

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

VOICE

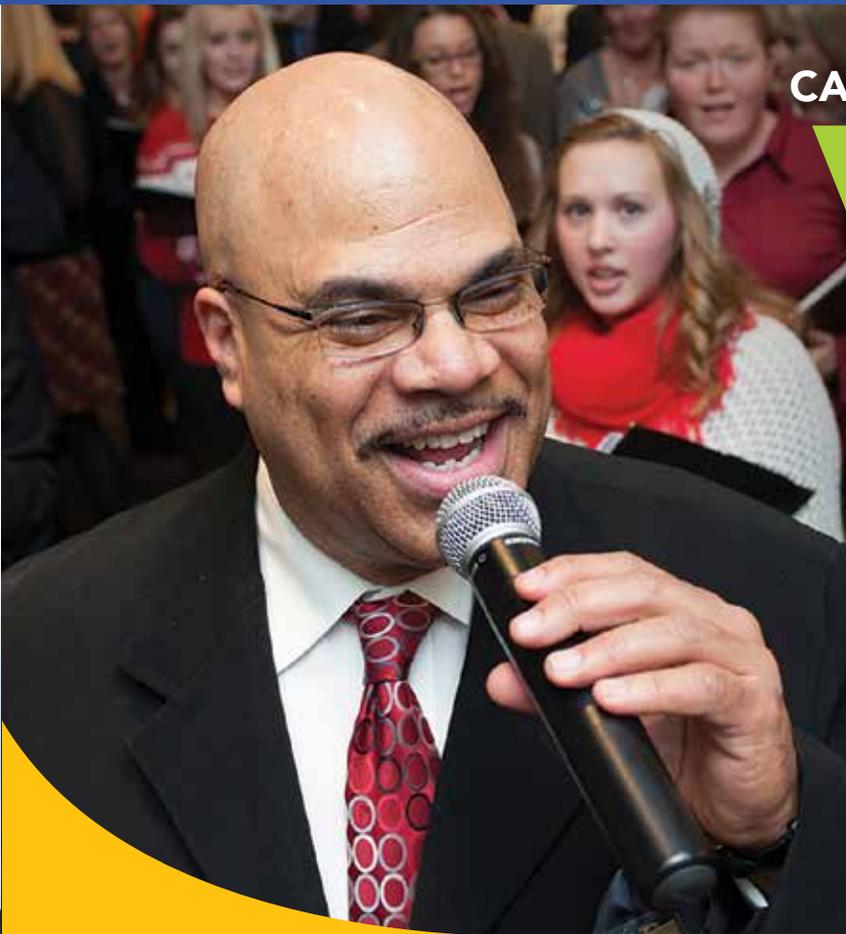
JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2015

The amazing journey of T. Mychael Rambo

You helped him move from the darkness of homelessness to the brightest stages

Inside this issue:

- Northside provides strong beginnings
- Advocating for those most in need



With your help, dreams come true

It's a long way to go, from standing in line at Catholic Charities' Dorothy Day Center and sleeping at Mary Hall to singing the national anthem for the president of the United States.

"I went from sitting homeless on a bench with a statue of F. Scott Fitzgerald on one side and the Ordway on the other side. It's been a journey. It changed me."

—T. Mychael Rambo

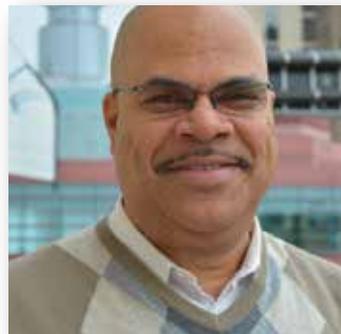
But—with hard work, hope, your help and a whole lot of determination—it is possible. T. Mychael Rambo is living proof.

"My introduction to Catholic Charities was in 1989. I was estranged from my family. I found myself without a place to stay," Rambo said.

Without a home to call his own—or a shelter to sleep in—Rambo would spend his nights in garages, doorways, in city buses and the emergency room at St. Joseph's Hospital. Later he found refuge at Mary Hall, sleeping in a single room on the second floor.

He was once one of the thousands of faces who came to Catholic Charities in their hour of need. He's now an actor, vocalist and educator—an accomplished man by any definition of the word.

