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Catholic Charities Bestows Its \"Keep the Dream Alive\" Awards

Michael Sean Winters | Jan. 18, 2011 Distinctly Catholic

Yesterday, at a Mass at St. Aloysius Church here in Washington, Catholic Charities USA had a Mass at which its annual "Keep the Dream Alive" Awards were bestowed. The recipients were: Joshua DuBois, head of President Obama's Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships; Marguerite Harmon, CEO of Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona; Maria Odom, Executive Director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network; and Jean Hale, parishioner at Our Lady Queen of Peace parish in Washington. Bishop Leonard Olivier, retired auxiliary of Washington, presided at the Mass.

I do not know three of the recipients, although the program detailing their work on behalf of the poor and the outcast indicates their worthiness to receive the awards. But, I do know Mr. DuBois. One of the worries some critics of the office of Faith-Base and Neighborhood Partnerships have raised is that the office would be used to reward the administration's friends. In the event, under Mr. DuBois's leadership, politics has been kept far from the grant-awarding process. While the USCCB was opposing the administration's leading objective, health care reform, Catholic Charities was still one of the largest recipients of funds from the administration. I am sure Mr. DuBois got some flak for that, and I am equally sure that he dismissed the flak appropriately, armed with the knowledge that the Faith-Based office exists not to promote politics but to promote the good works carried on by Catholic Charities and other organizations in helping the poor and the afflicted.

Congratulations to DuBois and all the recipients. To have one's work seen as a continuation of Dr. King's mission is no small achievement.

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