



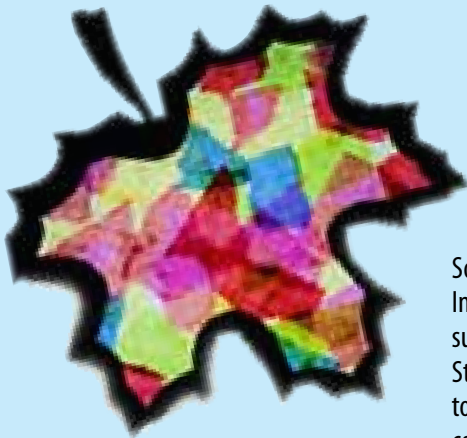
THE WINDOWS ARE OPEN



OCTOBER 11 - DECEMBER 28
WWW.SVSFCENTER.COM/WINDOWS

WINDOWS OF
OPPORTUNITY

FALL 2014



Dear Friends:

We are very excited that our long awaited **Windows of Opportunity** Exhibit at the Detroit Historical Museum is now open! Running from now through December 28, the display showcases our historic stained glass windows, as well as our unique history and what St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center is doing now. The Exhibit is free and all are welcome. We truly hope that you will have the opportunity before the end of the year to visit it and enter the "Win A Window" contest, as well as try your hand at some sample questions from the GED test.

Some people have asked me why we are doing this display. The answer is simple – for a LOT of reasons! In celebrating our 170th Anniversary, we are demonstrating to Southeastern Michigan that we have been supporting the community for a long time, as one of the oldest continuously operating organizations in the State. By doing so, we are also showing that the secret to our longevity is that we have always stayed true to our mission of helping at-risk children and families, but our services have evolved as the needs of the community have changed.

In addition, we want to start a dialogue to raise awareness of the importance of education in the family culture and how it can economically impact our community, while the motivation for the reemergence of Detroit is so urgent. Not just here, but as the nation watches how we transform ourselves. Too many at-risk families identify education as an obstacle/barrier, pointless, and do not see it as a means for economic self-sufficiency. We want to communicate to our exhibit guests that by encouraging that education be a part of the conversations in the home, we can help parents to teach the next generation about education as a pathway.

By featuring our historic stained glass windows, we are able to attract new audiences and perhaps re-engage past supporters that may not realize that St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center is still thriving, but in a new location and in a new role. We want to increase awareness of how the community can be part of our effort, through volunteering or service learning or even something as simple as supporting the Center by buying one of our **Windows of Opportunity** retail items as a Christmas present. For more information, please visit www.svsfcenter.org/windows.

Of course, this Exhibit is also about appreciating the past, as well as all of those that have faithfully supported the Center throughout all of its changes, by being reminded of the enduring beauty of the organization. Without friends like you, St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center would have been a distant memory and the Windows of Opportunity celebrates what we have been able to do as a community for 170 years.

This display has been a labor of love and we are so grateful for the enthusiasm and support we have received. You may have seen some advertising already for the exhibit. The people featured are actual students and graduates, because we wanted to celebrate their commitment to improving their lives. We are grateful to **Erin Thomas, DuJuan Carroll, Juanisha Woods, Gia Brown, Ricky Bouyer and Sandra Yinusa** for helping us out!

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the amazing, creative people that have put the entire Windows of Opportunity Exhibit and Retail line together, in addition to the hardworking SVSF Staff. But we have some exceptional vendors and partners that have made this all possible and I personally am grateful for their support (and enduring me)! Special thanks to: **Tom Newton, SEEDS Marking + Design, Logos Communications, Lesnau Printing, CK Interactive, The Glass Academy and Zara Creative**. We are grateful more than you know!

Diane Renaud

Diane Renaud
Executive Director/CEO

Madonna University and STEM



Picture of statue in Children's Courtyard.

It is a well known issue that in the United States, STEM skills (science, technology, engineering and math) are becoming increasingly important in education, especially for girls. Madonna University students **Nicole Murley, Kayleigh McCollum and Kelly Charniga, and Professor Veronica Riha,** wanted to bring those skills to SVSF students in the Children's Program. As a result, Madonna's "girls", worked with our 3rd – 5th grade girls on a variety of science applications, specifically designed to create an interesting exposure and experience with STEM areas of study.

