

Neighbors Helping Neighbors News: September 2019



In Her Own Words: Sandra



"I'll be 67 in December. I was born in Oakland at Highland Hospital and I grew up in West Oakland. After I graduated high school, I worked in food service. All my early jobs were related to food. I moved to Pittsburgh in 2007 after my mom died, but came back to my hometown in 2013. Then, I was taking care of my great-grandson. After that, I didn't have anything to do so I found myself at St. Vincent de Paul. It is so much fun. I loved

being in Kitchen of Champions and I wanted more. I heard about Kitchen of Champions 5 years ago, but every time I tried to come something got in the way. Earlier this year, I called the center. Jackie answered and said that the current cohort had already started and if I could be down there at 3:30 I could join the class. I got there within 15 minutes. I guess they knew something was special about me. I came to the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast in April and got to say my poem for everyone. I've never had so much fun as when I got to recite it in front of all those volunteers.

"I used to eat in the dining room. I had a drug problem and I'd come by here in the '80s for food. I was homeless. It wasn't always peaches and cream in my life. In '89 I started picking myself up and this journey has been so special.

"When the shelter cook position came open, Chef Armando called me and asked if I wanted to do it. People here say I put love into my food and they love eating it. I come volunteer on Saturdays and start prep for Sunday dinner. I work in the shelter on Sunday and Monday. I try to make every meal special. You don't want to give someone what you wouldn't eat. While I'm here, the guests get all my attention and care. My new goal is to have my own food truck. Cooking has always been in my life. My advice is: it doesn't matter how old you are, never give up on your dreams. There's always time for your dream."



Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Saturday, September 14th, **District Council**, 9:00 a.m., St. Bede Parish, 26950 Patrick Avenue, Hayward.
- Monday, September 16th, **Finance Committee**, 4:00 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Wednesday, September 18th, **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, September 23rd, **Special Works Committee**, 1:30 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland.
- Tuesday, October 1st, **Development Committee**, 1:30 p.m., West Oakland Campus, 2272 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland
- Thursday, October 3rd, **Spirituality Committee**, 1:00 p.m., Nob Hill Market, 2531 Blanding Avenue, Alameda.

Champions Catering Invites You To:

A ST. VINCENT DE PAUL ENTERPRISE

CHAMPIONS CATERING FUNDRAISING BRUNCH

Sunday, October 6, 2019
St. Vincent de Paul of Alameda County
675 23rd Street, Oakland

COOKING DEMONSTRATION AT 12:00 PM
BRUNCH SERVED FROM 1:00-3:00 PM

Tickets are \$30 per person.
Space is limited so RSVP to
Ava as soon as you can! Call
(510) 593-6381 or email
agambero@svdp-alameda.org.



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.
- 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.)
- Check out our Facebook page for more updates about our services throughout Alameda County: facebook.com/svdpalameda.
- Reserve Catering of Champions for your next event! Catering of Champions can provide food for any occasion, from office parties to weddings to church events. Chef Javier and his staff of Kitchen of Champions graduates will work with you to develop a custom menu, or you can order from our Spanish-style menu. To see the menu and submit an order request, visit: svdp-alameda.org/catering, call 510-681-3301, or email championscatering@svdp-alameda.org.

In His Own Words: Larry

"Last year I was at rock bottom. I was living pretty much in my car. I learned about St. Vincent and got a bed in the shelter. I was comfortable of where I was in life. I have a very supportive family. But, after a while, your family gets tired of dealing with your addiction. After my third week in the shelter I decided I was going to sit on a crate and do what the addicts do. Then, I saw an old friend and she came to SVdP, got my things and I went directly to a recovery program. I got clean.

"I work the graveyard shift at the post office. I drive to Oakland from Suisun City. My car broke down so I went to the shop where my buddy works and came back to SVdP to wait for the repair. It's a very safe and warm place here.

"My kids and grandchildren make me the most proud. My biggest goal is staying clean. And lowering my handicap in golf. When I'm clean, everything works for me. Thank you to my supportive friends and family. Thank you to the people in high places, especially Leslie, Jackie and Marcus at St. Vincent. God bless us all."



Vincenians Gather for National Assembly

More than 700 Vincenians from around the country gathered in Denver, Co. for the 2019 National Assembly. Attendees participated in workshops, which all relate to the Society and its work, led by subject matter experts on topics such as fundraising, special works, home visits, spirituality,



BLASE BOVA WITH SHEILA FROM NEW YORK, CANDEE FROM ST. LOUIS, AND ALTHEA FROM DETROIT.

communications and more. The National Assembly is always a transformational experience for Vincenians. "The conference was rejuvenating and I'm looking forward for what's in store nationally for our organization. It's always inspiring and uplifting to be in the presence of so many people who work together in promoting our mission," Executive Director Blase Bova said. The year 2020 marks the 175th anniversary of the founding of the first SVdP Conference in the U.S. It is fitting that the 2020 National Assembly will be held in St. Louis where, at the Old Cathedral, the first SVdP Conference in the United States was started.



SVdP Community Heads Back to School



We hosted our annual back-to-school open house on Saturday August 10 at our West Oakland campus. In addition to receiving backpacks and school supplies, 202 children and 74 families enjoyed crafts provided by Pledge to Humanity from San Ramon Valley High School, books (in English and Spanish) curated by volunteers in our Fremont thrift store, a special meal of homemade pizza and family portraits that were especially popular.

