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Providing Help. Creating Hope. *Serving All.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland wins Catholic Charities USA's \$1 million Innovation Challenge

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Sept. 22, 2020 –

Catholic Charities USA today announced the awardees of its \$1 million Innovation Challenge, naming Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland the winner of its large agency category.

As stated on Catholic Charities USA's (CCUSA) website, the Innovation Challenge was unveiled in September 2019 as a way to encourage "member agencies within the Catholic Charities network to propose a fresh solution toward alleviating, reducing or eliminating poverty. The awardees will receive a combined \$1 million to invest in their respective innovative programs."

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland will receive \$333,333 to launch the Max Kolbe Program (MAX), an enhanced, certified peer support program that incorporates job training, community collaboration and social enterprise to help individuals in poverty struggling with addiction.

"I'm very happy that we've received this award, especially because it's going to help us serve more people on the road to recovery and enable us to equip and empower other Catholic Charities to do likewise in their diocese," said Patrick Gareau, president and CEO of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland. "I'm especially proud of our team for all the hard work they did to make this a reality, including everyone behind the scenes who worked on our proposal and video content, as well as the colleagues who joined me on the panel for the Finals Show."

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland currently offers a Peer Recovery Support program in Summit County, in which peer recovery coaches meet clients in crisis—including in emergency rooms and courts—and offer immediate assistance, hope and mentorship as clients begins recovery. MAX will expand upon that program and offer peer recovery supporter certification, specialized field training and employment to those in recovery still struggling with poverty.

MAX will also be piloted in two counties, and Catholic Charities will develop an interactive website containing training materials that Catholic Charities nationwide can access in order to replicate the program in their communities.

During its online presentation, CCUSA also announced the other winning agencies of its Innovation Challenge, which included Catholic Charities of Omaha and Catholic Charities West

Virginia, for the small and medium agency categories. The six remaining agencies that did not win the challenge did not go home empty-handed, however. President and CEO of CCUSA Sister Donna Markham, OP, announced that each remaining agency would be awarded \$100,000 to help launch and expand its innovative program.

“These awards are a testament to our strong commitment to exploring inventive ways to meet the increasing needs of our brothers and sisters who depend on Catholic Charities agencies for help and hope,” Markham said in a press release. “We are excited to see how these programs progress and look forward to assessing their impact on promoting paths out of poverty and suffering.”

ABOUT

As one of the largest comprehensive health and human services organizations in the region, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland carries out Christ’s healing mission here in Northeast Ohio. Catholic Charities delivers more than 150 services at 60 locations to over 400,000 individuals each year – providing help and creating hope for people of every race and religion throughout the eight counties in the Diocese of Cleveland.

For more information, visit our website at <https://ccdocle.org>

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