

Dorothy Bennett Mercy Center  
273 Willoughby Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11205

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# Dorothy Bennett Mercy Center

**SUMMER 2019**

Dear Friends of DBMC,

Warmer days are finally here! This past winter was not too harsh, but we are definitely thankful for the nice weather.

Our families enjoyed turkeys and Thanksgiving food items donated by Sacred Heart Parish of Bayside, Queens. They also donated toys for the children of the After School Program. We are extremely thankful to them for remembering us year after year!

2019 has been a time of transition. We welcomed a new After School Program Coordinator, April Davis, and new After School Counselors as well. They come to us with much experience and eagerness in expanding and updating the After School and Summer Program.

April has years of experience in After School Programs and Youth Programs as a Coordinator. She is also an active member of our local Church and is a parent herself. She has had many wonderful ideas such as cooking days and a treasure chest for rewarding good behavior.

We have also reestablished the relationship with Berkeley College and have 4 fantastic interns assisting us in the After School Program. Their talents and energy are much appreciated by the children and staff.

We held our first Wine and Cheese Party as a fundraiser and as a way for our new neighbors to come and get to know the Center. Being that it is our 24th year of service to the community, we wanted to do something different and welcome everyone to our “Small Center with a Big Heart.”

We also planned and began a fun-filled summer program. It lasts 6 weeks and include trips, academics, and outdoor play. We have interns and SYEP workers helping out as well.

We have upgraded our website so please visit us at [www.dbmcenter.org](http://www.dbmcenter.org) and check it out! It was created by a very awesome individual, Diana Sim. She captured the essence of the Center and the work that we do.

Lastly, I want to thank our Board of Directors for all their support this past year as I transitioned to Executive Director. Sadly, our Chairperson Patrick Morgan passed away on July 5th. He supported the Center immensely with his time, compassion, love, and dedication. He exemplified all that the Center represents. He is truly missed.

Best Regards,

*Marcela Cuevas*  
Executive Director

## A Note of Gratitude...

To the following foundations, agencies, and persons who have generously provided support this past year:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Al & Peggy DeMatteis Family Foundation | The Morgan Family                                 |
| Apple Bank for Savings                 | Ridgewood Savings Bank                            |
| AT&T Corp. Emp. Giving Program         | Sacred Heart Parish of Bayside                    |
| Bonamassa Family                       | Sisters of Mercy, Mid-Atlantic Community          |
| Maria Cirillo                          | TD Bank   |
| Clem Utz Snacks, Inc.                  | The Hyde & Watson Foundation                      |
| Maureen Decker                         | The Joseph & Laura Wortman Foundation (Cititrust) |
| Hoyt Transportation Corp.              | The Pinkerton Foundation                          |
| Kiwanus Club Parkway East              | The RTS Family Foundation                         |
| Mercy Home for Children                | Honey & Michael Theogene                          |

Also, a special word of thanks to the students of New Visions H.S., St. Joseph’s College, Catholic Charities WLG Program, and other volunteers for their dedicated service to the children in the After School Program.

Deep gratitude to all others who have donated their time and services to the Center.



# NEW STAFF AT DBMC!!



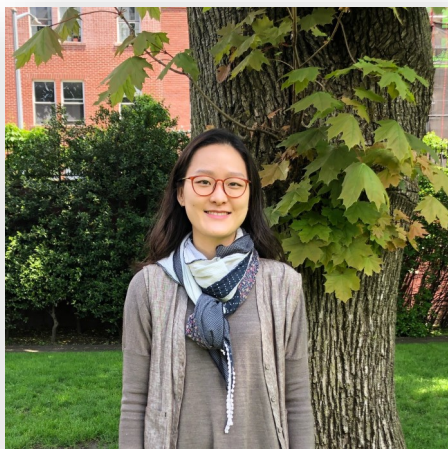
We welcome our new After School Youth Program Coordinator, April Davis. She is a member of the local community and a parent herself. She has brought fun activities such as cooking days, making smoothies, and educational indoor and outdoor games. She has years of experience supervising after school programs and is familiar with the Dept. of Education. She is an advocate for our parents at the local schools and focuses on improving the grades and reading levels of all the children who come through our doors. We also have two new counselors, Brenda Rodriguez and Jillian Torres. They are both members of the local Church and community and are college students as well. They both bring energy and a fun-loving spirit to the Center and the children enjoy having them help them with homework and arts & crafts. Radaysia McCormick continues to be part our DBMC family for almost a year now. Her great leadership skills and positive energy are admired by all!

