

GOOD SAMARITAN

St. Vincent de Paul | Louisville, KY

www.svdplou.org

February | 2013

Homeless Single Women Find Hope and Support in SVDP's New SRO

Vanessa is the first to admit she's made some serious mistakes. A lifelong addict who "ran the streets," sold drugs and neglected her son, she served prison time for writing bad checks.

None of that matters much anymore. At 46, Vanessa has peace of mind she'd never known before moving to the campus of St. Vincent de Paul.

Last March she was one of the first tenants in SVDP's new SRO (single-resident occupancy) supportive housing program for homeless single women. The three-story apartment building features 24 private bedrooms and shared common areas, including kitchen, bathrooms and living room.

"It's a really nice place to be," Vanessa says. "I like that I have my own room – that it's mine, that I have a lease, and that I have my own key. There's quiet time, and everybody respects everybody."

Despite years of estrangement from her son, today Vanessa has a good relationship with him, his young children, and his girlfriend, a college graduate who is about to open her own daycare center. Vanessa is proud of her and has been helping her get the center ready for children.

"When he was little, for so long my credibility was shot with him," Vanessa says of her son. "He'd heard the story so many times: I'd say I was going to quit getting high. I'd get clean for six months and then go back to it. Addiction had its grips on me. I don't wish it on nobody."

One of the pivotal moments of Vanessa's life occurred in 1988, when she went to check on her best friend and discovered that she and her son had been stabbed to death. The incident sent Vanessa into a state of despair and years of self-destruction. Memories continue to haunt her. "I've seen some horrific things," she says.

Clean and sober for five years, Vanessa struggles to cope with health issues. "I'm bipolar and have psychosis," she says. "I was diagnosed with this way before my drug use began. And I got hit by a car when I was a little girl, crossing the street. So my back hurts constantly. Still, I wouldn't trade my life for nothing in the world," she adds. "I'm here. I'm blessed, and I'm so grateful."

Three days a week, she takes the bus to her job at a fast-food restaurant. She likes earning a paycheck, she says. Her plans are to save money and to work on improving her communication skills, she explains. Her housing situation at St. Vincent de Paul allows her to work toward these goals. She pays a portion of her income for rent, and she relies on the SRO's program manager, Hannah Jackson, for guidance and support. "Hannah helps me a lot," Vanessa says. "I can go to her with anything and everything."



To learn how you can help St. Vincent de Paul assist clients such as Vanessa, please call Nancy Naughton at (502) 301-8682.

On the Ground

By Nancy Naughton

To effectively serve the men, women and children living in poverty and homelessness in our community, social service organizations must work together to reach those in need.



St. Vincent de Paul works in partnership with many of our sister agencies to effectively and efficiently deliver help and assistance across the Louisville area. For example:

- As the lead agency for several recent winter clothing drives, St. Vincent de Paul has coordinated with Catholic Charities, Volunteers of America, and many other organizations to ensure warm winter clothing is available to anyone in need.
- St. Vincent de Paul is the top responder for Metro United Way's 2-1-1 emergency help line that connects people in crisis with needed services. The St. Vincent de Paul Conferences and the St. Vincent de Paul campus respond to hundreds of calls each month, helping with shelter, food, clothing, rent assistance and utility assistance.
- Through our 2012 Christmas outreach programs, St. Vincent de Paul helped the Boys & Girls Club of Kentuckiana provide a Christmas for 53 families living in extreme poverty.
- Similarly, St. Vincent de Paul is the recipient of help from our agency partners.

- When we experienced depleted pantry shelves at the Open Hand Kitchen due to the growing number of meals served and the provision of more than 400 food baskets for families in need, Kentucky Harvest came to our aid with 10,000 cans of soup (see opposite page).



- To help the children residing on our campus to excel academically, Jefferson County Public Schools provides a wonderful tutor, Miss Easter, who is on the SVDP campus Monday through Thursday, providing guidance, encouragement and support to our young students.

Working together, with a constant focus on the needs of the people we serve, is a key ingredient to helping people achieve independence.

St. Vincent de Paul has a long heritage of compassionate care for the poor of Louisville, quietly serving for 160 years.

This important force for good is evident through the work of hundreds of Vincentians, the St. Vincent de Paul campus which serves as home to more than 300 people, the Open Hand Kitchen and the leadership role St. Vincent de Paul assumes in serving our community.

Everything that is done here at St. Vincent de Paul is made possible by the loyalty of those who believe in the importance of caring for our neighbors in need.

Thank you for your kindness and steadfast support.



Sending Flowers For Valentine's Day?

If sending a dozen roses, a bouquet of spring flowers or a pretty potted plant to a loved one is on your to-do list this month, please consider ordering online.

Local florist Nanz & Kraft offers a charitable giving option that allows customers to designate the charity of their choice to receive a small percentage of their order.

This is an easy way to help support St. Vincent de Paul's mission to serve some of the poorest families and individuals in our community.

Visit the florists' website and look for the Helping Hands button on the bottom right-hand side of the home page.

Be sure to select St. Vincent de Paul from the drop-down menu before placing your order.

www.nanzkraft.com

SVDP's Soup Kitchen Receives 10,000 Cans of ... Soup

Kentucky Harvest recently made a substantial donation of food to St. Vincent de Paul's Open Hand Kitchen.

