



Franciscan Center for Social Concern
3261 W. State Road
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24-FCSC-FANEWS

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRANCISCAN CENTER FOR SOCIAL CONCERN AT ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY
www.sbu.edu/FCSC

Furthering Francis

Experiences and Encounters

By Alice Miller Nation



The theme of this newsletter is Experiences and Encounters. The longer I minister at St. Bonaventure, the more I understand Francis' understanding of relationships and encounters with others. You will read articles about the many ways our students have rich experiences and encounters with people they never imagined they would meet.

In this newsletter, you'll meet Jenna, Anargha and Audrey, SBU students who found their way to the Franciscan Center for Social Concern. Each was looking for something different and somehow found just what they needed for their personal and professional growth.

And I am so pleased to introduce you to Hiryu (Mike, as he is known to all on campus) Waseda. I first met Mike when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the university to shut down and send students home. As an international student at Bona's, he stayed on campus throughout the pandemic. He began volunteering at the Warming House as a way to say "thank you" to the university



Legos and smiles: Bona Buddies is the largest youth mentoring program in Cattaraugus County with more than 70 buddies matched with 84 SBU student mentors.

community for their hospitality and compassion during that difficult time. Mike will tell you the rest of the story, but I am so pleased to now be Mike's colleague within University Ministries.

I love to hear the anticipation of the Warming House meal coordinators as they leave campus each afternoon. If you find yourself in the McGinley-Carney Center Monday through Thursday, you will hear the squeals of

our Bona Buddies playing with their mentors. A quiet evening in my office with a student discerning a year of service or graduate school often brings me back to the questions and ponderings I had as a young adult. I get to experience true delight when I show a grant acceptance letter to a student who worked diligently on a grant application for the Warming House or Bona Buddies.

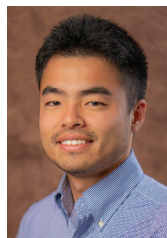
If we are truly honest with ourselves, the Warming House, Bona Buddies, the SBU Food Pantry and each of the outreach programs is not only about caring for those in our community and world that need support and assistance. The FCSC is also about offering opportunities for SBU students to learn leadership skills within the Franciscan tradition. It's about letting students make mistakes and learning about and talking about the mistakes that offer lessons in humility, compassion, wisdom and integrity.

As we begin a season of gratefulness and giving, I'd invite each of us to reflect on the values of compassion, wisdom and integrity. May this be a season of offering hope and light to a world desperately looking for both.

Alice Miller Nation is director of the Franciscan Center for Social Concern.

I Got Called For This One

By Mike (Hiryu) Waseda, '21, '23
Assistant Director, Franciscan Center for Social Concern



I still vividly recall the day I received the job offer, and my excitement was palpable. It's an absolute privilege for me to say that my job as assistant director of the FCSC is something I'm passionate about. I've always yearned for a career where I can make a difference in someone's life through eye-opening experiences. Knowing that my role and this job centered around assisting students in the FCSC was more than I could imagine.

Being an FCSC staff member right after graduating from St. Bonaventure makes my role a bit unique. Sometimes students remind me of my own experience during my very first days at Bona's. I feel their excitement about embarking on a new chapter, making new friends, and becoming a part of the Bona family. I also keenly understand their struggles and challenges, because I first arrived as an international student from Tokyo, Japan, entering a completely different culture and environment.

I started at the Warming House when the COVID-19 pandemic began. I casually began as a volunteer, which truly put me on the track of establishing the unbreakable bond with the Warming House and other FCSC programs today.

What initially began as a casual undertaking has evolved into something I can now professionally pass on to the SBU students of future generations. I believe that I was called to this important role to not only sustain our wonderful community but also to further enhance my own experiences.

I'm also passionate about continuing to develop current programs and practices within the FCSC. After talking to many parents at Orientation for incoming students last summer, I felt even more responsibility. If I had kids, I would also want them to have the opportunity to experience and learn to the best of their abilities, gaining something unique from their time at Bona's.

Seeing students achieve success brings me great joy. The Warming House and all the other FCSC programs hold such special significance in the history of our university and in the hearts and experiences of our students. I am committed to maintaining our rich outreach programs and helping them to grow. Understanding that my role also includes maintaining the heritage of Franciscan values and experiences at Bona's for future Bonnies motivates me to continue working diligently.

Your support means a lot more to us than anyone might realize, but I truly understand its significance and value. Thank you!



