



Celebrating

YEARS

of IMPACT

Summer 2021

UPDATE ON COVID PROTOCOLS

As the world starts to recover from the disruptions of the pandemic, CCC does as well. As of June 1, we no longer require clients to make an appointment to shop and our client numbers are increasing weekly. We are equally happy to welcome back many of our long-standing volunteers to work one-on-one with clients and help to process our high clothing donation levels.

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LOOKING BACK AT 40 YEARS

As Community Clothes Closet turned 40, I imagined how our existence has positively affected the Fox Valley. In 40 years, we've helped over 100,000 friends and neighbors, giving them a new start and helping them use their limited income for other basic needs like food and shelter. It may be difficult to see the long-term effects of our mission, but we know that with your help people have felt safer, stayed healthy, gotten jobs and performed better in school.

This impact was only possible because of your compassion and understanding that the right clothing can change a life.

While proud of the significance of this anniversary, we continue to plan for the future. It is with this in mind that we introduce the **40 YEARS OF IMPACT Giving Campaign**. Please consider supporting our mission with a donation today to honor 40 years of free clothing to all in need. Any donor – individual, family or business- that gives \$400 or more will (with permission) have their name listed as a 40 YEARS OF IMPACT donor on a large wall display near the Shopping Floor that celebrates CCC's 40th anniversary.

From myself, our clients, board members and team – thank you for your continued assistance as we meet the urgent and evolving needs of the future.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Jones".

Executive Director

CELEBRATING A BIT OF CCC HISTORY

MARCH 1976 – Rosalie Misco borrowed \$80 from her church to start the Christian Clothes Closet, mainly to assist residents at the Outagamie County Health Center. During the first six months, 3,548 people received 24,712 items.



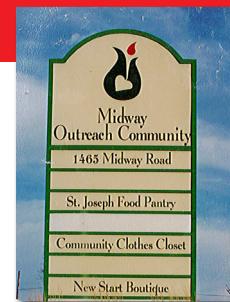
JULY 1980 – Christian Clothes Closet is renamed Community Clothes Closet and became a registered non-profit in the former St. Joseph's School on S. Elm Street, Appleton.



AUGUST 1987 – CCC moved to Appleton Street, Appleton. Bank balance is \$2,230 and 23% of families served were refugees.



OCTOBER 1992 – The first CCC newsletter published.



NOVEMBER 1995 – An anonymous donor offered a building site for an expanded CCC Facility.



NOVEMBER 1996 – CCC moved to its current location on Midway Road.



SEPTEMBER 1998 – Part-time Executive Director was hired and was the first paid staff person.

JUNE 2001 – Gunderson Cleaners began accepting donations.



JULY 2007 – Cool for School introduced, providing new school outfits for 572 kids.

DECEMBER 2015 – PajamaRama debuted, offering kids new PJs, a book, blanket and pillow.



MARCH 2020 – CCC suspended operations for 10 weeks, due to coronavirus.



JUNE 2020 – After reopening, CCC experienced record volume of clothing and home goods donations.

MARCH 2021 – CCC assumes programming for Operation Cinderella, a local non-profit, providing prom dresses to underserved high school girls.

JUNE 2021 – As CCC celebrates its 40th anniversary, plans are in place to convert to renewable energy by the end of the year.

ROSALIE MISCO, VISIONARY

Recently, we had a chance to sit down with Rosalie Misco to talk about how she began the Christian Clothes Closet (now Community Clothes Closet). With a bright smile and giving spirit, Rose had many inspiring memories and insights to share. At the beginning, two occurrences came together to bring CCC to life. Rose's church was charged with developing an outreach program to help the community and she suspected there was a need for free and functional clothing for the less fortunate.

At the time, Rose cleaned a few homes for extra money and one of her clients was Clare Kiepke, the volunteer coordinator at the Outagamie County Health Center. After hearing Rose's idea for a community closet, she helped secure a site in the center for the project. "That is a wonderful memory, having someone step up to help as we had no funds to pay rent," she shared.

With a small loan from her church and one government grant, there wasn't money for advertising to gain clothing donations. "I wrote many Letters to the Editor in the Post Crescent to get the word out. And it worked!" The CCC grew quickly and after four years, it was time to pass the operation on to the capable hands of the Church Women United group. But first, Rose changed the name to Community Clothes Closet. "I wanted to keep "CCC" in the name."

