

Neighbors Helping Neighbors News: March 2019



In His Own Words: Wendell

Wendell became involved with St. Vincent de Paul in 2017, when he and his wife received Conference support. He was referred to our Kitchen of Champions culinary training program, and began as a trainee in January 2018. He graduated from Cohort 56 in March 2018. Since graduation, he has worked with our Vincentians to secure a car to help with his commute from Oakland to Newark for work. At age 60, Wendell faced barriers to employment in the culinary field. He and his wife are working towards owning their own home. Please read below for an update of his life since graduation, in his own words.

"I graduated KoC a little over one year ago. Being in the program was fun and very enjoyable. I loved it. I loved the people, the environment and the work ethic.

"I am working at BJs Restaurant and Brew in Newark. I'm a line cook, I help with the appetizers, make the pizza and sometimes help to prep the food. I got the job by putting an application through an agency. The restaurant saw it and called me. Two days after they called. I got an interview and then got hired. I love it there. It reminds me of St. Vincent.

"We will serve 800-900 people a night, and the place can hold about 1500 people. I enjoy my work, I enjoy working in the kitchen. I like to cook and everyone enjoys the food, and my family is happy with the food too at home. I go to work with a smile. I've been at BJ's about nine months.



"I have six children and one of my daughters just moved to Texas and I miss her. My youngest daughter came to St. Vincent's with me once. I'm getting ready to retire in about three years. I enjoy where I'm working and don't want to go anywhere. I might even stay longer and not retire. In my free time I like throwing darts, playing softball, cooking, reading and enjoying time with my family, especially family dinners."



Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Saturday, March 9th, **Regional Meetings**, 9:00 a.m., Various Locations.
- Monday, March 18th, **Finance Committee**, 4:00 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Wednesday, March 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, March 26th, **Special Works Committee**, 1:30 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue.
- Thursday, April 4th, **Spirituality Committee**, 1:30 p.m., Nob Hill Market, Alameda.

‘Our Faith In Action’ Premieres

Did you know SVdP has a TV show and movie? Yesterday, the movie "Our Faith in Action" premiered on EWTN, Global Catholic Network. According to the SVdP national website, "It captures the spirit and charisma of a 400-year old French saint through the examples of charity by nearly 100,000 dedicated men and women of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The feature-length presentation "Our Faith in Action" tells the spiritually uplifting, personal stories of our Vincentian members in direct service with people in need across the country." The 10-week television series captures the spiritual growth journeys of SVdP society members as they serve in their communities and see the face of Jesus in their neighbors through home visits, food pantries, providing financial assistance and more. If you missed it, catch up on the TV series on the SVdP USA YouTube channel or Vimeo page!



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.)

Call for Easter Open House Donations

The annual Easter Open House will be held on Saturday, April 13 from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the West Oakland direct service campus community center: 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland 94612. To volunteer, please contact the volunteer team (see back page for contact information).

We are asking for monetary donations to help us celebrate with up to 250 parents and children. We will have a visit from the Easter Bunny, crafts, books, Easter baskets, and a special lunch.

For more information or to donate, please contact John Sterns, community engagement manager (see back page for contact information). Our annual open houses wouldn't be possible without the generous donations of money, time and talents by our community. We wish everyone a blessed Easter.



Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon April 28

Every April, nonprofits everywhere celebrate volunteer appreciation month. This is a time to show gratitude for the thousands of hours our volunteers have dedicated to SVdP. From our Vincentian Conferences, to the thrift stores, to the direct services to the shelter, our volunteer contributions from 2018 total over \$2,000,000 worth of labor.

We would like to honor the hard work and dedication of our volunteers by giving a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on Sunday April 28, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul of Alameda County, 675 23rd Street, Oakland, CA 94612. If you are a Vincentian or a volunteer at our West Oakland site or in our thrift stores join us to celebrate you! Space is limited so RSVP now to Katie Troy, ktroy@svdp-alameda.org or 510-877-9252. We couldn't do it without you!



Celebrating Duarte and Janet Monteiro

De Sousa House and Holy Spirit Conference and Parish community celebrate Duarte and Janet Monteiro's gifts of time, talent and treasure to the community and beyond. Duarte and his wife, Janet, and one of their two children, Amanda, gathered with over 80 people to celebrate Duarte's retirement and move to Turlock, Calif. Duarte served as the Holy Spirit Conference president from 2014 to 2018. He has been a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul since 2009. During this time he contributed many hours to our ministry by meeting with people living in poverty. Fr. Ken Sales, pastor said he has Duarte on his speed dial. One touch of the phone and he'd hear Duarte's voice saying "Father, how can I help?"

