

VINCENTIAN CONNECTION

Spring 2019 Volume 55, Number 1 Magazine of The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Phoenix Diocesan Council stvincentdepaul.net

THE
SOCIETY
OF
ST.
VINCENT
DE PAUL



FEED. CLOTHE.
HOUSE. HEAL.



A New Healing Space

See inside the expanded Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic already bringing quality care to uninsured patients

“God is to be found not in the crisis, *but in our response to the crisis.*”

– Rabbi Harold S. Kushner



Vincenitian volunteers work in the margins of an imperfect world. We serve the forgotten, the broken, the hopeless, the refugee. Our God is a God of unconditional love. He didn't create the circumstances in which those we serve find themselves, nor does he directly respond to those circumstances. We are called to be the hands, the feet and the face of God—to offer comfort, compassion and dignity to those who've been abandoned or who have simply lost their way.

The U.S. is predominantly a country of immigrants. Our ancestors fled religious persecution, potato famine and various forms of social and political unrest to come to America in search of a better life. Immigration is a complex issue, one that has been highly politicized in recent years. Our country, like all nations, has a need to protect its borders and its citizens from external threats. Yet, we must never forget, particularly since we are children of immigrants, the words enshrined on the Statue of Liberty in New York.

“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

– Emma Lazarus

Vincenitian volunteers serve anyone in need. Need doesn't discriminate, and neither do we. We serve all regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or any other reason, including immigration status.

This March we were asked to provide temporary relief for asylum-seeking families—fathers, mothers and children mainly from Central America. Immigration and Customs Enforcement released the families with documentation to await their asylum court hearings, a legal process under federal law. Our volunteers and staff responded immediately by providing food and a safe space to busload after busload of new immigrants, while working with other agencies and nonprofit organizations to connect and relocate those released with family members living elsewhere in the country. This is what the Society of St. Vincent de Paul does. Our Rule says “No work of charity is foreign to the Society.”

Immigration may very well be a crisis. But if so, let us respond to it as Jesus would.

“If you grant asylum to so many refugees, your house may be sacked sooner by the soldiers. The question is whether, because of this danger, you should refuse to practice such a beautiful virtue as charity.”

– St. Vincent de Paul

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S Attwood". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Steve Attwood, *President,*
Phoenix Diocesan Council

VINCENITIAN CONNECTION

P.O. Box 13600, Phoenix, Arizona 85002-3600

Diocesan Council President
Steve Attwood

Executive Director
Steve Zabalski

Associate Executive Director
Shannon Clancy

Marketing Director
Mary Chou-Thompson

Editor/Writer
Marisol Ramirez

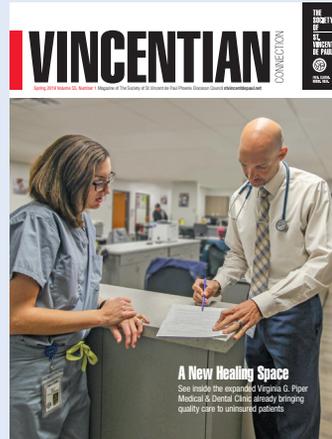
Writers
Alejandra Bucon
Kim Cecere

Photography
Alejandra Bucon
Marisol Ramirez

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the poor and providing others with the opportunity to serve. The Phoenix Diocesan Council has been assisting central and northern Arizona families since 1946. Programs include services for the homeless, medical and dental care for the working poor, charity dining rooms, thrift stores, a transitional housing shelter and general assistance for individuals in need through 85 parish conferences of charity.

If you have a change of address, please call 602-850-6927.
stvincentdepaul.net

CONTENTS



ON THE COVER

Dr. Maurice Lee, the chief medical officer at St. Vincent de Paul, goes over a patient case with Wound Care Director Erin Tharalson inside the already completed medical half of SVdP's expanded Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic, set to fully open this summer.

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 By the Numbers
- 18 Profiles
- 22 Thousand Thanks

FEATURES

- 5 **Surviving the shutdown**
From keeping bills paid to providing food to the Grand Canyon National Park Service, SVdP was there for furloughed federal workers during the partial government shutdown.
- 8 **Clinic sneak peak**
Look inside the expansion of SVdP's Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic, which is already helping more patients before its full opening this summer.
- 12 **Helping humanity**
The community asked, so SVdP opened its doors to asylum-seeking families to offer relief and expedite family reunifications
- 15 **The group effect**
Three local groups share what it's like to participate in SVdP's holiday Adopt-A-Family program and make Christmas for Valley families in need.



Inside SVdP's temporary Day Relief Center for asylum-seeking families, two children grasp hands in play—the first time in a while they've been able to just be kids after a journey not yet over. The center sees to the families' basic care and works to reunite them with loved ones in the U.S.

Almost a year later

The Diane & Bruce Halle Center

BY THE NUMBERS



Thousands have crossed through the doors of the Diane & Bruce Halle Center for Hope and Healing and found a kind face and helping hand since the center first opened May 22, 2018.

The newest of St. Vincent de Paul's main campus facilities, the Halle Center houses SVdP's Resource Center as well as its 60-bed transitional shelter, called Ozanam Manor.

The two-story, 40,848-square-foot campus addition has become a beacon of hope on 320 Watkins Road for those seeking anything from clothing and a hot shower to legal assistance, help with bills or a safe place to get back on their feet.

In fact, Arizona Commercial Real Estate Magazine recognized the building's importance to the Phoenix area when it awarded SVdP's Halle Center its 2019 Real Estate & Development Award for Community Impact.

Thank you to general contractor Ryan Companies, Inc., and architect firm Vehr/Webb Studio for making the building possible.

