

# Good Samaritan

The monthly newsletter of St. Vincent de Paul | Louisville

[www.svdplou.org](http://www.svdplou.org)

## All-Ages Running Program for the Homeless and Others Builds Momentum at SVDP

A citywide outreach to help the poor and homeless improve their physical fitness has taken hold at St. Vincent de Paul, since founder Ryan Althaus and his Sweaty Sheep Ministries started a pilot program called runPossible in partnership with St. Vincent de Paul at our Family Success Center last year.



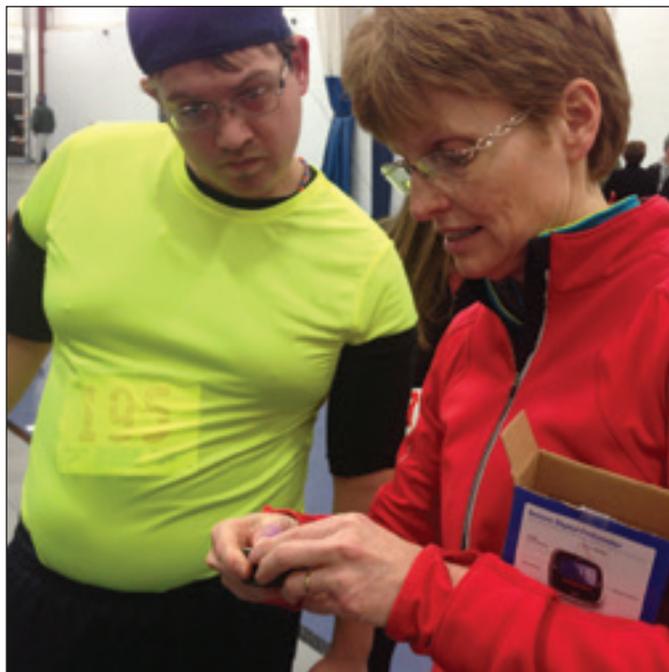
The program has SVDP clients and even their family members energized about walking, jogging, and running.

For the past three months on Tuesday nights, residents, volunteers from the running community, and the runPossible team meet at the Family Success

Center to run, walk, or jog anywhere from one to three miles.

For many of these residents, walking even a mile was something that they thought they would never be able to do. But now they meet once a week to do stretches and warm-ups with the gusto of seasoned athletes. In December, eight residents competed in their first 5K run. Plans are now underway to start training for spring races.

At the beginning of each workout, participants stand in a circle and take turns saying what they are thankful for. Responses have included "That I am getting healthy," and "For the support and strength that you are giving us," as well as "To be able to wake up and breathe."



Businesses have donated running shoes, pedometers and women's sports bras as incentives. In addition to such rewards, clients are encouraged to set goals and push themselves to achieve their personal best.

*Participants are not only improving their health but also their self-confidence and self-esteem, organizers say. To participate as a volunteer or running mentor with the group or to donate running gear, contact SVDP Programs Director (Acting) Beth White, [bwhite@svdplou.org](mailto:bwhite@svdplou.org), 502-272-2134. For more information, visit [www.sweatysheep.com](http://www.sweatysheep.com).*

## SVDP's Physical Fitness Initiatives Reap Huge Rewards for Clients of All Ages



By Nancy Naughton

A key goal of St. Vincent de Paul's mission of helping the poor and homeless is to provide them with the tools for a brighter, more secure future. As you will see on the front page of this newsletter, we currently have a fitness program for our residents, with the objective of not only helping their health but

also building their self-esteem, which is often very low.

Low-income individuals are at a distinct disadvantage versus their higher-income counterparts from a health perspective. They are twice as likely to suffer from diabetes as more affluent individuals. Coronary heart disease is nearly 50 percent higher among poor adults than among the most affluent adults.

Similarly, children in poor families are about seven times as likely to be in poor or fair health as children in the highest-income families. If we do not intervene, this cycle of poor health, poor nutrition and poverty will continue.

A critical issue is lack of access to safe recreational programs. Utilizing parks and walking within the neighborhood is not a well-regarded fitness activity due to safety concerns. In order to overcome these barriers, St. Vincent de Paul established the Family Success Center, which is home to fitness and nutrition programs for individuals of all ages, in addition to the academic and social skills programming we provide for children year-round.

To date, these fitness initiatives have been very successful,

with participants fully engaging in new physical fitness activities and benefiting from the camaraderie of their fellow residents, mentors and coaches. We hope to expand these programs to continue to provide the people we serve with some of the things most of us take for granted, such as a simple stroll around the block.

This program and others we offer at the Family Success Center are critical to helping our clients re-enter the mainstream of life. For the children on our campus, they learn the importance of fitness and nutrition; they grow more confident and perform better in school. They will carry these benefits forward and hopefully break the patterns of generational poverty common to many of these families.

These important initiatives are not possible without your help. We need your

assistance in continuing to grow our Family Success Center programs that will help so many.

Please consider a small increase in your gifts to St. Vincent de Paul. Your generosity will last a lifetime.

Contact Nancy Naughton  
at [nnaughton@svdplou.org](mailto:nnaughton@svdplou.org).



