

SICM NEWS

Year 48, Number 1, Winter 2015

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Executive Director



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2014 Annual Report

2014 continued to be a busy time for SICM: a time continuing programs, starting new initiatives, and collaborating in the community. Read ahead to learn more about what we've been up to during 2014!

SICM Community Service Awards

At the December Assembly, SICM awarded the Community Service Award to individuals who are part of the SICM network and who have gone "above and beyond" in areas of ministry. The 2014 Award Recipients are:



Joanne Cogswell (Lynnwood Reformed Church) started her involvement with the Camp@Steinmetz by just "helping out." She quickly became an integral part of the daily activities at the camp, still helping out, but offering much more than help through her creativity, vision, and experience as a teacher.

James McFarland received the award for his dedicated service through the Sunday Breakfast Program at First United Methodist Church. He is the Chief Cook and the program serves 125-200 community members every Sunday.

Erwin Susich (St. John the Evangelist) is a volunteer at the Food Pantry, and serves in any area that needs extra help, whether it's distributing food to the guests at the window, cleaning and organizing the warehouse, restocking shelves, sorting food, or acting as the doorman for mass distribution.



2014 Community Service Award Winners
Left to Right: Erwin Susich, James McFarland, Joanne Cogswell

Thanks to these wonderful volunteers, for sharing their time and talents with SICM and the community. Congratulations to all!

In 2014 SICM established an **Instagram** account, which you can follow at @SICM_NY. Follow us on **Twitter** @SICM_NY And don't forget to follow and 'like' us on **Facebook** at Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM).



Ministry Notes

Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) celebrates the partnership of 54 member congregations "relating the resources of the congregations to the human needs of the city," which means ministries of social service, education, witness and social action. The SICM newsletter and more detailed financial and program information is available from SICM at 1055 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12308 or (518) 374-2683.

FAX: (518) 382-1871.

Email address: information@sicm.us.

Website address is: www.sicm.us.

SICM's finances are audited annually by an independent auditing firm.



Remembering and celebrating.

As I recall this past year, two people come to mind: Rev. Eloise Frazier and Rev. Michael Hogan. Eloise I mention

first since she was not shared in the media. She was the Associate Minister of Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church. She was concerned about the youth; I found out that she "provided a space" for youth in the Baptist Association that had an effect on many. I recall her as a trailblazer: she was the first woman to be selected as the President of the Interdenominational Ministers Conference. I also recall her as patient: she worked on her church to be a site for the summer lunch program. Of course she was very active with the Schenectady County Human Rights Commission and the leader in the MLK Coalition. She told me she did not want to be a Pastor. But she continues to inspire her church.

Fr. Hogan was more well known. It is interesting and instructive to me that the local media paid attention to Fr. Hogan but not Rev. Fraser. Mike was a friend for many years. Mike came to Sacred Heart/St. Columba's Church and continued a ministry of hospitality. The "kitchen table" was a symbol. He had a talent for service

on many boards, serving on the SICM Steering Committee. He chaired other community boards with valuable service. His legacy is St. Joseph's Place. He called to say, "you know the Catholic Church does not need to buy more property. But if you could buy the old Traffic Division building we would be glad to start St. Joseph's Place, a ministry of hospitality." I can think of no better legacy!

Rev. Phil Grigsby

The Communion of Saints are all those who have gone before us, are with us now and are yet to come. We are encouraged and sustained by all the saints who are with us still!

St. Joseph's Place Opens

SICM purchased the former city police department's Traffic Division Building at 837 Albany Street, adjacent to the food pantry. After careful and prayerful consideration, SICM moved ahead to secure the property. With ownership of the pantry at 839, it includes all the parking; and the lot is busy when the pantry is open.

St. Joseph's Place is a legacy to the late Fr. Michael Hogan, former pastor at St. Joseph's in Schenectady. With the consolidations that have occurred in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, the parish boundaries shifted so that Hamilton Hill is now included. Fr. Hogan envisioned a ministry of hospitality, much like the "kitchen table" that was always open in the former Sacred Heart/St. Columba's parish. Sr. Ann Christi Brink and Sr. Linda Neil are working to develop this ministry further. As Sr. Ann and Sr. Linda have articulated, they are not social workers but are providing hospitality for individuals and agency staff who want a place apart. The center has a prayer/mediation space.

