

Neighbors Helping Neighbors News: September 2017



Pizza! Pizza!

The end of the month tends to be busy in the SVdP dining room, but the last day of August was the busiest in recent memory since word got out that Little Caesar's 18-wheeler Love Kitchen was parked outside on 23rd street. Jim Cusick, who works as operations manager for Little Caesar's in Sacramento, shared some of the history of its restaurant-on-wheels: "Little Caesar's Love Kitchen is a self-contained restaurant that has been rolling into underprivileged communities since 1985, feeding children, senior citizens, soup kitchens and homeless shelters across the U.S. It's exciting to be here and to see the guests get excited



about seeing the truck in the neighborhood. It travels all over the place. We're off to San Jose and then Salinas after that. We're happy to do it."

Thanks to the 300 pizzas made and donated by the Love Kitchen, we served over 800 trays to our guests during lunch service. There was a party-like buzz throughout the kitchen and dining room as volunteers, staff and guests shared their glee about pizza day. It goes to show how a simple menu of pizza, salad, fruit and a sweet treat can bring joy and levity to our community. We are grateful to have Little Caesar's as a partner and look forward to having the Love Kitchen back in our neighborhood soon!



Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Saturday, September 9th, **District Council General Membership Meeting**, Mass at 8:30 am, meeting at 9:30 am, Our Lady of Grace Church in Castro Valley.
- Monday, September 11th, 1:00 pm, **Development Committee**, Downtown Campus (1st Monday of the month).
- Monday, September 18th, **Finance Committee**, Downtown Campus, 2272 San Pablo Ave, Oakland, 4:00 pm (Monday before Board Meeting).
- Wednesday, September 20th, **Board of Trustees Meeting:** fellowship/meal at 5:30 pm followed by meeting at 6:00 pm, Downtown Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland (3rd Wednesday of the month).
- Wednesday, September 20th, **Podiatry Clinic**, 9:00 am to 11:30 am, Downtown Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland (3rd Wednesday of the month).
- Tuesday, September 26th, 1:30 pm, **Special Works Committee**, Downtown Campus (4th Tuesday of month).

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: JOYCE

Meet the new barber on campus!

"I'm here at SVdP because I want to help and be a blessing to someone. I'm a novice barber and was having a hard time finding a job at other shops, but now I see that I am more needed here. God sent me where I was needed. I am glad to be here and every Tuesday I look forward to getting up and gathering all my tools to come down to SVdP.

"I have many conversations with people here and the staff is beautiful as well. So I'm getting my experience this way in trying to become a very skilled and good barber. This is a second career for me after a long career as an AC Transit bus driver and I think I'm going to stick with this one. I love barbering and this is what I want to do."



News Briefs

- Our Women's Center needs an infusion of gently worn children's clothes in all sizes for both girls and boys. Everyone knows that kids grow out of their clothes in about a minute – why not donate those surplus children's clothes to SVdP?
- Your leftover shampoo bottles and soap from a hotel stay can be turned into a small blessing for one of our clients here at SVdP. We always need toiletries to distribute to the women, children and men we serve. So the next time you think about tossing these items, please remember our clients and donate to us instead.
- The Clothing Closet at our main West Oakland campus provides women and men with clothing, shoes and accessories. For more information about making a clothing donation and/or volunteering to help collect, sort and display Clothing Closet donations, contact John Sterns our community engagement manager. (See back page for contact information.)



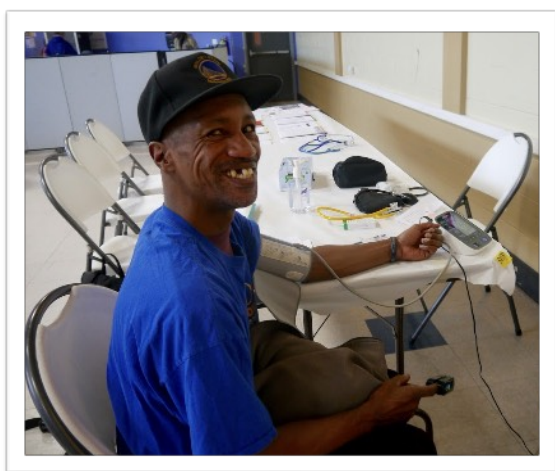
What's it Like to Be a Vincentian?

