



A PLACE OF
Welcome |

The campaign to expand the Catherine McAuley Center



OUR MISSION

The Catherine McAuley Center offers hope and opportunity through educational and supportive services that promote stability, skill-building, and connection.

OUR VISION

People embrace opportunities to better themselves, their families, and their community.

OUR VALUES

Empowerment: We believe everyone has the potential to create and live a purposeful and fulfilling life.

Learning: We believe in the transformative power of knowledge and skills to build self-sufficient lives.

Mercy: We believe in the dignity of every individual as demonstrated through compassionate service in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy.

Community: We believe our future depends on inclusive communities that welcome, respect, and support a diversity of individuals and ideas.

Commitment: We believe in the mutual dedication of staff, clients, and community to create lasting change.

Welcome to Hope

Think for a moment.

Imagine receiving an important-looking paper from your son's school, and not recognizing the letters covering the page, let alone being able to read and understand what it says.

Imagine, after decades of struggling with addiction and enduring abuse, first from your parents and then from your spouse, you feel broken, worthless, and alone. You have no idea how to make the suffering stop, and no one to ask for help.

Imagine fleeing from your home and rebuilding your life thousands of miles away from your friends, your community, and everything familiar, and trying to find a job to support your family – with very little English, no experience with computers, and no connections.

Where would you turn?

The Catherine McAuley Center (CMC) welcomes people who have been in situations where the most basic of human needs, such as securing food, shelter, and safety have occupied all of their efforts, clouding dreams of future stability, personal fulfillment, family unity, and happiness. People whose lives have been interrupted — homes destroyed by war, countries rife with human rights violations, families torn apart, abusive relationships, homelessness.

The Center offers guidance, connection, practical skills, and a warm sense of welcome to people working to re-establish their lives, or to build new ones. At the very core is the belief that the people who come to CMC are strong and resilient, that their dreams are worth reviving, and that together, we can create dignified change for individuals and lasting change for the community. Welcome change.

As our community grows, the need for the Catherine McAuley Center's services is increasing rapidly. As it has throughout its history, the Center is rising to meet the needs of our time, in more ways and for more people, offering *A Place of Welcome*.

“We need people to support the mission, to support what we do, so that we can continue to work together for an inclusive community.”

– Paula Land,
Executive Director,
Catherine McAuley Center



From the Director

From its inception, the Catherine McAuley Center has lived its mission by meeting the needs of our time. From a small donated building on stilts to a repurposed convent, CMC has created a place of welcome, where people have the safety to learn and grow.

As the organization has adapted to meet these growing needs, we have faced the questions of expansion and sustainability. The critical services that offer hope and opportunity must be available to **all** who seek a better life. Thus, we are committed to engaging people across our community as we work **together** for an inclusive community.

A community of support does not happen by accident, however. It takes the mutual dedication of staff, clients, and community to create lasting change.

What will our new Place of Welcome look like? People greeting people, learning, laughing, discovering and embracing opportunities.

Every day, we see the need, and we know that meeting it is our most important work, just as Catherine McAuley did in the 1800s when she enlisted many courageous women, the Sisters of Mercy, to serve alongside her and beyond.

Extending mercy, recognizing the dignity of every individual through compassionate service, we invite you to help CMC continue its history of service in a place that will not only impact lives today, but into the future.



Paula Land

Paula Land,
Executive Director



“We have a rich history of supporting immigrants and refugees in this community, and we continue to do that. The outreach that this Center provides is essential to that effort.”

– Steve Ovel,
A Place of Welcome
Campaign Co-chair



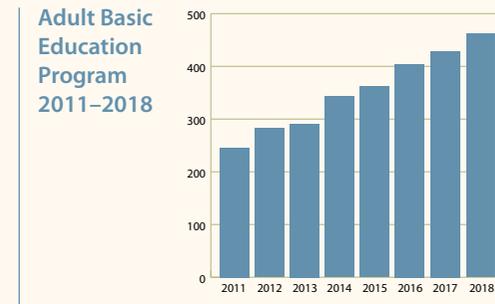
1989
CMC opens
its doors

Sisters of Mercy identified transitional housing for women and adult basic education as greatest unmet needs



1993

A History of Welcome Services



Education Program experiences average 10% increase in students year-over-year

2011-2018

2001-2003

Addressing needs beyond education, CMC opens food pantry and hires Immigrant/Refugee Coordinator

2008

Transitional Housing Program increases depth and scope of supportive services beyond meeting basic needs



CMC moves to current location, a repurposed convent, and grows services to offer English as a Second Language to both men and women

2015

To address space constraints, CMC partners to offer three off-site locations for learning
Hiawatha Library
St. Jude Catholic Church
Seventh-day Adventist Church



2020 In its 31st year, CMC will move to 1220 Fifth Ave. SE

2019

Today, a team of 11 assist immigrants and refugees with resettlement, employment, and connecting to community resources



Tara's Story

Tara King works as the Support Services Assistant in the Transitional Housing Program, but she was a CMC client first.