Designed by Vehr/Webb Studio with Ryan Companies US, Inc., serving as general contractor

THE RESOURCE CENTER

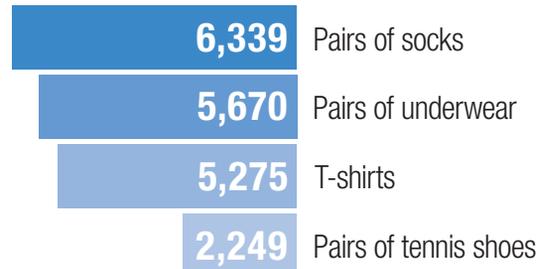
12,819 individuals and families helped



284 legal consultations completed



Some of the most requested basic clothing provided:



Rent and utility assistance helped **3,208** individuals and families avoid homelessness



OZANAM MANOR

Housed 141 Residents



79 vets and 62 non-vets

Most people came from a shelter or a place not meant for habitation. Their top two reasons for homelessness were **medical conditions** and **economic downturn**.

3,450 case management hours

104 people over the age 55, 16 of them over the age 70



63 successful move outs



110 people were disabled

79% remaining in their homes 6 months later

During the Government Shutdown, **WE HELPED LIKE WE ALWAYS DO**

How St. Vincent de Paul alleviated financial strain and hunger for furloughed federal employees

By Marisol Ramirez

They came to St. Vincent de Paul in need—border patrol agents, forest rangers, government health care specialists and other federal employees furloughed or working without pay.

After the partial U.S. government shutdown began Dec. 22, 2018, no one knew that two paychecks would go missed for roughly 7,300 federal employees in Arizona. The shutdown lasted 35 days, ending Jan. 25 and bringing wholly unfamiliar faces of need to SVdP's door.

The federal employees came or called into SVdP's Resource Center in south Phoenix. Others received aid from one of SVdP's 83 conference food pantries across central and northern Arizona.

The workers were in crisis. For more than a month, bills flowed in where paychecks didn't. They needed financial assistance. They needed food.

Continued on next page...

Keeping the lights on, the water running and roofs over heads

Some people live one missed bill away from homelessness. That's what Jackie Solares, supervisor to homelessness prevention at SVdP's Resource Center, said many people don't realize.

In responding to furloughed federal workers, she and a team of dedicated Vincentian volunteers did what they always do when any person comes in fearing eviction or their utilities being cut off. They listened to personal crises, offered caring support and worked to solve financial gaps by paying off utility bills, rent and sometimes car payments.

Grant monies and special funds, like the Arizona Public Service Co.'s Crisis Bill Assistance program, for which SVdP serves as one of a handful of community dispersers, make that possible.

The only difference this time was the people in front of the Resource Center team and the additional \$500,000 in assistance APS set aside Valley-wide for the federal workers. There was a border patrol agent who had just been transferred and had spent his savings to move his family across country. His spouse had left a job and was still hunting for employment when the shutdown struck. They had just had a baby.

A single mother of two and certified nurse specialist from Indian Health Services also came for help. She and her children's grandmother, who was also a furloughed IHS employee, made up their entire household income.

In both cases, they received rent and utility assistance to help make it into February. These were just some of the many federal employees who sought and received help from SVdP.

"We're talking about people who are protecting and serving us," Jackie said. "They're doing really important work and all of sudden many still had to show up to work, but they didn't have the gas money or budget for food anymore."

"Most federal workers felt pretty secure in their jobs before the shutdown," Jackie continued. "They may have felt secure enough and extended themselves financially a little. Maybe they paid off a family's medical bill or fixed something on their car. Then all of a sudden the shutdown happens, and they lose that check they were counting on."

These workers weren't accustomed to asking for help and suddenly they found themselves among some of the Valley's neediest people visiting the Resource Center.

"They expressed fear because it gave them a visual about where they could be if the shutdown didn't end," Jackie said.



Jackie Solares is supervisor to homelessness prevention at SVdP. She led the volunteer team that helped disperse bill assistance money to the furloughed federal workers, paying off utility bills, rent and sometimes car payments.



They're doing really important work and all of sudden many still had to show up to work, but they didn't have the gas money or budget for food anymore.

— Jackie Solares

Many federal workers had modest paychecks and tried to spend responsibly but had life circumstances that stretched their money thin.

"Some had savings and got by for a little while," Jackie said. "Many saw money fly out the window because of automatic payments deducted from their accounts before they could stop or pause anything. They were so used to their lifestyle before. It was shocking."

In total, Jackie and the Vincentian volunteers dispersed almost \$40,000 to help 55 furloughed individuals and families avoid eviction, utility cut offs and/or the repossession of their cars. "It gave them breathing room," Jackie said. "It was one less thing to worry about, so they could focus their remaining money on other needs."

Beyond financial assistance, Jackie and the Vincentians offered another crucial boost—connecting people, including federal workers, with their local SVdP conference food pantry and support system. "We have tentacles," said Jackie, whose team made connections even beyond the Phoenix SVdP service area and into Tucson, Yuma, Summerton and the Navajo reservation. "One phone call, and we can extend our help to so many places and not just with money."



Valle, Arizona, resident Mike Scott stands with some of the food donated to the emergency food pantry he set up inside the Grand Canyon Recreation Center after learning of the government shutdown's strain on the federal employees of the National Park Service, who continued to work without pay.

Helping feed the Grand Canyon National Park Service

NPS employees continued working without pay during the shutdown and started making stark financial decisions between paying bills and buying groceries.

As the government shutdown drew on into the fifth week, Kelly and Rona Mortensen, along with fellow volunteers Sheila and Dean Schill, found themselves transporting canned goods and other nonperishable food in a truck to the Grand Canyon.

The Mortensen couple, who serve as volunteer leaders in SVdP's San Francisco de Asis food pantry in Flagstaff, Arizona, had learned of an emergency food pantry set up in the Grand Canyon Recreation Center by Mike Scott. Mike is a Valle, Arizona, resident who tackles local food insecurity. Typically, Mike works to make sure school children without regular access to food don't go hungry. But the government shutdown had brought a new group struggling with food insecurity to his attention—the National Park Service.

NPS employees continued working without pay during the shutdown and started making stark financial decisions between paying bills and buying groceries. That's when Mike decided to open the emergency food pantry for them and other canyon residents.

"When we heard of Mike's effort, I took it to our volunteer meeting," said Kelly, who serves as San Francisco de Asis Conference president. "There was no question in terms of food. Everyone agreed—we absolutely had to help."