Larry Barrios, the current Holy Spirit president, recalled that when there was a parishioner who needed help caring for their children when his wife took ill, Duarte and Janet and several other Vincentians brought the family food for a few weeks. As soon as he is settled in Turlock and has found a parish home, Duarte plans to join a Vincentian Conference. If there isn't one, he will start one. "Once a Vincentian, always a Vincentian. Our ministry continues for a lifetime," he said.



DUARTE AND JANET MONTIERO ARE HONORED FOR THEIR MINISTRY WITH A COMMUNITY MEAL AND GATHERING.

Tavecchio Returns After Football Season

Last fall, dining room volunteer Giorgio Tavecchio spent some time in our dining room before he was brought on as kicker for the Atlanta Falcons. Tavecchio is a Bay Area native who played football at UC Berkeley and even played professionally for the Oakland Raiders. He began volunteering at SVdP because he was influenced by his father. After leaving to play for the Falcons, he stayed in

contact with us, sending well wishes to staff and volunteers. It was a great surprise to see him return to serve in the dining room on March 7. Tavecchio and our custodian Joseph (pictured) became fast friends, and were happy to see each other again. We are so happy he kept us in mind, and was called to serve during this trip home. "I am in town visiting family, so I had to come back home to St. Vincent," Tavecchio said. He has signed a two-year contract with the Falcons, and plans to volunteer at the St. Vincent de Paul in Atlanta. We wish Giorgio the best of luck, and hope to see him again soon!



SVdP On the Move, Staffs Mobile Pantry

A mobile food pantry was proposed by the offices of the Sisters of the Holy Family (SHF) in Fremont as an opportunity to reach more people who experience food insecurity. Five of our eight Conferences in southern Alameda County were present to learn more from Sr. Elaine Sanchez, SFM. Taylor Tracy and Mari Sailer of Tri-City Volunteers, Inc. Food Bank/Thrift Store (TCV) led tours of their mobile food pantry. To respond to the area's food insecurity, SFM provided the funds for purchasing a second mobile van. TCV has run a successful mobile pantry for the last two years. One of the greatest needs of people in the Tri-City area is accessibility and availability of fresh fruits and vegetables along with nutritious staples to fill out their home pantries. An



opportunity to have a 360-degree mobile pantry provides much needed supplementary foods, including specialty foods - bok choy, cilantro and a variety of spices. The mobile pantries are stocked and ready to go; all that is needed is a team of two, one driver and a ride along to public and private farmers markets. For more information, see www.tcvfoodbank.org.

St. Vincent Connects with St. Anthony



MEMBERS OF SVDP POSE ALONGSIDE LONGTIME VOLUNTEER, TWEETY (MIDDLE FRONT), WHO THEY MET WHILE HAVING LUNCH. TWEETY HAS SERVED AT ST. ANTHONY'S FOR 27 YEARS.

In early March, members of the SVdP community engagement team and Vincentians from St. Lawrence O'Toole were invited to tour St. Anthony Foundation in San Francisco. St. Anthony's first opened its doors in 1950 as a dining room. They expected to serve about 150 meals on their first day, and ended up serving 400. Since then, they have moved to two new buildings on Golden Gate Avenue. in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco. They have medical services, a dining room, a computer lab, clothing closet and more. Their growth as an organization is a testament to their hard-working staff and generous San Francisco community. Like St. Vincent de Paul of Alameda County, they have been able to expand their direct service centers from dining rooms to large operations that

provide basic needs, wellness and fellowship. We are happy to learn more about another amazing organization, and will continue to serve alongside our community with the hope and reassurance of knowing so many others are doing the same.



Fraternity Brothers Serve Together

Members of the Sigma Delta Upsilon fraternity at California State University, East Bay joined our dining room for service for the first time in February. They have a student leader who organizes service trips for the members, and we are happy they chose SVdP as one of their service sites. The men were great volunteers in our kitchen, prep room and dining room. "Having groups of friends is always nice to help create a happy environment," Volunteer Coordinator Katie Troy said.



"You could tell they were having fun being in the dining room together, and they made cleaning up afterwards fun too." Thank you to our volunteers for bonding over your service and bringing fellowship to our dining room. We work with CSUEB, UC Berkeley, Saint Mary's College, and more with a variety of service opportunities, from kitchen work to grant writing opportunities. We welcome students of all ages to serve with us at SVdP!

