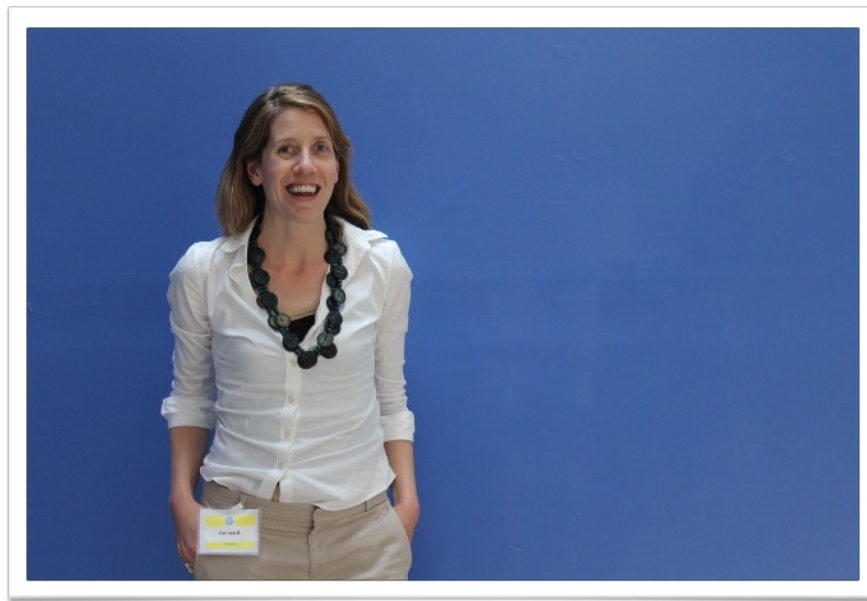


## Neighbors Helping Neighbors News: June 2017



# Carmen's Fellowship



Carmen Brick has been a weekly volunteer in the SVdP Community Center since the fall of 2016. We are thrilled to announce that Carmen is the recipient of a community engagement fellowship from UC Berkeley to support her work with the SVdP Kitchen of Champions program! The Berkeley Food Institute Community Engagement and Leadership Fellowship will enable Carmen to develop a much-needed resource database for the KoC program which will help guarantee the program's continuation and allow for its expansion. Cultivating KoC's longevity is imperative - addressing the systemic barriers to employment faced by our neighbors in poverty is

a long-term and multi-faceted endeavor. Carmen has been working directly with the Kitchen of Champions culinary students and staff, focusing on the program's professional development and case management services.

Carmen is a PhD candidate in the field of sociology, and has held positions with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Congressional Research Service,

and the New York State Legislature. Carmen studied Sociology at Mount Holyoke College and Public Administration at the State University of New York at Albany, and hopes to use her sociological training and governmental experience to contribute to policies that improve the economic security and social inclusion of low-income people. Carmen's current research examines how U.S. work institutions can be reformed to reverse contemporary job polarization. SVdP is fortunate and proud to have Carmen on our direct service campus sharing her skills and talents with our staff, guests, and volunteers.



# Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Saturday, June 10th, On the Road: **Regional Meetings** - various locations.
- Monday, June 12th, 2:00 pm, **Development Committee**, Downtown Campus (Normally 1st Monday of the month).
- Monday, June 19th, **Finance Committee**, Downtown Campus, 2272 San Pablo Ave, Oakland, 4:00 pm (just before Board Meeting).
- Wednesday, June 21st, **Board of Trustees Meeting**: fellowship/meal at 5:30 pm followed by meeting at 6:00 pm, Downtown Campus, 2272 San Pablo Ave, Oakland. (3rd Wednesday of the month).
- Tuesday, June 27th, 1:30 pm, **Special Works Committee**, Downtown Campus (4th Tuesday of month).
- Saturday, July 8th, 9:30 am, **District Council Meeting**, All Saint's Church (Mass at 8:30 am) 22824 2nd Street, Hayward.