"I like to say that, in 2009, the Catherine McAuley Center saved my life," she said.

Tara was on the brink of homelessness, living in a cheap hotel, and working an extremely low-paying job. Her probation officer put her in touch with CMC.

In the Transitional Housing Program, she found structure and a simple set of rules to live by.

"But one of the coolest things about the housing program is they just let you talk, and they listen. And that's a big thing."

The Transitional Housing Program serves women who have survived trauma and are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. Without having to worry about shelter and food, residents are able to work on themselves, take advantage of the group learning opportunities and resources available, and start building themselves back to self-sufficiency.



Like so many others, the Center welcomed Tara with shelter, comfort, people to confide in, and an opportunity to improve her quality of life.

"I think for the community to see someone who can be at rock bottom and work their way up to being a helpful member of society, that's huge," she said.

Transitioning out of the Center, Tara moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, and graduated from Le Cordon Bleu Culinary School before returning to Iowa. Today, she manages the kitchen at a local retreat center while also working evenings and weekends as a part-time staff member at CMC.

Tara teaches cooking groups and leads other group activities for residents throughout the week, but her most important role has become that of the listener, prompting residents to talk, connect, and heal.

"You're here to do what you need to do to better your life. You're here to learn who you are, and you're here to learn how to take who you are and apply it outside."

Tara's work ethic and comforting presence serve as an example of the future that is possible for each resident as they work toward stability.

"I am beyond grateful that people have this place to come to," Tara said. "Because where would they be without it?"

"I think for the community to see someone who can be at rock bottom and work their way up to being a helpful member of society, that's huge."

– Tara King





Jacques' Story

Jacques Bisimwa arrived in the United States in 2017, following a long and painful journey. At the age of 14, he and his 16-year-old brother fled their native Congo because of violence in what has been called “Africa’s First World War.” They fled to Zimbabwe, where Jacques spent a decade in a refugee camp.

“When I was living in the refugee camp, I didn’t have any hope at all,” Jacques said. “It has not been easy, but by the grace of God, we got our resettlement through CMC. And today, I’m here.”

Jacques is now attending Kirkwood Community College, majoring in human services. Because of the support he experienced along his journey to the U.S., he wants to serve other people.

He arrived in the U.S. knowing little English.

“I didn’t even know how to greet somebody in English,” he said.

He signed up for English classes at CMC, where he eventually gained enough confidence in speaking, listening, reading, and writing to register for college. Through CMC, cultural orientation on topics like banking and transportation helped Jacques adapt.

He will always remember his arrival at the airport, when employees and volunteers from CMC greeted him.

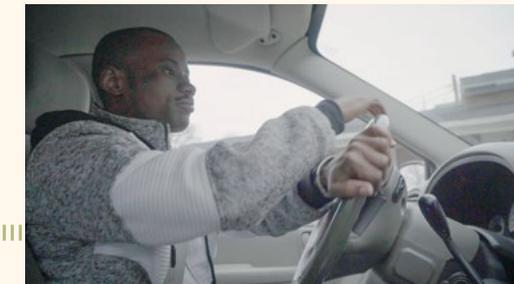
“It was like, wow, these people are great,” he said. “How can they welcome me? They don’t even know me.”

While attending community college, Jacques works as a Transportation Coordinator with CMC, driving other clients to their jobs.

“I really like having a job,” he said. “Because if you don’t have a job, you can do nothing here in America, especially when you have a bunch of bills to pay. So you have to work hard.”

Jacques sees the need for more space for the Center — a place where clients have greater privacy in meetings with their case managers and where staff workspaces are not crowded into former storage areas — so that together, they can “save more lives.”

“Yes, they did save my life, because I didn’t know where to start over in my life,” he said. “But through the services provided to me, I know, OK, I can start here. Then the sky will be my limit.”



“It was like, wow, these people are great. How can they welcome me? They don’t even know me.”