Other human services agencies have expressed interest in the available space, and SICM anticipates having the space fully used in 2015.

SCHENECTADY INNER CITY MINISTRY

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Executive Director: Rev. Phillip N. Grigsby

Editor: Janet Mattis

The Assembly of SICM includes one clergy and two lay delegates from member congregations: Alplaus UMC, Altamont Reformed, Bellevue Reformed, Bethel AME, Burnt Hills UMC, Carman UMC, Christ Church Episcopal, Church of St. Adalbert, Duryee Memorial AME Zion, Eastern Parkway UMC, Emmanuel Baptist—Friedens UCC, Faith UMC, First Baptist, Sch'dy, First Reformed, Sch'dy, First Reformed, Scotia, First UMC, Friendship Baptist, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Holy Name of Jesus PNC, Immaculate Conception, Immanuel Lutheran, Lynnwood Reformed, Messiah Lutheran, Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist, New Consecration, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Prince of Peace Lutheran, Refreshing Spring, Rotterdam UMC, St. Anthony's, St. George's Episcopal, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, St. John the Evangelist, St. Joseph's, Sch'dy, St. Joseph's, Scotia, St. Luke's, St. Paul the Apostle, St. Paul's Episcopal, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Scotia UMC, Society of Friends (Quakers), Stanford UMC, State Street Presbyterian, Tabernacle Baptist, Trinity Presbyterian, Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady, Zion Lutheran.

Emergency Food Program

The program was led by Gail Van Valkenburgh, and then Shennan Jarboe after Gail's retirement. 2014 was our third full year operating under a once-per-month visit policy made possible by our New York State HPNAP (Hunger Prevention Nutrition Assistance Program) grant. Our HPNAP funding allows us to provide at least 450,000 meals' worth of groceries to our guests annually. Due to the high level of the community's continuing need for emergency food, we have met this goal each of these last three years, with 451,071 "meals" given out in 2014. These groceries went to 50,119 individuals, including 18,239 children (duplicated count). Our peak month in 2014 was October when we gave out 42,579 "meals." Supplementing the groceries we gave out in 2014, 14,601 Stewart's milk cards (good for a gallon of 1% milk) were also distributed.



Additionally, on our Mass Distribution days (usually the last Thursday of the month), we served an average of 370 households, as compared to just over 82 households served daily on the average during the 178 days our Pantry was open in 2014. Our peak month for Mass Distribution was May, with 438 households served. This food is provided by the Regional Food Bank. We continued delivering groceries to homebound individuals previously served by the Sacred Heart/St. Columba food pantry until its closing in mid-2013. A total of 335 such deliveries were made during the year, an average of 28 per month.

We continued our efforts to improve the nutritional value of the food we give out by deleting items of lower value and offering rice and pasta (as opposed to a choice of one or the other) as well as more produce. And, with the added support provided by New York's Holiday Initiative, we were able to give out more milk cards (as noted above) and other items.

With a new EFP Director, Joe Doolittle coordinated a series of food program "conversations" that raised areas for consideration, e.g. access to the pantry, employment opportunities and others.



During our annual "Soup"er Bowl fund drive held during the NFL Super Bowl, local businesses and congregations raised over \$10,000 for the Pantry.

As part of SICM's "Days of Service," several individuals and congregations collected goodies for Easter/Spring treat bags. In 2014, 300+ children at the Food Pantry benefited, receiving the treat bags in the days leading up to Easter.

The annual Post Office Drive in May provided over 70,000 pounds of food for our local food pantries, of which SICM received over 34,000 pounds. Food donations from individuals, congregations, and others totaled 145,150 pounds. We purchased from the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York; they also donated just under 500,000 pounds of food (through USDA).



"Wrap around" services offered to guests at the Pantry continue, including representation from Cornell Cooperative Extension, Experience Works, Catholic Charities, Healthy Capital District Initiative, the AIDS Council of Northeastern NY, and, most recently added, SCAP with information on their employment services.