Gary Flinders has been a Vincentian for over 20 years with Church of the Assumption Conference in San Leandro. Here he shares a bit of the rich history of his involvement with the conference.

"Twenty years ago, the Assumption conference was reactivated and we used to only do home visits in San Leandro. Then there was a need requested from the Oakland area which we border upon. This was a very difficult ask for some of our conference members, but it turned out to be a wonderful growing experience. I invited some of the members to tell their stories: 'Hey, I was born and raised in Oakland and even sheltered from certain parts of it, but we are called to serve the poor and Jesus didn't talk about boundaries.' As a result of these conversations, more and more of our members began to heed the call of service and now for over 12 years we have been going out and visiting our brothers and sisters in Oakland.



"We have so many members now that we go out in trios so everyone can serve. It's a very vibrant group and we're blessed to have two spiritual advisors that prepare for our meetings so we can go do home visits when and where needed. Christ has invited us to go out to the poor. It's worked very well. It's meaningful and we have a good time."



Health Care for the Homeless

Every Friday Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) parks its mobile clinic outside our direct service campus in West Oakland. Since 1988, HCH has provided health care and case management services to persons experiencing homelessness throughout Alameda County. Current services include comprehensive primary care with integrated behavioral health treatment.

"HCH provides much-needed services to our clients who would otherwise go without even routine health care

provisions," says Blase Bova, SVdP executive director. "The urgent care, brief social work assessments, and referrals to community resources provided by HCH are invaluable services for those we serve."



GUEST PROFILE: TERESA

"I worked all my life. I was a bus driver until I got liver cancer. A bus driver is almost like a psychiatrist. Everyone tells you their problems. I loved it. I want to go back to driving that bus.

"I am here. I am alive! Some people cannot say that. I can see the sky, I can hear, I can smell. I can see that beautiful green tree outside. The little things in life that people think are nothing are something. I am doing ok. I have nothing to complain about. I have an appreciation of life.

"I am living in a shed. It is like living in a box. It is actually inside a wrecking yard. I have electricity but I don't have a shower and if I don't feel well enough to make it here, I go out and use the hose to clean up. Only cold water!

"I was living in my car, but my cousin had this place and lets me stay there. If I had had to continue living in my car I would be dead. If I had a wish it would be to be free and clear of cancer. I wish I had a place of my own where I could really get well.

"I come here to take showers and to eat. The people here are courteous and genuinely respectful. They are kind and they really care. It is not like they are just doing a job. That makes a big difference to people who are in this kind of situation. I get a lot from St. Vincent de Paul. I'm very grateful you are here."



Do You Know the Muffin Man?

Jack Dice is the Muffin Man. He's one of many who regularly pick up donated food from distributors in Alameda and Contra Costa counties and deliver it to organized food programs in Oakland. He recently made a delivery to SVdP with his granddaughter and shared a bit of the history of the Muffin People: "When we started thirty years ago the big thing for breakfast was muffins. You