Dorothy Day Center was there when he was hungry, when he needed a hot cup of coffee on a cold day. The people of Catholic Charities were there to help him find the services and opportunities he needed to find his pathway out of poverty.



"Catholic Charities has helped me find my true north. It helped

provide me with a sense of direction. It gave me footprints in the sand. It gave me hope. It gave me a sense of vision. They gave me a reason I was worth caring for and loving myself," he said.

READ MORE: cctwincities.org/Tmychael

You did it!

Thanks for meeting the \$500,000 challenge match

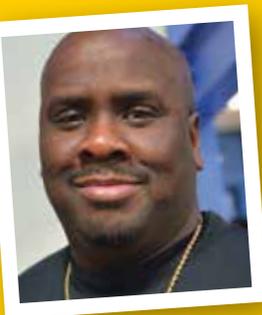
Your generosity during the holiday season went twice as far, providing much needed meals and shelter during these cold winter months. \$500,000 goes a long way, providing 35,714 meals and nights of shelter for those experiencing homelessness.

Northside's Damont Jones:

Committed to improving the lives of children

Every day, Damont Jones comes to Catholic Charities' Northside Child Development Center and works to improve the lives of North Minneapolis children.

It's something he's done for more than 25 years and something he plans to do for as long as possible.



"The kids, the community, this is a great organization to work for," Jones said. He came to Northside as a 15-year-old working a summer program. He did so well that they asked

him to stay on and work with the after school program. Damont continued his education but never lost contact with Northside. His roles have changed over the years and now he works as program manager.

Jones appreciates the quality team he works with and how much they care about the children. "What do I like about Northside? It's always the children first, but I love the team I work with. Every one of our workers really care and want to be here. Thanks to the support we receive from our donors we can focus on what is important, the future of the children."



"What we are doing works, the children are prepared to start school."

— Program Director
Kim Osborn



Providing strong and healthy starts to kids on the north side

Catholic Charities' Northside Child Development Center provides early education, preschool, school readiness and school reinforcement experiences, all designed to combat the negative impact poverty can have on children. Since 1985 Northside has been an integral part of the Catholic Charities mission, providing strong, healthy starts to children in North Minneapolis. Because of the quality education we are able to provide at Northside, you are giving children the first steps on their pathways out of poverty.

The staff are the heart of the center and the work that happens there. Parents feel comfortable bringing their children to Northside because they're bringing them to a good place. "Northside Child Development Center is embedded

in the community and people want their children to be here. What we are doing works, the children are prepared to start school." said Program Director Kim Osborn. In addition to top-notch early childhood education the staff at Northside also works with the parents and families, providing services and educational opportunities to build strong and stable environments where kids can thrive and succeed.

Our staff strives for the highest quality possible, and thanks to your support, Northside Child Development Center once again received a four-star rating—the highest rating possible—from Minnesota Department of Human Services Parent Aware.

"I was fortunate. I got to go to college and have a good job. I think everyone should consider volunteering." — Higher Ground Volunteer Caitlin

Tuesdays at Higher Ground

Volunteers Caitlin and Adam are Tuesday night fixtures at Catholic Charities' Higher Ground, a shelter for those experiencing homelessness.

They work the front desk in the shelter, greeting clients as they come in to stay the night, not merely checking them in, but welcoming them.

"I wanted to stay in my neighborhood but I wanted to get outside of my comfort zone," Adam said. "I come here every Tuesday. It's become a part of my normal weekly routine. After coming week after week, you feel a part of something."

Jessica Grassie, shelter program manager at Higher Ground, said Adam and Caitlin are a most appreciated addition to Higher Ground.

"They make a huge difference. It's only a few hours but those few mean a lot," Grassie said.

Giving back is just part of their way of life. "I just think that's part of being an active member of the community," Caitlin said.

"This is fun. I look forward to it every week," Adam said.

GET INVOLVED: cctwincities.org/Volunteer



Advocating for those in need

Incredible change has happened thanks to Catholic Charities Sowers of Justice and all of you who advocate in the community.

Organized by Catholic Charities' Office for Social Justice, advocates have met with legislators, sent letters and postcards and are doing grassroots work throughout the community to make change happen.

