



svsf

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

FALL 2019

Good, just busy...

Dear Friends,

Have you ever run into an old friend or colleague with only a few minutes to chat and they ask how your job is going? While there may be a lot of different things happening, you don't have the time to fill them in, so you short-hand the discussion by saying "Everything is good, just busy."

I am often asked that question. It's a hard one to answer, because St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center is a place that is always a bee hive of activity. It's never dull and there is always a lot of traffic. In the rare moments of quiet, it's an opportunity to catch our breath and catch up on the never-ending tracking, data keeping, researching and paperwork. But we are also always looking to continuously improve the services that the Center offers, so there is always something going on, such as developing a new process, recruiting new students, strategic planning, assessments, etc.

How do you articulate that in a brief conversation? It's a challenge because education isn't particularly "newsworthy". It's not glamorous or something that is interesting enough for continuous social media postings. We aren't opening new buildings, playing with cute animals, distributing food and we don't announce exciting medical breakthroughs. It's not like building a house in a day, where there is immediate gratification and visual results of your efforts. There are few photo opportunities and results take a long time to accumulate and talk about.

It is hard work. It is emotionally intensive. Education is about being meticulous in building the brain of a human being. And each human being is different. It takes different things to make education click in each individual. Imagine building a house, where every brick is a different size, shape and texture. It wouldn't fit a mold. And neither does education. Just because you can't see, feel, taste or touch it, doesn't mean it's not happening.

However, at SVSF, you can hear it! In our hallways, in our offices, in the conversations with students and volunteers. Listening to the interactions, the "A-ha" moments when an element clicks for a student or the encouragement that a student receives when they aren't understanding a concept. The staff discussions identifying a new pilot program to offer more assistance to our students, or the passing on of the learnings from one person to the next. You can close your eyes at the Center and hear the buzzing of the bees. And those moments taste sweet as honey.

But, how do you tell someone that in passing and they ask how your job is going? "Good, just busy."

Wishing you the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Diane Renaud'.

Diane Renaud
Executive Director/CEO

2019 *Celebrate* the **CENTER**



We also celebrated our **Director of Adult Education, Sharon Wheeler**, for 20 years of outstanding service to the Center and the community.

And last but not least, we honored the founders of the Center, the **Daughters of Charity** for their selfless life of service.

This year's Celebrate the Center was another wonderful event, where we celebrated not only the graduates and accomplishments of the Center from the previous year, but also our 175th Anniversary. As part of the event, we showed a video of the Center's evolution since its inception. Please visit our website at <https://www.svsfcenter.org/library/>. You might see some people that you know!

We had a special guest at our 175th Anniversary Celebration: Sr. Susan Sheehan who worked at our former location in Farmington Hills, when it was a residence. She wrote a moving remembrance of her time at the Center, that is unfortunately too long to include here. But please visit our website at <https://www.svsfcenter.org/library/> to read a little bit of what it was like "back in the day".

Also, we recognized some special individuals:

2019 Volunteer of the Year John Paul Hessburg

In honor of the many things that he has done for the Center in his 12 years as a Trustee and decades of volunteering.



Celebrate the **CENTER 2020**

For 2020, we are changing the format and the venue for the Celebrate the Center event, so that more people will be able to join us and be a part of a special day celebrating our students, volunteers and impact. It will be a Family Movie Day on Saturday, April 18, 2020 at the historic Redford Theatre, featuring the famous Redford Organ! More information will be coming in the Spring, so mark your calendars. We hope that you will join us!

SUMMER EDUCATION

Our Summer Children's Program was very busy and included educational field trips to Crosswinds Marsh, Dossin Great Lakes Museum, Green Living Science and the Detroit Parade Company, as well as learning about art, nutrition and of course, time in our Urban Garden.



in *Loving* memory

In June, we lost our beloved Board Member Jane Perzyk, who had been serving as a Trustee since 2011. While Jane's passing after a long illness was not entirely unexpected, it was still a shock because she was a fighter. Even through her health struggles, she was still a staunch advocate for our students and the Center.

The first time I met Jane in person was to pick up a rocking chair she was donating (which is still used by Santa when he comes to visit each year). What I thought was going to be a simple exchange became an extended conversation about education, serving others and the vision for the Center. Suffice to say, that set the tone for the rest of our relationship – one that I deeply value and miss tremendously.

Jane was a seeker of knowledge throughout her life, which did not diminish in her later years. She challenged assumptions, researched trends and stayed current on anything that may be beneficial to the Center and its services. She was a driving force in ensuring that changing the lives of our students was at the core of every strategic move of the Center. Her insights and wisdom from a life in education were profound and her legacy of caring will continue to bloom.

In that spirit, the Center planted hydrangeas as a daily reminder of the beauty of this devout woman, who was rooted in being there for others. *We miss you Jane!*

Diane Renaud



*Rooted in Love,
Always in Our Hearts*

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!

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.**