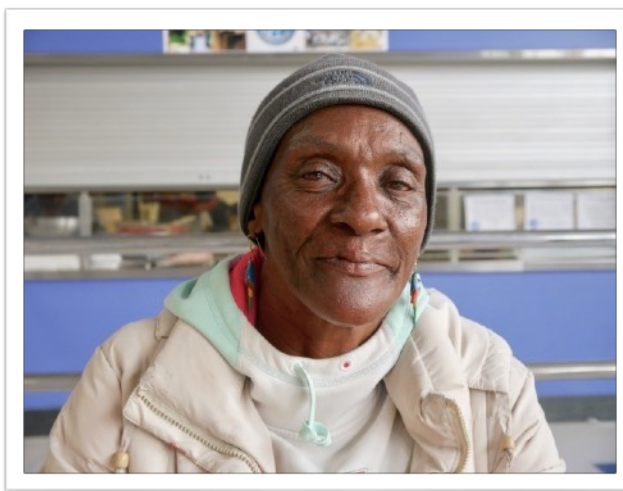
could get muffins everywhere. One day we brought food over to St. Mary's Center and one of the ladies started saying "Here comes the muffin man!" and it stuck! It takes 23 vehicles a week to do this. We bring food six days a week and on the seventh day ECAP makes

our run. I set that up for them. We drive to four different organizations: SVdP, St. Mary's Center, ECAP and A Friendly Manor. We're always looking for new people!"



Let People See Us As We Are

When volunteer photographer Sacha spends time with our guests throughout our campus, many interesting interactions take place. Sometimes people seek her out to chat and aren't keen on being photographed. Other times, people may want a photo to give to a family member or friend, but don't have much else to share with Sacha. The connections are as varied as humans are themselves. It keeps Sacha on her toes and she loves being in the moment with each person she meets. Sacha recently recalled a story about walking through the dining room and having a woman named Sheron call out and asking her, "Why don't you take a picture of us?" Sacha loves when guests seek her out and made her way to Sheron and her friend. When asking for consent to capture their photo, the friend refused saying she didn't have any lipstick on.



Sheron was sure she wanted her picture taken and told Sacha and her friend, "Let people see what we really look like. They don't want a photo of us all gussied up. Let people see us as we are." Thank you, Sacha, for your fellowship with our guests and for sharing their wisdom and grace with our community.

GUEST PROFILE: DWAYNE



"I am a journeyman carpenter. I got very sick with diabetes and then developed some other major health issues. This was 10 years ago. I was desperate and St. Vincent really helped me out. It was my main food source for a long time. It is

great that this place is here. It filled the gap when, suddenly, I could no longer work. It was very frightening. I don't understand how a civilization as great as this one can have so many people in the food line. I wish I could work but until I am better I can't. I loved my work.

"I really appreciate SVdP. I haven't been here in a year. I try and get by on my own. I have a little money available now from when I worked. I use that and I am very careful, but today I really needed to come. I am grateful to SVdP.

"I come from Little Rock and want to go back and get a little place and grow my own food. That's my dream. I think of it all the time. I really hope I can do it someday."



Goodbye to Muna Texier

We said goodbye to a valuable SVdP team member in August: Muna Texier left after four years working with us, most recently as community engagement manager.

Muna started at SVdP volunteering as a part-time administrative assistant for executive director Blase Bova. In this position, Muna's database expertise and organizational experience made a tremendous contribution to our work.

When the volunteer manager position opened, Muna was the perfect candidate to fill that role. As a manager, Muna brought her positivity, energy and commitment to SVdP, allowing her to influence volunteers, co-workers and guests with ease. Her natural warmth combined with her professionalism made everyone she had contact with feel cared for and fulfilled.



"Muna's dedication to serving others while working as an important member of our team made a deep and lasting impact for us at SVdP," says Bova. "She touched everyone here with her generosity and kindness."

We wish her nothing but success and happiness in her next adventure in life.

