



CONNECTIONS



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A Message from the President

NCCS has been busy this past year...Our Board committees reviewed our Strategic Plan to make sure that their action plans were in line with the strategic plan goals we set. Membership launched a new initiative – the Chapter Liaison Program. With this program, we hope to develop a better understanding of local membership challenges, local programs and share chapter successes.



Carol Pickle

We welcomed three new provisional chapters this year and all are off to a great start. The Program committee decided that our Challenging Poverty Manual needs an update so, with that in mind, we will be reworking the national website to make chapter resources easier to find. We also decided to focus on interactive programs while still promoting literacy. We hear so many stories about kids who were inspired by a teacher, mentor or

volunteer. Wouldn't it be great if members of our chapters could be that inspiration for a child? All it takes is our presence. A smile, a little attention, and a listening heart go a long way.

Our Communications committee continues to focus on getting our story out in the form of newsletters, social media and our website. Our next goal is to develop a "Get to Know Us" campaign that will be a template for all chapters to use in their local communities. One of our major focuses for the 2018-2020 Board lies in development. We have begun major efforts to identify and procure grants and other outside donors who will support our mission. We will also be looking for grants that will directly support your efforts at the local level in areas such as layettes and literacy. As chapters we are small, but as a National organization, we are a strong presence!

I'd like to say thank you to our members and supporters. You are the faces of the National Christ Child Society and the reason we are able to grow and continue our mission.

A Message from the Executive Director

They say time goes faster as you get older - well it is hard for me to believe it's been six months since I joined NCCS! Like all new jobs, there have been challenges but there have also been great rewards. NCCS's former Executive Director, Carolyn Pumphrey, left me some wonderful tools to get started. Long-time Office Manager, Mary Eustice, delayed her retirement a few weeks to train our newest staff member, Trudy Scott. Together with the board, patience, prayers and many acts of kindness, we are finding our stride.

Our first major task was handling all logistics for the 2019 Conference in Bethesda, Maryland. It was a great event and we had one of the largest number of attendees to date. The

reward, for me, was the opportunity to meet and connect with so many of our chapter members.

When I was interviewing for the job in April, someone said to me "The Christ Child Society is the best kept secret." Well one of my goals is to share the secret! It is important for our mission and membership growth to talk more about the Christ Child Society. The ad on the back panel is our first step towards this goal.

I look forward to the challenges and rewards the next six months will bring. Together, with our chapters, we will continue to challenge poverty, one child at a time.



Moira Lynch



"Let not a day pass without having learned something, without having overcome yourself in something, without having performed a kind act, without having accomplished something."

Mary Virginia Merrick,
Servant of God, 1866-1955

National Christ Child Society | Board of Directors | 2018 -2020

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CONFERENCE 2019

Conference 2019

Every other year, chapter members from across the country come together to participate in the NCCS conference in Bethesda, Maryland. This past September 27-28th, 78 women and men from 30 chapters were energized and inspired in the advancement of our mission!

For many, the conference began with an off-site DC excursion. The first stop was the Washington DC chapter's Opportunity Shop in Georgetown, a high-end consignment shop the chapter has operated for over 85 years. We did a great job emptying the shelves on that stop!

Next, we went to visit our founder Mary Virginia Merrick's final resting place. We visited her gravesite in Oak Hill Cemetery where a beautiful white floral wreath graced her headstone and a special prayer service was led by Patty Myler, our NCCS Historian and Past National President.

Finally, we were lucky enough to have lunch at the former Merrick home in Chevy

Chase, MD. The home is currently owned by Bridget Overcash, a DC chapter member, and she has pictures of Mary Virginia Merrick on display throughout the house. The entire morning was an inspiration as our founder is foremost in our thoughts while we continue the work she started so long ago.

The afternoon welcome session included a presentation on "The Legacy We Share" with our founder, presented by Patty Myler. In addition, Kathleen Astorian, postulator

for the Cause, gave us an update on Mary Virginia Merrick's Cause for Canonization.

