



**SANTA  
MARIA**  
COMMUNITY SERVICES™



# **SANTA MARIA COMMUNITY SERVICES**

# FROM THE CEO



On December 2nd we celebrated our 121st anniversary! We are excited to have recognized Meghan Cummings, Executive Director of The Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, with the Sr. Blandina Segale Award in recognition of our founder, and Pro Bono Partnership of Ohio for the tens of thousands of dollars' worth of free business legal services they've provided to Santa Maria.

Over the past year Santa Maria has made a difference in hundreds of lives, stabilizing families, supporting parents, and helping people become more financially independent. This groundbreaking work will continue in earnest into the New Year.

We offer our deepest gratitude and thanks to all of you who have sent financial gifts to Santa Maria already this year and to those who will do so in the coming weeks. More than ever, Santa Maria depends on the gifts of generous supporters. Thank you for considering a year-end gift to support Santa Maria's work.

Our very best to you and your family during this upcoming holiday season and into 2019!

**H. A. Musser, Jr.**  
President and CEO

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# SANTA MARIA CELEBRATES 121<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY



Meghan Cummings and ProBono Partnership of Ohio (represented by Erin Childs) recognized at annual Birthday Brunch

Santa Maria celebrated its 121<sup>st</sup> year on December 2nd at its annual Birthday Brunch. The fundraiser, featuring a live and silent auction, raised funds for the continuance of its free programs and services, which serve nearly 4,000 individuals annually. Santa Maria honored Meghan Cummings, Executive Director of The Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, with the Sister Blandina Segale Award, which pays tribute to the life of Santa Maria's founder. The agency also presented Erin Childs, Executive Director of ProBono Partnership of Ohio, with the Organization Award, recognizing the organization's countless hours of free legal services to Santa Maria and other nonprofits.

This year's live auction featured unique experiences, including a private plane ride and lunch for two, a one-week resort stay in Ashville, North Carolina, Reds Diamond seats, lunch with Hamilton County Commissioner Todd Portune, A night at the Lyric Opera of Chicago including dinner and two-night stay, lunch with Cincinnati Ballet Artistic Director, Victoria Morgan, and Police Chief for a day.

Santa Maria Board Member, Mike Gentry, and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Director of Media Communications, Diana Lara, emceed this year's event. Santa Maria would like to thank those who participated in this year's Birthday Brunch, and those who helped to make the event possible. A special thanks to Santa Maria's Presenting Sponsor, Nehemiah Manufacturing.

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## PUTTING AN END TO WASTE AT WORK

Santa Maria Vice President, Blair Schoen, was recently recognized for expanding the recycling efforts at each of Santa Maria Community Services' six buildings. In appreciation of her efforts, the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District awarded Santa Maria with the "Let's Stop Waste at Work Program of the Year" award. The agency's recycling and waste reduction efforts were acknowledged at their 2018 Annual Awards Breakfast on Thursday, November 15. Mary Sticklen of the Division of Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services presented Blair with the award at Santa Maria's headquarters in Sedamsville.



Mary Sticklen (right) presents Blair Schoen (middle) with an award recognizing Santa Maria's recycling efforts.

# ON THE COVER

Alexis Santiago was first connected to Santa Maria's Every Child Succeeds (ECS) program while pregnant with her daughter Ava. Before the birth of her daughter, ECS staff visited Alexis at her home to share more about the home-visitation program, which provides community resources for first-time mothers and offers developmental support and education for children age 0-3. Alexis worked with ECS Family Support Worker Barbara Smith for two years before Barbara's retirement. "I cried when she left," said Alexis. "I loved her. We had this connection and this bond, and she loved Ava."

When Ava was born, she suffered an accident during delivery. Ava's left shoulder was lodged in Alexis' pelvic, rendering her arm motionless for the first three months of her life, a complication referred to as shoulder dystocia. As a new and worried mother, Alexis confided in Barbara. "Barbara started as a Family Support Worker but left as a friend. She started to become my outlet; I could tell her everything. She was there to offer me so much support and have my back. She also adored Ava and loved working with her."

