

Neighbors Helping Neighbors News: February 2019



In His Own Words: Jerry

"I've been coming here off and on for a few years. I usually sit down and have a meal. I like to talk to people when I come. I've known the security guard, Eddie, for a long time. There are a lot of nice people here. I used to take showers but I don't need them anymore because I am no longer homeless.

"I like to hang out at the library and read books. I play basketball, too. I do some odd jobs when I can. My SSI is pending, but I don't want to rely on it for the rest of my life. I like reading nonfiction, like autobiographies and biographies of Martin Luther King and Muhammad Ali. I also like to read Danielle Steele and Jackie Collins for thrillers. I've been in transitional housing since 2017. It's not a bad place. They help with permanent housing if you want it. I have a housing coordinator I'm going to meet with this month. I want a space of my own. I want a home.

"I joined a rehab program called Options in 2017 after I was hit by a hit and run driver and was in a coma for one month. I was asleep for a lot less time than they expected or than people usually are from injuries like mine. After I woke up I was too scared to ever use again, so I entered the Options program and I've been straight ever since. When I was doing nothing, I had nothing to lose. When I survived and

came out of a coma and almost lost my life, I didn't want to risk it again. The man upstairs was with me. He had to be. It wasn't me who woke me up. It had to be him.

"If I can help somebody, I'm willing to do what I can, even though I need so much help. I can be there to talk with others. People have helped me with no strings attached and I'm alive to talk about it. I'm not where I want to be, but thank goodness I'm not where I used to be."



Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Saturday, February 9th, **District Council**, 9:00 a.m., St. Bede Parish, 26950 Patrick Avenue, Hayward.
- Monday, February 11th, **Finance Committee**, 4:00 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Wednesday, February 20th, **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.
- Tuesday, February 26th, **Special Works Committee**, 1:30 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue.
- Wednesday February 27th, **Spirituality Committee**, 1:30 p.m., Nob Hill Market, Alameda.

Park Day Joins Dining Room

On the first day of the month, we were joined in the dining room by six returning students and two teachers from nearby Park Day School. Take time to read below some of the 8th grade students' reflections on their service. Thank you for serving with us, Park Day!

"St. Vincent de Paul is an amazing way for our community to get the needs they deserve. Whether they are homeless or can't afford a meal St. Vincent is there for them. Everybody who works there is very welcoming and sweet, and the guests are also super nice! By volunteering there I was able to feel more connected to my community." – Daphne

"It was really nice to see a place where the guests were treated as people. All of the volunteers knew many of the guests and it was really meaningful to see them interact with everyone. It helps them know that St. Vincent de Paul is a safe place." – Julia



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 information.)

From Student to Staff: Anthony and Willie



ANTHONY TAKES A TRAY OF VEGETABLES OUT OF THE OVEN TO GET THEM READY FOR SERVICE.

Anthony: Anthony is a graduate from Kitchen of Champions cohort 59. After completing the program in September, he started his position as shelter cook in November. "I was looking for work after graduation and was going to apply for a shelter monitor, but Chef Armando told me about this position so I took it instead," Anthony said.

Each meal we serve in the shelter includes protein, fruit and green salad, a dinner roll and dessert, just like our lunch meals. We are glad to be able to serve fresh, hot meals in our year-round shelter. In the morning, guests receive a light, continental breakfast that the shelter cooks also prepare, and is then served by shelter monitors in the morning. Anthony enjoys cooking chicken, which we always have around in the kitchen. "I want to make simple dishes, something that's gonna stick with you throughout the night," Anthony said. Our shelter cooks enter the kitchen and assess what we have. Anthony appreciates the challenge of planning the meal each night. "I always try to add to or elevate what's in front of me," he said. Keep up the good work, Anthony!

Willie: Willie was a student of the Kitchen of Champions cohort 58, and graduated in July 2018. He works in the evenings to make dinner and breakfast for our shelter. He began this job as soon as the shelter opened in November, and alternates working days with fellow KoC graduate, Anthony. "I enjoy kitchen work, especially here. You feel most needed and it's upbeat. There's a lot to do. I also like what St. Vincent stands for. I'm honored to serve others," Willie said.

Willie's favorite dishes he has served are chicken stir fry and ribs with mashed potatoes and sweet corn casserole. He tries to serve as many vegetables as he can each night. Our shelter cooks enter the kitchen and assess what food we have and prepare the meal for up to 100 people based on our inventory. "It's really cool to have freedom in the kitchen. You don't find that other places," Willie said. We are happy to see KoC graduates come full circle from students to staff members. Many thanks for a job well done, Willie!



