and Paulette Salmon
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
SEI Giving Fund
Linda Slater
Robert Dobbs and Marie Terlizzi
Tompkins Financial Advisors
True Insurance
William and Lisa Turner
Visions Federal Credit Union
Volker Vogt and Carla Marceau
Elizabeth Watkins
Albert Wetterling
Stephen and Amy Yale-Loehr
Julia Zepkowski Memorial Foundation

$500-$999

Doug and Gail Barton
Barton United Methodist Church
Beginnings Credit Union
Brothers for the Cross
Mary Crosley

$500-$999 contd.

David and Linda Caughey
Mary Ellen Cummings
Kieran Donaghy and Victoria Pifalo
Kenneth and Martha Donovan
Hank and Sally Dullea
First Presbyterian Society
Katherine Forester
Stuart Fox and Barbara Miller Fox
George and Jan Frantz
Mariano and Ellen Garcia
Jim Gilmore
Julia C. Gorman
Jean Luzzi
Matthew Hall and Elizabeth Lyon
John Oakley and Margaret Hammond
Carol Hockett
Michael Hughes
Immaculate Conception Church
Ithaca Catholic Worker Community
Barbara Ivers
Michael Kesten
Irene Komor
Dr. Russell LaFrance
Jim and Ellen Morris-Knower
Vincent Mulcahy & Cynthia Livermore
David and Julie Murphy
Owego Elks Lodge 1039
Owego Rotary Club
Mark and Karen Petzold
Sara Pines
SEFA
Kathleen Seitel-West
Michael and Karen Shuler
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Stefek
Temple Beth-El
Urban Core LLC
Jay and Vicky Williamson

$250-$499

Mitchell and Julia Addy
Lynn Andersen
Frederick and Helene Ballantyne

$250-$499 contd.

Karen Biddinger
Bousquet Holstein PLLC
Rick and Trish Burgess
Terrence and Sally Campbell
Cayuga Medical Center
Timothy and Mary Ann Colbert
Douglas and Rosemary Collins
Mark Corey
Crown Construction
Frank and Maura Fetsko
Kenneth Finkelstein and Lois Pollack
Martin and Mary Gessini
James and Elizabeth Gossett
Laurel Guy
Zachary Huber
Henry and Susan Hyatt
IBEW Local 241
Ithaca Foreign Car Service
Ithaca Substitute Teachers Association
Julee Johnson
Catherine Jones
Mary Kane
Peter and Mary Katzenstein
Robert Love and Sarah Wessels
O.J. and Gloria Masters
Daniel and Jean McPheeters
Gregory Menzenski
Christopher and Elizabeth Miller
Nina Miller
Harold Mills and Sabrina Johnston
Rev. William Moorby
Cheryl Myers
Linda K. Nicholson
Tony Parise and Sally True
Ed and Linda Pasto
Paula Peter
Pumpelly House Estate
Simone St. Anne and Pedro Perez
Robert and Lisa Schleelein
Roger and Carol Sibley
Lynn Szymanski
Twin Sheep Dentristy

$250-$499 contd.

Doug Tyler and Rie Kadota Tyler
Mark and Alicia Wittink
Jan Zeserson

$100-$249

Mary Andersen
Patrick Aquilio
Arnold Printing Corp.
Elizabeth Bagnardi
Mary Lou Bailey-Smith
Beverly Baker
Mark Barrett
Lorraine Bates
Debra Benson
Donald Berens and Maureen Farley
Elizabeth Berens
James and Deborah Bilinski
Louis and Jeanne Billera
John and Drucy Blume
Frank and Meredith Bocek
Virginia Bolton
Thomas and Ellen Bonn
George Boyer and J. Lee Millman
Michael And Katlheen Burton
Derek Chase and Erin Sember-Chase
Roberta Chiesa
Dan and Celia Clement
Steve and Liz Colucci
Dr. John Costello and Dr. Ann Costello
Paul and Katharine Crance
Diane Dougherty
Thomas and Kathy Dubel
Daniel Dwyer
Tony and Julie Eisenhut
Darlene Ellis
Kathy Faben
Teresa Ferrara
Fidelity Charitable
Stephen and Barb Finney
Carl and Zsofia Franck
Dr. Lois Frankel
Philip Gabler
Nancy Gabriel
Terry Gifford

$100-$249 contd.