Volunteers helped assemble and load boxes in preparation for the delivery to the canyon.

"We've provided assistance to national and international disaster responses before," Kelly said. "Our conference is truly fortunate to be able to provide generously to people who need it."

They made a trip and delivered a total of 2,000 pounds of food to the Grand Canyon emergency pantry just days after the shutdown had ended but still during the waiting period for paychecks.

"When the government reopened on Friday, people had already taken three quarters of the pantry's food," Mike said. "And over the next week the rest disappeared."

Mike estimated that the Grand Canyon emergency pantry served about 250 people. He said roughly 80 percent of those were NPS employees with the rest going to canyon residents in need.

"I cried on several occasions," Mike said. "People were genuinely hungry. By the end, as food came in, it went out pretty quickly."

SVdP's San Francisco de Asis volunteers were one of more than 20 local organizations and companies to donate food and other necessities to the Grand Canyon emergency pantry.

"Virtually all was volunteered," Mike said. "It didn't require me pounding on doors."

After the shutdown ended, Mike started working to establish a permanent pantry in the canyon, which has a poverty rate of 32.4 percent—almost double the state's rate. He and Kelly will work together in the coming months to model the Grand Canyon pantry on the one at San Francisco de Asis.



Expanded Space, Expanded Services



Dr. Kurt Heiland, who volunteers in the clinic and specializes in ear, nose and throat care, prepares to examine the inner ear of a young patient inside one of 11 new medical exam rooms.

Peek inside the renovated Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul, set to fully open this summer

Helping to heal more people. That's what the newly expanded Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul makes possible. Last year alone, the free clinic provided 15,800 medical and dental visits to uninsured and low-income patients, who would otherwise forgo even the most discounted health and dental care because of financial strain.

The redesigned, bright interior with new flooring, fresh paint—and more importantly—additional patient care spaces, sets up SVdP's clinic to not only serve more uninsured patients, but also provide them high quality health care in a better-equipped facility.

The expansion makes up the second phase of a \$16 million capital project—the first such project for SVdP in 25 years. The first phase erected the Diane & Bruce Halle Center for Hope and Healing

in 2018 (See page 4), which houses SVdP's transitional shelter and Resource Center. Those services formerly shared space in the building now devoted entirely to the clinic.

The medical half of the free clinic, including the Ben & Catherine Ivy Foundation Center for Family Wellness that educates patients on preventive self-care through nutrition and exercise, began operating in its new space on the first floor in December 2018. The dental team has continued services on the second floor while the dental half of the clinic redesign comes to fruition around it. Completion of the renovation is expected this summer.

Vehr/Webb Studio Architects & Artists designed the new interior and DJ Murphy & Company is the general contractor.

PHOTOS ON PAGE 9

Top Left: Dr. Joseph Giancola, who volunteers in the clinic and specializes in dermatology, examines a patient's leg. Behind him are colorful posters in English and Spanish helping to visually explain preventative care and diabetes, which has a high incidence among the uninsured patients visiting the clinic.

Top Right: A pharmacy rounds out the medical clinic expansion, helping doctors and nurses to more readily provide medication when needed.



The Medical Clinic

Serves as a medical home for youth and temporary medical home for adults until a more permanent medical care provider is established.

- Increase from 5 to 11 exam rooms
- Intake area
- Laboratory
- Ophthalmology room
- Pharmacy
- Procedure room

Offers family medicine and access to more than 20 specialties including:

- Cardiology (adult and pediatric)
- Dermatology (adult and pediatric)
- Endocrinology (pediatric only)
- Ear, Nose and Throat (adult and pediatric)
- Gastroenterology
- Neurology
- Ophthalmology
- Optometry (adult and pediatric)
- Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
- Physical therapy
- Podiatry (adult and pediatric)
- Pulmonology
- Psychiatry (adult and pediatric)
- Rheumatology (adult and pediatric)
- Sports medicine
- Urology (adult and pediatric)
- Women's health
- Wound care



Inside the kitchen of The Ben & Catherine Ivy Foundation Center for Family Wellness at St. Vincent de Paul, registered dietitians host cooking classes and help patients focus on prevention and management of chronic diseases through nutrition as well as physical activity and overall wellness. The program has additional activity spaces and community partnerships to host its classes, which combine to help individuals, families and children make lifestyle changes with the support of their community and the center's culturally sensitive and passionate staff.

Below: Dr. Maurice Lee, the chief medical officer at SVdP, shares a laugh with patient Teresa Alonzo. It's a moment of relief for the uninsured single mother of five, who Dr. Lee and his team recently diagnosed with cervical cancer. She's since had a port placed for chemotherapy through charity care, and a physician is providing her radiation free of charge thanks to the clinic's coordination of her care.





The Dental Clinic

Increase from 8 to 16 chairs

Surgical rooms

Dry laboratory

X-ray room

Sterilization room

Dispensary room

Hall of smiles

Offers comprehensive and emergency care as well as specialty dentistry including:

Endodontistry

Oral Surgery

Orthodontistry

Pediatrics

Periodontistry

Prosthodontistry

PHOTOS

Top: Dr. Ken Snyder leads an examination in the Phoenix Suns room of the dental clinic at St. Vincent de Paul. On average, the clinic provides about 10,000 patient visits a year and sees both adults and children.

Middle: Fourth-year dental students treat a patient in one of what will be 16 chairs in the expanded clinic. Students, overseen by Dr. Snyder and volunteer dentists, come from Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health as well as Midwestern University College of Dental Medicine in Glendale, Arizona.

Bottom: Inside the Arizona Diamondbacks room, patients can enjoy a portrait of former Diamondbacks Outfielder Luis Gonzalez and a replication of his jersey. The cheerful sports-themed décor makes the clinic welcoming and fun for patients, especially children.





“We’ve provided for our children. We have a marvelous, comfortable home. Beyond medical care and a reasonable lifestyle, what do you do with the balance?”

– Kenneth and Denise Schaffer

The Schaffers chose to give their balance more meaning by including St. Vincent de Paul in their will.

