



**SANTA MARIA**  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

# Life in the Community

Helping Families Help Themselves Since 1897



FALL/WINTER 2017 - 2018

## Message from the President & CEO

Santa Maria Community Services is blessed to have so many donors and friends who support us during the holiday season. Thank **YOU** for your gifts that help us help families help themselves!



H. A. Musser, Jr.  
MA, MSW

December 8th marks our 120th anniversary of doing this work in Cincinnati. Many tens of thousands of people have walked through our doors, from Italian and other immigrant groups in our earliest decades to the Appalachian migrants in the middle of the 20th century to today's residents of Price Hill, where we've been based for the past 51 years.

A common thread is that we've always given people hope and encouragement to set goals they never thought possible and the tools and information they need to achieve those goals. Santa Maria helps families achieve financial stability through work, financial coaching, GED and housing services. And we are helping parents set up their children for success in the future.

Would you consider helping us help more families achieve their goals? I hope you will take a few minutes to click on the bright orange DONATE button on our secure website and invest in these families' lives.

[www.SantaMaria-cincy.org](http://www.SantaMaria-cincy.org).

It's that easy.

Thank you so much!

## Santa Maria Celebrates 120 Years at Birthday Brunch

Santa Maria is excited to announce its 120th year of helping families help themselves! Santa Maria first began on December 8, 1897 by the Sisters of Charity and founder, Sister Blandina Segale, and became a private non-profit in 1972. The agency will celebrate its 120th anniversary at the annual Birthday Brunch on Sunday, December 3, at The Cincinnati Woman's Club in Clifton from 10 am - 1 pm.



Eddy Kwon  
Director, MYCincinnati  
2017 Sr. Blandina Award  
Recipient

This year's event will recognize MYCincinnati, a program of Price Hill Will, and MYCincinnati's Director, Eddy Kwon. Thank you to our Corporate Sponsor, the SC Ministry Foundation and Impact Sponsors, First Financial Bank, Joan Friedmann and PNC Bank. Proceeds from the fundraising event benefit Santa Maria's programs and services.



You don't want to miss this lively event filled with raffles, silent and live auctions, great music, food and much more! Make your reservations now at

[www.santamaria-cincy.org/birthday-brunch](http://www.santamaria-cincy.org/birthday-brunch) or contact Leslie at (513) 557-7273 or [leslie.schultz@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:leslie.schultz@santamaria-cincy.org).

## Board of Directors

**Jorge Seda (Chair)**, GE Aviation (Retired)

**Paul Friedmann (Vice Chair)**, Great American Insurance Company

**Kaitlyn Baker Wessels (Secretary)**, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

**Christopher Zimmerman (Treasurer)**

**Robert Ball**, US Bank

**Tina Baumann**, The Kroger Company

**Sr. Patmarie Bernard, SC**, Sisters of Charity

**Stephen Brinker**, Hamilton County Board of Revisions

**Tim Gillespie**, Procter and Gamble

**Alonzo (Ted) Folger**, Cincinnati Children's Hospital

**Crystal Rose Gothard**, Salvation Army

**Gerri Hernandez**

**Dan Knecht**, Grayden Head & Ritchey, LLP

**Debra Knight**, Good Samaritan Hospital

**Maureen Maxfield**, Maxfield Associates, LLC

**James McCarthy**, Katz, Teller, Brant & Hild

**Laureen Niehaus-Beckner**, Retired

**Julieta M. Simms**, Cincinnati Public Schools

**Luther Smith, Ph D**, Xavier University

**Mary Ucci**, Northern Kentucky University

**Guillermo Villa**, Ethicon, a Johnson and Johnson Company

**Rose Mary Wesselman**, Rosebud Communications



## Santa Maria to Participate in Annual Price Hill Holiday Events



Staff from Santa Maria pose with Santa during the 2016 Holiday on the Hill event

On Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 23, Price Hill will host the 27th annual Price Hill Thanksgiving Day Parade. The parade will take place on Glenway Avenue in West Price Hill beginning at 10 am at Western Hills High School, and include marching bands, community and school groups and more before ending at St. Lawrence Church on Warsaw Avenue. Various family-friendly activities will take place at St. Lawrence Church,

including pictures with Santa, a petting zoo and hot chocolate provided by Santa Maria.