Oakland A's a Big Hit in Dining Room

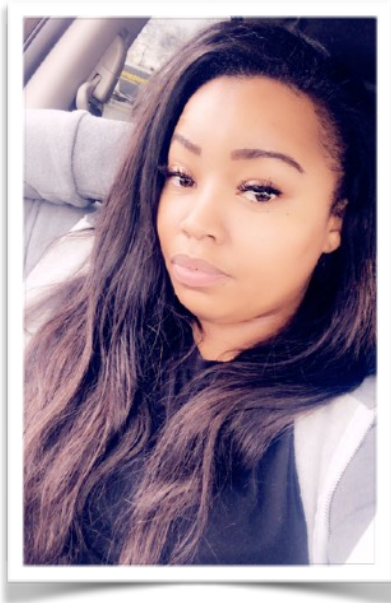
Groups from the Oakland A's offices have begun consistently volunteering in our West Oakland direct service campus dining room twice per month. Every time they come volunteer with us, every member of their group is wearing a signature A's t-shirt, to the excitement of our guests. In March, one of their chief



officers, Chris, volunteered with us and was able to greet our guests as they walked through the door. Catherine Aker, vice president of communications and community said, "We had a great group experience. It's really meaningful to come back and contribute to our community. It's a big part of who we are as an organization. We feel fortunate to have a partner in SVdP so we can come back in a regular basis and give back." We are excited to continue working with the A's on a regular basis and appreciate their organization-wide support of our mission.



Meet Our Staff: Ashley Davis



Please join us in welcoming Ashley Davis, the first case manager hired in our year-round shelter. Davis began at SVdP in January, and works here four nights per week. She also works at Bay Area Community Services, where she handles SSI status for about 230 people. Davis is used to being among the homeless community, and often meets with clients at encampments. Our SVdP guests work with Davis to talk about their goals, confirm their income level and receive housing. Davis is able to refer our guests to BACS, and so they often leave the shelter and see her there for additional services. So far, Davis has helped seven people move out of the shelter. She believes that with hard work, our guests can find their way from homelessness, and wants to be a support system for them. "I can work for our clients but not harder than them. If I could give you a little more motivation than you had before, sometimes that's all you need. Nothing worth having comes easy," Davis said. Davis

wants to help our guests find links to housing support, mental health services and employment assistance. She plans to continue her experience working in the field and earn a degree in social work, beginning in August. Davis has two children, and enjoys her self-care routine in her free time. She pampers herself after a hard week of work and caring for others, and believes it is just as important to care for yourself. We are excited for the future and grateful for the work Ashley has done so far.

Day of Reflection with Fr. Tom Bonacci

Are you looking for an opportunity to calm your mind, refresh your spirit and develop a better spiritual foundation? All Vincentians and religious peoples are invited to participate in a Day of Reflection with Fr. Thomas "Tom" P. Bonacci, CPS on Saturday, March 16 at Church of the Assumption Parish Hall, 1100 Fulton Ave., San Leandro. Join us for mass at 8:15 a.m. followed by Fr. Tom's presentation until 2:30 p.m. Continental breakfast will be provided. Please share this opportunity with others, and RSVP to Lu Cuevas at (510) 277-6435, or Jackie Mallory at (510) 638-7600.

Fr. Thomas "Tom" Bonacci is a Passionist priest and was ordained in 1972. He has conducted hundreds of Scripture study programs throughout the Western United States for over 32 years. He is executive director of The Interfaith Peace Project and teaches World Religions.



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
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
Marcell Lloyd	Shelter Manager	(510) 393-4259	mlloyd@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
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

Volunteers Make Lunch for OUSD Strike

During the February Oakland teacher strike, volunteers were concerned that students would not receive food from the lunch programs at their schools. Two OUSD families came to SVdP to make bagged lunches for 250 people at Lincoln Elementary School. We attached notes to the bags describing our family services and provided the sandwiches, fruit and snacks. Many students did not attend school during the week-long strike. Some parents kept their students home, and some



students went out to picket alongside their teachers. Due to low student attendance at Lincoln Elementary School, many of the sandwiches made were redistributed to other locations across Oakland over the first two days of the strike. Thank you to the OUSD families who carefully assembled lunches for their community. We appreciate their thoughtfulness around the food insecurity of their neighbors.

