

# SANTA MARIA COMMUNITY SERVICES

Helping Families Help Themselves Since 1897



## Fall Newsletter 2025

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# CATCH UP WITH H.A.



H.A. Musser, Jr.  
President & CEO

Dear Santa Maria Supporters,

As we head into fall, I'm reminded of how much can happen in just a few months when a community comes together with purpose. At Santa Maria, we've had a full season of meaningful moments, and I'm excited to share just a few of them with you in this issue.

You'll read about our Back to School Bash and Back to School Fest, where hundreds of students received supplies, support, and encouragement to start the year strong. You'll also read about our ongoing Price Hill Bus Tours, which give a closer look at the neighborhoods we serve and the challenges our families face and work to overcome.

We're especially proud to share an announcement about our capital campaign and the steps we're taking toward a new, permanent home for Santa Maria. We also had the unique privilege of attending the Segale Family Reunion, where we reconnected with descendants of our founders and reflected on how their mission continues to guide our work today.

Finally, don't miss the highlight of the season: photos of some very proud graduates from our Early Childhood programs. Seeing those little ones in their caps and gowns is a joyful reminder that when families have support early on, anything is possible. Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Your support helps us walk alongside families as they build brighter futures for themselves and their children.

Warmly,

H.A. Musser, Jr.  
President & CEO



# A LADDER OUT OF THE HOLE: YOFREY'S STORY

In 2021, Yofrey felt like life was closing in. He and his family were overwhelmed. "It felt like I was in a hole," he said. "And Santa Maria gave me a ladder to step out of it."

After trying churches and other organizations, someone pointed him to Santa Maria Community Services. From the moment he connected with Francesca, Santa Maria's Stable Families Coordinator, things started to change. "It was the easiest and most one-on-one experience," Yofrey shared. "I didn't feel like just a number. Francesca really cared."

She helped find resources to cover bills, connected them to doctors, therapists, a dentist for his wife, and even someone to fix their car. When school came around, she made sure the kids had what they needed. "Santa Maria is a beautiful source, whether financially or emotionally. Whatever we needed, Francesca was there."

It wasn't easy for Yofrey to ask for help. "I always want to consider myself a strong person, but I felt vulnerable," he said. "Francesca made me feel like it was okay. Santa Maria gave me a rock to lean on."

With encouragement and coaching, Yofrey and his wife began budgeting, saving, and working toward buying their first home. Francesca shared classes on saving money and tenant rights and encouraged him to look for higher-paying jobs. "If something happens and we can't solve it on our own, we know Francesca will help us figure it out."



Yofrey with his daughter, son, and wife.



Yofrey (right) volunteering at Santa Maria's recent Back to School Fest with Francesca (left) and her little one, Thiago.

Someday, Yofrey hopes to return the support. "When you ask a friend, 'Can I borrow some money and pay you back next week?' That's Santa Maria, a friend. And when I become rich enough to donate, I'm going right to Santa Maria. We're so grateful for the funds. Anytime you need a translator or volunteer, I'd like to pay you back."

His one wish? "I wish Santa Maria had billions and billions," he said. "Because you guys know how to do it."



# CELEBRATING BIG STEPS FOR OUR LITTLEST LEARNERS

At Santa Maria Community Services, we believe every early childhood milestone is worth celebrating, not just for the child, but for the family who stood beside them, supported them, and believed in their potential from the start.

This year, we were proud to celebrate 40 three-year-old graduates from our Every Child Succeeds (ECS) program and 35 five-year-old graduates from our Promoting Our Preschoolers (POP) program. These graduations mark more than age or readiness. They reflect growth, resilience, and the strength of families who have created safe, loving spaces for their children to thrive.

Santa Maria is honored to walk alongside families in these formative years, offering guidance, resources, and encouragement. ECS helps families build a healthy foundation from birth, while POP prepares children for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Turn the page to see proud smiles, loving families, and the powerful impact of community support.

To our ECS and POP families, thank you for allowing us to be part of your journey. Your commitment inspires us, and we look forward to what comes next.

# EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS

## CLASS OF 2025



# PROMOTING OUR PRESCHOOLERS

## CLASS OF 2025





## A LIFELONG CONNECTION: JOE AND JOANN'S STORY

For Joe and Joann, Santa Maria Community Services has been more than just a cause they support. It has been a meaningful part of their individual journeys and, eventually, their life together.

Joe first became involved in the mid-1990s, seeking a way to give back through the United Way. Drawn to Santa Maria's mission of building family stability and self-sufficiency, he joined the finance committee and eventually served on the board. What impressed him most was how Santa Maria continually adapted its programs to meet the evolving needs of the Price Hill community. "Santa Maria doesn't just provide a service and hope people do well," Joe explained. "They help people grow into self-sufficiency."