## Stanford Alums Beyond the Farm



A group of Stanford alumni spent their annual Beyond the Farm service day volunteering at our direct service campus in early May by organizing and cleaning our catering supply closet.

Who knew Cardinal red would complement SVdP blue so nicely?

## News Briefs

- Thanks for being a part of St. Vincent de Paul's mission of neighbors helping neighbors, serving those in need.
- Volunteers are needed in our Phone Center, taking calls from families in need of help with food, rent, utilities or household items, and referring them to the correct local St. Vincent de Paul volunteer group or Conference.
- We need volunteers in our Community Center at our Help Desk and in our Clothing Closet, on any morning or afternoon Tuesdays through Fridays, for 3 hour shifts between 8:30 am and 3:00 pm.
- Our Fremont Thrift Store needs volunteers to hang clothing, sort donations, straighten items on shelves, bring donations into the store, and greet donors and customers.
- Your online purchases can benefit SVdP. Amazon.com will donate 1/2% of anything you spend on their site, once you sign up. Just visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), and choose "Society St Vincent De Paul Alameda" as your charity. Once you're set up, every purchase you make yields a donation to SVdP.
- Thanks for making St. Vincent de Paul your charity of choice!

## IAC Publishing Serves at SVdP

IAC Publishing brought a team of 17 volunteers to our West Oakland direct service campus where they cleaned our walk-ins, prepped food, and served lunch with great spirit and work ethic - and all in nifty self-designed volunteer t-shirts! This was just a fraction of the IAC team, the rest of whom served at other Oakland based



nonprofits for their annual day of service.

Katie Van Den Bos, President of IAC Publishing Labs and SVdP's tray captain for the day, described IAC's volunteer site selection process: "This is actually our first company-wide service day like this one, where we partnered with four different organizations in Oakland and allowed our staff to choose which project they wanted to support. We decided to give people options so that they could support a cause that's meaningful to them."

SVdP is grateful to have been chosen as one of IAC's volunteer sites and we look forward to hosting IAC again.

SVdP is committed to building strong partnerships with companies who are engaged and dedicated to helping their local communities. IAC is a great example of such a partner.

## Hillcrest Elementary Diaper Drive

Miles and his mom Cara led a diaper drive at Hillcrest Elementary School to replenish the Women's Center's supply. Miles dropped off the collected items at SVdP's West Oakland campus. Thank you to Miles and Cara for acknowledging a need and creating the drive and to the Hillcrest students and families for donating.

Diapers are costly, high-demand items at our Women's Center and every donation is greatly appreciated by guests and their families. If you'd like to donate diapers, please contact us at (510) 638-7600.





## The Kindness I Found Here

In addition to working full time, Rosilyne is a student at CSUEB. When Rosilyne had to choose a volunteer site for an academic service learning assignment, SVdP was at the top of her list.

For the past six weeks Rosilyne has spent one shift per week organizing the clothing donations to keep the Clothing Closet well stocked. She's enjoyed working alongside Mike and other SVdP staff and, thanks to her background in social services, she has helped guests with a patient and listening ear.

Rosilyne greeted staff and visitors in the Community Center with ease as if she'd been here for many years. "The kindness I found here made this assignment a memorable one and I plan on returning to continue as a volunteer."



## A Raiders Gift

SVdP's Spirituality, Formation, Extension Coordinator and diehard Raider fan Lu Cuevas took a short trip to Alameda to collect donated goods from the Oakland Raiders.

When asked if she enjoyed every second of meeting the Raiders' representatives, Lu gave her usual rejoinder: "It is what we do for one another."

Lu took the opportunity and invited the Raiders to SVdP's Dining Room before the team's big move to Las Vegas. Thank you, Oakland Raiders for your generous donation and for making Lu's day a great one!