# NEW INTERNS AT DBMC!!



This year, we rebuilt our connection with Berkeley College and obtained 4 wonderful interns who work with the children in the After School Program and the Summer Program. It is hard to distinguish them from the staff because they have shown such great leadership and proactive engagement with all the children. Sean, Shaina, Sharon, and Soleydi are more than just interns at our Center, they are part of our little family now. They constantly show how much they care for our children and we appreciate them. Thank you Berkeley interns!

# NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE!!



We had the pleasure of having this fantastic person, Diana Sim, work here in the Center in our After School Program. She also took the time to rebuild our website so that it can be more functional and inclusive of who we really are. Although she was overqualified, she saw the need and dedicated whatever free time she had to revamp it so it better reflects the services we provide and who we are. Although she has moved on to a teaching position at a College, we are extremely thankful to her for how wonderfully she recreated our website through the vision that was presented to her. We wish her well in her future endeavors and hope she keeps in touch! Please visit our new website at [www.dbmcenter.org](http://www.dbmcenter.org)

# THE ADVENTURE OF KIDS TALES



The Kids Tales instructors dropped off published books that they put together with the writings of some of our children. Dan, Caitlin, and Obi work with our children for 5 sessions in the summer program helping them write their own stories which are then published. Kids Tales was founded by a kid for kids and is a non-profit organization that “teaches children who don’t have writing opportunities outside of school, how to create, compose, and publish their own short story. Kids Tales gives every kid the opportunity to write creatively, become a published author, and have a voice.” All the instructors are teenagers who are trained to teach the workshops. They are all passionate and dedicated to helping kids. We are thankful to have such exceptional youth work with our children.

# AMAZON SMILE

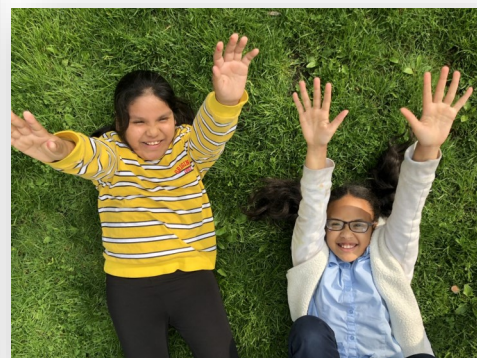


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# AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM



It's amazing how much our children take part in in the few hours a day they are here in our After School Program. Aside from the homework help they receive every day, we also enrich their lives through hands on activities such as finger painting, making their own yogurt parfaits and rice krispies valentine's treats, gardening, making healthy smoothies, Easter egg hunting, and playing in the garden (pictured from the left to right). Our Staff, interns, and volunteers ensure the children are safe and enjoying the fun and educational activities that the Center offers.

# AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM



Bryan (pictured on the left) was so excited to pick a prize from the Treasure chest! He received 5 gold stars for the week and therefore was able to choose a little reward. Justin (pictured on the right) was eager to finish making his very own pizza so he could eat his creation. Sayed and Alex (pictured with Justin) were eagerly waiting as well. These are two of the new ideas our new Coordinator implemented in the After School. We also began serving lunch once a week since a parent, Violet, expressed how the children do not eat well in school. Many parents donated lunch items for the children or donated towards it. Some donated fruit and juice boxes as well. We are thankful to them and to all that donate to us!

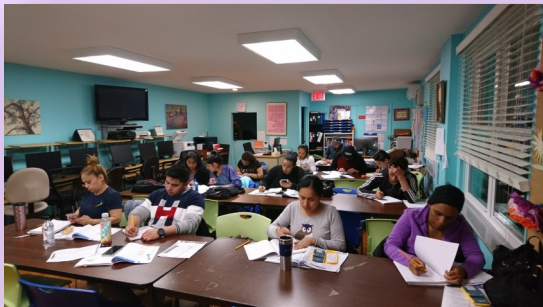
# THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS



Once again, we are ever so grateful to Sacred Heart Parish of Bayside for donating Thanksgiving goodies and turkeys to our families and for providing great Christmas gifts for our After School children. The children loved their presents! Parents donated a Christmas tree to the Center once again! Thank you Parents! We celebrated the Holy Season of Christmas with song, the nativity play, treats, and a special guest, Santa Claus! The children cheered with delight when Santa walked in with stocking stuffers for them. Even a few board members joined in on the fun (pictured on the bottom right, Anne Kreitsch, Santa, Adina Johnson.) Thank you Walter Kreitsch for being Santa's little helper! The Center is truly blessed with wonderful people that care and support the programs and families we serve.