Team Building Activities with Hula Hoops (demonstrating problem solving); bacteria experiences, (demonstrating sampling and analysis); Carbon dioxide and Exercise Experiments (identifying how we produce carbon dioxide when we perform different types of physical activity) and best of all, working with ice cream to identify properties of states of matter, were just a few examples of the extensive program Madonna put together for our students. We are grateful to Professor Riha and her committed team for a wonderful semester and experience!

Along with the new Children's Wing that opened earlier this year, our kids and their parents also now have a new, secure entrance, dedicated to the Children's program, entering through the new Children's Courtyard, which includes benches and a secure waiting area for parents and families, which was generously donated along with air conditioners by our very good friends at **Eastown Distributors.**

Sweet Dreamzzzz

Sweet Dreamzzz visited in our students in March, providing sleep education and bedtime essentials for our students. Sweet Dreamzzz is a non-profit organization committed to improving the health, well-being and academic performance of school-aged children. Sweet Dreamzzz teaches children how to get A's and B's by getting more Zzz's! Special thank you to **Michael and Suzy Fezzey** for their sponsorship of Sweet Dreamzzz's visit to the Center.

New Downtown Detroit Location and New Partner

In an effort to make our Downtown Detroit Campus more accessible to our adult students (especially during the M-1 Rail construction), we developed a new partnership with **Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency.** Although we are grateful to the Detroit Public Library for the space they provided at the Skillman Branch, Wayne Metro has graciously provided SVSF with a brand new classroom and access to a computer lab in their new offices, located at 7310 Woodward, at W. Grand Boulevard, www.waynemetro.org.



Another Partnership!



SVSF is pleased to announce that it has become an Impact Partner of **Reading Works.** Reading Works is dedicated to raising the level of literacy for adults across the metropolitan Detroit region. This mission is based on the knowledge that reading at a minimum proficiency is necessary for achieving the sustainable work and life skills that will transform the future for individuals, their families and our region.

New Adult Computer Lab

Sometimes blessings come in pairs! Thanks to two very supportive organizations, our Main Campus now features a new Adult Computer Lab, to help the students to prepare for the new computerized GED test. The computers and screens were generously donated by **St. Kenneth Church** in Plymouth, which has been an exceptional friend to the Center for 23 years.



New Adult Computer Lab.

Likewise, the **Farmington Rotary** provided the software and programs for all the computers, as well as 21 new GED preparation books, to ensure our students have everything they need to move forward. They too, have been a long-time friend to the Center, since they first donated 25 years ago!

We are so grateful to both organizations and their members for their kindness.

Students Helping Students

This year, the Center welcomed twelve **City Year Detroit** students in April for Spring Cleaning. They worked very hard quickly and enthusiastically tackling projects from washing windows, to moving access ramps, to cleaning every corner of the Center. They were a passionate group of young adults that are interested in making a difference and showed it, by rolling up their sleeves and getting their hands dirty! They were a joy to have with us and we are so grateful for their help!



City Year Detroit

Society of Women Engineers Visit

Thanks to our Children's volunteer, **Tam Nguyen** from the University of Michigan's Detroit Partnership Program, we welcomed a group of seven students from the U of M's Society of Women Engineers on March 26, 2014. Led by **Rachel Bielajew**, the group taught our kids about engineering and its various uses. Students were also given the chance to experience engineering hands-on by simulating the construction of roller coasters with foam pipes and marbles. To learn about aerodynamics, students built gliders using paper and straws then raced them down our hallway. It was evident many of our students have the talent needed to become the next generation of engineers!

Service Learning and Interns!!

As always, we are so grateful to our education partners, for their generous support of our programs. We are so grateful to **Madonna University, Marygrove College, University of Michigan/Dearborn, Wayne State University, Catholic Central High School and welcome a new partner, Eastern Michigan University!** Your students make all the difference for our students!!

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!



Follow us on Twitter

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
She's baaackkk!

Our Ms. Beth has returned! Although we are still sad that our beloved Sr. Marie Judith moved away, we are delighted that Beth Kraft has returned to the Center. Beth was a key part of the Children's Program for more than five years and she has taken over Sister's role as Director of Volunteer Services/Interns. She has been doing a wonderful job and we could think of no one better to fill this important position! Welcome back Beth!

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.