In the beginning of Ava's life, she was delayed in many developmental activities. "Barbara was understanding and would work my daughter through her disability," said Alexis. Ava, now two years old, has use of her arm but with limited function, and continues to see and occupational therapist.

As a single mother, Alexis has benefitted from the resources and opportunities offered through Santa Maria. "We have been to every outing they've had for kids. It's hard to afford a lot of activities for kids around the holidays and because the ones through ECS are free, I can get Ava out of the house." Alexis recalls her and



Alexis Santiago and daughter Ava

her daughter's recent visit to Parky's Farm, an annual event hosted by Santa Maria for its Early Childhood Development programs. "She was so happy and into everything. She loved it and I loved seeing her. She doesn't have a lot of friends her age so seeing her being able to interact with all the kids and watch her play - I was so happy."

"I feel like we need for nothing," Alexis said when asked about her experience with the agency, "especially now that I have Katie." Katie Overcash, Alexis' Family Support Worker since Barbara's retirement, has worked closely with Alexis since March of 2018. "I love Katie. She always offers a helping hand whenever I need anything."

Alexis plans to enroll Ava in Santa Maria's Promoting Our Preschoolers program once Ava graduates from ECS at age three. The family-focused, kindergarten-readiness program works collaboratively with families, schools, and the community through home-visitation program.

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## A THANKS TO FOUNDATIONS

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

**For Wellness Program -**  
Foundation of the  
Cincinnati Academy of  
Medicine

**For Youth Program -**  
The Andrew Jergens  
Foundation & Charles  
H. Dater Foundation,  
Inc.

**For Health Fair -**  
Cincy-Cinco | Cincinnati  
Latino Festival

**For Youth Program -**  
The Sutphin Family  
Foundation

**For EITC/VITA -**  
SC Ministry Foundation

# FAMILIES ENJOY ANNUAL TRIP TO PARKY'S FARM

On October 5, Santa Maria's Early Childhood Development programs (Every Child Succeeds, Promoting Our Preschoolers, Stable Families, and Family Child Care) spent the day at Parky's Farm in Mt. Healthy. Families enjoyed the park, playground, animals, pumpkin patch, hayrides, and lunch provided by the organization. Each year, the Parky's Farm outing offers Santa Maria's urban families the opportunity to enjoy a beautiful, educational, and fun green space where children can interact with others and parents and caregivers can form supportive relationships.



# P&G TEAMS UP WITH SANTA MARIA FOR NEIGHBORHOOD COOKOUT

On September 17, Santa Maria hosted its second community cookout of 2018, thanks to the help of 30 volunteers from Proctor and Gamble. As part of their 2018 United Way Give Back Event, P&G volunteers helped plan and organize an afternoon of food, fun, and games for Price Hill residents at

Santa Maria's East Price Hill location. In addition to serving and connecting with over 200 community members, volunteers cleaned out the garden at Santa Maria's Literacy Center West, and participated in a neighborhood cleanup throughout the streets of Price Hill.



# SANTA MARIA LAUNCHES GIRLS' YOUTH S



Santa Maria's Youth Development Program developed the agency's first official youth sports team - girls' youth soccer.

Thanks to funds provided by the Neighborhood Support Program through the City of Cincinnati, Santa Maria has been able to offer participation in the team to fourth through sixth grade girls in Lower Price Hill.

# SOCCER TEAM



Last year, Santa Maria began the Lower Price Hill Youth Sports League in collaboration with Oyler School's afterschool program. The Youth Sports League stemmed from a request by Santa Maria's partner, the Lower Price Hill Community Council, and from the realization that youth attending Oyler School were unable to participate in sports until the seventh grade.

"We have been able to teach the kids basketball, soccer, baseball, softball, flag football, tennis, volleyball, and many other active, running games," said Jessica Polzin, Santa Maria's Youth Development Program Coordinator. "Last year we developed a boys' basketball team with fourth through sixth graders and they were able to play competitively against Hayes Porter in a few games."

