Finding a “forever family” for a foster child is one of Catholic Guardian Services most important goals. Every child needs a family and a “forever family” requires a loving, dedicated, courageous and very special parent. The Hurtado family is one of many success stories that we see every day at CGS. Watch our new video about, “The Hurtado Family” to learn more about foster parent, Janet Hurtado, and the role CGS has played in the lives of her family, including foster child, Ethan.

Our 2017 Annual Report is Now Available

Catholic Guardian Services had a great year. We formed a new Associate Board of young professionals; had a successful Christmas toy drive that included support from corporate partners and friends, strengthened our programs for those we serve and had our most successful Child of Peace Awards Dinner ever. We are pleased to provide you with our 2017 Annual Report which highlights our programs and those who are impacted. You can view the annual report by visiting our website or by clicking link above.
March 2018

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

MARCH IS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS Month, a time for all of us to celebrate and recognize the needs and potential of Americans with developmental disabilities. Here, at CGS, we are well aware of the extraordinary potential of individuals with developmental disabilities and understand that all people have a special quality whether it is a talent, personality trait or simply being who they are. Catholic Guardian Services is family to more than 200 people of all abilities and disabilities across the New York metro area.

This year’s theme, “See Me, For Me” encourages us to focus on each individual and get to know people for who they really are, beyond their diagnosis. In honor of “See Me, For Me”, please take a moment to watch our short video, “Lori’s Story.” Lori has been in our care for over 35 years. She loves to dance and eat ice cream and she always keeps our direct support professionals laughing! https://vimeo.com/249544363

While we pause to recognize the contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities, we would also like to recognize and celebrate parents, family members, providers, staff members, direct support professionals and volunteers. We thank you all for your commitment and compassion and your positive impact on our community at large.

We encourage you to participate in our Annual Child of Peace Campaign and direct your gift to Elder Care Support for People with Developmental Disabilities by choosing Services for the Developmentally Disabled as your Designation at: https://www.catholicguardian.org/pledge/

Most sincerely,

Craig Longley,
Executive Director
April 2018

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and is an annual reminder that not every home is a haven of acceptance and unconditional love. Too often, childhood is marred with pain, violence, neglect, and abuse, which can have lifelong psychological, emotional, and physical consequences.

At Catholic Guardian Services, we strive to help families in need and protect children at risk by reaching out to them before they are in the Child Welfare system. Our Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention services and other programs for families help struggling families find solutions to difficult circumstances and grow closer.

This month, CGS honors the professionals, volunteers, and fellow organizations who work tirelessly to protect at-risk children and care for those who have experienced abuse or neglect. This difficult work is critical to ensuring the safety and protection of our children, to strengthening our communities, and to stopping cycles of violence harm. There are no substitutes for caring parents and guardians and we are especially grateful to foster and adoptive parents, who open their lives to children in need of loving and caring homes.

Watch our latest video “Family Connections: The Davis Family” to learn more about CGS’s prevention services.
May is National Foster Care Month, a month set aside to acknowledge foster parents, family members, volunteers, mentors, policymakers, child welfare professionals, and other members of the community who help children and youth in foster care find permanent homes and connections. CGS is one of the largest foster care providers in the State of New York, serving approximately 1,000 children annually throughout the New York City area. Protecting children and helping them gain a loving and permanent home is at the very center of our work and mission.

As this month comes to a close, CGS would like to congratulate Tanika Butts on her recent and successful adoption of Riley, Daniel, and Angelica. Ms. Butts, who works as a Self Direction Specialist with developmentally disabled adults, has been a dedicated foster mother to the siblings for four years. Along with Ms. Butts, CGS Caseworker, Patrice Shand worked tirelessly to make sure Riley, Daniel and Angelica achieved permanency and a forever home. Ms. Butts and Ms. Shand are shining examples of our dedicated foster parents and CGS staff’s commitment to ensuring a bright future for foster children in our care.

After four years as their foster mother, Tanika Butts celebrates with her newly adopted children Riley (12), Daniel (11) and Angelica (8).

The celebration of our youth continues this month, as our CGS young adults Justin Turbicio (above, left) and Menkie Collins (above, right) were recognized at the National Foster Care Youth Awards sponsored by NYC Administration for Children’s Services at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. From all of us at CGS, Congratulations Justin and Menkie!

Learn more about our Foster Care and Child Welfare Services by visiting our website: www.catholicguardian.org
As you have seen on the news, thousands of immigrant children have been separated from their families and dispersed around the country. Many of these children were sent to New York and placed in temporary care while their parents were placed in federal custody. Catholic Guardian Services is one of the agencies that are helping these children, by providing them with safe and supportive home-like settings where they can go to school, eat nutritious food, have clean clothes and receive medical care and counseling. We are working with other agencies to help reunite them with their families and provide legal support. To date, we have worked with more than 60 separated children. Please visit our website to support our mission.

In July, Accenture employees teamed up with Together We Rise to assemble 84 brand-new bicycles and also provided bike helmets for children in CGS’s care. The kids are excited and everyone at CGS thanks Accenture and Together We Rise for their generosity and their labor!

The Pinkerton Foundation recently supported Catholic Guardian Services with a grant to establish an innovative, in-house, mentored internship for youth who are “aging out” of the foster care system. CGS enrolled its first group of participants into the program—all of whom are 18-22 year-old residents in CGS foster and group homes in the Bronx. This fall, Menkie Collins (right) starts college at CUNY’s Borough of Manhattan Community College, where the skills he learned will translate from the office into the classroom. After completing his CGS internship, Justin Tiburcio (left) decided to pursue his dream of becoming a chef, and is headed to culinary school in Florida this September. “Menkie and Justin are two shining examples of how CGS’ Youth Development Program can affect change.” says Olesia Shaw, CGS Chief of Staff.

