

# Dominican Center for Women

2470 West Locust Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53206



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**PAID**  
Milwaukee, WI

## Amani Neighborhood Beautification



**Dominican Center Board Of Directors:** Dennis Scherr, Chair; John Debbink, Treasurer; Mary Howard Johnstone, OP, Secretary; Linda Bedford; Brandon Culpepper; Connie Kordsmeier; Arlene Patterson; Sarah Schneider; Barbara Smith; Janine Wagner; Reverend Mary Martha Kannass, Emerita Director; Patricia Rogers, OP, Ex Officio



# Supporting Community Change

Dominican Center | [www.dominican-center.org](http://www.dominican-center.org) | June 2018



## Thank You TO OUR *Generous* Donors

The Dominican Center is grateful for the generous support of our donors. Your donations make a difference in the lives of the residents of the Amani neighborhood.

During the past several months, the Dominican Center received grants from the following organizations:

- BMO Harris Bank
- Christ King Catholic Parish Human Concerns Committee
- Congregation Sinai
- Erica P. John Fund, Inc.
- Green Bay Packers Foundation
- Herb Kohl Philanthropies
- Irish Fest Foundation, Inc.
- Kohl's Hometown Giving Program
- Mary of Magdala Catholic Church
- Park Bank Foundation
- Patrick & Anna M. Cudahy Fund
- Pieper Electric Inc.
- R. A. Stevens Family Foundation
- Ralph Evinrude Family Foundation
- Saint Eugene Congregation
- Sinsinawa Dominicans
- St. James Congregation
- St. John Vianney Congregation
- St. Joseph Congregation
- St. Matthews Congregation
- Three Holy Women Parish
- WE Energies Foundation
- Windhover Foundation, Inc.
- Woman's Club of Wisconsin Foundation, Inc.
- Zilber Family Charitable Foundation

## “Hat Trick” Spring Event

Your generosity made our fundraiser one of our most successful to date—even with the sleet and snow!

Over 130 smiling faces in vibrant hats attended the Dominican Center's third hat-themed spring fundraiser, “Hat Trick”, at the Wisconsin Club on April 15. The day included an array of raffle items, a photo booth with amusing hats, a delicious lunch, engaging speakers, and a performance by the All Saints Gospel Choir. See the video shown at Hat Trick featuring the experiences of an adult education student, homeowner, and Amani volunteer at [www.dominican-center.org](http://www.dominican-center.org).

The success of this fundraiser is the result of generous and thoughtful friends like you. A special thank you to our sponsors: Northwestern Mutual Foundation, Children's

Hospital of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Kordsmeier Family, Zilber LTD., Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren, s.c., Brewers Community Foundation, Inc., and Milwaukee Bucks Foundation.

A big thank you to the fundraiser committee members: Connie Kordsmeier, Brandon Culpepper, Linda Bedford, Connie Poth, Kathleen Brady, Sister Patricia Rogers, and Alisha Klapps Balistreri.

Our fiscal year ends on June 30. If you wish to contribute to the momentum, please consider an online donation to the Dominican Center at [www.dominican-center.org/make-a-donation.html](http://www.dominican-center.org/make-a-donation.html).



## Notes from the Executive Director

Sr. Patricia Rogers



Dear Dominican Center Friends,

Over the past months I have been keenly aware of the many ways you gift the Dominican Center (DC): volunteering, donating, tutoring, providing sponsorships, and being lifelong friends. These relationships are, and continue to be, very important to me personally and to the Dominican Center's mission. Thank you for your loyal dedication.

Each month the DC staff reviews our plans and goals to maintain focus, measure progress, and make adjustments as needed. Through this process we have determined that our space limits our outreach and fragments our effectiveness. As we explore building opportunities, we are seeking input from residents and partners to help bring together resources and services for the Amani Revitalization Plan. Proven sustainable change starts with and supports community assets and brings community services together in one location.

As we continue to explore building possibilities, documenting community assets, and planning with residents and partners, we welcome your ideas and prayers.

Your attendance at our Fundraiser, "Hat Trick", was outstanding. Thank you!

Sr. Patricia

## New Roles at the Dominican Center!

### Richard Diaz, Amani Community Organizer



"I see the Dominican Center as the anchor to people trying to change things in Amani.

Richard Diaz

Richard Diaz, Dominican Center's newest Amani Community Organizer, is engaging residents and partners in the 2017 Amani Revitalization Plan's top priorities: neighborhood safety, housing and employment, education, and family well-being.