The keynote speaker, Meghan Cox Gurdon, presented her seminar highlighting her book, "The Enchanted Hour-The Miraculous Power of Reading Aloud in the Age of Distraction." Attendees learned how reading aloud to children can be a fast working antidote to short attention spans and distractions of the tech era we live in. The information we received can help



Previous home of Mary Virginia Merrick.

"I felt so much a part of something 'Big' that one small woman envisioned so long ago. I am humbled to have been introduced to this giving organization." Chris Schwartz, Detroit, MI chapter.



Kathy Clark of Naples, FL chapter with her Op Shop finds.



Conference attendees enjoy the membership seminar!



Elizabeth Madjesi of Candid presenting her seminar on grant-writing.



Mary Cox Gurdon signing a copy of her book, "The Enchanted Hour."



Presenters Molly Fanning, NCCS President Elect and Michele Bianconi, President Elect of Columbus chapter.

CONFERENCE 2019

chapters effectively run our various reading programs.

The first day concluded with time for us to network during a cocktail reception and dinner followed by a candlelight re-commitment ceremony. We ended the night with a spirited raffle drawing and many took home beautiful donated items.

The second day of conference started with the Annual Business meeting during which time three new chapters were awarded Provisional Status. Congratulations to President Patricia Gonzalez and CCS of Dallas-Fort Worth, TX, President Rebecca Smayda and CCS of Greater Binghamton, NY, and President, Chuck Alfano and CCS of Western Mass! We look forward to watching you grow as you do great work in your communities!

After our meeting, Elizabeth Madjlesi of Candid presented an informative seminar on how to find grants and write proposals

that will work for any size chapter. National's Membership Committee, led by Angela Schneider, had attendees working together on figuring ways to energize and inspire our chapters during an interactive session. Beth Barrett and the Program Committee presented "Nurturing the Seeds of Success in the Children We Serve." We learned about current research regarding adverse childhood experiences and discussed ways Christ Child programs can provide the positive interaction needed to help protect children from the effects of the difficulties they face.

Our day concluded with Mass, officiated by Msgr. John Enzler, CEO of Catholic Charities, and dinner at Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart, formerly the home of Mary Virginia Merrick's sister, where MVM was known to pray on many occasions. During dinner we were able to enjoy each other's company and continue to share ideas and form new friendships.



Mark your calendars!

Convention will be held at the beautiful Loews Ventana Canyon Resort in Tucson, AZ, September 17-19, 2020! Networking, Education and Fun all wrapped up in one convention you won't want to miss!

Save the Date!

Convention 2020 – Tucson, AZ
September 17th-19th



Visiting the Merrick Home, Chevy Chase, MD



NCCS President Carol Pickle awards Provisional Status to President Patricia Gonzalez of the Dallas-Fort Worth chapter, President Chuck Alfano of the Western Mass chapter, and President Rebecca Smayda of the Greater Binghamton chapter.

A special thank you to the following chapters who donated to our Scholarship Fund, thus allowing for increased participation by deserving chapter representatives at this year's conference. They are: **CCS of Boca Raton, FL, CCS of Detroit, MI, CCS of Pasadena, CA, CCS of South Bend, IN and CCS of Washington DC.** Thanks to your generosity six chapters were able to send representatives to conference!

Here are just a few of the activities that took place across the country:

Hosting a **National Day of Service** provides Christ Child Society chapters with an opportunity to tell our story on a national and local level and to show our communities what we actually do every single day of the year! It is also a great opportunity for member recruitment, fundraising, community engagement and a way to energize and recommit current volunteers.

The theme for our 2019 National Day of Service was **“Read to Me: Inspire Me to Learn,”** and events were held during the week of October 20-27th.

We encouraged chapters to focus on an existing literacy program or to add a literacy component to an existing program or project. And our chapters did not disappoint!

Door County, WI: Volunteers from CCS of Door County read to children at both a Head Start Program as well as a YMCA Child Development Center. Each child was sent home with a book of their own donated by chapter members.

Northern Michigan: On Oct. 24th, fifty second graders were taken to see the movie *Charlotte’s Web*, after having a portion of the book read to them by CCS members. All of the children were given a copy of the book to take home.