Pantry staff and supporters participated in various advocacy and educational events, including the Hunger Action Network of New York State's annual Lobby Day and a summer meeting with Congressman Paul Tonko, all aimed at addressing issues of hunger and poverty in New York. SICM staff and supporters also ventured to New Brunswick, New Jersey to visit a model program whose motto, "Food Changes Lives" uses food to address the issue of poverty and hunger in their community. Much inspiration was drawn from this visit and staff members look forward to using this inspiration to enrich the programming offered through the pantry in 2015.

Days of Service 2014

SICM sponsored two Days of Services in the Spring. For the first, volunteers from Mt. Olivet, Trinity Presbyterian, and Jack and Jill of America assembled treat bags filled with goodies donated by SICM congregations and others. Children using the Pantry delighted in being the recipients! In April we had many volunteers turn out to help spruce up several city parks where Summer Lunch is served. Volunteers were from congregations, Union College, Schenectady County Community College and Neighborhood Associations.



Summer Lunch



SICM's Summer Lunch Program grew dramatically in 2014. Certain aspects of the program remained the same, and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) provided the funding for meals, operating through the NYS Department of Education. The sites continued to be in public parks, on church lawns, in congregations, and in municipal housing community rooms. Whitson's continued to be our vendor this past summer.



In our 20th season, we served over 65,000 meals! Many additions were made to the program, and alterations toward improvement were also key factors. Rachel Curtis, the program director, and Janet Mattis, intern coordinator, worked closely this past summer to ensure more overall effectiveness. A "Meet N' Greet" was held at the beginning of the season to stress teamwork amongst Site Supervisors and Interns. Bi-weekly meetings were held for Site Supervisors, to allow for more team togetherness. An Instagram account was created, *SICM_SummerLunch2014*, to assist in the modernization of the way we promote the program. Promotion of the program also occurred at community events such as Union College's UCare Day, and the Hamilton Hill Art Center's Juneteenth Celebration in Central Park.

A major addition this past summer was a second mobile unit. The Mobiles operated with 12 city stops, serving over 14,000 meals over the course of the summer. Adding the second mobile with the extra six stops significantly increased the number of children we could reach in pocket areas of the city. This was made possible by the CDPHP Workforce Team Challenge, the Upstate NY Conference of the United Methodist Church, and United Way of the Greater Capital Region.

Once again, SICM partnered with United Way. The USDA funds cover the meals but only a portion of the costs needed to run a larger program, and this is where the United Way has been intrinsic over the course of the past two summers. The Summer Meals Outreach Committee was born as well, and together the coalition orchestrated a universal Kick Off event. SICM's event this year, in Jerry Burrell Park, was successful! Many local dignitaries attended, and children enjoyed a variety of special treats. The Schenectady Police Department handed out lunches, and the Puppet People showed off their skills. Mont Pleasant Bakery's cupcakes were a great hit, as well as giveaways, and fun was had by all!



The Summer Lunch Program does not operate in a silo. By pairing with other local efforts such as the YMCA, the Schenectady County Youth Bureau, the Boys and Girls Club, Cornell Cooperative Extension- to name a few- the program has experienced its greatest success. These partnerships are helpful, especially as we expanded the number of sites in order to provide more coverage. The United Way grant enabled us to hire more site coordinators who often partnered with interns and many dedicated volunteers to run sites. All volunteers were well hydrated thanks to the Niskayuna Co-Op's mass donation of water bottles!

The restoration of Collins Park in Scotia continued from 2013, and the park continued as a site, thanks to Campus Kitchens at Union College, a student-led group, which partnered with the churches in Scotia and Glenville to raise additional support and lunches were provided. The park itself does not qualify as an open USDA site, and we are lucky to have a dedicated college student group's involvement!

Camp@Steinmetz Has a Great First Year!

With the renovations completed, SICM initiated a day camp dubbed 'Camp@Steinmetz' in July. Steinmetz Park is on the end of Lenox Road near Niskayuna, but a 'gem' with 40+ acres!. SICM worked in partnership with Camp Fowler to provide a day camp experience akin to Fowler (based in Speculator, NY) in the city. The camp was directed by Ryan Cogswell, a Fowler 'graduate', student at Harvard Divinity School and from Lynnwood Reformed. Ryan brought both Fowler and urban camp experience to the

task. Six interns supported by congregations ably provided the staffing.