You can do them same. Your balance will lift up a neighbor, a friend and fellow human being. By including us in your will, you help the neediest among us for years to come and aid SVdP in providing:

- Warm, nutritious meals
- Homelessness prevention through bill assistance
- Housing for veterans, seniors and disabled adults
- Access to quality health care
- Socks, shirts, shoes
- A compassionate support system

HELP US keep the balance

Because of you, SVdP will be able to offer hope for a better tomorrow.

Visit <http://plannedgivingt.stvincentdepaul.net> or contact Donna Rodgers at 602-261-6884 or drodgers@svdpaz.org.

Read the Schaffers' giving story at:
<https://www.stvincentdepaul.net/svdp-blog/schaffers>



SVDP WORKS TO KEEP ASYLUM-SEEKING FAMILIES OFF THE STREETS, ON THEIR WAY TO FAMILY REUNIFICATION

By: Marisol Ramirez and Alejandra Bucon

It started with the community asking for help. An email from a network of Arizona churches landed in a St. Vincent de Paul inbox.

Since October 2018, the churches found themselves hosting an increasing number of asylum-seeking families, who continue to flee Central America (mainly Guatemala, but also Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Mexico) and arrive in the U.S. Asylum is a legal process under federal law and only granted to those escaping violence and persecution in their home countries.

The email asked for a temporary space the second weekend of March in which the International Rescue Committee could work to connect families to their loved ones in the U.S. as they await the continuation of the asylum process.

“We walked around our space, looked at the Hall of Banners, the comfortable atmosphere and the dignity that is offered here every day, and it just made so much sense,” said Jessica Berg, chief program officer at SVdP.

Legally in the U.S., but temporarily homeless

Asylum is a legal process under federal law and is only granted to those fleeing violence or persecution in their home countries. Immigration & Customs Enforcement releases families legally into the U.S. with documents confirming a contact, usually a relative, who is able to support their transportation from Phoenix to their final destination in cities throughout the country. ICE can only detain them at the border for a certain time period and must release them as they await the court-hearing of their asylum case.

If no churches are available to take the families or the number of people to be released exceeds the capacity of the churches available to house them that night, ICE releases them at the Greyhound station or sometimes on the street, and the families are thrust into temporary homelessness and in dire need of basic human necessities.

“Being dropped off in the middle of Phoenix with only a sandwich and a bottle of water, sometimes without the ability to speak English, and without any money, is a strange and dangerous place to be in,” said Stanford Prescott, community engagement coordinator for the IRC in Arizona.

Typically, it takes 24 to 72 hours to make travel arrangements and get to their relative in the States with whom they will live. Families aren’t released if they can’t provide an address and phone number of a sponsor who can purchase a ticket for their travel to their final destination.

But it’s getting them to that family member safely where the U.S. immigration system has a hole that churches and groups like IRC have been attempting to fill for asylum-seeking families in increasing numbers.

Living out the SVdP Mission

St. Vincent de Paul works to feed, clothe, house and heal people in need who have nowhere else to turn to for help. This core mission drove the decision to temporarily open SVdP's doors the second weekend in March to work with asylum-seeking families.

"SVdP is known for stepping in when the community needs help and providing that hospitality and basic support," said Shannon Clancy, SVdP associate executive director. "Although it seemed like a big undertaking, it also was an opportunity to help where help was immediately needed to care for those in need."

SVdP prepared its main campus dining hall to receive the families. When the first busses pulled up, mothers, fathers and their children stepped off, retrieved their bagged belongings and turned to see the welcoming faces of people from SVdP and IRC.

"We had a line of volunteers saying, 'Bienvenidos,' and 'Hola,'" Jessica said. "It was all many of us could really say in Spanish, but that was plenty. I remember one woman walking in holding her toddler with tears in her eyes, and I could tell they were just tears of relief and appreciation."

IRC immediately started connecting families with their relatives, booking flights and bus trips, and arranging car pools. SVdP did what it does best—helping to feed hungry people, clothe them, provide showers, hygiene items and a roof overhead.

That first weekend saw 299 people move through the dining hall without interrupting SVdP's service to its local community.

Cots were setup, and meals were shared together. Community volunteers and staff worked to fill the immediate need of the families and considered it a ministry.

"This is where God wants me," one staff member said. "I'm not doing this for me. I am honored to serve."

"We gave them love, good food, looked them in the eye, smiled at them, and then they were on their way to be with their relative," Jessica said. "It's rare if not impossible that we can have the incredible privilege and opportunity to reunite 299 people with family members in a single weekend."



One of many families that fled violence

Note: Names have been changed for the family's safety.

As Maria, 22, waited at a dining room table for the confirmation of her bus ticket and upcoming trip, she smiled and laughed at her four-year-old son who had found a friend with whom to play and share a black toy dinosaur.

"This is the first time in a month that I have been able to rest," said Maria, who had traveled four days through Mexico. "My son is full of energy again. We appreciate this place of love."

The scenes of the dining hall stood in stark contrast to those of her hometown back in Guatemala. She described the violence—young girls and women enduring assault, babies born on the street and 8-year-old boys forced to work in the fields or join gangs.

"I don't want that for my boy," she said. "I want him to go to school. I want him to be happy. He deserves to be happy like other kids."

Her son occasionally came up to show off his toy dinosaur. He sported a dinosaur T-shirt retrieved especially for him from the Resource Center by a SVdP staff member.

In Guatemala, Maria had been studying to become a nurse. She volunteered at the hospital in her hometown after school. She called the healthcare system there "broken" and lacking hospitals, doctors and medication.

Maria's traveled to the U.S. to give her son a better life and continue her studies. She said she knows this is just the start, but she's hopeful now about the future.

An alternative to the Greyhound station

In the days following the weekend hosting of 299 people, SVdP and IRC attended a meeting of community leaders working to address the steady flow of asylum-seeking families into Phoenix. Again, talk turned to the need for a large, safe space where ICE could drop off families as an alternative to the bus station or the street.