– Jacques Bisimwa

Welcome to the Catherine McAuley Center

While the Catherine McAuley Center's programs serve distinct populations — immigrants, refugees, and women experiencing crisis — they are united by a common purpose of promoting the well-being and dignity of individuals in need and helping people achieve greater stability, community inclusion, and improved quality of life. Starting with a small group of 16 students in its first year, CMC has grown to be a place known for offering hope and life-changing services to more than 700 individuals each year.



A PLACE OF CONNECTION

The Transitional Housing Program serves single women who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness, are exiting a correctional or mental health institution, or are experiencing other crises. Women meet weekly with a case manager and participate in group opportunities to set and work toward long-term goals. CMC offers women a physically and emotionally safe, positive, and empowering community living environment as they heal from trauma, build connections, and regain stability.



In 2018:

- The program served 40 women through its residential and Aftercare programming.
- CMC provided more than 1,500 individual case management meetings and 490 therapeutic and skill-building group sessions, an increase of approximately 37% since 2014.
- Women met or made progress toward 73% of their self-identified goals in areas such as mental health, employment, and healthy relationships.

A PLACE OF LEARNING

The Adult Basic Education Program provides free one-on-one and small-group tutoring to adults learning English as a Second Language, preparing for the U.S. Citizenship Exam, or studying basic math or computer skills. Tutoring is primarily delivered by more than 350 trained community volunteers, who meet with students at least one hour weekly. CMC students represent more than 50 countries of origin and have goals of communicating better in daily life, finding or improving employment, and better supporting their children in school.



In 2018:

- The program served 462 adult learners, an increase of almost 60% over the past five years.
- Students and volunteer tutors met for more than 14,000 study hours, and 61% of students showed learning progress in pre- and post-tests.
- More than 85% of students reported increased skills and confidence in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English.

A PLACE OF STABILITY

The Refugee & Immigrant Services Program provides refugee resettlement services as an affiliate of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, and assistance to immigrants and refugees in navigating community resources, such as healthcare, public transportation, legal services, the school system, and social services. CMC also offers a range of employment-related support services for refugees and immigrants, including employment-readiness classes, individual job-seeking assistance, transportation, support establishing in-home child care businesses, and partnerships with local employers to facilitate smooth connections between refugee and immigrant job seekers and prospective employers.



In 2018:

- More than 150 refugees from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East were resettled through the Center in the Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Waterloo, and Columbus Junction areas.
- CMC provided intensive case management, resource navigation assistance, and employment support services to more than 300 refugees and immigrants.
- 228 individuals accessed the Center's employment services, and of those, at least 70% found jobs. All those who found jobs were paid more than the minimum wage, and most were still working after six months.

Why We Need a Larger Facility

Every day, the bustle at the Center is pronounced, especially on the hour when classes start and end, and clients are making their way through the narrow entry and hallway.

The building is alive with voices from around the world. The kitchen, breakroom, conference room, and even the lobby are used as improvised spaces for tutoring, client meetings, and more.

Down in the basement, tiny offices have been forged out of closets. Behind every door, another group or program is hard at work. Storage space must be leased at a separate site.

Residents and volunteers with physical challenges face difficulties in maneuvering multiple levels of stairs throughout the building, posing safety risks or preventing participation altogether. The parking lot, shared with Immaculate Conception Church, fills quickly during noon Mass and funerals, forcing staff and clients to park across the street.

Once a convent, every available nook and cranny of the building is used. There are no more areas to expand. That means waiting lists for services, and the needs of many more prospective clients in the community go unmet.

Simply put, the Catherine McAuley Center needs more space to fulfill our mission.

Why? Greater capacity means more hope for more people.



Resident rooms are tight and dozens of small window air conditioning units are used for cooling throughout the building.



Closets in the basement have been converted to office space.

“Just like most nonprofits, we make do with what we have, but if you were to walk in here on any given day, you would see we’re busting at the seams. There are hundreds of people who are waiting to figure out how they can become more of a part of the community.”

– Nate Klein,
CMC Board of Directors

Currently the main lobby is also used as a food pantry, greeting and hospitality area, curriculum storage, and open filing of tutoring records.