Richard understands the importance of civic engagement through his work in political organizing and voter registration, specifically for first time voters. He previously worked for Dominican Center as an organizer for Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP), where he supported cross collaboration and a unified voice among Amani resident groups. He also co-wrote the 2014 Amani Revitalization Plan.

Richard likes to cook, eat, spend time with loved ones, play basketball, and engage in games like chess and dominoes.

### Jon Debbink, New Board Member



"[I appreciate] Sr. Patricia's no-nonsense approach..."

Jon Debbink

Jon Debbink, a retired and active community member, mentors 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders in math, volunteers at Community Warehouse, is a board member for the Pewaukee Scholarship Fund, and is a high school instructor for Secure Futures.

Jon's passion for financing and math makes him a perfect fit as Dominican Center's Board Treasurer. He will help with financial oversight and regulatory compliance. When asked why he joined Dominican Center's board, Jon said, "Sister Patricia, her no-nonsense approach to improving people lives and the Amani neighborhood."

Jon enjoys golfing, reading, traveling to the beach, and spending time with his wife of 33 years and three sons.

### Janine Wagner, New Board Member



"[This] ...gives me a chance to use my skills and serve others.

Janine Wagner

"Being on the Dominican Center Board gives me a chance to use my skills and serve others," said Janine, who will be supporting Human Resources while on the board. Her aunt devoted her life to the Dominican order, so Janine felt an instant connection with the Dominican Center when she heard it was started by two Dominican sisters.

Janine Wagner, now retired, has a natural interest in technology, which she has explored over the last 20 years. She is also passionate about the financials of companies and creating stability for people through life insurance.

For fun, Janine enjoys running marathons, golfing, biking, backpacking, and travel.



# Adult Education Program Updates



Regina Boyd



Doris Gant



Beverly Haynes



Darrien Tramel, Nefetera Porter, Corey Newsom Jr., and Shemeka Owens

## Congratulations, Graduates!

Congratulations to Dominican Center’s former adult education program students who are celebrating graduation and progression in their educational journey!

Regina Boyd graduated with her High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) on December 18, 2017 and is now pursuing her Associates Degree in Human Resources at MATC. Doris Gant received her General Education Diploma (GED) through Dominican Center and graduated on May 11, 2018 with her Associates Degree in Childcare from MATC. Beverly Haynes received her GED on February 22, 2018 and will be pursuing a degree in Health and Human Services at Bryant & Stratton College. Darrien Tramel, Corey Newsom Jr., Shemeka Owens, and Nefetera Porter graduated from MATC’s HSED program on May 23, 2018. All will be continuing their education: Darrien—electrical work, Corey—drama and video production, Shemeka—cosmetology, and Nefetera—nursing. We wish you well as you move forward!

Barbara Wells, Dominican Center’s Education Coordinator, said, “Dominican Center is a safe space beyond the education program.” She reaches out to former students every Thursday to check on their progress, provide encouragement, and connect them to resources.

“Ms. Barbara would support me in math problems over the phone or meet me at the library, even after the program. I’m thankful for her every day,” states Regina.

Thank you to the students, volunteer tutors, and staff who support each student’s education goals. Classes ended on June 7 and will begin again on September 5.

Are you interested in being a volunteer tutor in the fall of 2018? For more information, please email Barbara Wells at [barbara@dominican-center.org](mailto:barbara@dominican-center.org).



## Amani Neighborhood Beautification

Saturday, May 19, 2018 was a powerful day for building neighborhood capacity. Below are the activities that took place with the support of residents, volunteers, and community partners. Thank you! See photos on page 4.

### Bloom & Groom

The Dominican Center hosted its seventh Annual Bloom & Groom Plant Sale, which provided affordable flowers to support neighborhood beautification and strengthen connections among residents. The plant sale was sponsored by Lowe’s Home Improvement Centers, City of Milwaukee Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation, and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation.

### Community Clean-Up

In celebration of Earth Day, over 50 volunteers participated in the Amani neighborhood clean-up. Thank you to our volunteers, Amani community churches, and Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful organization for making Amani brighter and cleaner.

### Habitat for Humanity’s Rock the Block

Rock the Block is a volunteer event that Habitat for Humanity uses to reconnect the community through repair and neighborhood beautification projects. Six homes on the 2500 block of North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street received new porches, steps, sidewalks, siding repair, and lawn care, sponsored by Northwestern Mutual. The day also included a block party for both residents and volunteers with food and games.