“My impression is that ICE very much wants a better solution, but their hands are tied,” Jessica said. “They can’t hold people. They don’t have

space. So we assessed what was realistic for us and determined that we, in partnership with IRC, can step in as an alternative to the Greyhound station and be a place of hospitality.”

On March 13, the partnership piloted the temporary Day Relief Center in the dining hall of the SVdP’s main campus again. IRC coordinated the travel arrangements. SVdP provided the space and food. Together, the two organizations partnered with local churches to lodge families overnight as needed.

By the following Tuesday, the center moved beyond its pilot phase to remain open seven days a week, accepting around 100 people from ICE each day. It continues to provide travel arrangements, food, diapers, wipes, basic hygiene items, medical triage and legal guidance.

As of April 26, the center has helped reunite 1,725 people with their families in the U.S.

While the community, state and nation work to address this complex issue, SVdP will continue to offer assistance as one aspect of its comprehensive outreach efforts made possible by its thousands of volunteers and donors.

“No work of charity is foreign to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul,” said Steve Attwood, SVdP Council President. “Reaching out to those in need is what we do. It’s who we are.”

SVdP continues to serve the local population it loves and cares for every day. Helping asylum-seeking families is not infringing on that work—it’s simply in addition to what we already do. We are grateful for the generosity of the community that makes that work possible all year long.



HOW CAN I HELP?

Donate

www.stvincentdepaul.net/give/donate
or call 602-266-GIVE (4483).

Please specify “Asylum Efforts” in the comments section.

Check donations may be sent to:
St. Vincent de Paul
P.O. Box 13600
Phoenix, AZ 85002

Most needed items include:

Adult (size small) and children’s socks and underwear

Shoes

Baby wipes

Sturdy backpacks

Shoelaces



Formula

Baby bottles

Pedialyte/Ensure

Diapers

Bottled water

Volunteer

Help greet families, serve meals, distribute resources, organize children’s activities and more. **Contact Volunteer Coordinator Shawn Donnelly** at sdonnelly@svdpaz.org or 602-329-0701.

Thank You

We’re so grateful anytime a community member comes forward to support and serve with St. Vincent de Paul to help us feed, clothe, house and heal people in need.

Local groups help Adopt-A-Family Program

Pay it forward **Family to Family**

By Kim Cecere

It was a record year for St. Vincent de Paul's Adopt-A-Family program. A total of 900 disadvantaged families experienced the joy of Christmas this past December through the volunteer-run program, which has become a holiday tradition of giving for many local groups and families across the Valley.

The Adopt-A-Family program, which matches donors with families in need to provide Christmas gifts and meals, has steadily grown over the years, according to Dorothy "Dottie" Sullivan. She's coordinated the program for the last 10 years in conjunction with SVdP food pantries based out of Catholic churches, also known as conferences.



It has become a family-to-family program that gives people a good feeling when they visit the homes and drop off the gifts and meals to the families.

– Dorothy Sullivan

"Year after year, a great majority of our donors are repeat givers, and they tell their friends," said Dottie of the program. "It has become a family-to-family program that gives people a good feeling when they visit the homes and drop off the gifts and meals to the families. They get a chance to really see the difference they're making in people's lives."

At the heart of the Adopt-A-Family program are those "family-to-family" experiences that keep people coming back year after year. Here are just a few of those stories.



From practical gifts, like a new vacuum, to fun things for kids, like a Game Boy, the Adopt-A-Family program helped make Christmas for a record 900 disadvantaged families last year.



Girl Scouts Troop 287, Scottsdale

For a group of Girl Scouts who attend Sequoya Elementary School in Scottsdale, it's not about how many patches they can iron on a uniform—in fact, they don't even have uniforms—it's about the quality time they spend together, helping others and giving back to the community.

Troop 287 is comprised of 16 fifth graders who have been together since kindergarten, according to Troop Leader Keri Katz.

"We're a close troop of amazing families, the most giving people I've come to know," said Keri.

So when she first read the Christmas gift list from the family of eight the troop was sponsoring, she knew the troop's "village of families" would want to do more. The family that had been assigned to the troop had children ranging in age from 1 to 15 years old.

"All of the items they had listed were practical," said Keri. "We wanted to know what the kids really wanted for Christmas, what was on their wish list."

When Keri spoke with the mother of the family, much to her surprise, the woman told her they were soon to become a family of nine. A baby girl was on the way! Just as the family was about to grow, so too did Troop 287's generosity and Christmas wish list for them.

"Originally, there was nothing on the list for the newborn," explained Keri, "so we also talked about those needs and everything she asked for, we fulfilled."

The most fulfilling part of all, however, was when Keri and co-leaders Barbara Wheeler and Jennifer Duell delivered the gifts and the meal to the family's home on December 23.

"As soon as she opened the door (the baby, just 10 days old, was in her arms), she hugged me," said Keri.

When Keri and the other troop leaders returned home from the delivery and in the days that followed, she said the girls were "so excited to hear about the drop off and wanted to know the details," asking what it was like to meet the family and many questions about the baby.

"The fact that they knew the family and their names," said Keri, "that human interaction with the family made such a huge impact on our girls. They've asked if we can do it again this year."

Even though Troop 287 will be dismantled when the girls go on to middle school in the fall this year, their Adopt-A-Family experience is one that will keep their village together.



FireRock Country Club, Fountain Hills

When Mike and Donna Marasco heard about the Adopt-A-Family program last fall during mass at Church of the Ascension, Mike began recruiting a group of friends from FireRock Country Club to get involved.

You might say the Marascos have a deep appreciation and understanding of the value SVdP programs bring to the most vulnerable members of our society. They're not only donors, but also Donna served as executive director for SVdP in Victoria, British Columbia. So it was only natural for them to tell two friends, and they told two friends...and so on. Fourteen generous FireRock friends later, 17 families were served through the Adopt-A-Family program! It's what Mike calls, "an example of how doing good multiplies."

"Doing one good thing a day, creating a holy moment for someone is sure to multiply," Mike said.

The proof, Mike and Donna explained, came in the increasing level of involvement their friends had in the program.