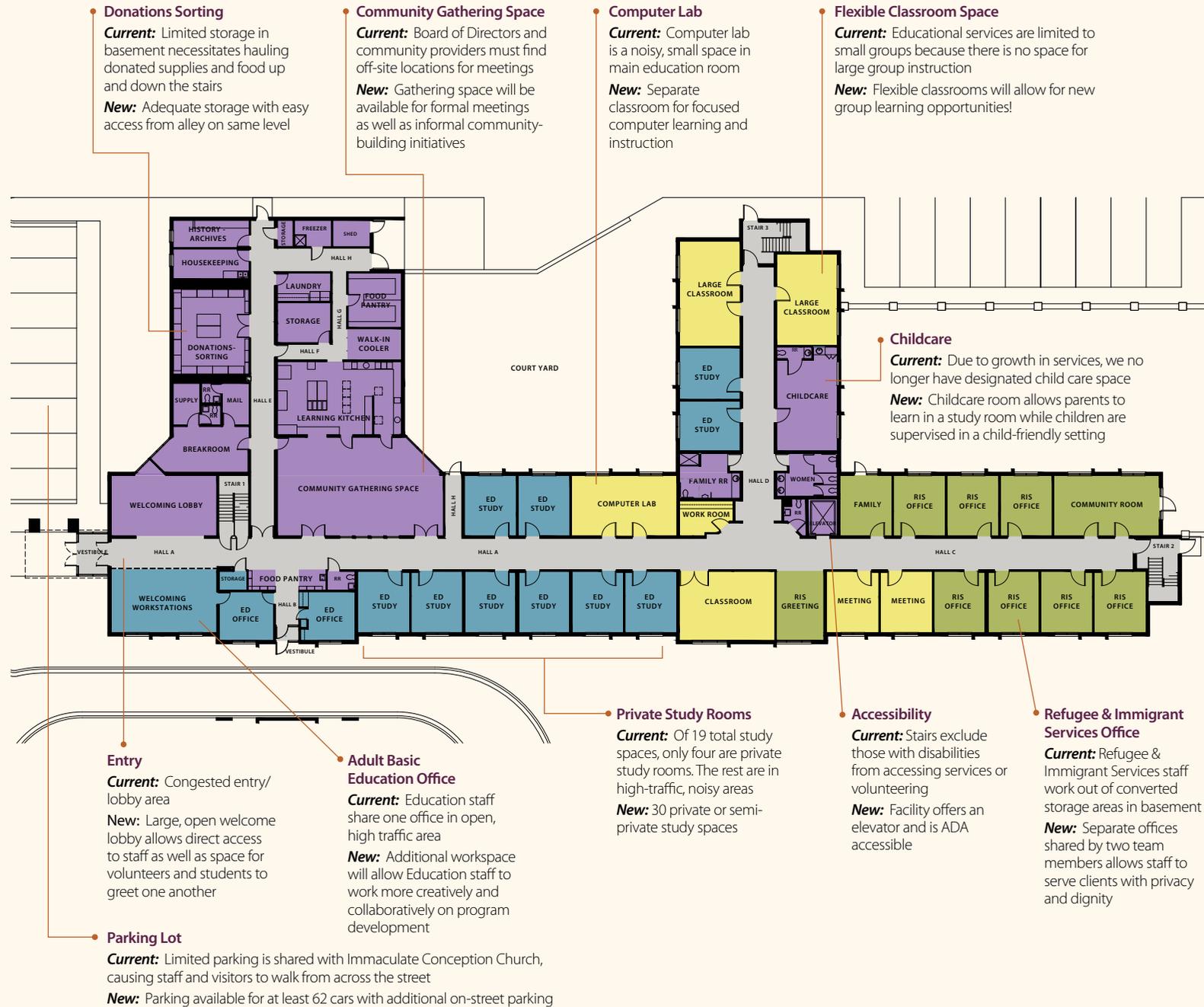


Above: Refugee & Immigrant Services staff lack private meeting space with clients and meet in an open room where other programming is conducted. Left: Our largest conference space is severed by a hallway between the lobby and the kitchen. It is too small for a full staff meeting.

