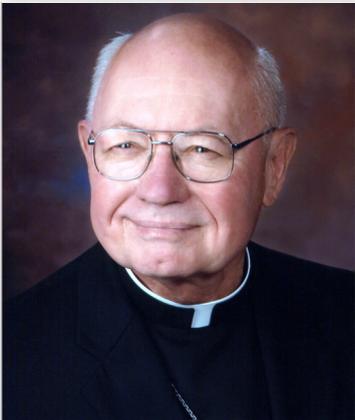


CATHOLIC CHARITIES USA'S 2016

VOLUNTEER

OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

Catholic Charities USA is pleased to honor the amazing volunteers who are finalists for our 2016 Volunteer of the Year Award. They represent the more than 300,000 volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to the Catholic Charities network each year. By leveraging their interests, talents and skills to serve and help others, each of the finalists exemplifies the mission and spirit of Catholic Charities.



Bishop Emeritus William S. Skylstad. Agency: Catholic Charities of Spokane. Program: House of Charity Homeless Shelter. Service: Since his retirement in 2010, Bishop Skylstad has volunteered in many capacities. He spends one day a week at the House of Charity providing day to day survival needs, counseling, and spiritual guidance. The bishop has helped the agency connect to constituents who have been hard to reach, and he has opened doors to donors who are eager to support causes he champions. He also volunteers his time offering marriage encounter, and other, retreats. Bishop Skylstad is in a unique position to assist the agency's work and Catholic identity by bringing pastors to the agency for tours, information sessions, and collaboration.



Colin Arnold. Agency: Catholic Community Service, Juneau, Alaska. Program: Swan Lake Senior Center, Sitka, Alaska. Service: Colin has been washing dishes five days per week, 52 weeks a year, for 21 years at the Swan Lake Senior Center. So dependable is he that if he does not show up at his regular time, someone goes to check on him. Colin's gift to the senior center goes well beyond cleaning. His kind demeanor endears him to the seniors who attend the meal program. Everyone's spirit and well-being are uplifted by Colin's friendliness and example of service.



Volunteer: Jan Moore. Agency: Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Program: Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program. Service: Jan volunteers every Wednesday morning and coordinates the donations for newly arriving refugees. Case managers give her the arrival date and the family members' ages and genders, and by noon every family has clothes and household items ready to go with a list of everything for the case manager's record. Outside the Catholic Charities office Jan searches garage and church sales in order to purchase things for the donation room. She recruits others to serve and to give as well.



Volunteers: Mr. and Mrs. Walter and Ray Merchant. Agency: Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Program: Adoption and Pregnancy Services. Service: For more than 38 years, the Merchant's have served as transitional foster parents for children awaiting adoption and then placement. During the transition, the couple provides around-the-clock care for the children. They have fostered 186 babies over four decades and adopted eight. The Merchant's seize every opportunity to engage family, friends, church members, and the community-at-large in adoption and pregnancy services. They are voices against injustice and in support of providing hope and help to mothers experiencing crisis pregnancies. Their understanding of the adoption process and the angst adoptive families can feel – as they await placement and finalization of their adoptions – is a perspective our clients need.



Volunteer: Elba Cruz Schulman. Agency: Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Hartford. Program: Institute for the Hispanic Family. Service: Elba is an active member of the advisory councils for the Institute for the Hispanic Family and Hartford Area Programs. A social worker/case manager by profession for the City of Hartford, she leverages her community connections to help those in need. Over the past 20 years she also has dedicated countless hours to working directly with families, with a particular emphasis on women and children and immigrants, helping them to obtain basic necessities and to access community resources. Elba is a tireless advocate for the Greater Hartford region's most vulnerable residents, including families that do not speak English and homeless families.



Volunteers: Mr. and Mrs. Dick and Evelyn Koprowski. Agency: Catholic Charities of Central Colorado. Program: Marian House Soup Kitchen. Service: The Koprowski's have volunteered at the Marian House Soup Kitchen for over 28 years. They commit a minimum of 12 to 15 days each month volunteering in various capacities. They schedule and organize groups of volunteers for the soup kitchen. They drive a truck around town picking up donations from stores. The Koprowski's efforts are contagious, and they have been able to recruit more volunteers, including partnering with a local Lutheran church. For nearly three decades, the Koprowski's have utilized their talents at every level including attending and volunteering with fund-raisers. They see the face of Christ in everyone they encounter, and they work to enhance the value and dignity of all human life.