

CATHOLIC CHARITIES JACKSONVILLE CHRONICLES

SUMMER 2026



Community, Compassion, and Celebration

The Community Comes Together for the Black & White Soirée

Catholic Charities Jacksonville celebrated a special 34th annual Black & White Soirée, with fundraising totals soaring over last year. Set against the stunning backdrop of Deerwood Castle, more than 425 guests gathered on May 15 for an unforgettable evening of community, compassion, and celebration. By the end of the night, the soiree raised \$302,000 — 50% more than last year's impressive total. All funds will power the life-changing programs at the heart of our Love Thy Neighbor initiative.

We are grateful to every attendee who made this such a memorable and record-breaking event. Bishop Pohlmeier inspired the room with his keynote address. Jacksonville Mayor Donna Deegan also joined the festivities, offering remarks in support of Catholic Charities' mission. Thank you to our title sponsor, Ascension St. Vincent's, as well as our other distinguished supporters including FIS, Pajcic & Pajcic, and RF Smart, whose generosity made the evening possible.

DJ Vic Micolucci kept the energy high throughout the night, while live watercolor paintings by Esther Bud Art and a spirited silent and live auction added to the magic of the evening.

Proceeds will support a range of life-changing programs including hunger relief, emergency financial assistance, ESOL classes, and Camp I Am Special, truly encompassing what it means to love thy neighbor. The event's turnout and outpouring of philanthropic support reflect a deep commitment to the community.

The event may be over, but the need for support doesn't disappear when the music stops. Financial strain is something local families face every day. **You can always help stabilize local families facing short-term challenges simply by giving at CCBJax.org/donate.**



Ascension St. Vincent's
CEO Scott Kashman
with his wife Jenny.

Helping a Military Dentist Reclaim His Career

Tymofii Popov fled the turmoil of war in Ukraine and was granted refugee status in the U.S. in 2023. Although safe, he was suddenly in an unfamiliar country with an uncertain future. Fortunately, he found his way to Catholic Charities Jacksonville.

There, he met Farhana Khan, a case manager who works with families to help them rebuild their lives and navigate the resources available to them in their community. Farhana connected Tymofii and his entire family with critical financial assistance that helped them establish stability in those early, overwhelming months. They received continuing support until they were able to stand on their own.

Many refugees arrive in the U.S. having left behind entire careers. That was true for Tymofii; he had served as a dentist in the Ukrainian military. Starting over in a new country meant setting aside his professional identity, at least for a little bit.

Yet once he ensured he and his family were on solid ground again, he could get back to doing what he did best. Tymofii is now enrolled in dental school at Tufts University in Boston. He looks back on his time with Catholic Charities as "a great experience," and credits Farhana for being professional and supportive every step of the way — all the way to Boston.

"Sometimes all it takes is a bridge from where someone is to where they're capable of going," said Frances Luna, Programs Director. "Community support helps us build that bridge."

If you'd like to provide the same support for more families like Tymofii's, please give at CCBJax.org/donate.

Other Ways We Help



Our ESOL programs help non-native speakers improve their English skills. **Last year we taught English to 2,379 students.**



Our rent, mortgage, and utility assistance helps individuals stay in their homes. **Last year, 1,453 individuals avoided homelessness.**



Letter from the Regional Director

Dear Friends,

The 2026 Black & White Soirée was a remarkable evening of generosity, community, and hope. With more than 400 guests in attendance, this year's event marked our strongest turnout since the pandemic – a powerful sign of renewed commitment to our mission. It was especially meaningful to have so many friends, supporters, and partners gathered in one room, sharing the joy of the evening and the impact of our work. Together, we raised more than \$300,000 to support our neighbors in need.

One of the most meaningful moments of the evening was the story of the Jones family, a veteran family whose homelessness was prevented through our timely support.

Having the family with us reminded everyone of what is truly at stake, and what is possible

when a community comes together. We also were honored by the words and presence of Bishop Pohlmeier and Bishop Emeritus Estévez as well as deeply grateful to Ascension St. Vincent's for serving as our lead sponsor.

At a time when rising costs for housing, food, and gas are placing immense strain on families, the work of Catholic Charities is more critical than ever. The need continues to grow, and so must our response.

Thank you for standing with us. Through continued giving, volunteering, and advocacy, we can ensure that more families find stability and hope in the days ahead.

With heartfelt gratitude,



Eileen Seuter
Regional Director
Catholic Charities Jacksonville



Learn more about the Jones family.



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CHARITIES
Transforming Lives



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