

Neighbors Helping Neighbors News: June 2019

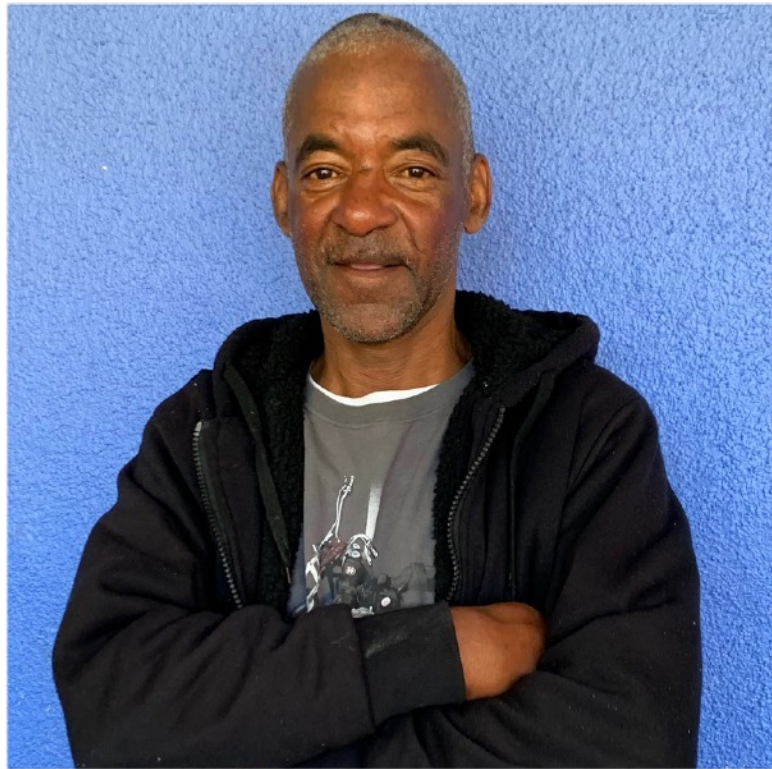


In His Own Words: Danny

"I've been coming to St. Vincent every day for over a year. I first started coming 3 years ago only one day a week. Now I come every day. I started coming more because I'm waiting for SSI from an accident that happened 3 years ago. It got denied twice so I'm still waiting.

"I started at St. Vincent because someone told me about it and I followed through. I came here and met [the security guard] Eddie. He started asking me to do things for him and I kept doing it. He'd ask me if I'd be in the next day and he'd count on me. I mainly help Eddie in the morning. I wash clothes, clean the men's center and let people in to use the services. Being here helps occupy my time until my SSI gets approved. I go back and forth to Sacramento because I have a lot of family there.

"I like to work. My favorite job I've ever had was construction for 15 years. We'd clean the sites for high rises and cleaned the windows in high rises. I love to wax floors. I love to work, period. I'm an expert at it.



"The last job I had I was working in Highland Hospital and I had a seizure on the job. I take pills every day now. I was in the labor union at that time and I had another seizure on the roof on the job. We were putting in air conditioning. After the second seizure I was told by the doctor that I should start collecting SSI. That's why I've been coming here. I want any job. I prefer construction, but I can do it all.

"My goals are to live as long as I can, to go back to work and just live. Period. I want to get my own place and do my own thing. I want people to know that I'm a very nice guy and I can do a little bit of everything. I'm like a handyman. I'm a jack of all trades."



Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Saturday, June 7th, **District Council Meeting**, 9:00 a.m., St. Bede Parish, 26950 Patrick Avenue, Hayward.
- Monday, June 10th, **Finance Committee**, 4:00 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Wednesday, June 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.
- Tuesday, June 25th, **Special Works Committee**, 1:30 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Thursday, June 27th, **Spirituality Committee**, 1:30 p.m., Nob Hill Market, 2531 Blanding Avenue, Alameda.
- Tuesday, July 2nd, **Development Committee**, 1:30 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.

Invitation to Catering Fundraiser

You're invited to the first fundraiser for SVdP's newest enterprise, Catering of Champions! Proceeds will help purchase food, supplies and hire more Kitchen of Champions alumni to a secure and reliable job after graduation.

When: Saturday, July 20, 2019

6:30-8:00 p.m.

