



## All Good Gifts Around Us



Dear Friends,

A blessing that I inherited from a very musical family is an appreciation for musical theater. When I am at the gym, cleaning or doing yard work, I like to listen to the sound tracks to my favorite shows, replaying scenes in my head and discovering new takes on the lyrics. I'm always amazed when there is another layer of meaning to a familiar song that can be found and applied to life – universal themes that can speak to all of us.

Recently, I was listening to one of my favorites, **Godspell**. A song that has always struck a chord within me was "All Good Gifts", whose lyrics include:

*All good gifts around us  
Are sent from heaven above,  
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord  
For all His love.*

For some reason, perhaps because I was feeling particularly thankful at that moment for all of the blessings at St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center, this song really made me stop and reflect. I wanted to learn more about it and found that it was based upon text from a German poet in 1782, which he gleaned from Psalm 144. It is a celebration of and prayer for a good harvest. Apparently, this particular text has been used in liturgies in a wide range of denominations, such as Jewish, Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Protestant.

While it may first appear to be the wrong time of year to celebrate a Harvest, there is no wrong time to be thankful and appreciate the many gifts that we receive. Reflected by the wide range of religions that use this simple principle as a core for its teachings, it is not inherent to any particular belief system. Gratitude is one of the many threads that runs through all humanity, regardless of your beliefs. Further, in order to be grateful, you must be humble enough to accept gifts or blessings and recognize them as such.

The Center has received so many blessings over the years and support from so many directions, including a number of individuals and organizations from a wide range of cultures and faiths. In the past year, we have continued our trajectory of growth, even during this incredibly difficult pandemic. Our volunteers continue to be devoted and our students enthusiastic; our team continues to be committed and Board exceptionally supportive. Grantors, partners and donors have blessed us with the ability to pass the benefits of those gifts directly to our students and change their lives. They in turn, have expressed extraordinary gratitude and pass it along to their families, teaching new generations.

One of the ways we will show gratitude for our many blessings is to bring back our in-person event, **"Celebrate the Center"**. **We have some exciting news that we will be sharing at the event and sincerely hope that you will be able to join us!** Until then, we "Thank the Lord" and you for our many blessings and our humility to understand that we are part of the service to others.

Warmest wishes,

*Diane Renaud*, Executive Director/CEO

# The Center's Report Card for 2021

## Children's Program (Fall, 2021 only):

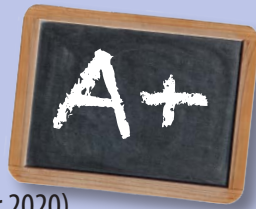
- Program is still being provided remotely, but even in that difficult learning environment, our kids:
  - ✓ Increased their language arts skills by an average of more than 18 new concepts.
  - ✓ Increased their math skills by an average of more than 26 new concepts.
- Implemented new online STEM training sessions for tutors.
- Mailed STEM experiment kits to all students, so that they could follow along with experiments that were provided online through the neatboard to the children.
- Facilitated virtual "hands-on" field trip with animals, to which the kids very enthusiastically responded.

## 2021 Adult Program:

- 600 Active (remote students, both on and off-line)
- 950 Students served total
- Increased GED "Graduation" rate by 17%

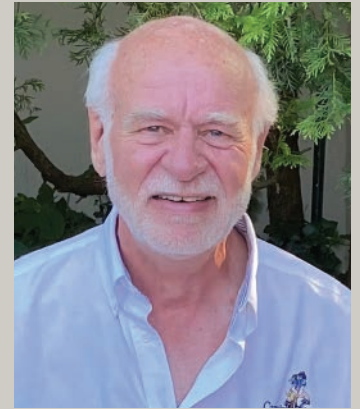
## 2021 Volunteer Program:

- 158 Volunteers (14% increase over 2020)
- 3,584 Volunteer Hours (17% increase over 2020)



# 2022 Volunteer of the Year!

## Bernard Schwartz



It is our great honor to recognize our **2022 Volunteer of the Year, Bern Schwartz**, who is celebrating his 52nd year of volunteering for SVSF Center!

Bern has been a Board of Trustee member since 2005 and the Vice-Chair for the past 10 years. A passionate children's advocate, Bern has been a driving force in the many decisions that have led the Center to where it is today. We hope that you will join us at "**Celebrate the Center**" and help us to celebrate a truly remarkable man!

## Still Growing...

We are very happy to announce that our services are now expanding with a new Pontiac location! We will be providing free Adult Basic Education and GED services out of the Oakland County Michigan Works! Pontiac office, under the auspices of Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit.

As a member of the Pontiac Chamber of Commerce, SVSF has developed a relationship with the Pontiac United Education Coalition and Pontiac Literacy Council, who have been very supportive of our efforts in Pontiac. Audrean Williams, SVSF's Assistant Director of Adult Education and Career Navigator has been leading this important expansion. "This new collaborative will provide educational services, employment assistance and community enrichment in Pontiac and the surrounding areas. We will work together to prepare enrolled residents for improved possibilities and a better future."

We are thankful for this new opportunity, which joins our six other adult locations across the City of Detroit, as well as our Children's program on our main campus.

**Here we come Pontiac!**



## Welcome Karen Gordon

It is with great pleasure that we welcome our new Center. Chief Financial Officer, Karen Gordon. Karen comes to SVSF Center from her previous role as the M-1 Rail CFO in Detroit and has a deep, broad background in a wide variety of financial capacities and Human Resources. We are thrilled to have her with us!

"Education has always been a field I've been drawn to," said Gordon. "No matter what we do, we're educating ourselves."

Welcome Karen! Your enthusiasm and passion for education are a great fit and we look forward to your assistance in moving the Center to the next level!



# Saying Goodbye...

It is with tremendous sadness that we say goodbye to a dear member of the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center family –

## ✧ Robert Asmussen ✧



Bob left us at the age of 80 and was the beloved husband of the late Patricia, and loving father of Laura Carey, Cathy Cooper, Mike (Laura), Kristie (Billy) Hand and the late Matthew.

Robert's love in life was his family; especially his grandchildren and was a long-time active parishioner of St. Cyprian Catholic Church. He was the Executive Director of Providence Medical Group and an avid golfer, who loved sports.

Bob joined the SVSF Center Board of Trustees in 1999 and was the Chair of the Corporate Committee since 2013. A very patient and intelligent man, Bob's logic and common sense was a key factor in making so many critical decisions for the Center and his support was deeply valued. Engaging and quick to laugh, Bob was passionate in his support of our programs, but was always the cool voice of reason.

He encouraged the Center to aim high and in his honor, we will do our best to make him proud!

*Thank you for everything Bob!*

## Celebrate the Center SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT

SVSF Center is delighted to announce a new Presenting Sponsor for our April 6th event:

**Doetsch**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Doetsch is a 122-year-old environmental contractor, based in Warren, Michigan. They offer professional cleaning services of wet and dry materials, located above or below ground, to municipalities, manufacturing facilities, power plants, foundries, chemical plants and refineries.

We are grateful to Doetsch for the support of our educational and workforce development programs. Their commitment to their customers and the community is a testament to their integrity of their company! *Thank you!*



# 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](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 Kevin Lill at (313) 535-9200, extension 3109.

**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.

**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](http://www.svsfcenter.org).**

***Celebrate the Center is Back!***



Presented By **Doetsch**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



**CELEBRATE THE CENTER**  
**APRIL 6, 2022 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM**  
**DETROIT ATHLETIC CLUB**  
**241 MADISON STREET, DETROIT, MI 48226**

Get your tickets by visiting <https://www.svsfcenter.org/celebrate-the-center/>