



The Education Experience

at St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

Homecoming

Dear Friends:

For many of us, Fall invokes memories of Homecoming, whether it is from elementary, middle, high school or college. We may not be in school ourselves or have school age children, but we all know the feelings surrounding the idea of homecoming. It's about remembering part of your past, and appreciating the places, people and events that helped to shape who you are.

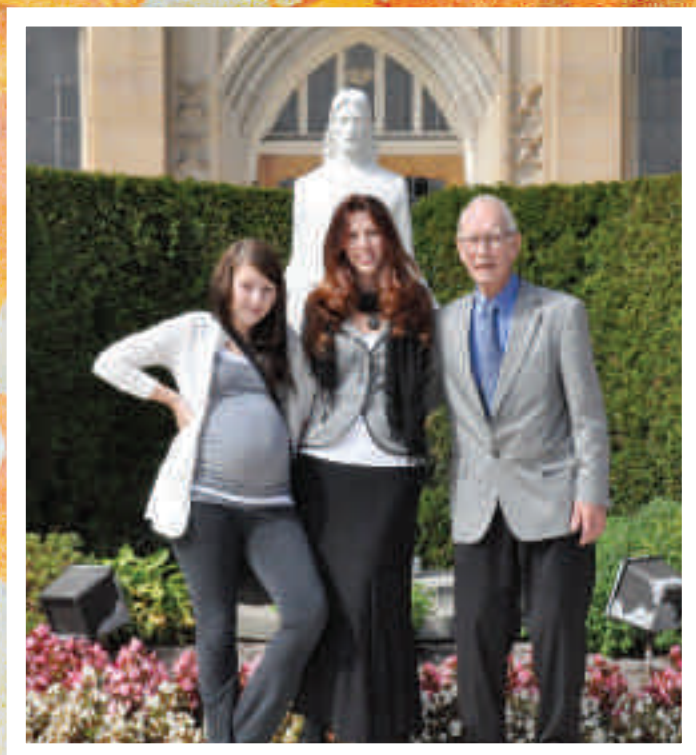
The past several months at St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center (SVSFC) have brought us many types of homecomings that you will see throughout this newsletter. From these stories, we have learned that after 169 years of serving the community, the Center is still impacting those from its past, as well as their descendents. In other words, those from our past graciously continue to bring new generations home to us.

One of our most recent graduates, **Theresa Ancick**, attended our Adult program with her daughter **Leah Prybylski**. Both Theresa and Leah passed the GED with two of the Center's all-time top scores, with Theresa setting a Center record with her score. We asked Theresa to speak at an event about the experience she and her daughter had with our program. In doing so, we learned that her father, **Valent Ancick**, had been a child in our foster program in the 1930's. Mr. Ancick, age 78, joined Theresa, Leah and us for the speech. Mr. Ancick shared that after St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center had placed him in a loving home, he went on to become his high school Class President, served our country in the Air Force and raised his own loving family, having 8 children of his own. His granddaughter Leah, who is expecting her first child, will be bringing into this world the fourth generation of this wonderful family, who have been impacted by the legacy of St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center.

It is personal stories like these that motivate our team of volunteers and staff to continue to fulfill St. Vincent's mission of service. Our programs may have changed over our long history, but the impact of helping others never does. You never know what today's effort will mean for someone tomorrow or how future generations will be impacted by those that gave of themselves yesterday. But if you are lucky, every once in a while, someone shares their story.

That is what Homecoming at St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center means.

Diane Renaud
Executive Director/CEO



Leah Prybylski, Theresa Ancick and Valent Ancick – soon to be 4 generations of a family served by St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

BIG SUMMER NEWS! *What did we do this Summer? Got a new Children's Wing!*

Many of you know that the Center currently rents its main campus space from Christ the King School. This Summer, a wing adjacent to the Center's existing space became available for our expansion. This new space means the Children's Program has its own wing, growing both the Children and Adult programs, enabling us to meet the increasing demands for our programs. We will now be working with not only more children, but will also add fourth and fifth grades to our curriculum. Also, our adult program will now have the space it needs to accommodate the computers and additional training necessary for the new GED test, that becomes computer-based in January, 2014.

