

Neighbors Helping Neighbors News: August 2018



In His Own Words: Will

"I like to talk with young people. I tell them when they see a drug addict they might think, 'Oh that could never happen to me.' But it can. I wanted them to look around see that all these people are here at St. Vincent for a reason. You can take one turn and it can affect your whole direction in life. I tell them to be careful and wise in their decisions. Be thoughtful. And when they know when they are taking the wrong turn, turn around.

"If you see woman on the bus and she has been drinking you might judge her, but what you don't know is her child died in her arms. All you see is a drunk woman, but you don't know what she has been going through.

"I was born in Oakland. I have lived other places but I am back here now in a little tiny studio. This is my hometown. I come in to St. Vincent when I need something to eat. I do electrical and plumbing and have been doing it most of my life. I learned the trade from watching. If my father was paying for someone to fix the sink or washing machine he would say to me, 'Stay here and just watch what he is doing, but

don't get in his way. Pay attention. Learn from him.'



"It was my biggest blessing to have both of my parents around. My father used to say, 'I am here to teach you, not to be your friend.' My parents loved both my brother and me very much.

"We used to listen to the older people. It's different now. I'm glad to be at this advanced age. I am tired. It's been a great ride. I have had my ups and downs. I have been very blessed in my life."



Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Thursday, August 23rd, 1:30 p.m., **Spirituality Committee**, Nob Hill Market in Alameda.
- Tuesday, August 28th, 1:30 p.m., **Special Works Committee**, West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Tuesday, September 4th, **Development Committee**, 1:30 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Saturday, September 15th, **80th Anniversary Mass and Reception**, 5:30 p.m., Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland.
- Monday, September 17th, **Finance Committee**, 4:00 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Wednesday, September 19th, **Board of Trustees meeting** - fellowship/meal at 5:30 p.m., meeting at 6:00 p.m. West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.

Fall & Winter Giving Opportunities

SVdP is preparing for the busy season beginning in the fall and encompassing the holidays. During this time we depend on your support to help those we serve. Below are a few ways to help.

Host a drive for toys. We will once again ask our community partners and individual supporters to host drives for new toys for our Christmas open house. Each year more than 250 children and 70 families receive these gifts as part of our celebration.

Host a drive for warm coats. Winter is an especially difficult time for those living on the streets. Last year, you donated more than 300 coats to our clients and we hope to meet or exceed that number this year.

Volunteer at our main service campus in West Oakland. Our volunteers donated time worth more than \$2 million in 2017. The Vincentian model is based on volunteer-led programs and we could not do our work without you.

Donate. Did you know that more than half of a nonprofit's fundraising contributions are received in November and December? SVdP offers the largest free meal program and temporary shelter in Alameda County. Eighty-eight percent of our donations go directly to service programs. Help us help those in need with a financial contribution this year.

Contact John Sterns, community engagement manager, if you are interested in hosting a drive, volunteering or making a financial contribution. (See back page for contact information.)

News Briefs

■ Donating a car or boat to SVdP is easy, through the National SVdP Vehicle Donation Program. Call 877-537-5277 or visit www.donatingiseasy.org

■ Want to show the love you feel for SVdP? Come volunteer with us! Play the piano for clients in our Community Center, chop vegetables with Elvis in our kitchen, or help run a craft demo in our Fremont or Livermore stores. There's so much happening here, and most of it goes better with more hands involved. We'd love to train you in a new, rewarding volunteer opportunity. Contact John Sterns for more details. (See back page for contact information.) Your free time can make such a difference in the life of someone in need!

■ Legacy gifts, also known as planned gifts, have made a tremendous difference for SVdP and those we serve. Legacy gifts let your charitable giving have a long-term impact reflecting your beliefs, priorities and values. "From general support to job training to our Dining Room and Women's Center, these gifts have literally transformed lives", said Blase Bova, SVdP's Executive Director. For more information about legacy gifts, contact Blase Bova or John Sterns. (See back page for contact.)



Volunteer Feature: Adam Boyer

When Adam Boyer began volunteering in the West Oakland campus community center, it was clear that he fit right in. He began his service to fulfill his internship requirement for his bachelor of science degree in kinesiology from CSU East Bay. "[Volunteering at St. Vincent de Paul] seemed like a great place to give back and make my internship worth something," Boyer said.



Boyer has brought a strong work ethic and warmth to the community center, and works especially well alongside security guard Mike Jefferson. "Adam is one of those people where it feels like you've known him for a long time, even though you just met," Jefferson said. Boyer credits Jefferson for creating a positive energy, saying, "Mike lightens the mood. If he wasn't around, this place wouldn't be the same."

After volunteering in the community center for two months, Boyer was hired in mid-July as interim community center coordinator. He will be an integral part in implementing a new structure for the community center, where we will be working towards greater connections and assistance to our guests by asking them directly their needs through personal check-ins. Welcome to the team, Adam!

Meet Our Staff: Elena Laron

Elena Laron, payroll/accounts payable clerk, started working at SVdP in September of 1988 as a receptionist. After one year, she was promoted to an accounting clerk. In the late 80s and early 90s, Laron worked on calculating expenses, accounts payable and receivable, some HR responsibilities, and payroll by hand and using typewriters for 150 employees. Laron has seen many changes over the years, like switching from paper to desktop computer programs, to working for seven executive directors, to changing offices to the West Oakland campus in 2016. "Everything was a learning process, but we were all learning together," Laron said.