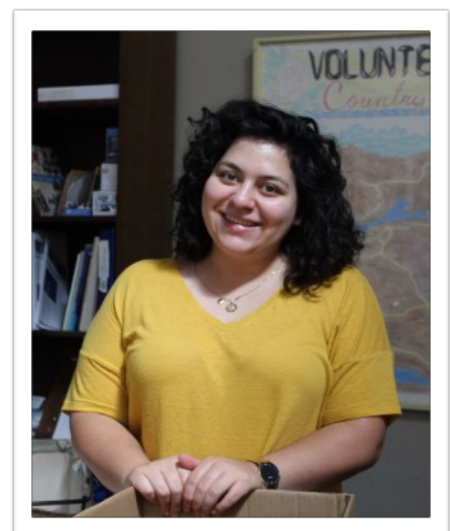
Welcome Ava Gambero

Join us in welcoming someone new to our team: Ava Gambero is our Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) member. Ava will be with us from August 2017 to August 2018 focusing on volunteer development and workforce training programs. Ava is placed with us through St. Mary's College in Moraga. The college acts as a central hub for several VISTA members and their sites throughout the Bay Area.

Ava is a St. Mary's alumna, graduating earlier this year with a degree in English. During her time in college, she participated in a number of volunteer and service learning programs. "I'm interested in learning more about how to serve

others," says Ava. "St. Vincent de Paul is a great way to put this into action."

Please stop by to say hello to Ava if you are at our direct service campus in West Oakland. She's only with us for a year and time flies by quickly!



Bombas Donates 250 Pairs of Socks

Happy feet and happy faces graced our monthly Podiatry Clinic in mid-August as volunteer nurses and staff gave clients free pairs of socks from Bombas' Giving Program. Three cheers for our lead volunteer nurse and clinic coordinator Janet Waring for taking initiative and applying to work in tandem with Bombas. We are grateful for partners like Bombas who are committed to giving back as part of their business model. Bombas supplied 250 pairs of new socks and everyone was impressed with their quality and design. Janet shared her enthusiasm for the day: "Our clients were eager and overly grateful for receiving free foot care, socks and shoes. It's interesting to see how goodness overshadows anger, poverty, and odd behavior. It is a tribute to our doctor, volunteers and students that they can look beyond the



sadness and anger and bring out the joy in each client they serve. The result is having a client say, 'Thank you for being here and helping us - to me you are all angels.'"



For More Information Contact

Name	Position	Phone	Email
St. Vincent de Paul 2272 San Pablo Ave Oakland, CA 94612	Main Phone Number/Call Center	(510) 638-7600	callcenter@svdp-alameda.org
Blase Bova	Executive Director	(510) 435-2625	bbova@svdp-alameda.org
Carmen Jones-Weeks	Human Resources Manager	(510) 385-8934	cjonesweeks@svdp-alameda.org
John Sterns	Community Engagement Manager	(510) 719-0774	jsterns@svdp-alameda.org
Julia Catania	Administration Manager	(510) 692-0460	jcatania@svdp-alameda.org
Patty Breslin	Social Enterprise (Retail) Manager	(510) 289-3891	pbreslin@svdp-alameda.org
Ryan Uyehara	Special Works (Programs) Manager	(510) 593-4120	ruyehara@svdp-alameda.org
Wesley Palmquist	Facilities/Tenant Services Manager	(650) 796-7349	wpalmquist@svdp-alameda.org
Volunteer Team	Volunteer Coordinator	(510) 877-9252	volunteer@svdp-alameda.org

The Impact of Your Giving

Like most nonprofit organizations, SVdP receives about two-thirds of its contributions from individuals during the final three months of the year. These generous gifts from our donors makes possible the programs that serve those in greatest need throughout our communities. Some of the people helped by your donations include:

Troy and Carol were sheltered at SVdP during the winter and finally found permanent housing for the first time in 18 years.

Ernesto has meals at our Free Dining Room, putting aside enough money to start school for computer programming. He has the real possibility of landing a well-paying job close to his family.

Sheila saves money by using the laundry at our Women’s Center and getting clothes from our Clothing Closet as she cares for her two

grandchildren.

These are just a few of the individuals and families we serve each day because of your generosity. If you receive a solicitation letter from us in the coming weeks, please remember that your gift is a critical part of the story for people like Troy, Carol, Ernesto and Sheila. You make a better life possible.