"In the beginning, many were happy to just write a check," explained Donna. "But as we got rolling, the passion of

making a difference caught on, and more people got involved in shopping, wrapping and wanting to deliver the joy of Christmas to the families."

It was an organized effort, indeed. After Mike called each of the families, taking the time to find out what other items the kids wanted—and what else the parents needed—beyond what they had listed, he began to organize everything. There were spreadsheets and shopping lists, as well as regular emails and meetings among the FireRock friends. "It was fun for me to watch Mike 'light up' on the phone as he talked to the families," remembered Donna. "It's a part of who he is as a Christian."

"We wanted to address more than their fundamental needs," said Mike as he remembered a lady who needed a garden hose because hers had been stolen, a mother who desperately needed a new vacuum and a child who wished for a Game Boy. "The way we see it, we're celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ and if you can make someone else's Christmas, that's the spirit of it all."

As for Christmas 2019, because the Marascos have been telling more friends about their Adopt-A-Family experience, many have asked to be included this year. Truly, the law of multiplication applies!

Century 21 Arizona Foothills Offices:

Ahwatukee, Central Phoenix, Glendale, North Scottsdale, Old Town Scottsdale, South Chandler/Ocotillo, Southeast Gilbert, Surprise National Park Service

For three years running, Kristin Koon has headed up Adopt-A-Family efforts for CENTURY 21 Arizona Foothills real estate offices throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area. She has many fond memories of delivering gifts to the families. One time a family made hot cocoa for her team of "elves," and on other occasions real estate agents dressed as Santa.

It's these special moments and the family connections that keep CENTURY 21 Arizona Foothills coming back to the Adopt-A-Family program every holiday season. 2018 was no exception as eight office locations—from Surprise to

Gilbert-Power Road—adopted one to two families each, collectively "making Christmas happen" for upwards of 60 people.

"We've looked at other holiday giving programs," explained Kristin, "but St. Vincent de Paul is the easiest to work with."

Kristin noted that working with Dottie the last few years has "made the process easy" for her to then coordinate with all the offices. She maintains, "It's quite a coordinated effort that runs smoothly."

Each year, there's an ambassador or "office elf," at each CENTURY 21 Arizona Foothills location who is responsible for coordinating with their adopted family and communicating with the agents. Kristin develops the marketing materials for use by the ambassadors to get the word out to the agents on fulfilling the lists.

The offices go all out in wrapping and delivering the gifts, according to Kristin. "It's everyone's favorite part, dropping off the gifts and seeing the looks on their faces, how appreciative our families are," Kristin said. "The Adopt-A-Family program truly is the best way for our offices to spread Christmas joy throughout the Valley."

It's everyone's favorite part, dropping off the gifts and seeing the looks on their faces, how appreciative our families are.

— Kristin Koon



Phoenix area's only
FREE CLINIC TO OFFER WOUND CARE



“I’m all about the uninsured population feeling confident in their health and building their health literacy.” – Erin Tharalson

St. Vincent de Paul Volunteer Erin Tharalson transformed the Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic's approach to the oft-overlooked specialty care for the uninsured

Wound Care Director Erin Tharalson says the public would be shocked by the number of wound patients seeking care at the Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul. She sees thousands of wound patients each year at the clinic, which offers more than a dozen specialties and gets more than half of its patients directly from hospitals.

Erin says all kinds of wound cases walk in, from those caused by trauma, car accidents and emergency surgery to more ordinary causes like a blister on a diabetic's foot that refuses to heal. With her wound expertise and training in sharps debridement in such high demand, she volunteers several shifts a week to accommodate all of her wound patients.

Making sure a wound closes and heals properly isn't something most people with health insurance and steady care worry about. The insured typically have a home-health wound nurse to change dressings.

"When you're uninsured and have a wound, you don't have access to that care," says Erin, who notes that the uninsured are left to tend to their wounds themselves. "The materials are extremely expensive, and the treatment is complicated, especially without knowledge and skills on how to apply things."

Wounds that remain open risk infection, and Erin stresses an open wound's overall toll on a person's emotional and physical well-being. She's seen patients who have had open wounds for 10, 20 and even 40 years.

"The wound society hasn't gone deeply into the discussion on uninsured wound patients," Erin says, "but as a whole, we see thousands of them each year."

For decades wound specialists have verbally explained or quickly jotted down care and dressing instructions to send home with uninsured wound patients. But in Erin's experience, this did little to progress a patient toward complete closure and often resulted in a wound reopening and return visits.

Erin's solution to this problem became her Doctorate of Nursing Practice doctoral project at Arizona State University, and the SVdP clinic became her field experience in implementing the solution focused on improving self-care and empowering patients.

She designed a brochure that uses step-by-step photographs, common language and 18 stickers to correspond with stickers on dressing materials. Overall, the brochure makes teachable 65 different wound regimens.

Erin incorporates the brochure into her patient's visits and then, using the teach-back method, has them teach her how to care for their wound.

"At visit two, we do it again, and by the end of visit four my patients are wound experts," she says. "I'm all about the uninsured population feeling confident in their health and building their health literacy. Our patients are so receptive to the education and are really motivated, so we've had great success."

"She is dedicated to her patients and advocates for 100 percent of them," says Dr. Maurice Lee, chief medical officer of the SVdP clinic, who also notes how much Erin has advanced wound care practice there. "Providers elsewhere may say what patients need but do not put in the work to get them what's necessary to succeed."

One such success goes back to the patient who suffered with a sizeable open wound for 40 years. She had been told by doctors that her wound could not be closed and turned to the SVdP clinic instead during another downturn.

"After seeing her nearly every week for eight months, we closed her wound," Erin says. "The team all cried. For someone to live 40 years with a large open wound and to close it...we couldn't have done it without the public's support of St. Vincent de Paul."

Donations provided materials and treatments that made healing such a complicated wound possible. On a recent visit, the patient proudly and gratefully reported that the wound remains closed.

