



St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

FALL 2016

Do unto others...

Dear Friends,

There is so much to be thankful for in our community today, with good people working together to really bring Southeastern Michigan to a new level. Are there set-backs? Absolutely. And sometimes, in today's world of social media, we are bombarded daily with tragedies, which are compounded by opinions on Facebook, Twitter, in interviews, blogs, etc. Sometimes we are able to find hope and agree with statements, other times, we see things that make us despair or may make our blood boil. At those times, it is easy to find ourselves vigorously engaging with others about our disagreements, trying to convince the other person that our viewpoint is the "right one". This is especially true as the political season starts to gain momentum. But in doing so, we can become so inflamed that we lose sight about what really matters: that we are in this life together.

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center began with the mission of St. Vincent – to minister to those in need. It is during challenging, emotional, fearful or as political forums take center stage, we must remember to work together and look to St. Vincent's words of wisdom for strength:

"Let us work to rid ourselves of our attacks of over-zealousness especially when it offends against respect, esteem, and charity. Look for peace to connect us over the ravine of our differences. Don't sever the vine of humanity that connects us to common interests..."

St. Vincent de Paul, 1640

Words to live by. And through the generosity of Sarah and Charles Fisher, we know that to give of yourself, you can impact generations to come.

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center exists because of the desire to help others and valuing that all people deserve respect and kindness. As we move forward as a community, State and Country into the election season and beyond, we will be striving to remember the words of wisdom and the actions of love for others that our founders set before us as a standard of living.

We hope you will join us.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Diane Renaud'.

Diane Renaud
Executive Director/CEO

Thank You!

We couldn't do it without you!

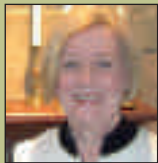
We need your help!

Please consider volunteering – we have a variety of ways you can support the Center and our Community. Contact Beth Kraft at (313) 535-9200 x3104 or visit www.svsfcenter.org for more information.

Passing the Torch

2016 was a busy year of transition. We said goodbye to dear friends and made new ones:

We are very sad to announce the passing of **Sr. Xavier Ballance**, DC. Sr. X was a long-time member of the Board of Trustees and Corporate Committee member of the Center, as well as serving as the President of Providence Hospital and a variety of other Boards. As a Daughter of Charity for almost 60 years, Sr. Xavier was a devoted and compassionate champion for those in need. God Bless and Rest in Peace Sister!



First serving SVSF Center as the Director of Finance starting in 2002, then as a Board of Trustee, **Pam Kane's** legacy of service has been a long one! She has completed her most recent service to the Center as a Member of the Investment Committee, where she has been volunteering since 2010. Pam's voice was an important advocate of the Center's relocation back to Detroit and she strongly

held the belief that education was important for the future of our community. We are so grateful for all of your years of service Pam and wish you a fun and well-deserved break!

NEW BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

We are proud and grateful to welcome the newest members of the SVSF Center Board of Trustees. These men and women have stepped up to help fulfill our mission and move the Center into bigger and better service! We are deeply appreciative of their commitment:

Joelle Maes, Quicken Loans

William Moylan, EMU

Karen Schankin, General Motors

Drew Sharp, Detroit Free Press



WELCOME BACK JESSICA!

In 2012, Jessica Chapman first came to the Center as a service learning student from Wayne State University. Jessica continued to volunteer with the Children's Program whenever she could. (When she wasn't conducting field research in South Africa or on a missionary trip in Cambodia, that is.) We are delighted to welcome Jessica back as the Children's Program Coordinator, as she works towards completing her degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders with a minor in Spanish. Already, she is a valued member of the Team!

Valuable Volunteers!



Twenty-six students from U of M Detroit Partnership volunteered in March to help with outside cleaning around the campus, including the block in our children's garden and courtyard. They were awesome! **Maggie Johnson**, site leader, made sure that we had all of the necessary tools and even offered to drop off wheel barrows, rakes, etc the day before. The team aimed for a zero waste day, so pizza boxes from lunch were recycled and food waste and paper plates they used were composted. Thanks U of M Detroit Partnership for making our campus beautiful!

CONGRATULATIONS BOB!

One of our most consistent and beloved GED Volunteers, **Bob Kuhr**, was recently recognized by The Farmington Hills/Farmington Commission on Children, Youth and Families with their Annual "Inspire By Example" Award. The Commission recognizes those in the community that recognize the importance of commitment to others, in order to build a stronger community. Bob certainly is an example of that and we salute him!!