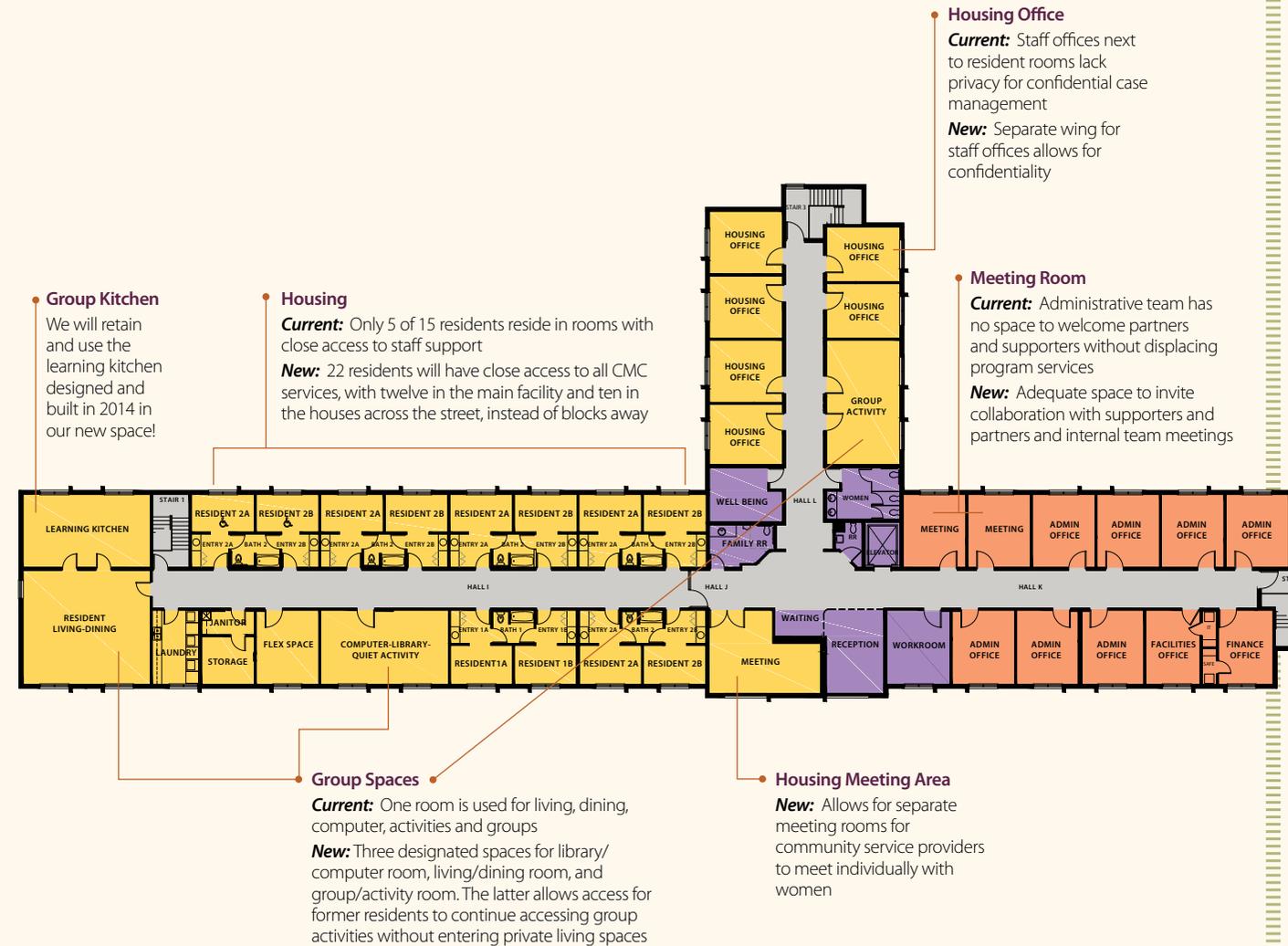
Most stairways are narrow and steep, including the only direct access to the basement where donated goods are dropped off.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



Embracing the Future

A comprehensive strategic planning process and in-depth task force assessment found that acquiring more space is critical for the Catherine McAuley Center to move forward.

More than 35 existing properties and a new building concept were evaluated as potential new homes for the Center. The task force concluded that purchasing an existing building was the best choice — specifically, the building at 1220 Fifth Ave. SE.

By purchasing an existing building, the Center avoids the higher cost of constructing a new building or adding on to an outdated one. The new building increases space from the current 8,724 square feet to 32,802 square feet and increases the number of people we can serve. In addition, the facility is accessible for people with disabilities.

COST BREAKDOWN

Projected Total Cost: \$5 million

\$1,675,000 Purchase of building

\$ 350,000 Property purchase and pre-development

\$1,625,000 Construction and renovation

\$1,000,000 Endowment

\$ 350,000 Professional fees

\$5,000,000

You Can Help Expand Our Place Of Welcome

The capital campaign goal of \$5 million is a significant, yet important investment. In launching this campaign, Catherine McAuley Center officials and supporters are inviting businesses, community leaders, and individuals to make contributions. These contributions are vital, and we ask for your generous help in improving lives and the community.

