



The Education Experience

at St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

Springing Forward!

Dear Friends:

Welcome to Spring!

As we enter this season of rebirth, The St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center hopes that all of our extended family and friends are healthy and happy! At the Center, we are excited as Spring approaches, because we are embracing another year of growth. We have tackled 2012 vigorously and we are off and running to what we feel will be another glorious year!

We are delighted to welcome a new Development Manager, Nancy Skula, who comes to the Center with a tremendous background in grant writing. In addition to restarting our donor recognition program, Nancy will be essential in helping to find the funds that will enable us to continue to serve the community.

Dr. Ruth Ray from Wayne State University once again invited the Center to be a participating organization for the Student Service class. Working with both our adults and children, these students are gaining valuable learning experiences about the importance of giving back, as well as what it takes to make a non-profit organization work. We are grateful for their support and to Dr. Ray for giving the Center this opportunity!

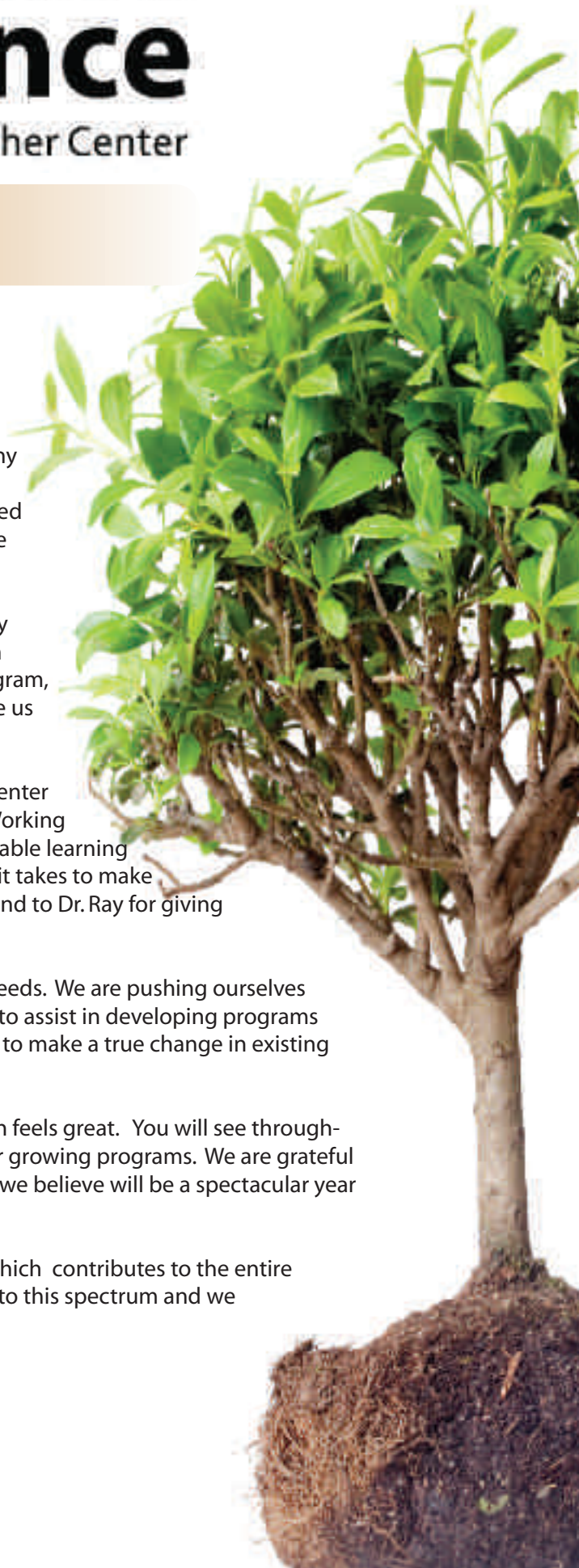
The Center is also actively working with local schools to identify needs. We are pushing ourselves and our partners to proactively develop pilot programs. We want to assist in developing programs that focus upon changing the dynamic of educational protocols – to make a true change in existing education for our area.

New students, new staff, new volunteers, new beginnings – growth feels great. You will see throughout this newsletter how a variety of people are contributing to our growing programs. We are grateful for the support of our friends and invite you to play a role in what we believe will be a spectacular year for the Center!

A single seed can grow a flower. A lot of flowers make a garden, which contributes to the entire spectrum of life. Each of our volunteers brings something special to this spectrum and we are creating a beautiful garden together.

Wishing you a wonderful season of rebirth,

Diane Renaud
Executive Director/CEO



What have we been up to?

At the Center, we knew we were busy in 2011. But when we reviewed our final student count at the end of the year, we were stunned to learn that we had increased our student population by 83%! It is astonishing to realize that even with this increase in students; we are barely scratching the surface of meeting the needs of our local residents. But, we are doing what we can every day to make a difference.

Children's Education Experience

Writing to the soldiers – Our children's after-school program has reached out to the brave men and women of the military. In December, the children sent holiday cards and in February, they made Valentines.



Summer Field Trip Program – We are delighted to announce that the Marc Suris Legacy Foundation has again sponsored the Summer Field Trip program for our kids. These trips were a wonderful addition for our children last year and we are honored that MSLF feels that the best way to celebrate Marc

Suris' dedication to children, is to sponsor our program.