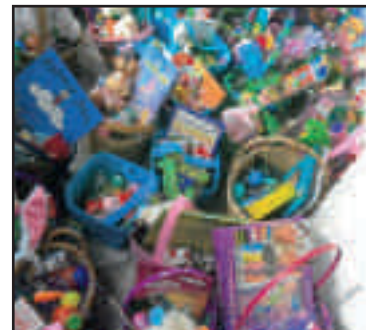
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

As an Impact Partner of Reading Works, SVSF Center received a generous donation for the purpose of recognizing the Center's many wonderful volunteers. **Paula Brown**, Executive Director Reading Works shared that this gift was made possible through **Danialle and Peter Karmanos, Jr.** in honor of author and publisher **Bill Haney**. "Bill is a great friend to Reading Works and the missions of adult literacy and we are grateful to be able to recognize him in this way." SVSF is grateful to Reading Works, Mr. and Mrs. Karmanos and Mr. Haney for understanding the importance of volunteers and what a difference they can make.

SPRING SPRANG!

In an effort to celebrate the season in a fun, new way, our Children's Program added a Spring Fever Celebration. New educational activities were included, such as plastic eggs with math clues to be solved, so that the children could win prizes. It was a great success!

And, then it was made even better! **Amanda Fresard** from Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan, and a student from Wayne State University, contacted the Center in January and began collecting items from local businesses and friends to furnish each child with a basket to celebrate the season. The baskets were full of fun toys, books and goodies for the children to enjoy. Amanda provided over 45 baskets that were beautifully wrapped in cellophane with big bright bows and ribbons. "I wanted to do something for the kids that wasn't during Christmas, so that they knew they were thought of all year long. The baskets were exceptional and the children loved them. I was thrilled by how much people in the community wanted to join in helping to do something for the children, and the whole experience and process was a great joy for all those involved." We couldn't agree more Amanda and we are grateful to you and all of your donors!



CONGRATULATIONS are in Order!

George Perdue, is one "SWEET" volunteer! After retiring from Chrysler, he pursued his love of baking by obtaining his culinary degree. After working at several bakeries, George began volunteering for SVSF Center as a volunteer tutor for our adult students. We happily became his official testers as he brought in scrumptious, diet-busting desserts for students, volunteers and staff. We are excited to announce that he has now opened his own catering business, Bakefiniti. We admire and applaud his work ethic and the example he sets for our students (who love him beyond his amazing baking)! *Congratulations George!*



THANKS ZARA CREATIVE!

Our good friends at Zara Creative (who created our brand video shown on our website) did something special for the community. They donated their services to create a special message from the Detroit Police Department to encourage everyone to make Detroit a better place. Zara graciously included our kids in the video. It is a moving and inspirational piece. If you haven't seen it, visit our facebook page! *Thanks for including us Zara!*

WHAT OUR STUDENTS TELL US

Periodically, we check in with our students, to make sure we are giving them the support that they need. We are grateful for their feedback and wanted to share some of it with you:

"My plans are to:

- a.) Pray that I will somehow leave this planet a better place than I found it.
- b.) Spend quality time with my family.
- c.) Offer my story to those who might use my experience to overcome their fear of failure.
- d.) Support St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center by sponsoring other students to get their GED."

"SVSF Center is an exceptional program and you have removed every barrier. Not just financially but for the whole person."

"Come when you can. We will meet you where you are. Don't give up."

"My biggest challenge was the fear. Fear that I might not be good enough, have enough focus, and if I failed it would serve as living proof on the planet that I am not intelligent."

Real quotes from real people facing real challenges. THESE are the people that are helped by our volunteers and donors.

Whatever happened to...

Our former property in Farmington Hills? There have been some misleading reports in the media recently and we would like to clear up any confusion. The property was owned by the Daughters of Charity and when the Center relocated to Detroit, the Daughters maintained ownership. Since then, it has been sold a couple of times, but now a new development will be starting on the property. EHM Senior Solutions will be developing a new senior living complex, which is expected to open in 2020. The new complex is not associated in any way with our organization or services and is simply occupying our former property, despite reports that it will use part of our name and/or is associated with St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center. We wish them the best, as their ministry meets a vital need in our community!

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.

AmazonSmile – Think of SVSF when you are shopping and Help Our Students! Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center whenever you shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com).

Charity Motors – Donate your vehicle and you can designate the proceeds to the SVSF Center. 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.

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.

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!

Board of Trustees

Cynthia Chabie
Board Chairperson

John Hessburg
Joelle Maes
William Moylan
Jane Perzyk
Karen Schankin
Bernard Schwartz
Drew Sharp
Christianne Sims
Kelley Vivyan

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



Shontale Stewart attended our Children's Summer Program for several years. As an emerging teen, she returned this Summer to give back as a volunteer to help other kids.

*Thanks for paying it
forward Shontale!*