The camp was a full day experience for 24 elementary school-aged youth who came from all parts of the community. The days included singing and story time, recreation time and all camp games, discovery time; flex time and lunch; and then rotations for garden/nature and art. Special events included trips to Camp Fowler, trips to the local MiSci Museum, and a visit by the Reptile Lady, a big hit! Many church volunteers helped.



Summer Interns

Janet Mattis coordinated 18 high school and college students who helped to achieve the goals of the Summer Lunch program, the Emergency Food Pantry, the Camp@Steinmetz, and the Home Furnishings Program. We are grateful to the sponsoring congregations and individuals who financially supported the interns: Austin & Marti Spang, First Reformed Church of Schenectady, Lynnwood Reformed, Niskayuna Reformed, Bellevue Reformed, Burnt Hills UMC, St. George's Episcopal, Trinity Presbyterian, Union Presbyterian, and St. Kateri Tekakwitha, as well as the United Way of the Greater Capital Region. We are equally grateful to the interns for all their hard work, dedication and incredible flexibility.



CROP Walk 2014

The 32nd Annual Schenectady CROP Walk was held on Sunday, May 4, 2014. 400+ people walked the 5K route to raise funds for overseas and local hunger fighting, including SICM's Emergency Food Pantry. \$40,600 was raised as a result of the CROP Walk, which was the 43rd largest in the country.



Damien Center

The Schenectady Damien Center officially re opened in November 2014 under the auspices of the Albany Damien Center (ADC). This had been in the works for some time but delayed by the fire at the Albany Center.

The Center, under the management of Raequan Brown, now offers programs on Tuesdays and Fridays, including a meal. The programs of the ADC are now available at the Schenectady Center, including PAWS, Pets are Wonderful Support. Smart Meals are available at the Schenectady site.



SICM Staff Changes

Allison Williams left SICM last spring when her husband became critically ill. We are saddened that he passed away and Allison and her family remain in all of our thoughts and prayers. We welcomed Rachel Curtis as the Summer Lunch Director, a role she held previously at SICM.

In May we said farewell to our fearless leader of the Food Program, Gail Van Valkenburgh. Gail started at SICM as an interning college student, then proceeded to the role of Deputy Director and then Director, a position she held for over 12 years. Under Gail's direction the Pantry saw many changes and improvements, including the move from the basement of First UMC in Schenectady to the renovated A & P Grocery Store at 839 Albany Street, its current location.

With Gail's departure came a promotion for Deputy Director Shennan Jarboe, to Director of the Food Program. We then welcomed Shelly Ford as the Deputy Director of the Food Program. Shelly had previously worked with Catholic Charities and the SNAP program. Oron Tucker joined us as the Van Driver for the Food Pantry in the Spring.

Development

SICM is blessed with continued volunteer and financial support from many individuals, congregations, religious organizations, businesses and foundations. We received support from the Consolidated Federal Campaign, Contributor's Choice of United Way and State Employees Federated Appeal. The continuing support from the GE More Gifts More Givers Program is very encouraging.

Thank you to congregations that hosted SICM summer lunch sites: Faith United Methodist, Friendship Baptist (Friendship House), Trinity Lutheran (Central State Street Ecumenical Cluster), New Consecration Temple, Christ Centered Unity Missionary Baptist, State Street Presbyterian, Faith Deliverance Tabernacle, and New Day Christian Empowerment Center. We also appreciate the City of Schenectady for support for Summer Lunch at parks (Central, Hillhurst, Jerry Burrell, Quackenbush and Wallingford) and the Community Rooms at Steinmetz and Yates Village provided by the Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority. We also thank community partners: Hamilton Hill Arts Center, miSci (Schenectady Museum), and Schenectady Public Library. Grants from the United Way of the Greater Capital Region and the Upstate NY Conference of the United Methodist Church supported our mobile Summer Lunch sites.

Thank You!