Frederic Gleach and Vilma Santiago-Irizarry
Robert and Eileen Gravani
Thomas and Suzanne Grout
Steve Harvey
Beth C. Hickman
HOLT Architects, PC
Robert and Mary Hutchens
Judith Hyman
Adam Jacobstein
Ann Johnson
William and Kathy Jorgensen
Dan Karig
Bill and Mary Kennedy
Monica Lang
Lansing Funeral Home
Jeffrey Laytron and Anne Dalton
Dr. Rebecca Lesses
June Locke
Harriet J. London
Thomas Loredo
Bruce and Lynne Mattingly
Saoirse McClory
Jean McPheeters Consulting, LLC
Rebecca Minas
Louise Mudrak
Jasper and Bridget Munson
Mr. Gerald Murphy
Charles Nocera
Jewelia Pence
Philoptochos Society St. Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church
James Pratt and Patricia French
JoEllen Rose and Paul Phillips
Kathleen Rourke
Janice Rueckert
Shawn Russell
Joseph and Jessica Ryan
Sayre Christian Church
Mike and Diane Schafer
Danny and Kristin Scott
Senior Exercise Group c/o Bill Kraft
Sepco Incorporated
Yoram and Beatrice Szekely
Robert and Mary Simpson

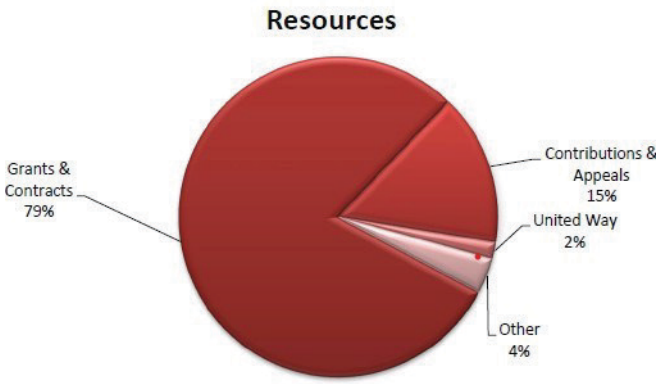
$100-$249 contd.

Ron Siwiec
Charles and Kathryn Snowberger
Mrs. Cindy Snyder
Laurie Snyder
Michael and Theresa Stanley
Sophie Stark
Christopher and Janet Strebel
Miguelina Tabar
Mrs. Camille Taranto
Dolores Teeter
Elizabeth Teskey
Tioga Nichols Area Lions Club
Gregg and Susan Travis
William and Kathleen Tyler
United Methodist Church of Trumansburg
Valley Energy
Aaron Weinberg
Dr. Jennifer Weinraub
Christine Wells
Julie Wendela
Gary and Linda Williams
Alexander and Lola Winter
Ellen and Neal Zaslaw

2025 Funding Sources

Grants & Contracts	2,789,954
Contributions & Appeals	539,038
United Way	58,207
Other	125,421
Total Operating Resources	3,512,620
Restricted Investment Earnings	29,185
2025 Total Resources	**3,541, 805**

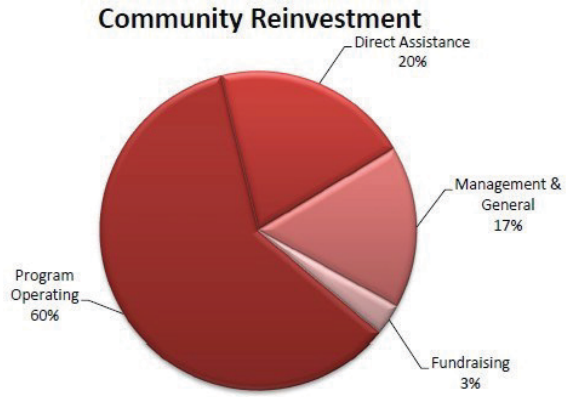
unaudited disclosure



2025 Community Reinvestment

Program Operating	2,075,364
Direct Assistance	697,774
Management & General	572,014
Fundraising	108,277
2025 Total Expenses	**3,453,429**

unaudited disclosure





From cooking to clothing distribution, our volunteers logged an incredible total of 3,232 hours in 2025!













Tompkins County
324 West Buffalo Street
Ithaca NY 14850
607-272-5062



Tioga County
932 West River Road
Nichols NY 13812
607-414-1023

United Way
Tioga United Way, Inc.

Excellus
A nonprofit independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

United Way
United Way
of Tompkins County

The Community Foundation
for South Central New York

Community Foundation
of TOMPKINS COUNTY