Memories of Home

By Anargha Ganguly, '26
Finance Major and Computer Science Minor

I serve as an administrative assistant at the Franciscan Center for Social Concern. Last year I had the privilege of being approached by Alice Miller Nation, who, upon reviewing my resume, recognized the freelance tech work I undertook during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The moment I learned about the Warming House, I was captivated.

The Warming House resonated with me on a personal level, evoking memories of a similar practice deeply ingrained in the Sikh community back home in Pune (near Mumbai in India). In our Gurudwara, which is not just a temple but a spiritual sanctuary, we embrace a compassionate tradition of providing free meals to all, regardless of someone's background or beliefs. This system thrives on a profound sense of faith and unity.

The parallels I observed between the Warming House and this cherished Sikh tradition increased my interest in working with the FCSC. I serve as the technical backbone: I collect and organize data used for grants, ensure students are trained in child protection if they volunteer in the Bona Buddies youth mentoring program, and generally take care of all the IT tasks within the FCSC. I also contribute to our sustainability and growth through grant writing. This involves crafting compelling narratives that capture our vision and impact, effectively communicating our goals to potential supporters.

I am dedicated to the Warming House's success, ensuring we continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute my skills and dedication to such a noble cause.

Opening Doors Through the FCSC

By Jenna Langle, '24
Educational Studies Major and English Minor



I am a fifth-year senior at St. Bonaventure. I have spent four years at SBU trying to find my place and it wasn't until the end of my fourth year that I finally did. I came to the FCSC looking for a summer job and it turned out to be so much

more. During the summer I worked for the FCSC in the Farm to Table program.

This program is 10 weeks long and consists of working mornings at Canticle Farm and afternoons at the Warming House. I chose this job because I love farming and cooking, but throughout my experience I gained a passion for service.

Being able to make warm meals for people and being able to use fresh, nutritious produce from the farm for those who don't always have access to it was inspiring. I have developed some really great relationships with my coworkers and the Warming House guests. It

makes my day when I come in and see their faces and I try to put a smile on them.

I also learned how to portion food to feed 120-plus people. At the Warming House, we always serve a balanced meal of fruit, vegetables, starch, protein, and, of course, dessert. I love that we hit the major food groups because sometimes the meal the guests have with us is their only one that day. I loved Canticle Farm and the Warming House so much that I continued with both jobs as the fall semester began.

The FCSC opened many doors and opportunities for me. During the fall midterm break, I went to the St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia. This was a life-altering experience. The St. Francis Inn is a soup kitchen that serves more than 300 people a day. It also has a clothing store called Marie's Closet. From this experience I am interested in doing a year of post-graduate service.

The FCSC also introduced me to the opportunity to participate in the Franciscan Leadership Justice Conference in Washington, D.C. I learned a great deal about the environment and care for creation. One highlight was to participate in congressional visits. We spoke to the staffers about the Black Farmers Act, which is part of the Farm Bill, as well as the Environmental Justice for All Act.

Six months ago, while I was looking for a summer job, I never imagined the direction my experiences would take me. I have found support, employment, friends, family and experience through the FCSC. I am excited to see what comes next!

The Warming House Warms Hearts

By Alexis Serio, '27
Communication, Social Justice and Advocacy Major, Spanish Minor

As my freshman year kicked off, I was given the opportunity to volunteer at the Warming House. There was something inviting about having this early opportunity to make a difference in the community. I quickly found my place and although it was my first time there, I felt at home with the generous students of SBU and the folks who came to eat.

The Warming House not only serves the people who eat there, but it also serves those who make the meals. It's a special feeling to prepare



a meal that you won't be eating and to see the faces light up of those who are presented with the meal.

I knew going into this experience that I would gain something. For me, I saw how teamwork makes the Warming House possible. There are multiple volunteers per shift, and everyone has a job, whether you are at the sink or standing at the stove. You quickly learn how to help in any way you can, and you can see yourself as a valuable part of the team.

As we hold hands and introduce ourselves to the community as the meal is served, there is an understanding that we are all one. We are a part of the St. Bonaventure

community of love and care for one another. We desire to serve one another and to give each other hope for the world around us.

I hope to get more involved with the community that the Warming House graciously serves. There is something powerful in taking the time each week to serve others, and I believe that everyone who wants to see change should take at least one trip to the Warming House to see that service in action.

The Warming House has given me a desire to be a part of something greater and helped me to be a piece of the community. No matter who you are, the Warming House is a place where judgment is thrown away and peace is welcomed in.