# TASC/GED Classes    Computer Tech Classes



Our TASC/GED students are studying hard in preparation to take the Exam. They come twice a week after their full days of work to better their future and their families potential as well. Good luck students!



The morning Computer Tech Class in English, completed another cycle of classes. Denise (pictured on the left) and Patricia (pictured on the right) received certificates for MS Word and Windows. We are proud of them and thankful to Ms. Anita Bailey for providing the lessons for them. Classes are taught once a week by our wonderful IT instructor Anita.

## Golden Age Club for Seniors



Our seniors celebrated Christmas and exchanged gifts at their annual Christmas party (picture on the left). They also sang some holiday hymns and shared stories of their own family Christmas traditions and celebrations. Our multi-talented office assistant, Jessica Cortes, held a spa day for the senior ladies (picture on the right). Sylvia (to the right of Jessica) was so happy to be getting her nails done. Thank you Jessica!

### CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR CALENDAR RAFFLE WINNERS!!

April 1: Carmelita Blake; April 3: Desmond O’Leary; April 5: Tomasita R. Viera (Golden Age Senior); April 8: Terry & Pat Daly; April 10: Sr. Frances Picone (donated it back); April 12: Sr. Mary O’Connor; April 15: Richard Sheehan; April 17: Lorraine Streib; April 19: Sr. Dorothy Flynn; April 22: Lou Comunelli; April 24: Sr. Kathleen Quinn; April 26: Sr. Linda Esposito

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE: [WWW.DBMCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.DBMCENTER.ORG)  
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK and TWITTER  
SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL



# A Tribute to Pat



### An Example of Loving and Giving

Sometimes blessings come from unexpected places or people. Such was the case with Patrick Morgan.

More than 14 years ago, Mary Morgan, asked us what we did here at the Center. After finding out, she gave us her husband’s telephone number because she said that he was interested in teaching English as a Second Language classes to the immigrants who were enrolled in our program. Patrick lived in Belle Harbor, worked for AT&T in New Jersey and Dorothy Bennett Mercy Center in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. To any normal person, this would be a challenge; but to Patrick, it was an opportunity to teach and empower adults. He loved it and they, in turn, loved him.

Patrick had a passion to help others. His generous heart and his brilliant mind enabled him to see beyond the immediate challenges and see the positive outcome of any problem. After joining the DBMC Board of Directors, he devoted his talents to improve our programs, to reach beyond our present and to begin to expand our services.

Finances have always been an issue for small non-profit agencies, such as DBMC. Thus, we began a Fundraising Committee and elected Patrick as the chairperson. Our Annual Benefit at the Belle Harbor Yacht Club was his first fundraising event, and our 13<sup>th</sup> one will take place this year on Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup>. Patrick always took the welfare of the children and adults to heart. He requested to have additional lighting in front of the Center so the adults coming to night classes would feel safe. He also suggested we add security cameras outside and energy-efficient HVAC units. He was always thinking of everyone’s safety and comfort at our “Small Center with a Big Heart”.

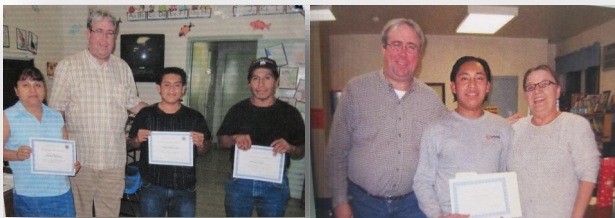
Patrick invited some of his friends to join the Board and support this Mercy Mission. Who could say no to a man who gave so much to others?

It is said when you die, your legacy lives on in the lives of those you have loved and have touched. That is a very large and diverse crowd: his wonderful wife, Mary, his children, Jerry and Teresa, grandchildren, friends, and all the children and adults involved in the Dorothy Bennett Mercy Center. All his effort put into assisting the Center will always be deeply appreciated.

Patrick was indeed a blessing to all who had the privilege of knowing him. May he rest in peace.



Pat was honored with the Mercy Spirit Award in 2013 at our 7th Annual Benefit for his boundless generosity and concern for others.



Pat volunteered as an ESL teacher for years to the adult students at DBMC. His passion and dedication to them was remarkable. They all enjoyed the weekly classes because of Pat’s detailed and dynamic way of teaching. Beatrice Ponelle was a great help as well, to him and to the students.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- After School begins again on Thursday, Sept. 5th
- 13th Annual Benefit — Friday, October 11th