Where: Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

2808 Lakeshore Ave, Oakland, CA 94610

Tickets are \$25 per person. To RSVP, call 510-593-6381. Please invite your loved ones. We are excited to see you there!



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.)

SVdP Hosts Interfaith Council Meeting

The West Oakland direct service campus hosted the May Interfaith Council of Alameda County meeting in our community center. The mission of the Interfaith Council of Alameda County (ICAC) is "To promote mutual respect, understanding and engagement among the diverse faith traditions in Alameda County, California; mobilize people to serve the community; support religious liberties; promote interfaith organizations and activities; and build a just and moral community." Members are comprised of people of faith-based congregations, organizations and spiritual individuals and are elected into the council by its members. Our Executive Director Blase Bova was elected to the council last year.

ICAC, led by Rev. Ken Chambers of Westside Baptist Church, was an integral sounding board for the Safe Car Parking that began last month in Oakland. Local churches are opening their parking lots, which will be security-monitored, for people who sleep in their cars to park at night. The council discussed the success and downfalls of the program so far, and what can be done to support it. So far, participation has been low, so the goal is to reach more people about the Safe Car Parking who may be interested. Targeted populations include college students in Oakland and Berkeley, but one concern is that the lots don't provide an adequate study space that on-campus libraries do, and that by the time the students are done studying, it is too late to enter the lot.

Census Outreach Manager for Alameda County Alessia Simmonds presented about the upcoming census, detailing the ways in which the presidential administration's census requirements will deter undocumented and homeless populations from participating.

St. Vincent de Paul was happy to host so many faith leaders in our space. Guests of the community center were also able to listen in on the meeting.

"We had some great presentations during the meeting, and we are glad to host such powerful voices within our walls," said Bova. "I am excited to keep serving on ICAC as we work to promote social justice in Alameda County." ICAC meets monthly, and you can find more information on their website: <https://www.interfaithac.org/>.



Congratulations to Cohort 63 Graduates!



Congratulations to our graduates of Kitchen of Champions Cohort 63! This cohort served an average of 600 meals per day, and even served a record of over 900 meals one busy afternoon. Our free dining room line was out the door for good reason - this cohort served delicious food every single day. In addition to their culinary skills and hard work, they brought their unique personalities and personal stories that enriched each other's experiences. "This is not only a graduation

for me. It is a commencement into a new life," said graduate Feng Lan as she addressed the crowd.

Speakers included Blase Bova, who gave introductory remarks, Lakietha Sanford, case manager from SVdP San Francisco and Chef Chantal Martin, co-chair of the culinary department at Laney College. Workforce Coordinator John Jones was surprised with a 'Superman' award by Sanford for all his work in support of her clients. Chef Martin encouraged the graduates to utilize their culinary training to accomplish anything. We are so proud of cohort 63!

Local Mosque Serves During Ramadan

The West Oakland direct service campus hosted members of Masjid Al Salam Mosque on Saturday, May 18 to provide a free meal as a part of their efforts to perform service work during Ramadan. The men prepared food for 100 people off site and served for one hour alongside Libby Schaaf, Mayor of Oakland. "We welcome all who walk through our doors, whether they are guests, staff or volunteers.



We are fortunate to have such a rich variety of cultures and religions in our direct service campus. We learn from each other," Executive Director Blase Bova said. SVdP always welcomes people of all faiths to join us for service or any event.



St. Michael's Staffs Help Desk in Livermore

The St. Michael's Conference in Livermore has been running a drop-in Help Desk in the Livermore thrift store for years. Open three days per week, the Help Desk is a place where people can come to receive assistance with bills like water and PG&E, receive household items like mattresses from the store and get thrift store gift cards to shop on their own. The desk is staffed by two Vincentians at a time, the same structure as home visits. The St. Michael's Conference funds all the projects, and even gives out gas cards and hotel vouchers. In addition, the St. Michael's Conference performs home visits in the community. The drop-in desk is a good resource for people who are homeless and able-bodied, and is a useful alternative to a traditional home visit. "The St. Michael's Conference is needed. We look forward to them coming out to the store each week," Livermore Store Manager Jamie Aubry said. This is a creative way for Vincentians to reach their communities. We thank the Conference for their great work in Livermore!



Vincentians Polled In County-Wide Survey

This year, all Vincentians received the opportunity to formally give feedback through the county-wide survey. The results are in, and are being addressed at each District Council meeting. Surveys were distributed to Conference presidents at district meetings, sent through email and administered at Conference meetings to make sure as many people could respond as possible. The need for new members and desire for greater spiritual formation were deemed most important by the survey takers.