What Joe didn't know at the time was that his wife, Joann, had a personal history with Santa Maria that stretched back decades. As a young girl from a difficult home environment, Joann found a sense of safety and belonging at Santa Maria. She remembered a social worker named Mrs. Maloney and her daughter, Lenore, who took a special interest in her. Through music, plays, and encouragement, they helped Joann discover her voice both emotionally and artistically. "Santa Maria was a lifesaver," she said. "It was like a home. I'd go there most days after school. It was amazing."

That early encouragement helped spark a lifelong love of music and gave Joann the confidence to pursue opportunities she never imagined. "They gave us courage," she recalled. "They were telling us we could do this. And so we did."

The couple didn't realize their shared Santa Maria connection until well after Joe's time on the board. For him, learning about Joann's childhood experience added a deeper layer of meaning to his volunteer work. "I always wondered how she came out of the environment she did, the way she did," he shared. "Santa Maria was definitely one of the reasons."





## A LIFELONG CONNECTION: JOE AND JOANN'S STORY

Today, Joe and Joann remain active supporters. Joe has designated Santa Maria as a contingent beneficiary of his IRA and continues to stay up to date on the organization's work, including the exciting progress of the new building. He sees the consolidation of services into one permanent space as a major step forward, one that will strengthen access and impact for the families who rely on Santa Maria's programs.

As parents, grandparents, and long-time supporters of Santa Maria, Joe and Joanne have always made family a priority, not just for their own family, but for the families throughout our community. Their continued support reflects a deep commitment to helping others find stability and opportunity, and their journey with Santa Maria is a powerful reminder that seeds planted long ago, whether through music or mentoring, volunteering or giving, can continue to grow for generations.



(Left to right) Santa Maria President & CEO, H.A. Musser, Jr.; supporters Joe & Joann Rumpler; the late Former Board Chair, Paul Friedmann; and Former Board Member, Rose Wesselman, at the 2018 Voices of Giving Award ceremony.



# PASSPORT TO SUCCESS: UNITY

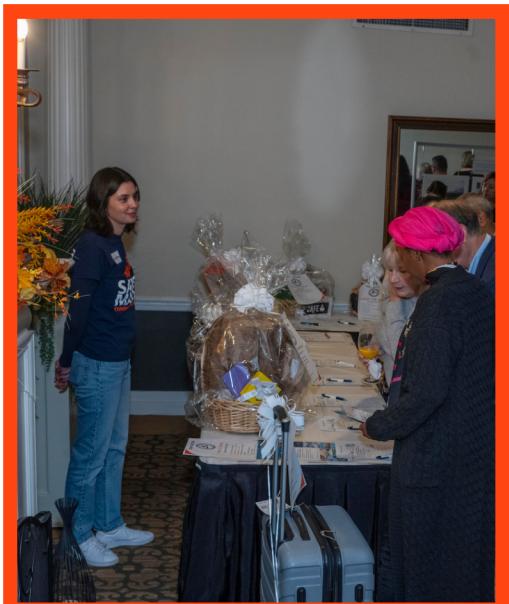
Santa Maria Community Services' annual Passport to Success fundraiser was a joyful celebration of connection and community. After changing venues and returning to a Saturday brunch, the event sold out well before the big day, filling Western Hills Country Club with friends, families, and partners. This year's theme, Unity, set the tone for a morning where we truly celebrated the spirit of coming together to uplift Price Hill families.

Highlights of the event included an inspiring keynote address by Kathy Wade, a touching Santa Maria Women's Group photo project by volunteer David Rosenthal, and the exciting announcement of Santa Maria's *One Building, Thriving Families Capital Campaign*.

(Read more about our Capital Campaign on page 12!)

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors, donors, and guests, Passport to Success raised vital funds to support Santa Maria's educational, financial, health, and supportive programs that serve nearly 3,000 individuals each year. Together, we continue to move toward a vibrant and thriving Price Hill, one family at a time.