But, there were some structural issues that needed to be fixed before we could occupy the space. Through the Archdiocese of Detroit, we were put in contact with **Mary Clare McCormick of CM Partners**. Mary Clare's tireless (and we do mean tireless) devotion to this project made this expansion possible. She obtained site evaluations, bids and helped find funding for this project, as well as recruiting an extraordinary team to make it all happen. We quite literally could not be more grateful to her for managing this entire project, start to end.

Nor can we thank enough the amazing group that she put together to do the demolition, construction and finishing work on our new wing, which not only provides us with four new classrooms, but also a new bathroom, parent waiting area, sink, inside storage room and locked outside garden storage area. These extraordinary individuals and their companies contributed not only a significant portion of their standard costs, but also brought their pro-

fessionalism, quality of work and their commitment (as we came up against unforeseen obstacles), never disrupted our programs and were extremely nice. For us, they are The 2013 Dream Team!

On behalf of all of our students, volunteers and staff, we encourage you to support these businesses, as they supported St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center:

Richard Adamo, Adamo Group – demolition, clean-up, asbestos management and removal

Scott Levigne, Midpoint Construction – construction of inside and outside storage areas, interior and exterior painting, brick finishing work, construction of exterior ramp to a storage area

Kevin Callahan, Bruttell Roofing - for the new roofing and gutter work

Frank Roberson, Donald E. McNabb Company, Inc. – carpet for the new children's classrooms



Tearing down a condemned portion of the new wing

ADULT EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Teach by Example - One of our recent GED graduates came to us from the Children's program. This young mother brought her two children to the after-school program and decided it was time for her to obtain her GED. She is the model for what we have been encouraging to our students. For parents to sit down with their kids and study together. For parents to lead by example and embrace education in the home. She not only scored extremely well on her GED, but she is not continuing her education by attending college. She is teaching her children by example, not just by words.

New Partnerships - We are pleased to announce that we have developed more partnerships with Detroit workforce organizations, providing more options for our students. Earlier this year, we began working with **Detroit Jobs Alliance (DJA)**, to identify support and resources we can share with our students, who are striving for self-sufficiency. Through this relationship, we were introduced to **Detroit Training Centers**. DTC provides training in the construction trade and is working with us to specialize math training for that industry.

In addition to being a strong advocate of increasing awareness about the coming changes to the GED, DJA also introduced us to **Restaurant Opportunities Center of Michigan (ROC-MI)**. ROC-MI came to our main campus and gave a presentation to our adults about opportunities in the food service industry, opening up many new options to our students.

Changes coming to GED Testing – The time for the current test is winding down and there are still a lot of questions to be answered. In July, **Representative Thomas Stallworth** visited the Center to learn more about how the changing test will impact Detroiters. We appreciated his visit and that he took the time to speak to our adult students about the importance of getting their GED. Thank you Representative Stallworth!

More Days to Serve Students – SVSFC is happy to announce that through a grant by the **Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC)**, we will be adding a day to both our East and Central campuses. In addition to serving more new students, we will also be able to add another day of study for existing students, to help them achieve their GED faster.

Priority Health Senior Impact Award

As we shared in our Spring newsletter, our 2013 Volunteer of Year is **Luella Jahsan**. In celebrating Luella, we shared her remarkable contributions to the Center with Priority Health, who celebrate seniors in the State of Michigan that make a significant impact in our community. Based upon her merits and with the tremendous amount of support she received through Facebook, Luella was given the honor of being named the recipient of the award in Southeastern Michigan. Congratulations Luella!