Rose built a strong organization and surprisingly, much of the structure is still in place 40 years later. Both the original and current CCC invite clients in to shop Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays after referral from another social service agency. All clothing and home items remain free of charge. The need for free clothing continues. And perhaps most importantly, volunteers are the backbone of Community Clothes Closet. "We never had an issue finding and keeping volunteers. Everyone got along and pitched in. We knew what we were doing was so helpful to so many."

When asked about her legacy, Rose didn't want to take credit. "I am grateful to God for the gift of self-discipline. I didn't go to college but I stick to things. I know how to get things done." We couldn't agree more, Rose.



THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD FOUNDATION

As most women know, it is hard to overstate the positive effect of a functional and well-fitting undergarment. CCC provides approximately 3,000 bras each year, often a priority for many of our clients. The actual need is likely double that number, if we were able to stock most bra sizes at all times and are working towards increasing funding and inventory. This client story illustrates the impact of a good bra.

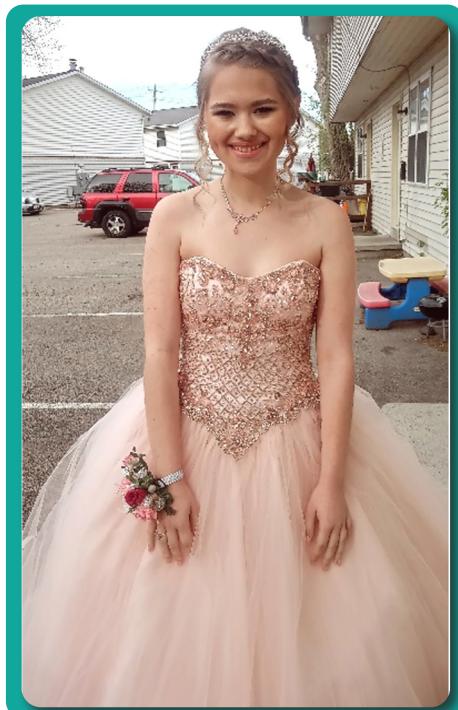
Recently, a 60-year old woman came to CCC after her family's home was destroyed. She didn't have a bra to wear and was very uncomfortable being in public without the proper support. She shopped for many things for her entire family including bedding, pillows and clothing. But the items she was most thankful for were several bras in her size. "I didn't want to come here today but am so glad I did. This is a light in a very dark week for us," she said.



MAKING PROM A REALITY

This spring, the team at CCC was asked to assume all programming for Operation Cinderella, a local organization that provides high school girls in need with free prom attire. After determining the program matched our mission, we were full steam ahead and moved thousands of new prom dresses to our building. In April, we welcomed very grateful young women in to shop for their perfect dresses, handbag, shoes and accessories.

This Cinderella shared, "I feel like a princess! Once I got the right dress on, it was awe-inspiring. I can't describe how special I feel. Thank you so much to everyone who helped make this possible!"



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"Congrats on your 40th anniversary! St. Joseph Food Program appreciates our partnership with the Community Clothes Closet.

Programs like the New Start Boutique, Cool for School, and PajamaRama offer clothing while also providing dignity to financially insecure households."

— Monica Clare, Executive Director, St. Joseph Food Program

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OUR MISSION: Provide free clothing to all people in need.

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2020 - WHAT A YEAR

Last year required quick thinking, flexibility and a renewed sense of purpose. With a healthy dose of 'we are all in this together' thrown in. Through the changes, Community Clothes Closet provided services to families and individuals in need. Programs include:

The Shopping Floor provides new and gently used clothing and home goods like bedding and pillows. In 2020, we served 3,619 individuals with this program

New Start Boutique supports job seekers with interview and career appropriate clothing. Last year, we assisted 71 job seekers.

Cool for School provides a complete set of new school clothes and shoes for at-risk children. In 2020, the event was low contact and served 281

PajamaRama teaches children ages 2-12 the importance of healthy bedtime routines and celebrates the joy of reading before bedtime. Last year, the event hosted 236 children with low contact pick up.

Baby Kits provide essential newborn items for new parents. In 2020, 26 Baby Kits were distributed providing more than 1,000 newborn diapers and clothing to new parents.



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"As LEAVEN identifies the financial needs of individuals and families in crisis, we appreciate CCC as a resource for clothing. For people struggling to make ends meet, CCC's free, quality clothing helps them stretch their limited resources and hold onto their dignity. Happy 40th CCC!"

– Mary Parsons, Executive Director, LEAVEN

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