Each of you makes a difference when you become a voice for the voiceless. Last spring, the Minnesota Legislature passed a bonding bill which included a record-breaking \$100 million for statewide affordable housing needs. Catholic Charities was later awarded \$19 million of those funds to support the new vision for the Dorothy Day Center.

This year Catholic Charities will be advocating for access to stable housing, opportunities to end the cycles of poverty, early childhood education, and expanded pathways to success through transit and transportation.

"I wanted to be part of something bigger."

Gopher punter gives kids at St. Joe's a few kicks

University of Minnesota Golden Gopher football punter Peter Mortell's generosity will impact the lives of many kids at St. Joseph's Home for Children for years to come. Mortell—as part of his participation with the Golden Gophers in the 2015 Citrus Bowl—received a gift card from Best Buy.

"I received this gift card and I thought: I could buy something for myself, but I knew that wouldn't last. I wanted to make a difference for kids—to buy something so a lot of kids could benefit. I wanted to be part of something bigger," Mortell said. He used his Best Buy gift card to purchase DVDs, game equipment, headphones, and other items that will be enjoyed by all the kids at St. Joe's.

"We greatly appreciate Peter's donation. This donation not only brought smiles over the holidays but will be useful in providing a welcoming environment for children throughout the year," said Keith Kozerski, Senior Director of Children and Family Services at Catholic Charities. St. Joseph's serves children who are dealing with mental health issues or healing from abuse throughout the year and donations like Peter's help us make sure we're ready to serve these youth all year long.



Peter Mortell with St. Joe's Senior Program Director Jon Stumbras

1 Find out who represents you by visiting www.leg.mn

2 Send your legislator a letter or email introducing yourself, and highlighting issues you care about

3 Sign up for Action Alerts at cctwincities.org/advocacy to learn more about issues, and when you can take action for those living in poverty.

All of us together can make a difference.

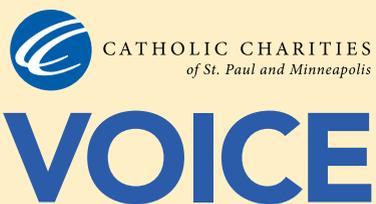
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YOUR VOICE CAN BE HEARD

Join Catholic Charities for Minnesota Homeless Coalition Day On the Hill

Thursday, March 12, 2015

For more information visit MNhomelesscoalition.org/advocate



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An update on the new vision for the Dorothy Day Center

In January, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners voted to provide partial funding in the amount of \$1.7 million towards construction of the Dorothy Day Connection Center in downtown Saint Paul.

The Connection Center will provide on-site housing, employment and health-related services to those experiencing homelessness and housing instability. This commitment by Ramsey County is the first local funding for the Connection Center and will provide a critical foundation upon which additional funding is anticipated to be provided by state and local, private and philanthropic sources.

“The Connection Center is an integral element of the new vision for the Dorothy Day Center. This investment by Ramsey County represents a significant step toward making this new vision a reality,” said Tim Marx, President and CEO of Catholic Charities. “We are grateful for the county’s partnership and leadership in addressing our community’s toughest challenges.”

FOR MORE UPDATES on the Dorothy Day Center ReVision go to: dorothydayrevision.org



From President & CEO Tim Marx:

Your generosity and advocacy change lives

Every year, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day provides an opportunity to honor one of our country’s great heroes—and reflect on our long struggle for justice and civil rights. King inspires us to action, stating that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” adding that “we are...tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

We are blessed at Catholic Charities to be able to partner with people like you who help weave that “single garment of destiny.” Your generosity and activism changes lives—you help those in need by offering your time and talent and by giving voice to critical issues at the legislature. We look forward to continuing that work with you in 2015, on issues such as affordable housing, early childhood, transportation and other programs that support pathways out of poverty.

We are also blessed because we are able to work on the frontlines every day, giving a hand up to our most

vulnerable neighbors, helping solve poverty and create opportunity in our own community.

And we have reason to hope: every year, Northside Child Development Center hosts an MLK Celebration, where kids share their talents and reflect on the lives of some of our civil rights heroes. At events like this, we see firsthand how we are helping shape the next generation’s leaders, a generation from which new heroes will emerge.

Thank you for all you do to make the world a better place.



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