SAVE THE DATE! For CGS’s 33rd Annual Child of Peace Awards Dinner October 16th at The Pierre Hotel. We will be recognizing Rory and Camille Kelleher (Child of Peace Award), James and Anne Flood (Rosalie Cadron-Jette Award) and Josie Natori (Edward Cardinal Egan Humanitarian Award) for their dedication and support to our city’s most vulnerable citizens. For more details and to purchase tickets visit our website!

To learn more about what we do, go to: www.catholicguardian.org

CGS would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Chief Advancement Officer, Laura K. Atwell. Laura brings over 25 years experience in development, having raised funds for hospitals, educational institutions, and human service organizations. Most recently she served as Vice President, Development at Team Rubicon, a veteran-led disaster response organization where she oversaw exponential growth during her four-year tenure, increasing funds from $4 million to $36.5 million. Early in her career she put her journalism training to use as a staff writer and editor at several daily and weekly newspapers. In her spare time she and her husband, Jim, work on their nearly 90-year-old home in New Jersey, run half marathons, and listen to the Red Sox when they can’t get to Fenway Park in person.
Record-Breaking Child of Peace Awards Dinner

CGS is proud to announce that the Child of Peace Awards Dinner, held on November 16th, 2018, was the most successful event in the organization’s history. Over 350 guests attended the annual dinner, which honours incredible children and adolescents in New York City’s most vulnerable communities. The dinner featured a special video highlighting Yushishia Watson, a CGS youth who received a Jetté Award, and her mentor, Anne Castro. Among the honorees were CGS Executive Director Craig Longley, Our Lady of Good Counsel Academy, and CGS Board President Jim Flood and his wife, Rosalie Cadron-Flood. The Bishop Gerald T. Walsh, Camille & Rory Kelleher, Josie Natori, Anne and Jim Flood. The Child of Peace Award Honorees (left to right): CGS Executive Director Craig Longley, CGS's Family Support Services for the 33rd Annual Child of Peace Awards Dinner.

Contract Awarded to Create Supportive Housing for At-Risk Families

Contract Awarded to Create Supportive Housing for At-Risk Families

CGS has been awarded a contract by the NYC Human Resources Administration and NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to create a new site for the Supportive Housing Program for young families. The program will target young families who would have difficulty maintaining permanent housing without supports. The program will be housed in the Scattered-Site Supportive Housing for Young Families, which is currently in foster care or who have a history of foster care as well as for the caregivers of the youth and children in impoverished communities. In recognition of their ongoing commitment to our most vulnerable New Yorkers, CGS was proud to honor our sponsors for helping us raise more than $2 million at The Pierre Hotel. We know that without your support, we would not be able to continue serving our community. Thank you to all our sponsors who make this event possible. Special thank you to the Wasily Family Foundation for supporting the 2018 Child of Peace Family Center.
The New York City Council has authorized $10M to help fund the Fair Futures initiative for children in foster care across NYC to provide long-term coaches and robust academic support to catalyze vastly improved educational outcomes. While the ask was for $50M in funding, this $10M will help to move the foster care system forward and lay the groundwork for additional advocacy.

In the current foster care system, 25% of foster care alumni suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, 22% experience homelessness for one day or more after emancipation, 26% age out of the foster care system without a high school or GED equivalent, only half will find gainful employment by age 24, and although 70% of youth emancipating from foster care plan to attend college, only 3% ever obtain a bachelor’s degree.

However, when the Fair Futures program model has been implemented, nearly 90% of participants achieve a high school diploma or equivalency by age 21.

NYC is now on track to become the first city in the nation to implement dedicated academic and life skills coaching for all youth in care until the age of 26, which has proven to improve educational outcomes and reduce system involvement. Thousands of lives will be enhanced as a result.

Catholic Guardian Services participated in the Fair Futures campaign, and our foster youth and staff stood on the steps of City Hall to rally for support. As a result, we will be hiring coaches to help prepare these youth for a brighter and fairer future. Coupled with Catholic Guardian’s Youth Employment Services (YES), Mentored Employment Programs, and Helping Hand Mentoring Program, the prospects for children in care just got brighter.

The Associate Board of Catholic Guardian Services is a dynamic group of young professionals and emerging philanthropic leaders who volunteer their time, talents, and energy to raise critical funds and build awareness of CGS mission. The Second Annual Summer Fundraiser hosted by Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher in the MetLife Building was a wonderful success. The proceeds will help children in foster care, children served by the child abuse prevention program, and children in Catholic Guardian’s shelters celebrate Christmas. If you would like to join the Associate Board or recommend a new member, please email Carolyn Githinji at cgithinji@catholicguardian.org.

To learn more about CGS please watch our 2019 Mission Video.

Visit our website: www.catholicguardian.org

Prospects for Children in Foster Care Just Got Brighter

2019 Child of Peace Awards Dinner

S e e y o u N e v e r e a t a t 6 p m o n N o v e m b e r 1 2 t h a t t h e Z i e g f e l d B a l l r o o m f o r o u r 3 4 t h A n n u a l C h i l d o f P e a c e A w a r d s D i n n e r . W e a r e p l e a s e d t o a n n o u n c e t h i s y e a r ’ s h o n o r e e s a r e :

- Aiko & Dan Decelles, Child of Peace Award
- Margaret (Peggy) & Bernard (Berney) Smyth, Edward Cardinal Egan Humanitarian Award
- Cokie & Steve Roberts, Rosalie Cadron-Jetté Award for Courage and Compassion

Click here to purchase tickets and tables and read more about our honorees and entertainment!