More photos coming soon on our Facebook page @SantaMariaCincy, and on our website at [SantaMaria-Cincy.org](http://SantaMaria-Cincy.org)





# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

of this year's Passport to Success fundraiser

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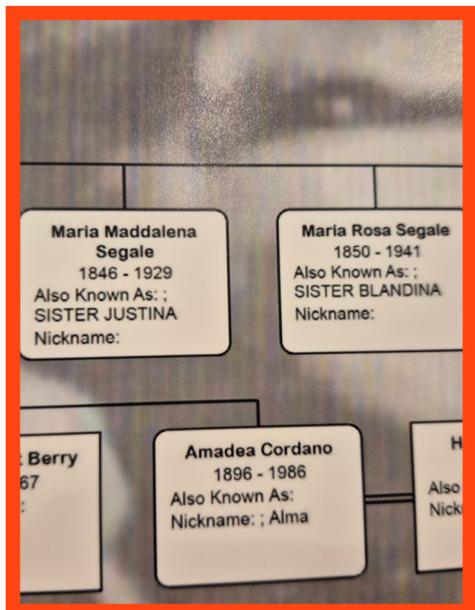
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# HONORING OUR ROOTS: A SPECIAL VISIT WITH THE SEGALE FAMILY



This summer, Santa Maria was honored to attend the Segale Family Reunion, a gathering of descendants of Sisters Justina and Blandina Segale, who founded Santa Maria in 1897.

More than 100 family members traveled from six states to celebrate the sisters' legacy. One family member and Santa Maria supporter, Molly Taggart, shared, "It was a real blessing and special honor to have [Santa Maria] in attendance with us to bring joy to the celebratory day."

The reunion gave us the chance to share updates on our work in Price Hill and reflect on how the Segale sisters' mission still guides us today. In a moving show of generosity, the family donated funds to Santa Maria to support families working toward stability and self-sufficiency.

We are grateful to the Segale family for including us and for reminding us of the deep roots of compassion that continue to shape our work.



# SANTA MARIA BUS TOURS

Each month, Santa Maria Community Services invites community members, supporters, and partners to join the Price Hill Bus Tour for a firsthand look at both the strengths and challenges of the neighborhoods we serve.

The route winds through East, West, and Lower Price Hill, offering a chance to hear stories, ask questions, and connect with the heart of the community. From local schools to partner sites to the future home of our new building, the tour brings the day-to-day work to life.

For many, it's an eye-opening experience. "I knew about the needs," one guest shared, "but seeing the sites and talking with staff gave me new insight." Another said, "Santa Maria clearly connects people to resources and to each other."

Guests often leave energized. "I've already recommended the tour to other foundation leaders," one attendee noted. "It shows how Santa Maria meets real needs and offers many ways to get involved."

If you haven't joined us yet, we'd love to have you. This tour just might change how you see Price Hill and what it means to be part of a community.

To join us on a tour, please contact Brooke Durling at [Brooke.Durling@SantaMaria-Cincy.org](mailto:Brooke.Durling@SantaMaria-Cincy.org) or 513-635-6741.





# ONE BUILDING, THRIVING FAMILIES CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



A digital imagining of our new space

At our recent Passport to Success: UNITY fundraiser, we proudly shared exciting news: Santa Maria is nearing the finish line of our \$15.5 million capital campaign to build a permanent home for our programs and families at 1048 Considine Avenue in East Price Hill.

After decades of operating from scattered and repurposed spaces, our future 26,600-square-foot headquarters will bring all of our services under one roof in a building intentionally designed to meet the needs of the community. This new space will provide a welcoming and efficient hub for families working toward self-sufficiency and stability.

As we enter the building stage, we're deeply grateful to every individual, foundation, and partner who has helped us reach this milestone. This lasting investment will empower Price Hill families and ensure a stronger, more connected future for our community.

To make a gift to the campaign and support our dream of lasting change in Price Hill, visit [SantaMaria.org/give](http://SantaMaria.org/give) and select "Capital Campaign" under "Donation Designation," or contact Nune Sargsyan at [Nune.Sargsyan@SantaMaria-Cincy.org](mailto:Nune.Sargsyan@SantaMaria-Cincy.org) or 513-557-7267.



# BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

At the Joe Williams Family Center, our Back to School Bash welcomed Oyler School students and their families for backpacks, haircuts, food, and fun.

This event rounded out our summer celebrations, helping hundreds of students across Price Hill start school with confidence and giving parents a boost too.

Thanks to Community Matters, Learning Grove, Lord's Gym, MYCincinnati, CareSource, the Charles H. Dater Foundation, and Fight Club for making it possible.



# BACK TO SCHOOL FEST

Our Back to School Fest at ARCO Cincy brought out 310 community members for a day full of music, games, pizza, and school supplies. We handed out 200 backpacks and 250 slices of pizza, all to help East Price Hill students start strong.

Thanks to generous support from the Charles H. Dater Foundation, Cincy-Cinco, PNC, Place Matters, and Fight Club, kids left prepared and smiling, and families left feeling supported.



# SANTA MARIA COMMUNITY SERVICES™

*Helping Families Help Themselves Since 1897*

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