Our expansion, renovations, and improvements will require substantial community support. Helping people on their path to self-sufficiency helps create a more stable community. Here are some points to remember:

- Gifts may be made in cash or securities.
- Gifts can include bequests, real estate, life insurance, and personal property.
- Matching gifts through your employer or spouse's employer can double or even triple your gift.
- Pledges are encouraged and may be extended over a period of up to three years. A reminder will be mailed to you each year.
- Your gift may be made in honor or in memory of someone. A letter recognizing your gift will be mailed to the person you are honoring or the family of the person you are memorializing.
- Your gift to the Catherine McAuley Center is tax deductible to the greatest extent of the law.



“Without English-language lessons at the Catherine McAuley Center, I was very slow to learn English. I had been in the U.S. maybe four years, and I still did not know much, just the basics. I came here and learned to speak, read and write English. Now I want to encourage others to do the same, because it means more opportunities for them and for their families, too.”

– Rogelio Lagunas

Naming Opportunities

All donors to the Place of Welcome campaign will be recognized in a special list of contributors to be published at the conclusion of the campaign. Names of contributors of \$1,000 or more will be recognized on a permanent, centralized recognition display on-site.

Many of the areas at the Catherine McAuley Center may be named for an individual or organization as a result of a major gift. See our list below. Recognition of these gifts will appear in a prominent place in the designated area.

| Opportunity | Available | Amount |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Administrative Offices | 9 | \$10,000 |
| Education Offices | 3 | \$10,000 |
| Housing Program Offices | 6 | \$10,000 |
| Refugee & Immigrant Services Offices | 7 | \$10,000 |
| Staff Breakroom & Lounge | 1 | \$10,000 |
| Garage - Storage for Furniture & Household Items for New Arrivals and Residents | 1 | \$10,000 |
| 5th Avenue Entrance | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Administrative & Housing Workroom | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Administrative Meeting Rooms | 2 | \$15,000 |
| CMC History/Archives | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Donation Sorting Area | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Elevator - Providing For ADA Accessibility | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Well-Being/Exercise Room | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Family Room/Quiet Space | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Food Pantry Storage | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Landscaping Outdoor Areas | 4 | \$15,000 |
| Outdoor Green Space | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Private Entrance For Residents | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Private Meeting Room (TH) | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Reception/Greeting Area - 2nd Floor | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Refugee & Immigrant Services Greeting Area for Clients | 1 | \$15,000 |

Adult Basic Education (ABE)
 Refugee and Immigrant Services (RIS)
 Transitional Housing (TH)

| Opportunity | Available | Amount |
|---|-----------|---------------|
| Resident Computer/Library/Quiet Activity Room | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Shared Meeting Rooms (ABE) (RIS) | 2 | \$15,000 |
| Education Welcoming Workstation | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Education Study Rooms | 9 | \$15,000 |
| Housing Resident Rooms | 12 | \$25,000 |
| Childcare Room | 1 | \$50,000 |
| Computer Lab (ABE & RIS) | 1 | \$50,000 |
| Expanded Food Pantry | 1 | \$50,000 |
| Group/Learning Kitchen for Women (TH) | 1 | \$50,000 |
| Large Classrooms/Flex Space | 3 | \$50,000 |
| Resident Activity Room (TH) | 1 | \$50,000 |
| Resident Group Living/Dining Room (TH) | 1 | \$50,000 |
| Community Garden | 1 | \$100,000 |
| Community Provider Meetings & Classroom (RIS) | 1 | \$100,000 |
| Large Community Gathering Space | 1 | \$100,000 |
| Community/Learning Kitchen | 1 | \$100,000 |
| Outdoor Courtyards | 2 | \$100,000 |
| Welcome Lobby/Greeting Area | 1 | \$100,000 |
| Adult Basic Education Area | 1 | \$250,000 |
| Refugee & Immigrant Services Area | 1 | \$250,000 |
| Transitional Housing Area | 1 | \$250,000 |
| Catherince McAuley Center Building | 1 | \$2.5 million |

Catherine McAuley Center and Campaign Leadership



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Steve and Susan Ovel

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Leya Neema, Employment Specialist & Refugee Case Manager
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Tara King, Support Services Assistant
Angela McKinney, Support Services Assistant
Presley Montgomery, Support Services Coordinator





Catherine McAuley Center
Working together for an inclusive community

Catherine McAuley Center

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Main Line: 319-363-4993

cmc-cr.org

www.PlaceOfWelcome.org

“We go along in our normal daily lives, and we don't always stop to think about all the services we provide that are so critical that, without them, we would be a very different place.”

– Susan Ovel,
A Place of Welcome
Campaign Co-chair