## A Grandmother's Love

Sheila is a regular visitor to the Women's Center. She comes twice a month to use the laundry services and to find flattering plus-size clothing for her diabetic nine-year old granddaughter. Sheila's granddaughter is having behavioral issues at school and at home. Sheila's son is no longer with her granddaughter's mother and that has been traumatic for the nine-year-old girl. The child's mother suffers from mental health illness and Sheila is concerned for a grandchild who doesn't talk to others much and mumbles incoherently when she does. The effects of her mother's mental illness are deeply affecting this young child and Sheila is fearful for her granddaughter's overall health.

Sheila's money goes towards rent and food. At 54, Sheila has raised five kids and will soon welcome a sixth grandchild. Sheila grew up in Alameda where she also raised her two eldest children. Once a girl scout and a bluebird, she remembers her childhood as a happy one. She participated in outdoor activities and loved camping. She thinks her granddaughter is too sedentary and bored at school and in serious need of a therapist. Sheila



wishes she would have taken her in as a baby. Barely making enough money to take care of herself, Sheila aches for a grandchild struggling with psychological and physical health issues that require much more than a grandmother's healing touch.

Helping family members who don't prioritize mental health or who don't have access to services is an ongoing struggle, a cycle that exists alongside those of poverty and multi-generational abuse. SVdP helps Sheila in very practical ways - having clean laundry and finding nice clothes for her grandkids is a tangible way she can help. The worry remains, however, that she may never be able to meet the more complex needs of her granddaughter.

## Putting Faith into Action

Parishes in Action (PIA) is a local collaborative of Catholic social agencies located throughout the diocese. The initiative - called the Parish Solidarity Initiative - will train parish teams in Catholic Social Teaching and provide them with leadership and organizing skills to engage their parishes in local and global social ministry

activities. SVdP will host a "Come and See" event for PIA on Tuesday, June 13, at its downtown Oakland location, inviting parishioners to learn more about direct service and social justice. "We hope that this will serve as a catalyst to energize parishes to participate more deeply in social action," says Blase Bova, SVdP executive director.



## My Way of Giving Back

Marie didn't think she needed any help when it came to cooking, but she was eager to learn the art of plating food. She was ready to step up her game in the world of catering. "The truth is you eat with your eyes before you taste anything, so that's why food presentation is important. I thought that was all I was interested in learning when I got here. Boy, was I surprised at all the learning that was ahead of me!"

September 30th, 2014 was Marie's first day in the SVdP kitchen where she spent four hours with Elvis in the prep room. It was Chef Ryan's third Kitchen of Champions class. She laughs as she reminisces: "It was an adventure - it still is! There were days I was disappointed and let down, but the big takeaway from those experiences was learning how to talk about it instead of just holding it in. Chef Ryan encouraged me to talk it



out when something happened. I wouldn't do that before I started working with Chef Ryan. It's helped me at home and in the kitchen and in how I deal and interact with other people. There's a time to talk and there's a time to be quiet and listen. I had to learn that."

After graduating from the KoC Program, Marie was invited to come back and volunteer for different events. She would help prep and serve at subsequent KoC graduation ceremonies and special events like the Spring Fundraising Breakfast. During the kitchen remodel Marie helped lead a long chain of volunteers who made hundreds of sandwiches every day. Marie is grateful for these experiences and for the exposure she's had in meeting the rich variety of people who walk through SVdP's doors.

Marie has taken jobs that keep her busy and away from SVdP, but never for long: "If I get a phone call that they need my help in the kitchen or to work a special event, I try my best to be there. If I can do it, I'm always available. That's my way of giving back to a place that has given me so much."