"These results are pretty close to the survey from a year and a half ago, but the feedback also stated that we have improved our support in these important areas. Moving forward, we are going to continue to respond to the feedback and we want to fill the ranks of the Conferences with more members," said Lu Cuevas, manager of spirituality, formation and growth.



Trader Joe's Tours with Muffin Man

The staff of Trader Joe's in Lafayette visited the West Oakland direct service campus for a tour organized by volunteer Jack the "Muffin Man" on May 16. The Muffin Men is a group of volunteers who round up pastries from local grocery stores and deliver them to nonprofits. We receive pastries every day from stores such as Trader Joe's and Safeway.

The Trader Joe's staff appreciated the ability to see firsthand how their regular donations are enjoyed by our guests. They contribute to an average of 550 free meals per day to our community. The team was able to bond by learning more about our service and the ways they impact our center in Oakland, even from miles away in Lafayette. We are thankful for their generosity and the hard work of the Muffin Men to ensure we can serve our neighbors delicious food each day.



Park Day School Returns for End of Year

A group of Park Day School students and two of their teachers returned to the dining room for the third time this school year to get in one last service opportunity before summer break. The students were able to reflect on their experiences throughout the year, noticing how the service has impacted them and how they've grown as individuals. The students shared some of their reflections with Volunteer Coordinator Katie Troy. We hope to see Park Day students return to the dining room next school year.

"I personally had a lot of fun washing dishes. At first, I was unsure what to expect because of the stereotypes against what a homeless center is like. In the end, though, I liked it." - Glenn Mah



"Before we started, the staff was helpful and nice. The first time I was the thumper and there was not much interaction with people. The second time, I was in the family room and had conversations with people and we got to know each other. The guests were equally as interested in us as we were in them." - Theo Darci-Maher



Mommy's Trading Post Delivers Clothing



Mommy's Trading Post, a maternity and baby consignment store in Alameda, responded to our need for infant and toddler clothing by donating 30 bags of children's clothes to our women's center. Our women's center offers showers and laundry, clothing, personal care items, books and a playroom for children, as well as baby room services, where parents receive family size products, children's clothing, diapers and more. "Mommy's Trading Post is such a good idea for a store. Now I know that I can even refer clients there when they are looking to buy pregnancy and baby clothes," Women's Center Coordinator

Jasmine Rogers said. We always accept diapers and other baby supplies to give to local families.

St. Joseph Basilica Donates Stools to Clinic

Members of the St. Joseph Basilica Vincentian Conference in Alameda donated two stools to the SVdP and Order of Malta free podiatry clinic in May. Volunteers from St. Joseph Basilica volunteered at the May clinic and see their donation in action. Clinic coordinator Janet Waring, RN arranges

donations of shoes and supplies for the clinic each month. "The stools are really terrific as they can be used to sit and fit shoes, also for clients being treated in a wheelchair that cannot get up to the exam table. The client can put their feet on the stool and it makes it easier for the doctor and the patient. Truly this is a wonderful gift for our clinic," Waring said. Since shoes are fitted to the client's foot before they leave, the stools will make it easier to try on the shoes and for our guests and volunteers to sit and rest on while in the clinic. This is an example of how



Vincentians can use their gifts and talents to find the right fit for service at the West Oakland direct service campus, in addition to their work in their Conferences. Thank you, St. Joseph Basilica!



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

St. Benedict's Ladies Serve in Purple

Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary Court 336 from St. Benedict's Church in East Oakland have been volunteering together once per month in the West Oakland direct service campus for many years. They can be spotted by the purple clothing and aprons they wear when they volunteer and are a good example of consistent volunteers who branch out from their church life to serve at SVdP. "We love the volunteers from St. Benedict's. They are always happy and they bring fun to the family dining room through their positive attitudes," Volunteer Coordinator Katie Troy said. We appreciate the ladies' dedication and enthusiasm.

Many Knights of Peter Claver are also Vincentians. Vincentians from St. Benedict's also provide food baskets twice monthly for their community, and are applying for an urban farming grant from the SVdP national office to support their food program. In addition, the Conference has completed training for home visits, which they will begin performing soon. Thank you all for your work!

