

non-profit news



Advocacy And Caring For Children

Supporting Local Children And Families In Need

Advocacy and Caring for Children (ACC) is a volunteer organization of women in the archdiocese of Western Washington who, through small group "Circles," provides care, funding, and advocacy for children and families in need. ACC, formerly Association for Catholic Childhood, supports a network of programs focused on the needs of under-served children and families. The organization recently celebrated its 100-year anniversary in 2019.

On December 12, 1918, with the blessings of Bishop Edward O'Dea, a group of Seattle's Catholic women met for the first time to organize a program of social welfare on behalf of children and families in need. Initially, these women cared for a few of the children themselves and were involved in their placement in adoptive homes and foster care. As the workload increased, they employed professional social workers to place and monitor the children, while they focused their efforts on raising money. Members gathered in small neighborhood groups to facilitate special projects, fundraising, and to sew layettes for the infants. In the early 1930s, the first "Circles" were formed. These small groups of women, which are often formed within a parish or neighborhood, raise money for ACC's grant ef-

forts. There are currently 14 Circles, including the St. Bridget Circle, the Josephine McDermott Circle, and the Frances Hoffman Circle, with over 300 members.

ACC has supported over 40 organizations with funding over \$1 million in the last decade, and close to \$3 million in the last 20 years. Funds go directly to support Catholic Community Services of Western Washington programs through a grant review process. Fundraising events include luncheons, fashion shows, raffles, auctions, and parties. Additional funds are raised by seasonal plant and wreath sales, the annual Labor of Love online auction in February, the Magnolia Holiday Home Tour in December, and the Celebrate the Children Event in October. Circles and individuals also provide in-kind donations including layettes, personal care items, back to school supplies and books, and countless volunteer hours.



ACC members, Marilyn Price and Barbara Fruhling, dropping off a dozen layettes that will be given to women after completing the parenting classes offered.

This year, ACC's fundraising efforts have been impacted due to COVID-19. The annual spring luncheon, traditionally held at Sand Point Country



Eva Dougherty, JJ Horner, and Marisol Joynt at the Celebrate the Children fundraiser event in October 2019

Club, was canceled, and some Circles' planned events have had to take place digitally. Most significantly, ACC's largest fundraising event called Celebrate the Children, which was originally planned for October, will now be a "raise the paddle" online event only. ACC continues to sell white "hope" glassy baby votives, which are available at <https://acc.ejoinme.org/endowment>.

ACC's immediate past president, Patty Barnes, noted, "As a member of the Frances Hoffman Circle at Assumption Parish and

immediate Past President of ACC for the last two years, I am particularly proud of our new all-association annual event - Celebrate the Children - that exceeded goals, as well as the influx of new members across the organization. Thank you to the many people in the neighborhood who have been instrumental and participated in our success as volunteers with agencies or with fundraisers. While I don't live in Laurelhurst 'full time,' I spend a lot of time in the community with my daughter and family, Shannon, Todd, Colin, and Erin Hofmeister."

Margie Rose, a St. Bridget Circle member of 45 years, added, "Although ACC Circles were started by Catholic women, they are open to everyone, regardless of religious affiliation. Funds are distributed to those families and children most in need without bias or discrimination.

A beautiful side benefit of our Circles is the support and friendships we have formed through the years. Even though we have turned much of the fundraising efforts over to our daughters' generation, we are bonded by our many years together."

To learn more about ACC, including how you can help support the organization with your time, talent, and treasure, visit the website at www.advocacyandcaringforchildren.org.

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