## Thank You

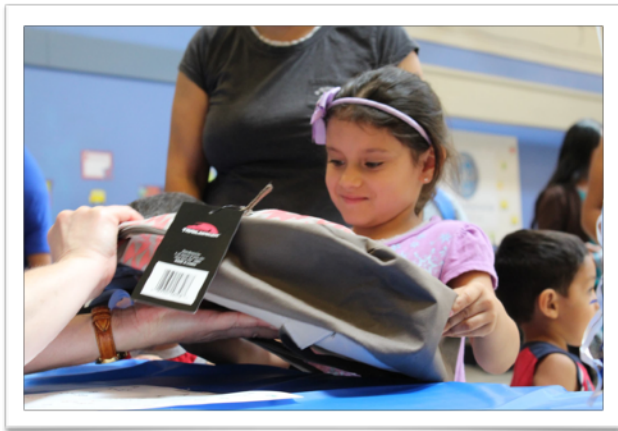
SVdP enjoys generous financial contributions from thousands of donors every year. These donations address the pressing needs of those we serve, providing shelter, food, clothing, job training and medical care to individuals and families seeking a hand up during difficult times. SVdP staff and volunteers dedicate their time and talents to fulfill our donors' desire to help those in greatest need with all the resources we have available.

So, thank you to our donors, volunteers and friends for the world of difference you make.





# SVdP Providing School Supplies to 250 Children



SVdP's direct service campus is getting ready for our annual Back to School supply drive, and we're inviting you to participate. We will be distributing backpacks and school supplies to 200 children at our Back to School Open House on Saturday, August 12th. We will also be providing backpacks and supplies to an additional 50 children the following week.

Our Back to School supply distribution is so important to the families we serve in our communities, families that would be otherwise hard-pressed to provide adequate school supplies for their children. It is also the most

expensive drive we host. We'd love your support in making sure that we're able to continue to serve our most vulnerable neighbors. You can find our supply drive flyer on our website's main page, or you can call our main phone number (510-638-7600) to request that a copy be emailed to you.

If you would like to participate in this drive by purchasing new items from the flyer, or by offering a gift that we can use to purchase supplies, please contact Muna Texier (contact information on the back). The sign-up sheet opens on Saturday, July 1st, and will close when all of the slots have been filled. We ask that all donations be dropped off at our direct service campus by Saturday, August 5th. Please contact Muna to arrange dropping off your contribution, or to schedule a tour of our campus.

Thank you for all that you do in our communities, and for your love and compassion for our neighbors.

## New Kitchen Manager

SVdP extends a warm welcome to Chef William Gomez who joined our staff as the new Kitchen Manager in May. With several years of experience in some of the finest dining institutions in Napa County and the SF Bay Area, Chef William brings a well-honed personal vision to SVdP and the Kitchen of Champions culinary program. An award-winning chef, William attended Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Institute, where he developed his kitchen management skills. Chef William is excited about transferring his passion for food to our guests and looks forward to teaching our Kitchen of Champions trainees to cook with love and passion, as well.



## For More Information Contact

| Name   | Position                           | Phone          | Email                        |
|--|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| St. Vincent de Paul<br>2272 San Pablo Ave<br>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 |
| Julia Catania  | Administration Manager             | (510) 692-0460 | jcatania@svdp-alameda.org    |
| Muna Texier  | Community Engagement Manager       | (510) 719-0774 | mtexier@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   |

## St. Mary's College Juniors Host Sock Drive



Abigayle and Lisa, St. Mary's College juniors, came to SVdP in May as part of their Community Engagement Course. As Abigayle and Lisa learned more about SVdP's community, they decided to jointly host a sock drive with the participation of family and friends. Both juniors shared how impactful it was to visit the SVdP direct service campus. "We would have never known the high demand that exists at SVdP for

clean and durable socks had we not come here and seen the need with our own eyes."

Both juniors also shared how beginning a collection drive was more difficult than expected. As they reached out to their peers and family members, it became clear that there was a divide between showing support and actually following through with a commitment. While many were quick to pledge a donation of new socks for their collection drive, few would follow through. Not ones to get discouraged, Abigayle and Lisa adapted quickly and began offering to pick up donations from people's homes themselves. This direct approach worked well and soon they had several bags of socks and toiletries in their cars to donate to SVdP's Clothing Closet. "It's easy for us to "like" a post on FB and other social media sites, but it takes a more intentional step to follow through with direct action towards a cause you believe in and want to support."

