



**Featured Sponsored Ministry: Notre Dame Learning Center**

**Prayer Intention:** Let us pray for the children, adults and families who are served at the Notre Dame Learning Center.



**Notre Dame Learning Center is housed in the Charles Settlement House.**

The first School Sisters of Notre Dame arrived in Rochester, N.Y., in 1854, to teach the children at St. Joseph School. From that time until the early 2000s, the sisters had a strong educational presence in the city. In time, as happens in many dioceses, schools were forced to close because

of low enrollment or financial challenges. The schools in Rochester where the sisters taught were all affected by the closings. However, the SSNDs in Rochester desired to continue an educational presence in the city.

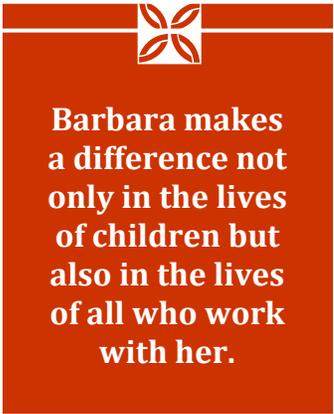
**Meeting the educational needs of the city**

After prayer, dialogue and research, the sisters realized there was a great need for an after-school tutoring program for children from nearby schools. Thus began the Notre Dame Learning Center, which provides one-on-one tutoring to children in grades 1 through 9 in the subjects of language and mathematics. A summer program is also offered for children. The 10 SSNDs in Rochester are involved with the center by writing lesson plans for the many volunteer tutors, by tutoring, by serving on the board or by administering. In addition to the tutoring program, two other programs at NDLC are offered to adults: GED preparation and computer literacy.

**Loyal Tutor**

**B**arbara Williams has been a reading and math tutor at Notre Dame Learning Center since January 2005. She tutors twice a week during the school year and also works in the summer program. Barbara is always available to help and is willing to substitute any day in any subject.

For many years, Barbara was a teacher and principal in Rochester Catholic schools. She has a strong dedication to and love for children and their education. She has always worked tirelessly to help children become successful and is a loyal supporter of the Learning Center and its mission.



## Successful Adult Learner

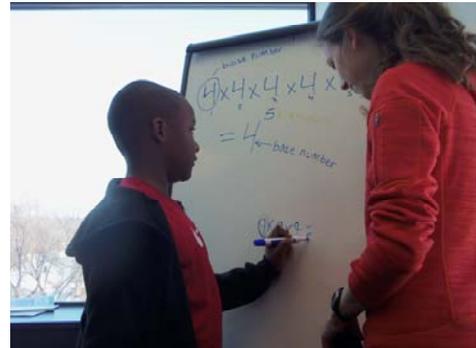
Sonia was 22 years old and the mother of two children when she applied for participation in Notre Dame Learning Center's GED program. She had had no formal education past the eighth grade, and there was some hesitancy about accepting her into the program. However, in the true SSND spirit of excluding no one from our concern, Sonia became the first adult student and was in a class by herself.

Sonia had many challenges on the road to success: She suffered partner abuse and drug/

alcohol addiction. After finally getting the counseling she needed, Sonia was determined to change her life. She attended tutoring classes two times a week and usually went a third day to work independently on a computer study program. Sonia took the New York State GED examination and passed it on her first try. She now holds a part-time job with a public relations firm and studies part time at a local community college. Sonia continues on her road to success. ■



**John Pyles, math tutor, age 87, and Jennifer Dailey, student, meet every Friday morning for additional help in math as Jennifer prepares to take her GED exam May 16 and 17.**



**DeKari Carter (left) is tutored in math by grad student Emily Wychoff from the University of Rochester.**

## New Venture



**Evelyn Breslin, SSND, director**

Mike Coniff, executive director of Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services, recently reached out to Evelyn Breslin, SSND, director of the Notre Dame Learning Center, for assistance in providing conversational English lessons to five Spanish-speaking women studying for their Certified Nursing Certificates. This initial conversation has evolved into a partnership involving three different groups in Rochester.

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An informational meeting took place at Bishop Kearney High School in Rochester. Those in attendance were Sister Evelyn, Stephania Walczak, SSND, Mike and Pippa Bianco, campus minister at Bishop Kearney. The meeting resulted in a new venture for each of the three groups: Refugee Resettlement Services, Bishop Kearney High School and the Learning Center. Students at Bishop Kearney High School will meet with the five women and plan activities to assist them with conversational English skills. The Notre Dame Learning Center will provide space for these discussions and will train the women in needed computer skills. Mike will be the coordinator of this new partnership. Again, the center is true to the SSND spirit of excluding no one from their concern. ■