WILLIE REEVES TAKES A BREAK FROM COOKING TO POSE FOR A PHOTO AT THE WEST OAKLAND DIRECT SERVICE CAMPUS KITCHEN.



First Cohort of the Year Now in Session



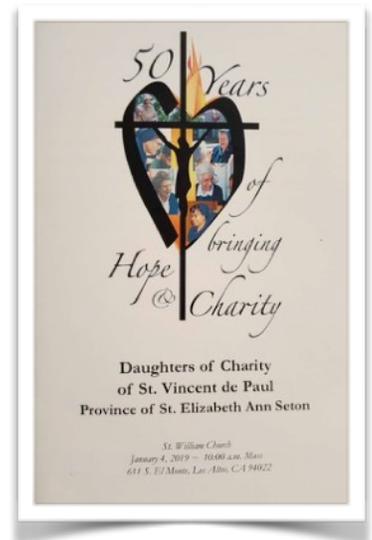
Cohort 62 of our Kitchen of Champions workforce training program is underway with four dedicated members. They have successfully served thousands of meals so far to our guests, and adapted to the busy crowds at the end of January, serving 750 meals for multiple days. The students will have the opportunity to try out new recipes and sharpen their culinary skills before applying for jobs in the field of their choice. In 2018, 70% of our

graduates were employed, and we hope to increase that rate this year.

This group is diverse in its age range, with the youngest participant being just eighteen years old, and follows in the footsteps of his mother and grandmother who both graduated from Kitchen of Champions within the last year. "This group has the largest age range that I've seen, and we have the familial connection that can help bring everyone closer together," Workforce Coordinator John Jones said. Cohort 62 is off to a great start and we look forward to working with them in the weeks to come!

Supporting Daughters of Charity

Over 300 members and supporters of the Vincentian Family gathered on January 4, 2019 at St. William parish in Los Altos. The Daughters of Charity of the Western Province have ministered to people living in poverty for over 50 years in the western United States. Over 15 clergy including bishops from the diocese of Spokane, WA the Most Rev. Thomas A. Daly, the Most Rev. Patrick J. McGrath, Bishop of San Jose, Rev. Bernard J. Quinn, CM., Provincial Director and Rev. G. Gregory Gay, Former Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul. Representatives from SVdP Alameda & Contra Costa County celebrated with the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. Daughters of Charity ministered and supported our Direct Service Campus for over 10 years in the Free Dining Room and Visitation Center for Women. As of January 4, the Daughters of Charity is now called "The Province of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton."



Councilwoman McElhaney Visits SVdP



Oakland Councilmember Lynette Gibson McElhaney (pictured) of district 3 visited our West Oakland direct service campus at the start of 2019. She was given a tour by Executive Director Blase Bova and Community Engagement Manager John Sterns. She saw our community center and dining room, which are converted into the shelter every night to hold up to 100 guests. She also saw the space in the breezeway off the dining room where we will be installing storage lockers for our guests' belongings during the day, a priority of the City. Councilmember McElhaney was curious about what challenges the shelter guests face, and was very interested in the work our Conferences do in aiding eviction prevention throughout the county.

Councilmember Lynette Gibson McElhaney was our second City official to visit us in 2019, preceded by Mayor Libby Schaaf and members of her staff who served in the dining room in January. Councilmember McElhaney was accompanied by Senior Constituent Liaison, Brigitte Cook, Manager of Human Services Department in City of Oakland, Lara Tannenbaum, and other esteemed staffers.

According to her website, Councilmember McElhaney's accomplishments include serving as the Executive Director of a multi-million dollar non-profit, where she developed affordable housing, expanded economic opportunity and curbed violence in low-income communities. Through her work she has learned how to bridge the interests of the business community with the needs of the neighborhood.

Councilmember McElhaney's visit was just one stop of her day long tour of multiple service centers in her district. She also went to St. Mary's Center on San Pablo Ave. and Brockhurst St. and the Tuff Shed Navigation Center on 27th St. and Northgate Ave. "St. Vincent de Paul is always happy to welcome Councilmember McElhaney to our direct service campus. We feel honored to have a physical presence from the City, since they've been great community partners for us. We always welcome anyone who wants to tour our campus to schedule a time to come visit. These tours are a great way to get information out there about our services and discuss the very real need for them," SVdP Executive Director Blase Bova said. Thank you, Councilmember McElhaney, for being visible to our community.