Children's Education Experience

Blessed Birthdays - The Center started the year with a different type of Homecoming and blessings from a family of our past. The **Beamer Family** became familiar with SVSFC when they adopted their twin sons about 15 years ago. The family also has a daughter name **Anika Jane** (age 12), who wanted to share the excitement of having a birthday celebrations with other children. This ambitious and generous young lady obtained a grant to fund birthday parties for at-risk children that do not have the means for such luxuries. Visiting the Center monthly, Anika Jane and her mother **Jessica** bring a cake for each child having a birthday that month, along with goodies for the rest and games. To make our kids feel so special and do something that so many people take for granted is a gift that is beyond any present that could be bought. The entire Beamer Family and Anika Jane are living and breathing symbols of how giving from the heart is the best gift of all and remembering people and places that have impacted our lives reminds us of our blessings. They show us what Homecoming is truly about and we are so grateful.



The Children's Garden before demolition. The crops survived!

Madonna University's Nutrition Network – Once again, **Laura Kull** and her students in Madonna University's Nutrition Network were amazing this Summer. In the Spring, they planned and planted crops with the kids and helped to make the garden beautiful. But in addition, these dedicated students came each week to weed, water and tend the Children's Garden and vegetable crops. Corn, greens,

carrots, tomatoes, peppers – you name it, we had it! Wonderful people doing wonderful things for our kids!

Summer Education Experience – Our Summer program was another success! Thanks again to our generous sponsor, the **Marc Suris Legacy Foundation** for providing a rich summer of experiences and field trips to our children, as well as assistance with making sure the children were well fed for the trips. Our kids were able to connect with nature, history and fun because of MSLF and we value their commitment highly!

We would also like to express our gratitude for our meal partner, **Edibles Rex** for their donation of the End of the Summer Children's luncheon. During the school year and in the summer, Edibles Rex professionally and dependably delivers with absolute excellence each day, ensuring that our kids receive healthy food.

The Summer Children's Program also included some new activities, including an etiquette lesson by **Janice Daniels**, music lessons by **Cassie Jensen**, and a yoga lesson by **Nour Hussein**.

Students Helping Students

As always, the local institutions of higher education continue to support our efforts. We gratefully acknowledge the following organizations for sharing their students, to help our students, through their field placement and student service classes:

- Madonna University
- Marygrove University
- Oakland University
- University of Michigan (Ann Arbor and Dearborn campuses)
- Wayne State University



Mercy High School students helping with the Children's Garden Fall Clean-up

Through our students volunteers, we experience another type of homecoming. In September, it was a great privilege for the Center to host more than 20 students from **Mercy High School**, who visited for a Student Service Day, helping with the Fall clean up of our Children's Garden. These young ladies worked extremely hard and brought strong work ethics, good attitudes and great interest in what we are doing at the Center. We are so grateful for all of their effort! During the day, their teacher, **Lauren Marquard**, told us that she had been excited to learn that her group was coming to SVSFC. She shared that her father, **Rick Bennett**, had been a Board Member in the 1990's, and that her parents (who continue to support the Center) are still friends with one of the Daughters of Charity that worked with the SVSFC when it was a residential facility. And now Lauren has come to the Center with the next generation of volunteers to demonstrate what it means to give to others.

These students help in so many ways and bring so much to the Center, not only through their efforts, but through their spirit of giving. We are grateful to them and to the administrations of these fine institutions for their partnership! **Thank you! We couldn't do it without you!**

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.

MARK YOUR 2014 CALENDARS for the WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY!

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center is coming to the Detroit Historical Museum

Sarah Fisher is part of our name and part of our legacy. You may know that in 1929, when the original residence burned down, Charles and Sarah Fisher donated the money for the reconstruction of the Home. Part of the new building included a series of stained glass windows, depicting Mother Goose nursery rhymes. When the Center left its location in Farmington Hills in 2006, the remaining stained glass windows came with us. The windows are uniquely beautiful and there are only a handful of artists in the state who are capable of doing this type of stained glass today.