### The Good Samaritan

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### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

St. Vincent de Paul is a nonprofit charity dedicated to serving the poor and providing others with the opportunity to serve. St. Vincent de Paul serves people in need, including those who are homeless, living in poverty or who suffer from addiction and mental illness, as well as people who are in crisis or facing unexpected hardship.

Through a continuum of care that includes food, shelter, affordable housing, counseling and emergency financial assistance with rent and utility bills, St. Vincent de Paul assists people, regardless of their background or faith, with the goal of helping each person achieve self-sufficiency.

## St. Vincent de Paul Clients Are Learning, Growing, and Achieving Their Dreams

### With Help, Lisa Rebuilds Her Life

A few years ago Lisa Bauer, lost everything – before landing on the doorstep of St. Vincent de Paul.

After surgery, a swift, unexpected addiction to prescription painkillers decimated her well-established life, costing her a good job and comfortable lifestyle, the respect of family and friends, and her own independence.

Despite never being in trouble before, Lisa plunged into an addiction that ultimately drove her to commit a crime. That one bad decision led to her arrest and several months imprisonment, a scenario she could never have fathomed, she says now.

Humbled and broken since being released, Lisa has been rebuilding her life from the ground up at SVDP. At our campus SRO, she worked with a case manager to begin tackling the hurdles that stood between her current situation and a return to self-sufficiency.



She worked fast-food jobs, saved money, endured back surgery (while forgoing post-operative prescription painkillers for fear of relapse), attended recovery meetings, and made amends with family members. Little by little, she regained her health and financial footing, as well as the confidence to dream of resuming a normal life.

She got a huge boost last year,

landing a stable, full-time office job. Having moved from SVDP's SRO to our 1-bedroom apartments, Lisa continues to receive intensive case management to keep her on track as she looks ahead to plan her exit strategy from the security of our programs.

"I'm so thankful for St. Vincent de Paul," she says. "I don't know where I'd be without the help you all have given me."

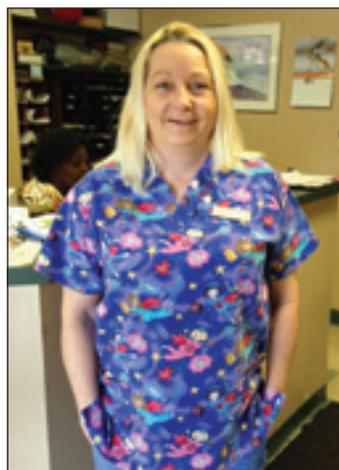
### St. Jude Client Becomes CNA

Loretta Lewellyn, recently obtained her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training.

A client at SVDP's St. Jude Women's Recovery Center, where the now-sober client continues her long-term treatment in overcoming an addiction to prescription painkillers, Loretta

says she never thought it was possible for her to achieve the kind of life she now leads.

She had given up hope before coming to St. Jude, but with the help and encouragement of SVDP's case managers, her life has regained promise.



She works as a CNA while she completes the program at St. Jude.

After completion, she plans to pursue a college degree as a drug and alcohol counselor so that she may help others as she was helped.

# FEBRUARY FUNDRAISER

*Chuy's*

**Wednesday  
FEB. 18th  
5 to 9pm  
Oxmoor Mall**

**A Portion of Sales  
Will Be Given to SVDP**



**VINCENTIAN  
AWARDS &  
INDUCTION OF  
NEW MEMBERS**

**SUNDAY, FEB. 8th**

**St. Agnes  
Catholic Church**

1920 Newburg Road  
11:30am Mass  
Followed by Lunch in the  
School Cafeteria



## **Makenzie Smith and Family Return to SVDP for 9th Year of Coat Giveaway**

Makenzie Smith, a 15-year-old from Borden, Ind., was just 7 years old the first time she came to St. Vincent de Paul with free coats she had collected for the poor and homeless.

In the eight years since then, the outreach has grown to include thousands of coats, both donated and newly purchased, as well as hats and gloves. On Jan. 14th she and her parents, Kevin and Carrie Smith, and younger brother, Hayden, along with family members and friends, set up racks and boxes with some of the 3,000+ coats in SVDP's new Family Success Center for a one-day free-coat event.

Thanks to the Makenzie's Coat Closet team for their hard work!

## **PROGRAMS WISH LISTS**



**Roberts Hall:** Needs women's deodorant and women's razors. "We would also like to see if anyone would like to donate movie tickets or museum tickets or to sponsor a game night with refreshments, or a crafts day," says Renee Yates, program manager for Roberts Hall, a 24-bed dorm-style residence for women with physical/mental disabilities. Drop off items at: 1032 E. Burnett Ave., Louisville, KY 40217  
More details at 502-637-7475; ryates@svdplou.org

**Ozanam Inn:** Our men's overnight homeless shelter needs toilet paper, shaving cream, disposable razors, toothbrushes, etc. Also, linens for bunk beds: sheets, pillow cases (and especially zippered, waterproof linings and pads). White towels (bath-sized). Drop off items at: 1034 S. Jackson St., Louisville, KY 40203