Erin graduated with her DNP from Arizona State University in May 2018. She also holds an MSN from the University of Arizona and a BSN from D'Youville College in Buffalo, N.Y. In addition to her clinic work, Erin teaches in ASU's College of Nursing and Health Innovation as an associate faculty member. She started volunteering at St. Vincent de Paul's medical clinic in 2011 and has served in numerous roles over her seven year tenure, including three years as associate medical director, prior to her position as wound care director. Previously, she worked as a nurse practitioner for 10 years in the veteran population of Arizona. She has a passion for working with the underserved and found her calling in wound care after discovering the great need for wound specialists in those populations.

“

I just never thought I was going to fall in love with somebody.

– Jonathan Barker



Finding love

IN THE LAND OF OZ

Jonathan and Cheryl each came to SVdP's Ozanam Manor seeking shelter and found so much more

In the middle of separate crises, Jonathan Barker and Cheryl Pawloski thought of only one thing—they each needed a place to live. Love, well, that could wait.

Jonathan had worked as a security guard for more than seven years in Phoenix until a sudden stroke partially paralyzed his right side, putting him out of work. Without a paycheck and trudging through the process to apply for Social Security Disability, he faced a gap in income and a landlord who could no longer put off collecting rent. His parents had died long ago, so he had no family support system, only a church that connected him to St. Vincent de Paul.

Cheryl had been living with family in Goodyear, Arizona, until they forced her out. Her modest Social Security check couldn't cover moving costs on top of base rent, and affordable housing waitlists were too long. She needed housing now. Her therapist's friend gave her three phone numbers—St. Vincent de Paul's Ozanam Manor was the first she called.

Ozanam Manor, or "Oz" as it's lovingly called, is SVdP's dormitory-style shelter for men and women age 50 and above experiencing homelessness and also accommodates physically or mentally disabled adults age 18 and above. The transitional shelter bridges people to more permanent housing. It has 60 beds with 23 set aside for homeless veterans.

On Feb. 1, 2018, Jonathan moved into Oz. The very next day he met Cheryl as she was moving in.

"We were instant friends," she said. "When I first met him, he was very quiet, very shy. I had to get him out of his shell."

"She just came right out," said Jonathan, laughing.

During their conversation, Jonathan revealed he had no immediate family left and a doctor's appointment the next day. Cheryl offered to go with him.

"He didn't believe me that I would go," she recalled, "but from that day on I went with him to everything."

Jonathan had grown used to doing everything on his own and had given up on relationships in his late 20s. But Cheryl surprised him.

"I was determined to help him because I could see that he was very shy," she said. "I've always been somebody that's helped other people."

Cheryl saw Jonathan through all of his health trials, from getting a pacemaker to recovering from his stroke and coping with short term memory loss.

"I would do anything to make him feel better," she said. "I never wanted him to hurt."

Cheryl cooked for Jonathan every night so that he stayed on his doctor's recommended low-salt diet. She even helped support him as he walked. Soon enough a quiet, unspoken affection developed.

"To me, it was all new," Jonathan said. "I had problems trusting people, and I didn't want my heart to be broken. I hadn't been in a relationship in a long time."

But that didn't discourage Cheryl. "I had all the patience in the world for him," she said.

The day they put Jonathan on Cheryl's phone plan, they cemented their relationship. While grabbing a sandwich at Subway, Jonathan burst out, "So we're on our first date."

He hadn't asked her, but they both just knew.

Back at Oz, they stayed respectful of the rules. No holding hands. No kissing. So life pushed forward and Oz propelled them each toward stability.

Case Manager Kim Coleman helped expedite the Social Security Disability process for Jonathan, securing him his monthly check. And Cheryl had the time and breathing room to apartment hunt while saving money to move.

Every day that summer they toughed through the heat, riding buses and walking all over the Valley looking for apartments. In the evening, they'd come home to Oz and cook dinner. They grew used to their routine and the community they had around them.

"Everybody made me feel very at home," Cheryl said. "The people were great. They made me feel like family."

But when it came time to leave, Cheryl wasn't leaving without Jonathan, who had made great strides in his recovery and could feel again in his face and fingers.

"The thing of it is, I'd be a total basket case right now if it hadn't been for her and the staff," Jonathan said. "It would've made it harder for me to go through things. I'm just in constant shock and awe of her."

In August 2018, they both moved out of Oz and into an apartment complex in the Metro Center area.

They each wear promise rings that Jonathan bought for them. "I didn't buy these for the fun of it," said Jonathan. "I just never thought I was going to fall in love with somebody."

The Society of a Thousand Thanks

One of the greatest privileges of serving in Arizona is being able to work with a generous community of people who care about the well-being of our state. Our friends not only host food drives and send volunteers, they also donate generously to support our work.



Safeway, Albertsons and azfamily's CBS 5 make Spring into Summer food drive a success

Thousands of children and hard-working families in Arizona will have a pantry stocked with nutritious food as the weather starts to heat up thanks to the Spring into Summer food drive made possible by Safeway, Albertsons and azfamily's CBS 5. All the nonperishable items and cash donations collected through their efforts help support SVdP's emergency food box program, which delivers to individuals and families in need throughout central and northern Arizona.

Thank you, Safeway, Albertsons and azfamily's CBS 5 for helping SVdP keep families happy, healthy and fed during spring and summer!

(From left) St. Vincent de Paul leaders Steve Zabalski and Shannon Clancy join Safeway's Nancy Keane and azfamily's Ian Schwartz at a local Safeway to kick off the 2019 Spring into Summer food drive. The partners are showcasing the types of nonperishable food items the drive collects for Arizona families in need.



Bashas', Food City and ABC15 summer water drive will help SVdP keep people hydrated

As the temperatures start rising, so does the need for water. That's why Bashas', Food City and ABC15 are stepping up this summer and hosting a water drive for St. Vincent de Paul the first week of July. Last year the drive collected 106,189 water bottles. SVdP looks forward to another successful drive this year! Thank you to Bashas', Food City and ABC15 for helping SVdP make sure Valley individuals in need don't go thirsty.



Fry's helps SVdP put food on the table

The Fry's grocery store at 8375 W. Deer Valley Road presented another \$1,000 to St. Vincent de Paul for the grocery chain's Zero Hunger Zero Waste initiative, which shares a common goal with SVdP in making sure the less fortunate of our community don't go hungry. Thanks for helping us feed, clothe, house and heal our community!