The current President of the **Detroit Athletic Club is Michael Ottaway**, one of Charles and Sarah's great grandsons. To celebrate this artistry, as well as the Center's evolution, Michael helped the Center to obtain a 3 month display of our windows in the Art and Architecture Gallery of the DAC earlier this year. The display generated so much interest, that the Detroit Historical Museum is graciously giving us the use of their Community Gallery from October 11 to December 28 in 2014. The display will be free to the public and will feature not only our one-of-a kind stained glass windows, but also the remarkable history of the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center, our current programs and how Sarah and Charles Fisher made an impact on generations of Southeastern Michigan families.

Mark your calendars and look for future information on a Preview Party, special children's events and other activities!

Corp! Magazine Salute to Diversity Award

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center was honored this Summer by Corp! Magazine, in recognition of the Center's service to our diverse community. It was a great affirmation of the efforts by the team and our commitment to service all students, regardless of their race, gender, religion, orientation or culture. We are grateful to Corp! Magazine for this acknowledgement.

easy ways to Help make a **Change**

It's easy to be part of all of the positive changes in the Center and help in ways you may not have considered before.

Like us on Facebook!



Facebook is a wonderful way to stay connected to all of the announcements and activities of the Center. Help us expand our social network by "liking" us!

Charity Motors - Donate your vehicle and you can designate the proceeds to the SVSFC. Visit www.charitymotors.org for more information.



Ask your employer – Does your employer have an Employee Giving/Matching Gift program? A volunteer group? Give grants to non-profits? Or are there employee activities such as a jean day that raise money? Ask how St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center can be included.

Check with your place of worship – many faith communities have funds that they designate to community efforts.

Designate us for Busch and Kroger Community Rewards programs – log on to their websites and select St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center to receive a donation from your grocery shopping.

Leave a Legacy – Consider St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center in your estate planning, to leave a gift that keeps on giving. We can help. Call Nancy Skula at (313) 535-9200, extension 3110.

Monetary donations - We rely on donations to operate. Your contribution is not only tax-deductible, it also directly supports our programs. Your gift will help our kids to succeed in school and make our adults more employable, which has economic impact for our entire community – both now and in the future. We are able to accept secure donations on our website too!

In-kind - Visit our website at www.svsfcenter.org – We have a variety of needs. Something as simple as a roll of paper towel or batteries can help off-set operating costs.

United Way designation – If you or your company participate in the annual United Way campaign, you can designate your gift toward St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center.

Volunteer – It doesn't take a lot of time to make a difference. And we have a variety of ways that you can help. Whether it is tutoring, administrative assistance, or publicity and marketing, your assistance is appreciated.

Call us at (313) 535-9200 or visit www.svsfcenter.org and learn more about how you can contribute to change.

Goodbye and Hello

We are heartbroken to have to say goodbye to our Ms. Beth. **Beth Kraft** has been with the Children's Program for more than five years. During that time, she pursued her dream of becoming an art teacher and a very lucky school has hired her for a full time position. Although she will come back to volunteer in the summer, our hallways will be a little less sunny without Ms. Beth's laughter and love that she so generously shared with all of us and most importantly, the children. Her contributions to the program have been enormous and we are a better organization for just having known her. We thank you Ms. Beth, miss you terribly and can't wait for your Homecoming!

But, we are extremely happy to have another Homecoming to celebrate! Our Ms. Kerri has come back to us in a new capacity. **Kerri Eby**, another long-time employee in the Children's Program, unfortunately had to leave her position with us last year. But has returned in a new role – as our newest Board of Trustee! Kerri's dedication to the Center and our students never wavered while she was away and she continued to be one of our strongest advocates in a variety of ways. We are thrilled that her circumstances changed and she is now able to come back as a volunteer and in her role as a Trustee, help guide the Center as it continues its journey forward. Thank you Ms. Kerri for coming home to us!

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

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**For more information, please call us at (313) 535-9200
or visit www.svsfcenter.org**



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.