

August 2021



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR *Special Needs*

Saint Catherine Center Looks to the Future

Following a multi-year planning process, we are pleased to announce [*Building For the Future*](#), a \$5M capital campaign to double the footprint of our current facility in Fairfield, expand programming and provide for the future.

“This expansion is the most important initiative to happen at the Center since we opened our doors over 20 years ago, and moved to our current site in

2007,” said Helen Burland, Executive Director. “Over the years there has been an evolution of expectations of what young people with disabilities can accomplish. **Our mission all along has been consistent: to recognize and value each person, and to help them become as independent as possible. We need more space to continue to do that well.**”

The current building was completed in 2007 with the support of hundreds of donors throughout the Diocese and was designed to support up to 28 students at Saint Catherine Academy. The Center now serves 43 Academy students and young adults attending our adult day program. Every available space in the building is occupied most of time.

Planning for the expansion began in 2018. After discussing all possible options, the Board of Directors concluded that the best option would be to expand the facility at our current location, keeping the Academy and Adult programs together and building on the substantial investment already made in improvements to the current site.

A workgroup of individuals from both Saint Catherine Center and Holy Cross Church convened in 2019 to discuss the expansion. Monsignor Thomas Powers, Vicar General of the Diocese of Bridgeport, coordinated the collaboration, which resulted in a mutually beneficial agreement in March 2021.

The Center is working with the architectural firm Antinozzi and Associates to finalize the building and renovation plans. Construction is expected to begin in late spring 2022, with the new Center opening in 2023. The addition will more than double the current footprint, from 6,200 square feet to 12,700 square feet.



Building plans include a commercial kitchen for a bakery enterprise, a hydroponic garden room for growing micro-



greens year-round, and a center courtyard for outdoor activities. A portion of the funds raised will be used to expand programming, such as after-hours gatherings, additional vocational and volunteer opportunities for participants, and a transition program for students to help them prepare for life beyond school.

Burland and members of the Board have been meeting with individuals to describe the *Building For the Future* project and garner support. “The outpouring of support has been just amazing,” Burland said. “We are five months into the campaign and have secured pledges and gifts of more than 80% of goal. With a generous matching gift of up to \$500,000 in place, we hope to complete the campaign by December

31, 2021. I am truly touched by the generosity of the Saint Catherine community—parents, families, friends—who have brought us this close to our goal. They understand how important this project is and the difference it will make to the young people we serve.”

[View the *Building For the Future* brochure](#), to learn more about our exciting plans.

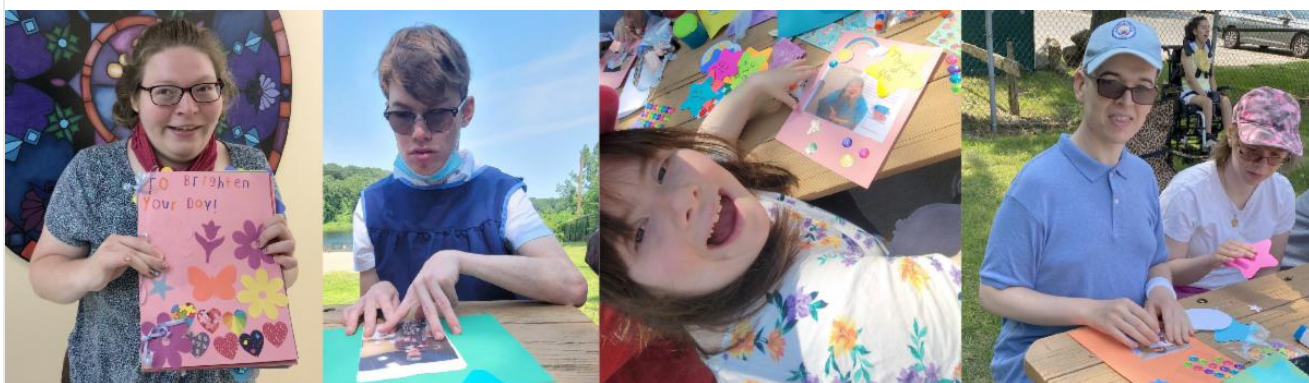
If you are interested in supporting [Building For the Future](#), or want more information, please call 203-540-5381.

To make a donation that will be matched, follow this link to [make a donation online](#).

Brightening The Days of Others

Inspired by a request from Foundations in Faith, adult program participants created a book of greetings and good wishes for the retired priests at Queen of the Clergy Residence in Stamford. The book, “To Brighten Your Day,” was well received. “Your unique and beautiful book is on the coffee table in our living room,” wrote Vickey Hickey from the Residence. “As a resident enters the room, the first thing he does is pick up the book, smiles, and turns each page with care and concern.”

“Everyone had a good time making the book,” said Racquel Lynch, Activities Coordinator. “We love to share our enthusiasm with others.”



SAVE THE DATE!

Invitations will soon be in the mail for our
2021 “Joy & Gratitude” Dinner on
Sunday, October 3,
at Fairfield University.
We hope you will join us!

Joy and Gratitude

ANNUAL DINNER

Sunday, October 3, 2021

Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs



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