Santa Maria will also provide free pictures with Santa on Saturday, December 2, during the Price Hill Holiday on the Hill weekend event. Holiday on the Hill begins Friday, December 1, at 6 pm at Seton High School for the Light the Hill event and continues through Sunday, December 3. Pictures with Santa will take place Saturday from 10 am - 1 pm at Santa Maria's Griswold Center on 3214 Warsaw Avenue.

## Coaches and Mentors Needed for Lower Price Hill Youth Sports League

The City of Cincinnati's Neighborhood Support Program has granted \$5,500 toward youth activities in the Lower Price Hill neighborhood. Santa Maria's Youth Development program is partnering with Oyler School to provide sports activities for K-6th graders during their after-school programming at Santa Maria's Joe Williams Family Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The Lower Price Hill Youth Sports League provides older youth with the opportunity to become an assistant coach and mentor to the younger youth. Seasons for the Youth Sports League will align with the Cincinnati Recreation Commission's sports schedule in order for teams to be able to compete with other youth sports leagues. Leagues included are: Winter 2017/18 basketball, Spring 2018 soccer and volleyball, and Summer 2018 flag football, basketball, baseball, softball and

obstacle course racing. The Youth Development program is currently seeking coaches for this exciting new project. For information on how to get involved, contact Santa Maria Youth Worker, Michelle Ricica at (513) 557-7283 or [michelle.ricica@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:michelle.ricica@santamaria-cincy.org).



Student, Shane Butler, coaches younger youth for the Lower Price Hill Sports League

## Foundation Corner

Thank you to the many supporters of Santa Maria and its programs! We have recently received support from the following foundations:

### For the Youth Program

- Charles H. Dater Foundation

### For Promoting Our Preschoolers and Family Child Care Providers Support

- SC Ministry Foundation

### For Capacity Building

- SC Ministry Foundation

### For Wellness Program

- The HealthPath Foundation of Ohio

### For Workforce Development

- US Bank

### For Earned Income Tax Credit Project

- SC Ministry Foundation



## Exciting New Fundraiser to Take Place in the Heart of the Price Hill Community

Santa Maria is excited to announce its newest community-centered fundraising event, **The Sharing Table!** The event will take place in the evening on Friday, April 13, at The Sanctuary in Lower Price Hill and raise funds for the programs and services of Santa Maria while bringing awareness to childhood poverty.



The **Sharing Table** will offer a variety of soups from local vendors for guests to eat throughout the evening while enjoying wine or

beer tastings, hors d'oeuvres, dessert, games and live music. During the event guests will be encouraged to purchase hand-crafted bowls through the event designed by local artists through the Cincinnati Clay Alliance. The event will include family-style seating at long tables as a "home-roots" way of gathering and connecting with friends of Santa Maria and community members.

"This event is truly unique in that it focuses on community connection first by being located in the heart of the community we serve, by offering food, drinks and art through local community businesses, and most importantly, by encouraging the community to participate and connect by offering affordable tickets and a come-as-you-are, family-style setting," says H. A. Musser, Santa Maria President and CEO. For updated event information keep checking Santa Maria's Facebook page and [www.santamaria-cincy.org](http://www.santamaria-cincy.org), or contact [leslie.schultz@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:leslie.schultz@santamaria-cincy.org).

## Board of Directors Discuss Agency, Plan for Future

Santa Maria's Board of Directors met on Saturday, September 23, at Graydon on Main in Over the Rhine for a six hour Board retreat to discuss the agency and plans for the future. With a fiduciary responsibility to ensure fiscal health of the agency, the Board meets every other month to provide oversight to the agency, check on the state of affairs of the agency, address the needs brought to their attention and celebrate successes. The retreat included an engaged session of program managers and Board members lead by outside consultant Gwen



Santa Maria 2017 Board of Directors and Staff

Finnegan to review the past three years and look into the future. The group discussed current community demographics, trends and issues, the agency's strategic plan, ways to develop Santa Maria's family-centered approach, programs, annual outcomes, next steps for the agency and more. When reflecting on the retreat, Jorge Seda, Santa Maria's Board Chair, stated, "I found it very constructive and everyone was very engaged. I believe we had a lot of outstanding input that will define and help us set up the base for the next three years. I learned a lot from the discussion and am very proud to belong to this organization."





## Support Santa Maria When You Shop at Kroger

Did you know you can support Santa Maria whenever you shop at Kroger? If you're planning to shop at Kroger for your holiday meals or gifts, don't forget to add Santa Maria as your charity of choice! For every purchase made, Kroger will donate money to the organization -- at no extra cost to you!