The much-needed donation of about 10,000 cans of soup will be a tremendous help in St. Vincent de Paul's mission to serve the poor and homeless of our community.

The need is great: St. Vincent de Paul's Open Hand Kitchen, at 1026 S. Jackson St., serves a free hot lunch and dinner seven days a week, 365 days a year, to men, women and children in need.

Open to the public, the Open Hand Kitchen serves the poor and homeless as well as the working poor in our community, who rely on St. Vincent de Paul for a hot meal when they have nowhere else to turn.

Last year, St. Vincent de Paul served more than 120,000 free meals.

Donations of canned goods, meats and protein items, and other pantry staples are needed year-round.

To make a cash or food contribution, please contact Nancy Naughton at (502) 301-8682; nnaughton@svdplou.org.



Volunteers with Kentucky Harvest unload a truck with thousands of cans of soup for SVDP's Open Hand Kitchen. Local TV stations, including WAVE-3, covered the delivery.



Blum Enlists Help for OHK

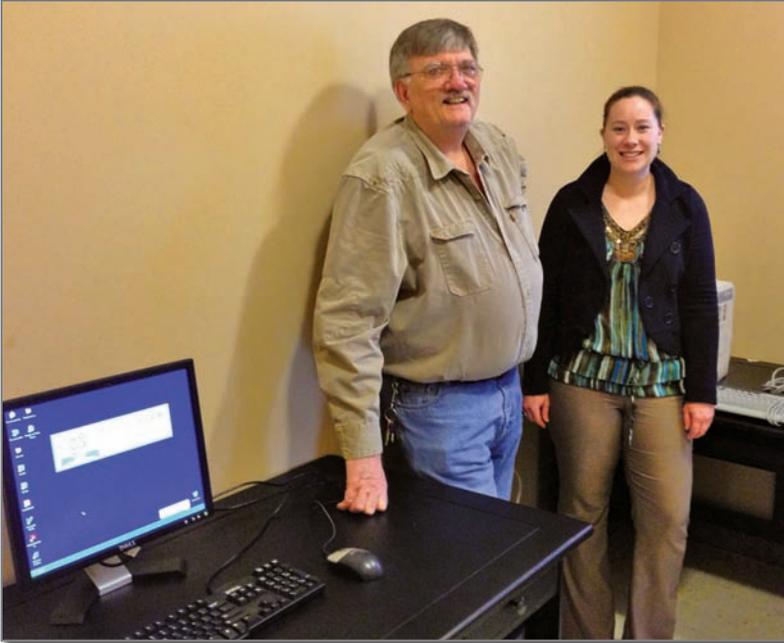
They've become familiar faces inside SVDP's Open Hand Kitchen: volunteers including YUM! Brands executive Jonathan Blum and a team of his close friends.

For several years, Blum (second from right) has enlisted these friends to help him serve lunch or dinner here at St. Vincent de Paul.

Each time, the men arrive with hundreds of hot, fresh KFC meals for our guests. Grateful clients even applauded Blum's crew on their most recent visit.

Call Us: (502) 584-2480

Connect With Us: www.svdplou.org



Gary Sparks and Hanna Jackson in the study room at the Women's SRO

Good Sam Reader Steps Up to the Plate with Two Computers

When Gary Sparks' wife, Kathleen, read the December issue of this newsletter, she noticed one of the items on our program managers' "Wish List": computers for the women living in one of our SRO supportive housing programs.

Gary Sparks, retired from IBM and Lexmark, enjoys rebuilding and tinkering with computers. So he called Hannah Jackson, program manager at the Women's SRO, and offered to donate and install two computers.

"I'm just pleased as punch," Hannah said. "This will help the clients with school work and job searches and working on their resumes."

Gary donated Dell and HP computers, as well as a brand-new digital printer. We thank him for his generosity!

Volunteer(s) Needed as Soon as Possible!

St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores are looking for a person (or several people) with a vehicle to work one morning per week to help obtain and pick up donations of gently-used clothing and household items. Training will be provided, and the volunteer may set his or her own schedule.

Donations of gently-used clothing and household items are critical to maintaining the operation of our four local Thrift Stores. All of our Thrift Store sales help fund St. Vincent de Paul's many programs for the poor and homeless in our community. These services include a homeless shelter, women's recovery center, supportive housing programs for homeless families and individuals, and a community "soup" kitchen that serves more than 120,000 free meals annually.

If you can help, contact **Judy McCoy** at (502) 301-8676; jmccoy@svdplou.org.

Induction Awards Set for Feb. 10

St. Vincent de Paul's annual Induction/Awards Ceremony will be held Sunday, **February 10th** at St. Patrick's, 1000 N. Beckley Station Road, Louisville. Mass will begin at 11am. Afterward will be the induction ceremony of new Vincentians and the presentation of the Vincentian Awards. A brunch reception in Schindler Hall will follow.

Mall Collects Coats, Blankets

Although the winter so far has been warmer than usual, colder temperatures can occur well into March. To help prepare for those chilly days, Mall St. Matthews is asking shoppers to donate new or gently-used blankets, coats, hats and gloves.

Items will be collected through **February 28** and can be dropped off at Mall St. Matthews in the collection bin located near Pottery Barn and Ashcroft & Oak Jewelers. St. Vincent de Paul will pick up all donated items and distribute them to Louisville area children and adults in need.

February 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		