Laron cites great relationships among coworkers as her favorite part of working at SVdP, and what has kept her in her job for thirty years. "I love the job and the people that I work with, and I can see the mission here, which is helping people in need," Laron said. Laron's thirty-year anniversary at SVdP is this September, and we are so grateful for her work so far, and look forward to the future. Congratulations on a great milestone, Elena!



Back-to-School Open House a Success

SVdP hosted a terrific back-to-school open house on Saturday August 4. Sixty-seven families attended the event and backpacks filled with supplies according to grade level were distributed to 172 children from kindergarten to twelfth grade. An additional 25 backpacks with universal supplies were assembled and will be distributed to families on our waiting list.

An event like this cannot happen without the gifts of time and talent given by our volunteers, whom we deeply appreciate. We had three craft tables and a book table helmed by our students from Beth McKnight's Pledge to Humanity group, along with community volunteers. A special lunch was provided to families and children and the menu included homemade pizza. We gratefully thank our volunteers, including Claire O'Reilly, our lead events volunteer.

In addition to our volunteers, special thanks to our generous donors who made the event possible, including conferences from St. Benedict, St. Theresa, St. John the Baptist, St. James the Apostle, St. Augustine, St. Leander, Holy Spirit, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Church of the Assumption, All Saints and St. Philip Neri/St. Albert the Great.

Thank you all for making the event a success and for providing much-needed assistance to our families and children.





CSM Crosses Borders to Serve

We can always count on the local chapter of City Service Mission to provide groups of wonderful volunteers to the SVdP dining room. City Service Mission is "a generation of God's people equipped to lead, compelled to serve, and committed for a lifetime to the often-forgotten in their communities." This July, these volunteers traveled thousands of miles collectively to get to SVdP and put their faith into action. The



local CSM organization hosts young leaders of faith in their community home near Lake Merritt. Each day, the group embarks on service missions throughout the Bay Area, never knowing their schedule day to day to keep them focused on the present moment.

In July, SVdP hosted over 50 CSM volunteers on six different days who were from out of state and out of the country. The volunteers traveled to us from Manitoba, Canada, Highlands Ranch, Colorado and



Rainbow City, Alabama. Each day, the volunteers brought smiles and positive attitudes, and Chef Armando and the Kitchen of Champions cohort showed gratitude for their work by providing them with flowers, drinks, and snacks at the end of the day. This gave the groups the chance to debrief after their service and relax. SVdP appreciates the constant commitment from CSM and is glad to host volunteers who prove that there is global solidarity

surrounding poverty and homelessness. "CSM is always great to work with because they have such positive attitudes. Having them come from different countries and different parts of the country is energizing because it's showing that other communities recognize that we must step up and help each other out," Volunteer Coordinator, Katie Troy, said.



KoC Celebrates Three New Graduates

After nine weeks of culinary training, the three mighty members of cohort 58 finished strong with a special graduation ceremony.



Wilton Stephens, Willie Reeves, and Tammy Samuels deserve recognition for their amazing natural cooking abilities and perseverance throughout the program.

John Jones, workforce coordinator, is hopeful for future cohorts to graduate with the same skill level and passion so we can “continue the good work and celebrations.”

Each graduate has returned to the SVdP kitchen at least once to cook with the new cohort and show them the ropes, and we hope to see their faces again so we can wish them continued success.

Cohort 59 Showing Terrific Teamwork

The newest Kitchen of Champions group has been working hard in the kitchen for close to a month. Before cohort 58 graduated, the two cohorts were on campus working together and learning from each other. Cohort 59 even got the opportunity to go to the last graduation, giving them a glimpse of the kind of celebration they deserve for completing the program.

So far, there are six trainees who have undergone four weeks of kitchen training and soft skills lessons, including a budgeting workshop by Wells Fargo. Chef Armando Corpus, kitchen manager, values the teamwork of this cohort and appreciates their willingness to learn. “The thing about this group is they cooperate really well. They have different personalities and are different people, but they show how to share space and share responsibility,” Corpus said. We look forward to more great work and synergy from cohort 59!



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	(925) 323-5848	jsterns@svdp-alameda.org
Julia Hancock	Administration Manager	(510) 692-0460	jhancock@svdp-alameda.org
Leslie Thomas	Homeless Services Manager	(510) 719-1000	lthomas@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

Donor Spotlight: Wells Fargo

The Wells Fargo team provided a pleasant surprise to the West Oakland campus in late July. The team was scheduled to give a soft skills presentation to our Kitchen of Champions cohort, but took advantage of their trip to our campus to bring the products of their region-wide diaper drive and present a check for general operating support. Their visit brought together our community engagement, workforce, and client service departments through their gifts of money, an informational workshop and more than 4,000 diapers in various sizes to our women's center, which immediately helped many families with young children.



We appreciate the Wells Fargo team for their incredible amount of support, and for showing the many ways to give and make an impact at SVdP. We are happy to work with such a thoughtful and committed community partner and look forward to a successful relationship with the company. Thank you, Wells Fargo!

