



## Why Go It Alone?

Dear Friends:

One of our GED students shared something that has stuck with me. He was dragging his feet on taking his first test and through the support and persistence of our amazing team, they gave him the confidence to push through his fears. When he passed, he said to them, "You are the family that I wish I had". What a double-edged sword. So hard to hear what we know to be true – that some of the people we serve don't have the support that they need to succeed. But so wonderful to learn that we aren't just helping people prepare for a test, but are also giving them a family and a place to belong.

This student's words came back to me in February, when we posted a video on our Facebook Live for potential students. We asked a simple question. "Why Go It Alone?" Life is hard enough without feeling like you have to tackle challenges on your own. Look around, ask for help and often you will find support from unexpected places. Ask and ye shall receive, right? This student needed a support system – a family – and he found one at St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center.

If you are reading this newsletter, I truly hope that you have "liked" us on Facebook, because we have a lot of ongoing updates about our students, families and the Center. So much more about our family than what I can include here. So much activity, so much inspiration. To thank for that, we have to acknowledge our friends at **Logos Communications** and our own Information Manager, **Patricia Wilson**, who have really moved the Center forward through our social media program. By their efforts, we are reaching new audiences and as a direct result, the number of students and families we serve continues to grow. As does our enormously appreciated and talented Volunteer and Intern corps, through the efforts of our Director, **Beth Kraft**. Without the talented and selfless individuals that step up to help, we wouldn't have been able to create the dynamic and inspiring extended family that we offer to those that want support. We've asked for support and we receive it. Daily.

So I ask are you or is someone you know "Going it alone?" Maybe we can help you find the support, acceptance, the inspiration or the family that you need to make it through your challenges. We are here, just ask if you need help.

Yours,

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

Diane Renaud  
Executive Director/CEO



**Detroit Free Press Charities** granted the Gift of Reading through a grant a purchase books for the Children's Program. The grant was made possible by the Detroit Free Press readers who gave generously to help programs that inspire Metro Detroit children to discover the joy of reading.



**Thanks to Clayton & McKervey** (Global Tax and Accounting) firm for their generous sponsorship of SVSF's booth for the second year in a row at the Birmingham Holiday Market in December, 2016. It is a wonderful event and we are most grateful for their support!

## GED Graduate Spotlight

Theresa Ancick, 2013 GED Graduate, spoke at the 2016 PULSE Conference about her professional and personal accomplishments that she has earned since obtaining her GED.



*PULSE: Practice-Based Updates for Literacy Strategies and Education is an interactive forum for practitioners in the field of adult education, from across Southeast Michigan.*

## GED Updates

- 2016 GED Graduate goal was surpassed by 3 graduates!
- **Stephen Goodrum**, Director of Adult Education, presented at **2016 National Drop-Out Prevention Conference**, sponsored by Clemson University.
- The GED Program is pleased to announce its first graduate from its COTS campus. The new graduate obtained some of the highest score in the Center's history and has qualified for tuition assistance for college as a result.

## "Helping Students"

The Center has received some extraordinary assistance from some amazing groups in the past year and we

*thank you!*



A group of **City Year Americorp** members were assigned to work at an area elementary school. While waiting for their assignment to begin, Team Leader Harrison Rosenfeld contacted the Center to find other opportunities to serve in the area. City Year's availability and mission fit perfectly with our Children's After-school Program and they began volunteering with us in September and continued through the whole semester. Their consistency and passion made a huge impact on our children including helping them to improve greatly in their skills.

**John Claassen**, a resident at senior community **Independence Village**, decided that he wanted to help children learn to read. A dream came true for the Center when a group of approximately 10 seniors from Independence Village began to work our Children's Summer Program. Every Wednesday, the children anxiously waited for "their" person to show up. The bonding was beautiful and touching. The progress of the kids was amazing. The Seniors returned to us in March and we are delighted to have them back! They have been missed!

**The Quell Group** has been volunteering for the Center's Harvest Festival since 2014, as part of their 20th anniversary celebration.

**Richard Kuhn and Jillian Rinke** and other Quell Employees have been excited each year to come back (and bring candy) to make "Trick for a Treat" a fun learning experience for our kids. And we look forward to their participation every year!

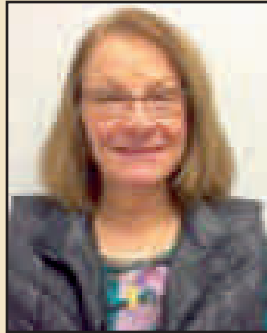
**Quicken Loans and their family of companies** began a relationship with SVSF when a group came to help us at the 2016 End of Summer Luncheon for the Children's Program. They invited SVSF to speak at an informational session for their employees, resulting in regular attendance from some of their employees, who volunteer as tutors. Also, they have provided a group of Quicken Loans volunteers, headed by **Katelyn Lalinsky**, who are always willing to help with group requests or last minute needs. Her group has helped out by tutoring our children, donation sorting, decorating for the holidays and more.



# APRIL is... Volunteer Appreciation Month!

## Congratulations to the 2017 Volunteer of the Year – Ruth Nye-Hurst!

Ruth graduated with her Master of Education from Wayne State University. She taught High School math in the Detroit Public schools for over 25 years and is now retired. She and her husband Mark, are from the Farmington Hills area and have 3 cats. Ruth found our volunteer opportunities online and has thankfully been volunteering with the GED program since 2009.



Ruth Nye-Hurst

An avid camper, Ruth loves to be outside and often visits Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes National Park, as well as going to the gym. Ruth tells us that she likes tutoring for our program, because she enjoys the students she works with and the other volunteers. As one of our resident math experts, we are deeply grateful for her devotion over the past six years!

*Think of SVSF  
when you think of Spring!*

**We could use your help to make our grounds more beautiful! While you are out buying your Spring flowers, think of SVSF and pick up an extra perennial!**

We are looking for both shade and sun loving perennials and will be accepting them on Saturday, May 20, during the Christ the King Festival from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Center's Main Campus. If you would like to make arrangements for your donation for another day/time, *please let us know by calling (313) 535-9200.*

## Passing the Torch

Sadly in 2016, we said goodbye to another Board of Trustees member, through the passing of **Drew Sharp**. Drew brought an enthusiasm and energy that meant a great deal and we continue to pray for his family.

However, we are very excited to welcome adding another two new Board members, **Tricia Ennest, Level One Bank** and **Greg Scheessele, TMD Friction Group**. They have both already been passionate supporters and we are delighted to have them join the SVSF Family!

# 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. Visit [www.charitymotors.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.svsfcenter.org) and learn more about how  
You Can Contribute to **Change**.**

**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!

## St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

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**For more information, please call us at (313) 535-9200  
or visit [www.svsfcenter.orgden](http://www.svsfcenter.orgden).**



**"My favorite thing (about being  
in the After-school Program)  
is working in the garden."**

*Serenity, Age 7*

### 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.