- Sign up for a free, online Kroger Community Rewards account at Kroger.com



- When signing up, add your Kroger Plus Card or create a digital card using your phone number
- Once logged in, go to **MY ACCOUNT** and click **ENROLL** under **COMMUNITY REWARDS**
- Search for Santa Maria Community Services, select Santa Maria from the list and click **ENROLL**.

Now, every time you use your Kroger Plus Card, whether with your card or phone number, Kroger will donate to Santa Maria! Happy Holidays and Happy Shopping!

## Santa Maria Hosts Second Friend-Raiser at Price Hill Wine Bar



New and old friends of Santa Maria enjoy the patio at SOMM Wine Bar during the SOCIAL-izing at SOMM event.

Santa Maria employee Jaime Mutter and her husband, Steven, enjoyed the evening with Santa Maria and SOMM

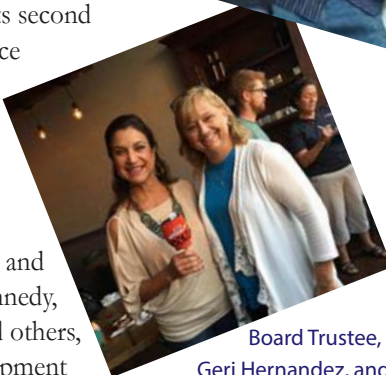
Harold Kennedy and Jim Holmstrom perform at SOMM Wine Bar for the second SOCIAL-izing at SOMM event



On Thursday, October 5, Santa Maria hosted its second friend-raiser, SOCIAL-izing at SOMM, at the Price Hill wine bar, SOMM. Over 30 guests attended the event, which invited the community to learn more about the agency, including information on upcoming news and events.

Guests delighted in food and wine tastings, participated in gift basket and split the pot raffles and enjoyed live music by local musicians Harold Kennedy, former guitar player for Montgomery Gentry and others, and Jim Holmstrom, Santa Maria's Youth Development Program Director.

Look for more events like this in 2018!



Board Trustee, Geri Hernandez, and Santa Maria employee Kim Durst



SOMM Wine Bar Manager, Kevin Armon, poses in front of raffle winnings



## Santa Maria Says Goodbye to Long-time Employee and Hello to New Staff Member

It is with bittersweet emotion Santa Maria says goodbye to long-time employee, Gladys Bell. Gladys will be retiring from the agency at the end of the 2017 year after 18 years with the organization. Gladys first joined the Santa Maria staff in October of 1999 when a friend, who worked for the agency, called to ask about her interest in employment.

“I was drawn to Santa Maria by the collection of staff,” said Gladys. “They are a group of good hires. There is a great responsibility of hiring right. Santa Maria has a very positive work environment.”

Gladys started as the Center Director at the East Price Hill office on Warsaw Avenue supervising, training and overseeing building activities and services. During her time with the agency, Gladys held three other positions. The second, serving as interim Bienestar Program Manager. In 2008 after years of working with multiple programs and volunteers, Gladys took on the Volunteer Program Manager position, a new role for the agency at that time. Here she continued



Gladys Bell

her work facilitating volunteer opportunities and managing Santa Maria’s Meals on Wheels program until its end in 2014.

Still a Volunteer Program Manager, Gladys also took on the role of HR Manager in 2009, thanks to her HR experience and previous

position as HR Associate before coming on board with Santa Maria.

“I could not think of a better place to end my formal work career. I’ve done everything I’ve wanted to do. All I’ve wanted was to help people live their best life, and I’ve been able to do that.”

H. A. Musser, President and CEO stated, “Gladys has been an influential and highly respected member of Santa Maria’s leadership team for more than 18 years. All of us at Santa Maria, as well as the dozens of external partners Gladys interacts with regularly, will miss her

deeply.”

“Gladys is such a kindred spirit, and she has the love of the community. The belief in the mission of Santa Maria, the work ethic, and sense of humor of a saint,” said Blair Schoen, Vice President. “Her warmth and openness shines and she has always gone above and beyond in her work with volunteers and partner organizations. Gladys helped make Santa Maria the community and family-friendly organization it is. “

On October 9, Santa Maria welcomed Samantha Doktor as part-time Volunteer Coordinator to oversee the agency’s Volunteer Program. Sam’s previous experience working with volunteers and diverse groups is what made her an excellent fit for the role, and the agency is excited to have her join the Santa Maria team. To contact Sam and find out more about Santa Maria’s volunteer opportunities, email her at [Samantha.Doktor@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:Samantha.Doktor@santamaria-cincy.org).