Recently, Santa Maria's Youth Development Program developed the agency's first official youth sports team - girls' youth soccer. Thanks to funds provided by the Neighborhood Support Program through the City of Cincinnati, Santa Maria has been able to offer fourth through sixth grade girls in Lower Price Hill positions on the team, which Jessica Polzin helps coach afterschool. "The girls were excited to end in a tied score, 2-2, against Westwood in their second game after just a couple of practices," said Polzin. "Their first practice consisted of very little work on actual soccer fundamentals, but more on showing the girls how to put on their cleats and explaining things like shin guards - things the girls in this community had never seen before."

The Youth Sports League has seen a lot of success in its first year. "We've been able to utilize the skills and knowledge from nine adult coaches as well as 34 youth coaches," says Polzin. We've also had an estimated 50 youth that were able to start developing basic skills needed for a variety of different sports in Lower Price Hill."

# SERVING A SECOND TERM: AMERICORPS MEMBERS RETURN TO SANTA MARIA

Santa Maria's AmeriCorps Project Advance program has been a vital program of Santa Maria since its adoption into the agency in 2014. AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides full and part-time service opportunities for members. Participants work to serve their communities while increasing the capacity of nonprofit organizations to meet educational, health care, and other social service needs. Each year beginning in September, Project Advance AmeriCorps, a program of Santa Maria, engages AmeriCorps members to serve an 11 month term at nonprofit locations throughout Cincinnati, including within Santa Maria itself. Members are eligible for bi-monthly living stipend (\$13,732 total), health insurance, professional training opportunities, plus The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award worth \$6,095 toward college costs.

Santa Maria recently interviewed Rayanne Pancoast, Jessica Choate, and Deborah Roberts, three AmeriCorps members who have returned to the agency for a second service year, to find out more about their experiences with the program.



AmeriCorps members Jessica Choate, Rayanne Pancoast, and Deborah Roberts

## 1. Why did you first get involved with AmeriCorps?

- a. **Rayanne Pancoast:** I joined AmeriCorps because I needed a break between my undergraduate and graduate degree, and I wanted to get a different view of the healthcare field. I found this position specifically and decided to apply for it so I could learn more about the issues individuals might face and bring that experience with me when working with patients in the future.
- b. **Jessica Choate:** I did some shorter disaster-relief service projects in college and worked alongside AmeriCorps members. I wanted to do a longer service term since you can only do so much during short, week-long projects. You can't really learn about the community you're serving. I looked at AmeriCorps, specifically at the housing position, because I did a lot of work rebuilding homes and was interested in learning more about the housing system.
- c. **Deborah Roberts:** I'm here for a more personal reason. I am an older adult and was working at UDF when I received a 20 cent raise and because of that, I had my healthcare benefits taken away. That is the reason I am here but, once I started the program, I really liked it.

## 2. What has your role been as an AmeriCorps member?

- a. **RP:** I'm a Bilingual Health Navigator. I help to reduce barriers to accessing healthcare. Last year I focused heavily on client hours, and this year I am focusing more on the 50 Families Project which focuses on 50 families for the long term by helping them get out of generational poverty.
- b. **JC:** Last year my position was referred to as "Housing Specialist" and now it's "Economic Coach". I think the name changed because I did much more than housing; it was more general stabilization. I helped people find housing or stay in their houses, assisted with benefit applications like Medicaid, and helped with utility bills. The position does not have a strict structure which allows the service to fit to the client's needs.
- c. **DR:** Right now I am doing a lot of training because my position has changed from Employment Coach to Economic Coach, helping clients with financial and housing assistance. As an Employment Coach, I facilitated workshops to help clients get a job which included working on applications and resumes.



### 3. What is your most successful client story or memory?

- a. **RP:** Last June I had a participant who had a tumor and needed surgery to remove it. Her doctor declined to provide the surgery until she had financial assistance. I was able to work with her and get her a referral to UC which provides financial assistance before operations. She was able to connect with a new doctor and hospital, and I was able to be that person who advocated for her and got her in the right place to make sure she could get her tumor removed.
- b. **JC:** Right when I started, I had a client who had a large past-due water bill and lost water in her house. We worked for months to figure out different ways to get the bill paid down and eventually got the water turned back on. Once that weight was lifted, I've seen the client take steps toward achieving other personal goals that she was unable to previously focus on.
- c. **DR:** One gentleman - I met him last year - came in with a briefcase full of paperwork. He is partially blind, so I just sat down and did paperwork and organized bills for him. I think he needed more of the companionship and someone who wanted to help. He would take the bus to come here when another agency closer to his house was not helping him. He just called me for another appointment so I can help him with some of his paperwork again.