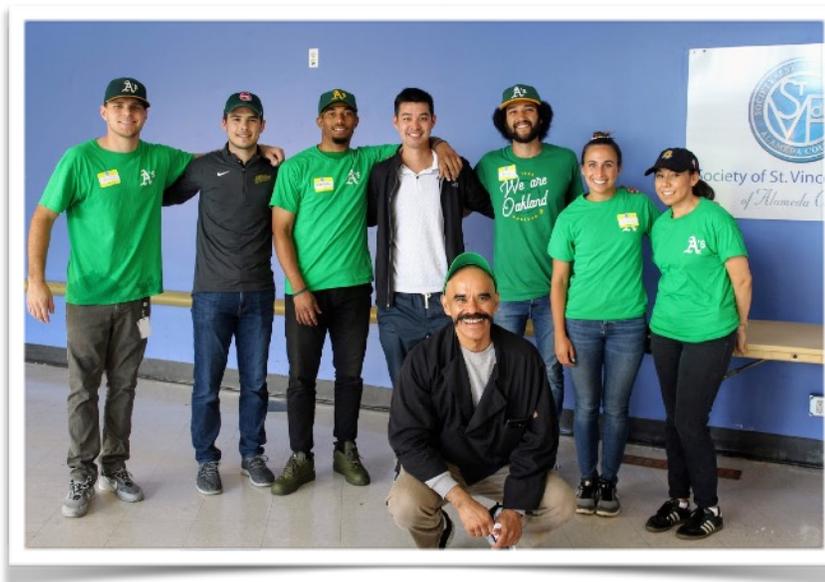
Special thanks to Claire O'Reilly, our lead event volunteer, and volunteers and staff in our community center and women's and children's center. We also want to thank the conferences and volunteer groups who donated to the event, including St. Augustine, St. Raymond, St.

Philip Neri/St. Albert the Great, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Patrick, Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary and All Saints. Our next community open house will be in December to celebrate Christmas.





Oakland A's Volunteers Are a Home Run



Staff from the Oakland A's continue to provide quality service in our West Oakland direct service campus dining room. Not only do they serve consistently, but they make lasting impressions by providing A's merchandise and, occasionally, free tickets to their games. We appreciate their commitment to reaching out to the greater Oakland community. "The guests love seeing the A's come into the dining room. They always have their eyes out for one of the

players. We hope to welcome more of their volunteers in the future," Volunteer Coordinator Katie Troy said. Every time guests see the green A's shirts in the dining room they get excited to talk about sports together. Thank you to the A's volunteer teams for their commitment to volunteer service, and for providing a consistent "bright spot" for our guests.

Movie Star Joins Monthly Movie Night

This weekend, we had our monthly movie night in the shelter. We screened SORRY TO BOTHER YOU and were joined by one of the film's stars and West Oakland resident, Michael Sommers, for a Q&A with our guests. "Everyone was so kind and welcoming to me. I had a really good time! Thank you, all my friends from movie night," Sommers said. Thank you to all who helped put on a great program. We are especially happy to have shown a movie that was filmed in Oakland. Champions Catering cooked a special taco bar dinner. The Cathedral of Christ the Light Conference brought volunteers, the movie, snacks and the large movie screen. Next month, the Conference will put on a game night, and alternate monthly between showing movies and hosting games with our shelter guests.



Livermore Stores Belongings for Neighbors



The Livermore thrift store has a new partnership with Abode Services and the Livermore police department to make sure homeless clients of Abode can store their belongings safely while they meet with case managers. The Livermore police will transport people's purses, large bags and carts to the Livermore store, where they will be kept until the client's appointment with Abode is over. Then, the client is escorted by their case manager to pick up their belongings. So far, the program has had "no hiccups at all," said Livermore Store Manager Jamie Aubry. The

Livermore store is notified that someone will need their bags stored with them either the morning of or the night before. They have made themselves open to taking bags on any given day, even with little advance notice. "It's really amazing that there are three organizations working together in this partnership. It's awesome. It shows a positive community response to homelessness," Aubry said. People who are homeless are extremely vulnerable to theft, and this is just one way to try and keep people's possessions safe.

St. Benedict Earns Urban Farming Grant

The St. Benedict Conference was awarded an Urban Farming Grant through our National SVdP office. They were one of two Conferences in the Western Region to receive the grant. "The Knights of Peter Calver Ladies Auxiliary Court 336, always enjoy the time we give to the Dining Room. Now, my SVdP Conference was happy and surprised to receive the Urban Farming Grant," said Wallita Sykes-Bush, Conference president. The Conference will meet in September and decide how to best utilize the funds to support their service. We encourage all of our Conferences to think about the support of the national office and, if your Conference has the capacity, to apply for their grants. More information can be found on the national council's website: www.svdpusa.org.



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	wepalmquist@gmail.com
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
Champions Catering	www.svdp-alameda.org/catering	(510) 681-3301	championscatering@svdp-alameda.org

St. Joseph Plans Donations After Service

St. Joseph's Mission in San Jose joined our dining room volunteers on August 24th and after an impactful experience, the group wanted to do more for SVdP. They met together and decided to bring clothing, toiletries and towels on a quarterly basis. When volunteers leave our direct service campus wanting to do more, that means we are making a difference. St. Vincent de Paul not only serves with our guests, we also help to transform volunteers, donors and community partners to reflect and act in support of people who are homeless. One way we measure success is by the mobilization of volunteers to engage in more service after spending time at SVdP. If you'd like to do more to help your neighbors, contact our volunteer team at (510) 877-9252 or email volunteer@svdp-alameda.org.