SICM Received Support From:

Albany Presbytery	Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA)	Robert E. Van Vranken and Lori Liebers
Beukendaal Chapter No. 271 OES	First National Bank of Scotia	Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany through CREO (Capital Region Ecumenical Organizations)
Brown Transportation	GE Athletic Association	Schenectady County Com. College
Edward D. Cammarota Foundation	GE Global Research	Schenectady Federation of Teachers
Capital Area Baptist Association	GE United Way Campaign	Schenectady Ole Timers Baseball Club
Capital Gains Investors	GE Woman's Club	Scotia-Glenville Lions Club
Catholic Charities	Golub Foundation	SEFCU
CDPHP Workforce Team Challenge	Hernas Veterinary Clinic	Siemens Caring Hands
Chamber of Schenectady County	Hudson Mohawk Association United Church of Christ	Sisters of St. Joseph
Church Women United	Hudson Mohawk Road Runners Club	Stewarts' Shops
Church World Service	I.A.T.S.E. Local #14	Story Circles of Proctors
City of Sch'dy's Consolidated Plan	Lagus Applied Technology	TA Predel & Co. Inc.
Coburg Village Residents	Marvin & Company	The Schenectady Foundation
Common Cents NY (Veeder Elementary)	Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger	Tough Traveler
Community AIDS Partnership of the Capital Region	Metroland Business Machines	Troy Savings Bank Foundation
Community Foundation of the Capital Region	NYS Department of Education (Summer Food Service)	United Way of the Greater Capital Region
Concerned for the Hungry	NYS Dept. of Health, Hunger Prev. Nutrition Assistance Program	United Way of Massachusetts Bay
Congregation Gates of Heaven	Niskayuna Consumers Cooperative	Upper NY Conference of the United Methodist Church
Culligan of Scotia	Pine Grove Volunteer Fire Department	WGY Christmas Wish Campaign
Ellis Hospital	Princeton Seniors	Wright Family Foundation
Ellis Hospital Foundation	Red-Kap Sales, Inc.	
Emergency Food and Shelter Board through United Way	Reformed Church World Service	

SICM Plays a Major Role in the U Matter Workgroup on Food Insecurity



A workgroup on Food Insecurity was formed out of the Ellis-sponsored U Matter community health survey project with the goals of mapping available food resources in Schenectady County, developing a further understanding of barriers to food access experienced by needy families, and identifying initiatives targeted on reducing food insecurity in Schenectady. SICM's Assistant Director, Jack Sweeney, and Naomi Wood from SCAP (Schenectady Community Action Program) are co-chairs of this workgroup that also includes leaders from County Public Health, the City Mission of Schenectady, the Schenectady Foundation and Ellis Medicine

A meeting of key leaders from a wide range of community food programs was held in June 2014 with all participants contributing to development of a preliminary inventory of available food assets in Schenectady County, especially those accessed by low-income City residents. Data from this session were assembled and analyzed by the workgroup; addresses and other related data elements (e.g., hours of operation, phone numbers) were added to the inventory; and the resulting array of data was given to a Siena information technology professor who had volunteered to develop a computerized map including all of this information.

This map was developed over the summer of 2014 and the result was presented in October to the same audience who had participated in the June meeting. Bob Yoder, the Siena professor, was able to project the map on a large screen using his laptop; and the scope and usefulness of the map were readily apparent to the audience.

Since then, Professor Yoder modified the map so that a developmental version of the application is accessible from PCs, tablets, or smart phones. The "app" allows the user to locate Schenectady County SNAP vendors, grocers, food pantries, convenience stores that accept SNAP benefits, produce outlets such as farmers markets, and other food resources for the county as a whole or for specific zip codes within the county. The user can also create more complex queries such as "show me all the grocery stores and convenience stores in zip code 12306." Once a query is entered, the app responds with a count of the number of entities that fit that query followed by a map screen with each of those entities marked by a color-coded icon (each resource category uses a different color icon). Running the cursor (or just touching in the case of tablets and smart phones) brings up a small box that shows the name, address, days and hours of operation and other relevant information as well as an indicator as to whether a particular entity accepts SNAP benefits.

The Food Insecurity workgroup is developing a short survey intended to better identify the barriers food insecure people face in accessing the resources captured on the map.