### 4. What does AmeriCorps mean to you?

- a. **RP:** Service. AmeriCorps for me is a way to give back to the community. I had done service trips and I wanted to do more of that work long term. I have done three month service projects and liked the consistency, so I wanted more of that. This offered me a more constant opportunity for service.
- b. **JC:** I think it's really easy to say you want to help people who aren't as privileged as you, or whatever your service learning goal may be, but you don't really understand those needs until you are in it. AmeriCorps is an opportunity to take time to experience the real world. I'm coming off of a four-year undergrad degree and this service year offers an opportunity to make real connections you don't have the chance making while in the "bubble" of college. Hopefully I can bring this experience to law school and learn how to advocate for people more effectively because of this experience.
- c. **DR:** It offers training and knowledge by working in different fields I never thought I would experience. I came here thinking 'I'm a shipment clerk,' but that's not true; I'm employment, I'm housing. By me being older and going through that second stage of life I can take the training I learned here and take it somewhere else or keep it here.

### 5. If someone is interested in becoming an AmeriCorps member, what would you want them to know?

- a. **RP:** There is a huge support team. Specifically for Santa Maria. The AmeriCorps Program Director and Coordinator are so great and are always willing to talk to us about what is going on at our service sites, what we can do to improve, how we can make things better for ourselves and for our team. As a member, you are not going in this alone; there is a huge group of people who support you. You get so much training, even if it's not aligned with your future career goals, it's helpful for how you work with people in the future.
- b. **JC:** It can be daunting when you are starting. You need to be patient and allow yourself time to learn. You can get through the beginning, scary part and really help people. Also, you are AmeriCorps working with employees of Santa Maria, but I felt a part of the team; you have everyone's support.
- c. **DR:** There is a light at the end of the tunnel. You're getting experience you need. You're getting to see how you can help people. It can be frustrating but it's knowing that this too shall pass and once you get past that you will see how beneficial it is. You're going to learn a lot. Everyone you deal with, you're going to impact their life. You may feel like you don't know a lot, but the information you do know - it's going to help somebody. I just love it I really do. Maybe I'll go on my third year!

Interested in helping your community and getting paid for your service? Individuals 18 and older are invited to apply. For more information visit: [santamaria-cincy.org/get-involved/ameri-corps-program](http://santamaria-cincy.org/get-involved/ameri-corps-program)



# DONATING WITH TAX SAVINGS

If you are 70.5 years old or older, you can take advantage of a simple way to benefit Santa Maria and receive tax benefits in return. Eligible individuals are able to give from their IRA directly to a qualified charity such as Santa Maria without having to pay income taxes on the money for up to \$100,000. This law no longer has an expiration date, so you are free to make annual gifts to Santa Maria this year and well into the future.

## Why Consider This Gift?

Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference your donation is making.

You pay no income taxes on the gift. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your deductions. If you have not yet taken your required minimum distribution for the year, your IRA charitable rollover gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement.



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. I've already named Santa Maria as the beneficiary of my IRA. What are the benefits if I make a gift now instead of after my lifetime?**

**A.** By making a gift this year of up to \$100,000 from your IRA, you can see your philanthropic dollars at work. You are jump-starting the legacy you would like to leave today, and giving yourself the joy of watching your philanthropy take shape. Moreover, you can fulfill any outstanding pledge you may have made by transferring that amount from your IRA as long as it is \$100,000 or less for the year.

**Q. I'm turning age 70½ in a few months. Can I make this gift now?**

**A.** No. The legislation requires you to reach age 70½ by the date you make the gift.

**Q. Can my gift be used as my required minimum distribution under the law?**

**A.** Yes, absolutely. If you have not yet taken your required minimum distribution, the IRA charitable rollover gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement. Contact your IRA custodian to complete the gift.