St. Bede to Host District Council Meetings

The St. Bede Conference has taken on a new responsibility: they now host district council meetings at their parish in Hayward. The district council is comprised of SVdP leadership throughout the county, including Conference presidents and members. There are usually between 40-60 people at each meeting, and the number is growing with increased participation of Conference members. These



meetings are ways that SVdP staff can update the Conferences on their work, and vice versa. St. Bede Conference treasurer Steve Tedesco recognizes the good work of his peers and is looking forward to the new opportunity. "I'm really excited about the DC meetings because it allows some of our members to step up and do some hospitality by cooking breakfast and hosting. It allows us to see the fellowship that goes beyond our

boundaries. We have things in common with conferences all the way from Fremont to Oakland. It's a great opportunity to see the big picture of our district council in our tiny gym," Tedesco said.

Along with hosting meetings at St. Bede, the nineteen active Conference members host a food pantry on Saturday mornings, and are sent on seven to ten home visits each month. St. Bede puts a lot of effort into making sure that people's calls on the help line are returned within one day. The community members who call appreciate their promptness because some people have become used to their calls for assistance going unanswered from various agencies. This also ensures a timely scheduling of home visits to assess need as soon as possible. The home visits are a great example of the spiritual aspect involved with being a Vincentian.

"The Holy Spirit attends the home visit with us, and we believe much will be revealed while we're there as we prayerfully enter and are face to face with our neighbors. It is really the heart of our ministry," Tedesco said. We are grateful for the prayerful work of St. Bede and look forward to the future of their ministry.



Saint Mary's Gaels Write Grant

During the month of January, Rocio Angeles and James Gan from Saint Mary's College of California worked with West Oakland direct service campus staff to write a grant proposal as a part of their service-learning grant writing course. The students learned the dos and don'ts of grant writing from their professor and classmates, and checked in with SVdP for guidance on their final grant application. Angeles, a pre-med student, wanted to learn to write grants to help her gain experience for scientific research proposals. Gan, an accounting major, has worked in development in a nonprofit setting, and wanted to learn more about the process of how finances are acquired. Both students were also motivated to learn about their communities. "Every time I drive in Oakland and see all the tents, it breaks my heart," Angeles said. Gan shares that sentiment. "I wanted to get out of the areas I was familiar with and learn how direct services work," he said. Both students learned new writing skills through this process. "We have learned about how to highlight the needs and making that connection between us, who we serve and the donors by using people-first language," Angeles said. Last year, two Saint Mary's students from the same course wrote a grant that earned \$10,000 for SVdP, and we look forward to seeing the results of the grant this year. Thank you, James and Rocio, for all your great work!



St. Joachim Returns with Lunch Boxes



Thank you to St. Joachim School for sending representatives from every grade level to bring lunch boxes to our dining room guests. The whole school rounded up donations to supply snacks and sandwiches to our West Oakland direct service campus. They also added thoughtful touches to the lunch boxes by coloring pictures and writing encouraging notes and Bible verses on each one. St. Joachim's usually provides these lunches at least once a year, and we are grateful for their creativity, service and support. See you all again soon!



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 Website: www.svdp-alameda.org |
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| Wesley Palmquist | Facilities/Tenant Services Manager | (650) 796-7349 | wpalmquist@svdp-alameda.org |
| Volunteer Team | Volunteer Coordinator | (510) 877-9252 | volunteer@svdp-alameda.org |
| Livermore Thrift Store | 1817 Second St, Livermore, 94550 | (925) 455-1104 | lstore@svdp-alameda.org |
| Fremont Thrift Store | 3777 Decoto Rd, Fremont, 94555 | (510) 792-3711 | fremont@svdp-alameda.org |

Podiatry Clinic Powersteps into 2019

Last month's podiatry clinic was filled with new donations of Powerstep inserts from Brian Lyons of the Locator Store and foot cream from David Moderspack of the Trust Clinic. Each month, the podiatry clinic serves around 45 patients and each person gets their feet washed, visits with the doctor and then is fitted for a new pair of shoes and socks. Clinic Coordinator Janet Waring, RN, said, "Our doctors have indicated that shoe inserts are one of the most important tools to alleviate foot problems with our patients." We also have a supply of foot creams and powders that we give away, and the donation of additional creams will help our patients for months to come.

The podiatry clinic nurses created a banner of thanks for these donations, and it now hangs in the shoe fitting room of the clinic. The clinic is operated by the Order of Malta Clinic of Northern California and housed by St. Vincent de Paul. Thank you to all who support this necessary health service for our community!