Board of Visitors helps SVdP clinic save lives

Thank you, Board of Visitors, Arizona's oldest women's charitable organization, for your support of our efforts to provide cancer screenings to Arizona's uninsured women in need.

On Feb. 19 the organization awarded St. Vincent de Paul's Virginia G. Piper Medical & Dental Clinic a \$125,000 grant to support preventative and diagnostic screenings of the most common cancers in women—breast, cervical and colorectal cancers.

Lower-income patients have significant cancer disparities when compared against the larger population. Much of this is due to a lack of access to preventive services. With these funds, the clinic can continue full-force on its mission to raise screening rates for the uninsured to meet and even exceed national rates for insured patients.

St. Vincent de Paul's Director of Development Ryan Corry and Chronic Care and Quality Coordinator Gaby Barraza receive the Board of Visitor's check. Gaby monitors progress on cancer screenings and coordinates care and follow up appointments for all patients who have abnormal tests.



Fashion Square shoppers support SVdP during benefit event

A St. Vincent de Paul sign stood tall and proud outside Michael Kors during The Legacy of Luxury Shopping Benefit, which kicked off the grand reopening of Scottsdale Fashion Square's luxury wing. The benefit event donated 10 percent of sales Nov. 15-18 to local nonprofits, including SVdP. Thank you so much to all who contributed to our mission!

Robert Kemper Corrigan Foundation helps spruce up Phoenix Dining Room

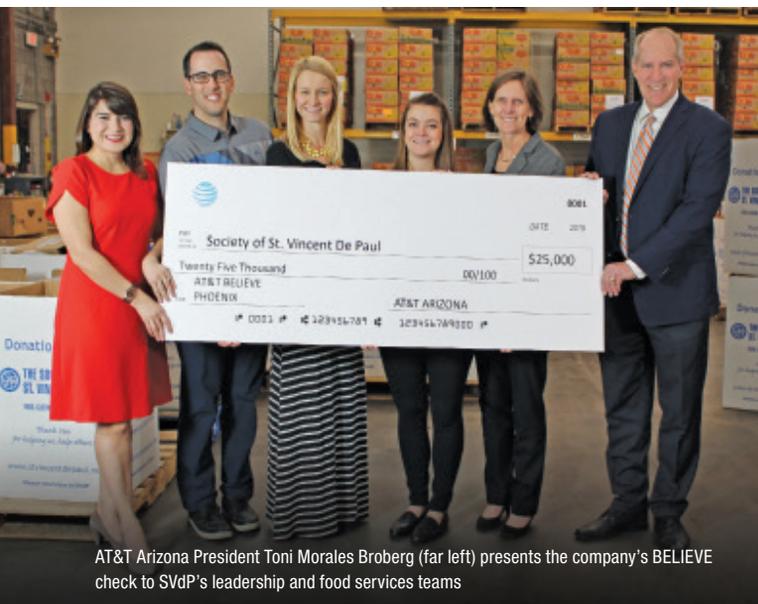
On Dec. 12 the Robert Kemper Corrigan Foundation presented \$50,000 to St. Vincent de Paul to repair and renovate areas of our Phoenix Dining Room at the Human Services Campus. The money went toward repainting key spaces, replacing flooring and purchasing replacement equipment. Thank you to the Robert Kemper Corrigan Foundation! You helped us serve the neediest of our community in a facility better equipped to offer some of life's most basic necessities.

U-Haul establishes fresh way to give to SVdP

Thank you to U-Haul, which designated St. Vincent de Paul the beneficiary of one of their recent farmers markets held each month in the parking lot just east of the U-Haul Corporate Towers and open to the public. There were approximately 40 vendors selling everything from fresh locally grown produce to Ruff Life Dog Bones. U-Haul donated 10 percent of the total sales to St. Vincent de Paul.

SVdP 'charity of choice' at 6th Annual Italian Festival

A fun-filled weekend at the 6th Annual Italian Festival helped support St. Vincent de Paul, which the Italian Association again featured as the festival's charity of choice. This year, they added a VIP evening the Friday night before the two-day festival, Feb. 23 and 24. Thank you to the association and festival-goers! Twenty-five percent of net proceeds went to support SVdP's efforts to feed, clothe, house and heal our community.



AT&T Arizona President Toni Morales Broberg (far left) presents the company's BELIEVE check to SVdP's leadership and food services teams

AT&T's BELIEVE Phoenix Initiative helps SVdP feed the hungry

Thank you, AT&T, for investing in the community and choosing St. Vincent de Paul as one of your many trusted nonprofit partners in your 2019 BELIEVE Phoenix Initiative. Earlier this year, AT&T presented SVdP with \$25,000 as part of the initiative that helps fight hunger and food insecurity in the Valley.

The money supports SVdP's food bank and Urban Farms, helping us pack food boxes delivered to hungry families and supply nutritious food to our central kitchen, which serves more than 4,500 meals a day to families and individuals in need or experiencing homelessness.

"Everyone deserves to live without worrying about where their next meal is coming from. Unfortunately, that is not the reality for far too many in our community," said Toni Morales Broberg, president of AT&T Arizona. "We're passionate about addressing this problem and making a positive impact."



VINCENTIAN CONNECTION

P.O. Box 13600, Phoenix, Arizona 85002-3600

If you are receiving duplicate copies of this newsletter or have changed your address:

- please call 602-850-6927 or
- email subscribe@svdpaz.org or
- unsubscribe@svdpaz.org

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage

PAID

Phoenix, Arizona
Permit No. 115

BE A SUMMER ACTION HERO.



As temperatures rise, so do the needs of people who are struggling in our community. Join us in helping provide much needed food, water and assistance.

You have the power to make a difference. To donate, volunteer or gift an item off of our Amazon Wish List, visit SummerRelief.org or call our hotline at 602-266-GIVE (4483).

SummerRelief.org



**THE SOCIETY OF
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**

FEED. CLOTHE. HOUSE. HEAL.