Math Star – In the Fall of 2011, our Children's After-School program welcomed Nyla, an extremely shy second grader. Nyla's lack of confidence was preventing her from doing well in math and she needed some personalized assistance. Through the program, not only did her confidence increase, but so did her math skills - to such a degree that she was asked to compete in the 24 Challenge® Math Program by her school and she won. Congratulations to Nyla and her mother for their hard work and commitment to education. And thank you to the Children's Education Experience staff and volunteers for making a positive impact on Nyla that will last the rest of her life!



Oral Hygiene Classes - One of our volunteers and Board members, Dr. Calvin Brown, brought his staff to teach some of our children proper oral hygiene habits. They brought with them free toothbrushes and other things to help the children understand the importance of taking care of their teeth and mouths. The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all and we look forward to Dr. Brown and his team returning to work with more of our children. Thanks Dr. Brown – for keeping our children's smiles bright!

Trick for a treat - The Center respects all views on religion and Holidays. As a result, in October, we celebrated a Harvest Festival with the children. Instead of the traditional Trick or Treating, the children visited each staff member's desk, where they participated in level-appropriate math or reading problem solving. Each child received a treat when they successfully solved their problem. Our volunteers and staff enjoyed it as much as the kids!

Adult Education Experience

TRiO – The Center has developed an outstanding relationship with the TRiO Educational Opportunity Center. TRiO provides funds to low-income residents that have the academic ability to attend higher learning institutions like colleges or universities, but not the financial means. The manager of TRiO visited with our adult students and provided information on how they may be eligible for tuition assistance. The manager then later returned to the campus for a special enrollment session with GED candidates. We are very proud that not only have some of our graduates enrolled, but also some of our GED candidates have enrolled – aiming higher than they ever had before.

Success Rates Increase – We have previously reported that a first time GED applicant usually passes the exam only approximately 25% of the time. But that our students pass all five tests 80% of the time on their first-try. In 2011, the Center team worked hard to identify improved methods to increase a student's likelihood of passing the GED on their first try. We are very pleased to say that we accomplished that objective and now our average pass-rate has increased to 85%! Well done Adult Education Team!!

Student Database - As part of our tracking system to measure our success rates and identify the true impact the program is having upon the community, the Center has created a new Student Database. With this system (using existing technology, so there was no cost to implement this process), we are now able to track our alumni, testing rates, scores, etc. faster and easier. This improved procedure also will help us to provide more detailed information on our effectiveness to the community and potential funding sources.

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month!

The Center wouldn't exist without the tremendous support of our volunteers. As you have seen throughout this newsletter, we have a variety of friends that support us in different ways. One of the best things about Spring is that April is Volunteer Appreciation Month and it gives us the opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary kindness of giving of some very special people. This year, we celebrate those that have been volunteering as tutors with our students for the past five years:



Delores Fangman

Tom Magoulik

Sandra Sims

Thank you! We couldn't do it without you!

We need your help! Please consider volunteering – we have a variety of ways you can support the Center and our Community. Contact Sr. Marie Judith Haupt at (313) 535-9200 x3104 or visit www.svsfcenter.org for more information.



Beth Kraft, our little spring clover.

Spreading the Seeds of Opportunity in our Communities

We have been very fortunate in the number of ways that individuals and organizations have stepped forward to help spread the word about our services to the Metro Detroit area. The Center is starting to benefit from revitalized awareness of the organization and we are grateful for the ways people are helping to spread the seeds of information about the opportunities the Center offers to our students:

Grosse Pointe War Memorial TV and The John Prost Show featured St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center in an interview that ran on Grosse Pointe Cable for a week in February. The segment featured our Eastside Campus at the NSO Multi-

Service Center and the need for volunteers to help support that location. A special thanks to Yvonne Maes, owner of Do By Hair Company. Ms. Maes, an Eastside resident, volunteers for the Center as an adult tutor and she donated more of her time by participating in the show. Thanks Yvonne!

On the West side, the Center is being supported in a variety of ways by residents of Canton. The Village Theater at Cherry Hill will again be displaying our stained glass windows in the month of April. A tremendous supporter of the Center, Tom Newton, will once again curate the show, as well as help promote the exhibit on the Canton Cable TV, which is taping a feature segment this month. Tom, your dedication means so much!



Peggy and Sara Frankie, our own Kitty Cat and Pooh Bear



Special recognition needs to go to Sue Voyles and the team at Logos Communications. Sue and her staff have been working extremely hard on behalf of the Center to raise awareness of the quality of our services and our mission to support the Community. We are grateful for her many hours of donated hard work on our behalf!

Online partners have been very receptive as well and partners such as Groupon and Hip City Deals have featured St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center via online promotions in the past several months, raising awareness and helping to raise money. We appreciate their efforts on our behalf and their support!

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

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**For more information,
please call us at (313) 535-9200.**

Our Mission - We provide educational programs, basic skill building and academic enhancement for at-risk children and adults, designed to build self-sufficiency skills for academic and employment success, personal achievement and dignity.

Our Values - The values of our founders continue to guide the expression of the Center's mission:

Simplicity - Honesty, integrity and openness in all of our words and actions

Teamwork - Working together in service to others

Advocacy - Advocating for those with no voice

Inventiveness - Being creative in everything we do

Respect - Showing respect for those we serve and everyone we contact on their behalf

Service Quality - Providing the highest quality services