**Q. I have two charities I want to support. Can I give \$100,000 from my IRA to each?**

**A.** No. Under the law, you can give a maximum of \$100,000. For example, you can give each organization \$50,000 this year or any other combination that totals \$100,000 or less. Any amount of more than \$100,000 in one year must be reported as taxable income.

**Q. My spouse and I would like to give more than \$100,000. How can we do that?**

**A.** If you have a spouse (as defined by the IRS) who is 70½ or older and has an IRA, he or she can also give up to \$100,000 from his or her IRA.

It is wise to consult with your tax professionals if you are contemplating a charitable gift under the extended law. Please feel free to contact Nune Sargsyan at 513-557-7267 or at [nune.sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:nune.sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org) with any questions you may have. This information is not intended as legal or tax advice. For such advice, please consult an attorney or tax advisor. Figures cited in examples are for illustrative purposes only.

# 12 Ways to Support Santa Maria

Are you interested in supporting Santa Maria but don't know how? There are countless ways to support the organization and the thousands of individuals it serves each year! Supporting Santa Maria in any of the following ways helps provide free services to families in need. If you would like more information on how to support Santa Maria, please contact [Nune.Sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:Nune.Sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org) or call 513-557-7267.

1 

**Attend an Event:** Join us for one of our many fun events! For upcoming events, visit: [santamaria-cincy.org/category/events](http://santamaria-cincy.org/category/events).

2 

**Volunteer:** Give back to the community! For volunteer opportunities, visit: [santamaria-cincy.org/volunteer-opportunities](http://santamaria-cincy.org/volunteer-opportunities).

3 

**Donate Stock:** Donate stock without paying capital gains tax! To find out the benefits of donating stock, contact: [Nune.Sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:Nune.Sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org) or call 513-557-7267.

4 

**Employer Match:** Find out whether your employer matches donations! When giving a gift online, be sure to let them know! Donate online at [santamaria-cincy.org/donate](http://santamaria-cincy.org/donate).

5 

**Donate Items:** Donate items from our Wish List to the families we serve! View the list at [santamaria-cincy.org/in-kind-donations](http://santamaria-cincy.org/in-kind-donations).

6 

**Use Amazon Smile:** Purchase your Amazon.com items through [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products will be donated to Santa Maria after you select us as your "charity of choice!" Find out more at: [smile.amazon.com/about](http://smile.amazon.com/about).

7 

**Shop at Kroger:** Select Santa Maria as your "charity of choice" when using your Kroger Rewards Card! Find out how at: [kroger.com/topic/community-rewards-9](http://kroger.com/topic/community-rewards-9).

8 

**Start a Facebook Fund:** When your birthday rolls around, or really any time, invite friends and family to donate to Santa Maria through your own Facebook fundraiser! Find out more at [facebook.com/fundraisers](http://facebook.com/fundraisers).

9 

**Sponsor an Event:** Have your business become an event sponsor and reap the benefits at any level! Learn more at [santamaria-cincy.org/get-involved/giving-opportunities](http://santamaria-cincy.org/get-involved/giving-opportunities).

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**Share Our Message:** Share our twitter and Facebook social media posts and e-newsletter with friends and family, or invite them to sign up for our e-newsletter by clicking the newsletter button on our website homepage at [Santamaria-cincy.org](http://Santamaria-cincy.org).

11 

**Donate a Monetary Gift:** Give a one-time or recurring gift to any of Santa Maria's programs, or donate in memory or honor of someone special at [santamaria-cincy.org/donate](http://santamaria-cincy.org/donate).

12 

**Give a Planned Gift:** Support the future success of Santa Maria by incorporating us in your will. To find out the benefits of planned giving, contact [Nune.Sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org](mailto:Nune.Sargsyan@santamaria-cincy.org) or call 513-557-7267.



**SANTA MARIA**  
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Santa Maria Community Services is a catalyst and advocate for Cincinnati's Greater Price Hill families to attain their educational, financial, and health goals.

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