## Early Childhood Development Programs Visit Parky’s Farm

On Friday, October 13, 80 families from Santa Maria’s Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs attended the annual Parky’s Farm outing. Santa Maria’s ECD program consists of the following programs: Promoting Our Preschoolers, Every Child Succeeds, Family



Child Care, Stable Families and Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids.

Families enjoyed the Hamilton County Park’s Pumpkin Patch event, which included access to the playground, farm animals and a hayride to the pumpkin patch. Lunch was provided by the agency for each family, most of which are from the Price Hill area. Each year, the Parky’s Farm outing offers Santa Maria’s urban families an opportunity to enjoy a beautiful, educational and fun green space where the children can interact with others, and parents can form supportive relationships.





## Spanish-Speaking Women's Group Enters Second Year

Santa Maria's Spanish-Speaking Women's Group has entered its second year assisting mothers from Latin America. Most of the participants have lived in the United States for a decade or more, and the group offers individuals a much-needed place to come together, form bonds, ask for help and share advice.

With sponsorships from The Hispanic Chamber and Hispanos Avanzando Hispanos, the Women's Group is hosting a 10 week session called "Fortaleciendote Mujer" (Empowering Woman) presented by Maritza Dyer of the Addiction Services Council. The sessions will touch on five themes including effective communication, acculturation, mental health, domestic violence, and substance abuse. Fortaleciendote Mujer aims to empower women to make informed decisions and encourages them to vocalize their thoughts, feelings and experiences in a safe space to build self-esteem with the hope these empowered women will positively affect their families and community.

## Well-Known, Local Musician Teaches Guitar to Santa Maria Youth

Local musician, Harold Kennedy, has been volunteering his time each Wednesday afternoon at Santa Maria's Joe Williams Family Center in Lower Price Hill to teach youth guitar. Harold began his music career at the age of 13, playing the banjo with bluegrass groups in the Mississippi/Alabama area. As his career progressed, he toured as lead guitarist for an RCA country artist based in Nashville, TN, and relocated to Music City where he established himself as a studio and road musician. During this time, Harold began what he now refers to as his "family tradition" gigs, or artists with famous family members, such as Hank Williams III, Noel Haggard and Montgomery Gentry.

Harold became involved with Santa Maria, because his wife's mother was a donor to the organization. Eventually, Harold contacted the Family Center's Youth Development Director, Jim Holmstrom, to discuss possible guitar lessons at the Center.

As of now, Harold teaches four students at the Center. During lessons, he gets to share his talent and walk the youth through different chords and songs. He also uses this time to encourage natural talents, such as singing.



Local musician, Harold Kennedy, poses with Santa Maria Youth Development program students after the mini guitar and singing concert

Not only do youth get to partake in lessons, but they recently held a mini-concert at the Family Center for friends, family and community residents to enjoy. Harold's time and dedication encourages creativity in Lower Price Hill youth, while boosting their self-esteem. Harold uses his talent to give youth something to look forward to and to make a difference in their lives.

## Family Child Care Network Meets

The Santa Maria Family Child Care (FCC) Network is offered to licensed in-home child care providers in and around the Price Hill area with the purpose of improving the financial stability of women, preparing children for kindergarten, enhancing the quality of care provided in family child care homes and supporting early social/emotional development skills in children. The FCC Network met on September 11 for their Learning Network Meeting which offered a way

for current and new members to meet, greet and socialize while taking in valuable information. Staff members shared an informational presentation and guest speaker and tax consultant, James Denson, presented information and tips on how to track, log and include allowable business expenses when filing taxes. Each provider was presented with a basket of books for their child care centers and a yard sign to advertise their association with Santa Maria.



## Santa Maria Reflects on First Year of Joe Williams Family Center

This summer Santa Maria's Youth Development program celebrated its first year at the Joe Williams Family Center in Lower Price Hill. Santa Maria's Youth program began in 1974, and was first located in a small facility on State Avenue working with court-referred juveniles with minor offences. 10 years later the program moved to another location on State Avenue where they remained for 29 years. During this time, the program was combined with other community programs that worked with groups of toddlers, teenagers and adults. The program's outcomes eventually focused on youths' school attendance and social/emotional skills.

The Joe Williams Family Center was established in August, 2016 in partnership with Community Matters thanks to the support of the Reds' Community Fund's Community Makeover Project, including partners Procter and Gamble and the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden. 400 volunteers from the community and partner organizations helped renovate the old Espy Boys and Girls Club on Glenway Avenue.