In Honor Of

Bob & Mary Stewart of
Amarillo, TX
Bob & Pat Obrecht
Chuck and Cathy Vannatten's
40th Anniversary
Dick Wyles
Elaine Bair
Eve Gannon
Fred & Virginia Thompson
Friends and Family
Greg, Patricia and Lucy Notch &
Emily and Russell Ford
Herbert A Stocker
Jose & Rosa Velasquez
Josna Tayi's Birthday
Julie Cupp & Nick
Brooks-McDonald
Linda and John Linton
Liz Pratico
Luana Moross
Nancy Bedard
Princeton Hourglass Seniors
Ralph and Clara Lasselle
Richard and Kristie Becker's
20th Anniversary
Robert VanVranken
Sr. Rosemary
The Richardson Family
The Scott Family
The Slivas' Anniversary
Tom Duff's 65th Birthday

In Memory Of

Loretta Lounsbury
Ann B. Lonn
Al Lowe
Andrew Nicodemi &
Gregory Puerto
Anne S. Harrington &
Nancy Harrington Denning
Barbara and Thomas Morris Sr.
Bernadine O'Hearn Herskind
Bernardi Gabriele
Bertha Baskous
Catherine Kubasta
Charles & Eleanor Button
Charles Ehrcke
David Little
Don Patneade
Donald Kerr
Dorothy Harlow
Elaine Lefkowitz
Eleanor F Kerley &
Mary L Johnson
Ellanor Relyea
Floyd & Dorothea Baker
Fr. Michael Hogan
Fred Bartz
George Barr
Gregg Miller
Harold E. Harlow
Helen L. Ringlee
Henry Hank Rosko
Ian J. "Corky" Boehm Sr.
Iris Fay Barrett
Jack Hajjar
John F. Van Hoesen

Joseph & Angelina Friello
Joseph Early
Joseph Litwin
Len Garver
Leona O'Leary
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M. Jean Hynes
Madaline Babcock Stocker
Marcia Germain
Marilyn Berrigan
Martin "Armand" Bianchi
Mary Claire Whitney
Mary Depaula
Mary Kelefant
Mary S. Steven Contribution
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Pauly Cox
Peter Morra
Raymond C. Hart
Robert Grot
Rosemary Bowman Peters for
Summer Reading Program
Ruth Brady
Sean Valero
Secord & Weisheit family
members who have gone before us
Shirley I. Willis
Steve Munson
Tom Rourke
Toni Ann Galleli
Wilt Raney



Did you know. . .

SICM accepts donations online? Visit our website at www.sicm.us and click on "Donate Now" on the sidebar. Follow the directions, click, and you're on your way! Last year SICM received many online donations! Questions? Contact the Business Manager at 374-2683, X105.

Donate
Online



SICM also received support from former member churches Union Presbyterian and Grace Lutheran.

Thank you!



SICM EVENTS

SICM Celebrates Schenectady

In May we held an event at the Mohawk Golf Club, "SICM Celebrates Schenectady," where we recognized Shirley Readdean, Ellis CEO Jim Connolly, Sch'dy Schools Superintendent Larry Spring, and the Niskayuna Cooperative, all for their vision, courage and tenacity, for making Schenectady a better place to live. Over 150 people attended the event, and a good time was had by all! That evening \$15,000 was raised for SICM in general.



SICM Named a "Charity of Choice" by CDPHP Workforce Team Challenge

Last May, over 9,000 people came out to participate in this annual walk/run, which benefitted four different charities this year, SICM being one of them. A team of SICM staff and volunteers made up the "SICM Striders" to walk/run the



route, and another team served water to participants at a water station in Washington Park. SICM received a check for \$6,400. Many thanks to all who made this event a success!

Community Hero Award

Congratulations to Rev. Phil Grigsby! Last spring he was named a "Community Hero" by the Schenectady Foundation (one of ten). He was recognized for his leadership and service to Schenectady, by being a voice for justice, for equality, for compassion, whenever community needs and circumstances have called for such a voice.



Niskayuna Co-op's Summer Carnival

Many thanks to the Niskayuna Co-op and their staff for all their support of SICM throughout the year, and



special thanks and appreciation for making SICM the benefactor of their Annual Summer Carnival.



Harvest for the Pantry

Our 7th annual Harvest for the Pantry fundraiser was held at First Reformed Scotia in November 2014. Chef Nicky and crew revamped the menu and did an outstanding job; over \$15,000 was raised from ticket sales, the Honorary Committee, donations and the Pick-a-Prize.