Washington, DC: The chapter launched a social media campaign #iremembermyfirstbook to generate interest in books and request donations from supporters for their virtual book drive. Several area schools also participated in book drives for the chapter. CCS of Washington DC held an event called Trick or Treating for Books, which included crafts and story-time at two different locations.

South Bend, IN: The chapter used their Clothing Center to distribute educational support packets to children from preschool – sixth grade. The packets address the vocabulary and skills deficits of many children living in poverty. Each packet contained a skills workbook—either math or reading literacy, flash cards, a non-fiction book, crayons or colored pencils and tips about reading to children.

Quad Cities: On October 24th, they partnered with a Head Start program for 135 children aged three to five, at their Annual Pumpkin Fest. The chapter participated in two activities relating to pumpkins. Each child was given a book to take home.

Dallas-Fort Worth, TX: Joining forces with an elementary school where chapter members are tutors, they organized various stations during the school’s “Spook-tacular Read” event. Each station featured a literacy related activity. At the end of the day, children were able to pick a book of their choice to take home.

Cleveland, OH: Volunteers made activity folders for 80 students at a local Head Start school to enhance comprehension of the book “Pete the Cat I Love My White Shoes.” The folders contained coloring pages, flash cards and puppets. On October 22nd, volunteers read the story to the children and distributed the folders for them to take home.

Atlanta, GA: A children’s development center was the site of Atlanta’s “Fall on the Farm” festival where 150 children ages six months to five years enjoyed being read to, singing and doing crafts with volunteers dressed in farm attire. Each child received a book to take home.

DAY OF SERVICE



Sarasota chapter participant displaying her bat hat.



CCS of Sarasota members reading to children after bat hat activity.



CCS of Boca Raton celebrates MVMs birthday.



Quad Cities and Head Start Annual Pumpkin Fest.



Door County members reading to Head Start children.



A few of the books the Summit County, NJ chapter collected at their Day of Service.



CCS of Washington DC holds Trick or Treating for Books!

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our National Day of Service continues to be a time that our chapters can work together nationally to make a difference locally. It is also a time that we can honor our founder, Mary Virginia Merrick's legacy, on the occasion of her birthday, November 2nd.

Thank you to all our participating chapters for your charitable work during our National Day of Service and for all you do every day of the year for those who need us the most!

“Today a group from the Christ Child Society of Tucson came to read to our preschoolers. The children enjoyed the individual attention, participating in an art project and preparing a snack. The children were also delighted to choose a book to take home and share with their families. The experience was fun, positive and educational. I am very grateful for their time and kindness.”

*Cecilia Cancio,
Teacher at Pio Decimo Center*



CCS of Tucson celebrates National Day of Service with reading, crafts and take home books.



CCS of Atlanta prepares for National Day of Service.



CCS of Columbus gets recognition in local Catholic newspaper.



Phoenix members read Beverly Cleary book to 4th/5th graders.



CCS of Cleveland members making puppets for activity folders.

ANNUAL APPEAL

Sole Searching vs. Soul Searching

A member of the Detroit, MI chapter recently recounted an event she remembered from her childhood – the excitement of getting a new pair of shoes to start the school year! This memory came to mind as she went through some photos of a very different kind of back to school new shoe shopping.

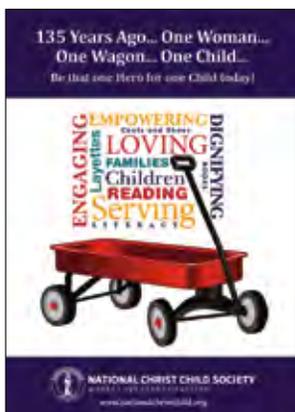


CCS of Detroit, MI, has owned and operated the Christ Child House since 1948. The facility is a licensed, residential treatment center which can accommodate up to 31 boys ages six through sixteen. Many of the boys suffer the traumatic emotional scars of physical abuse and severe neglect. The photos were taken when a group of staff members and volunteers took the boys from the Christ Child House to the Nike store in Detroit to pick out new tennis shoes. Because of the generosity of a number of donors, the boys were able to walk confidently into a new school year. Most of these boys have never owned a new pair of shoes. Their stories are ones that most of us cannot fathom.