The Family Center offers structured programming for 6th, 7th and 8th graders: assisting them with tutoring, mentoring and social/emotional skill building, as well as working with the parents. The youth are able to go to the Family Center after



First Employees of Santa Maria's Family Center reunite after 30 years. Pictured left to right: Barb McCauley, Jennifer Hoeffle, Ida Rothwell, Jim Holmstrom, Anna Sexton, Melaney Swenson, Blair Schoen, Colleen Healey and Becky Clark.

school. The Center offers positive and safe spaces and people.

The Family Center encourages youth to get involved in the community and offers events for them throughout the year. Just this past year, youth participated in planting a community garden and held an event for the community called "The Longest Table," which included cooking for the community. They have also planned basketball tournaments with police officers and firefighters to promote positive engagement.

In addition to the Youth Development program, the Center has been able to offer family services, including family counseling, job training and more. Not only are there great activities for the kids, but Santa Maria also added mentors for the children. "Having mentors really does benefit the kids, and we know that, because they show it. They know that we are here to help them," said Jim Holmstrom, Youth Development Program Director. Holmstrom has worked with three

generations of Lower Price Hill youth and celebrated his 40th anniversary with Santa Maria in August. Santa Maria also recognizes this year as the 30th year of providing an established Family Center.

Within this past year the Family Center received a grant for a violence prevention collaborative. An officer that patrols the Price Hill community meets with the youth to discuss healthy ways to handle anger and ultimately prevent violence. The collaboration offers a way to bridge the lack of relatability between the community and police officers. Tony Thomas, Vice President of the Lower Price Hill Community Council stated, "The Joe Williams Family Center is the best thing that has ever happened to the youth in Price Hill. The Violence Prevention Project and the Center both want the same thing and that's to continue to help Price Hill thrive and be the vibrant neighborhood it is."

## International Welcome Center Welcomes New Students, Youth



Santa Maria's International Welcome Center's Youth Enrichment Program

This September Santa Maria's International Welcome Center (IWC) welcomed 122 adult students to its 2017-2018 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program at Roberts Academy. Santa Maria is excited to announce 46 children have also been enrolled in Santa Maria's Youth Enrichment program, which provides activities for children while their parents attend ESOL classes. The Youth Enrichment program has several exciting

upcoming activities planned which include presentations and visitors from the Cincinnati Children's Museum and Imago, who will teach the children about nature, as well as medical students from the University of Cincinnati, who will help students learn about personal health and fitness. The ESOL team is excited about the newly enrolled students and looks forward to a successful year of English education.



# SANTA MARIA COMMUNITY SERVICES

Helping families help themselves since 1897.

Administrative Office  
617 Steiner Avenue  
Cincinnati, OH 45204  
(513) 557-2700

[www.SantaMaria-cincy.org](http://www.SantaMaria-cincy.org)

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
CINCINNATI, OH  
PERMIT NO. 4850



FUNDED IN PART BY  
**CINCINNATI**  
city of



## Santa Maria Receives Mural as Part of an ArtWorks Cincinnati Project

From June 12 to August 4 organizations ArtWorks Cincinnati and Price Hill Will teamed up to incorporate five mini murals in East Price Hill along Warsaw Avenue. A team of 13 people, including one project manager, two teaching

The project included five community engagements to get the community involved by creating art related to the mural themes. By bringing the community together, the project aimed to bridge cultural divides, to build empathy and deepen cultural understanding. The goal of the mural project is to not only create an enjoyable atmosphere in Price Hill, but also to tell stories and build cultural unity.



Volunteers painting the mural at Santa Maria's 3301 Warsaw Avenue location

artists, two lead artists and eight youth apprentices lead the mural project, including one on Santa Maria's 3301 Warsaw Avenue building. Local lead artist John Lanzador and Lizzy Duquette created the murals, which were then painted by student apprentices in the ArtWorks Cincinnati program.

“We love it and were glad to be part of this community revitalization project,” said H. A. Musser, President and CEO of Santa Maria. “I think they add color and vibrancy to the Warsaw strip.”

The mural painted on Santa Maria's building includes a variety of different pictures and symbols representing the East Price Hill neighborhood and the residents within it. The sunflower symbolizes peace and hope; the football represents the neighborhood kids; monarch butterflies symbolize change, freedom and immigration; and many more.



Mural lead artists John Lanzador and Lizzy Duquette