Tech Valley Non-Profit Award

SICM was honored to receive one of the two Tech Valley Business Council's Nonprofit Organization Awards from the Chamber of Schenectady County and the Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce. SICM was recognized at a luncheon at the Albany Marriott attended by 300+.

From the Case Files

While the names are changed, this story is an example of help provided through SICM.

“Jose” and his wife recently came to the pantry for the first time. They have young children. During his second tour of duty, Jose’s Humvee exploded and he was critically injured. His best buddy died in his arms. After a long rehabilitation, Jose returned home to Schenectady. He got a job. But he was tormented by the war, and his angry outbursts frightened his coworkers. He lost his job. Similar outbursts cost him his second job. Now he can’t find employment. His medications are not working, he can’t get counseling, and his next medical appointment is 6 months away. The family savings are gone. He can’t feed his kids. He is ashamed, he says, and looks away. His wife begins to cry. The good news is, we gave Jose food at the pantry, told him how soon he could come back, referred him to other pantries and Soup Kitchens, and suggested other resources that might help, including a veterans’ counselor. The day Jose came to the Pantry, we served over 300 people. Each person had their own story; their own struggle. The need is great.



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Collaborations

SICM provides strong leadership in the Schenectady County Embraces Diversity (SCED) initiative. SCED was formed by members from SICM, the YWCA, and the Schenectady County Human Rights Commission, after several racial incidents occurred. SCED continues to provide the experience of study circles for area students in the middle and high school level on issues of race and diversity. The study circles model provides a structured format for students to talk about difficult subjects. The sessions are open-ended and students work together on action plans to address the issues.

SICM was one of the founders of the Community Crisis Network (CCN). CCN came about with conversations from SICM, the Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP), the Jewish Community, and Catholic Family and Community Services (now Catholic Charities). CCN is a focal point with services at SCAP to provide a comprehensive assessment, and access/referral to services. CCN provides a small emergency fund, primarily supported by congregations, to assist persons in need. Access to CCN is through SCAP at 913 Albany Street, 374-9181.

SICM participated in the End Poverty Schenectady coalition. End Poverty sought to provide educational events to provide ways to better understand the reality and dynamics of poverty in our community. Topics focused on the connection with employment, education, and the realities of poverty among youth. Members of the Schenectady County Human Rights Commission initiated this effort.

SICM provided a representative on the Schenectady Civilian Police Community Review Board. Connie Richardson serves on the board to provide a review of civilian complaints against the police. Initiated by the Schenectady Committee for Social Justice, the board provides a review of complaints against the police. It also makes policy recommendations on issues that arise during the course of investigations.

SICM continues to participate actively in the Schenectady County Food Providers, a committee of Concerned for the Hungry. CFH provides the Thanksgiving Food Program in the community. The food providers group is a forum for networking and common effort among emergency food providers in Schenectady County.

Schenectady Inner City Ministry

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Schenectady, NY 12308-2807

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SAVE THE DATES:

March 24: CROP Walk Recruiters Meeting
April 8: SICM Assembly
April 13-17: Wellness Week at the Food Pantry
April 25: Day of Service—Parks Cleanup
May 3: CROP Walk
May 6: SICM Assembly



The Last Word

by Shirley Readdean, **President**, *SICM Steering Committee*

As I reflect over the past year, I am very grateful for all who helped SICM “relate the resources of the churches to the human needs of the city.” Many contributed. I am reminded of the Biblical story of the small boy who had only two loaves and a few fish. What was so little among such a great need? One of the important parts of the story is that he gave what he had. He provided what he could provide. And then we know that there was much abundance.

So it is with SICM. Many provided what they could. Some gave volunteer hours – whether to a clean up day or each week at the food pantry or as part of a team giving out summer lunch. Some gave treasure so that we could provide food for too many of our neighbors in need of temporary and emergency food. Some prayed for our work and resources. Some spent time on task forces and committees to figure out the strategies to address the problems we see. Some took time in congregations for food drives and other ways to support our common mission. Some walked in a CROP Walk that bore witness to the need to help the hungry both here and overseas.

The Biblical story of course is about the Miracle of Multiplication. When the small boy gave what he could, it was multiplied many times over. There was more than enough. Thanks to you and many, we could reach out to our neighbors in need, providing for what is needed in our community. Thank you!



Think Spring!