Please do your own "Soul Searching" and donate to NCCS or one of its chapters so we can continue to make a difference in the lives of the children we serve.

Annual Appeal 2019

NCCS depends on your generosity. Your gift to the Annual Appeal ensures that the mission of Mary Virginia Merrick remains in perpetuity. Our number of chapters will grow and thrive. More importantly, they will continue to help underserved children and their families in ways most effective in their communities.



NATIONAL CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY
SERVING CHILDREN FOR 135 YEARS
2019 Annual Appeal

Coffee Cup Club Monthly Donation*

Circle of Honor (\$2,500 and above)

Christ Child Circle (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

MVM Circle (\$500-\$999)

Red Wagon Circle (\$250 - \$499)

Cherub Circle (up to \$99)

I prefer my gift to remain anonymous

I plan to leave NCCS a bequest

I would appreciate information regarding a planned gift

*You see our Coffee Cup Club - Our coffee is weak provides chapter support for an underserved child. Pay by credit card and you could make a difference while helping a child in need!

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Chapter Affiliation _____

Name(s) for Acknowledgment (if different than above) _____

Donation Amount \$ _____ (Please fill in the back of document)

NATIONAL CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY
SERVING CHILDREN FOR 135 YEARS
2019 Annual Appeal

PAYMENT OPTIONS

My check is enclosed (Please make check payable to National Christ Child Society, Inc.)

Please enroll me in your Coffee Cup Club for \$_____ per month (minimum \$25 per month)

Please charge: MasterCard Visa Discover American Express

In the amount of \$ _____

Name as listed on card _____

Card number: _____ Exp. date: _____

Signature: _____ CVV Code: _____

Please take a minute to see if your company has a Matching Gift Program to match your donation. For more information, contact NCCS at 301-881-2490.

For credit card payments, you may give online at www.nationalchristchild.org

Please call 301-881-2490 if you have any questions.

Please donate online at www.nationalchristchild.org or mail your donation to: 6110 Executive Blvd., Suite 504, Rockville, MD 20852

National Christ Child Legacy Society...



Become a member of the National Christ Child Legacy Society today!

By generously providing for us in your wills or estate planning, you will make a lasting impact and enable NCCS to change lives for the better, well beyond your lifetime.

What your gift to NCCS can do:

- Grow our footprint by establishing new chapters
- Help our chapters increase their impact and meet changing local needs
- Build our chapter volunteer base and increase community support
- Develop strong leadership for the future

Please contact:

Executive Director, Moira Lynch at 301.881.2490 or mlynch@nationalchristchild.org for more information on the National Christ Child Legacy Society.



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CHAPTER HIGHLIGHT

CCS of Dayton, OH Responds During a Time of Crisis

Dayton, Ohio and its surrounding communities experienced major tragedies this past spring and summer. Nineteen tornadoes touched down in May 2019, injuring several people, triggering mass power outages and causing extensive damage to homes, businesses, and roads. On August 4, 2019, a mass shooting by a lone gunman occurred that killed nine people and injured twenty-seven.

The impact of these horrible events could not be overlooked. CCS of Dayton knew that the children they served would be adversely affected. They began to take the necessary steps to increase their efforts to assist those children in the affected areas, knowing they would need additional financial assistance to purchase their school uniforms. CCS of Dayton increased the number of school vouchers to purchase uniforms to more than two hundred and twenty. In addition, they knew there would be an increased need for coats and shoes as they move into the winter months so they increased the number of vouchers donated for these items as well.

Members of CCS of Dayton not only met the physical needs of the children in their community, but also kept everyone in their prayers and were on hand to lend support while working directly with the children. Through their actions, the Christ Child Society of Dayton, OH, proved themselves a living example of our founder, Mary Virginia Merrick, who said "Nothing is ever too much to do for a child".



"The best kept secret" is out! National Christ Child Society
We've been serving children and families in need for 135 years.

Join | Volunteer | Donate

For more information visit www.nationalchristchild.org or call 301-881-2490