



New Heights

KITCHEN LOVE AND MERCY



Much has been written about what happens in kitchens. Countless recurring themes of heart, home, creativity, and even magic can be found with any Google search. Today we look into the kitchen at the St. Vincent Catholic Charities' Children's Home, and one particular person who has inhabited this kitchen ... that person is Beverly Burns. She puts heart, creativity, magic and mercy into her work for the children, and she has been doing this for over 25 years!

Our Children's Home has an efficient commercial kitchen with three staff members who work tirelessly to prepare three meals and two snacks per day – seven days a week for the 100 or so children who call

the Children's Home their home for varying lengths of time over the course of the year. However it is the fact that these fragile, vulnerable children are nurtured with very real corporal works of mercy performed by Beverly and her team, that fills us with pride.

“For the most part these children, if they were lucky, were raised on a steady diet of chicken nuggets and French fries. And, if they weren't lucky, their food, what there was of it, was either a battle ground of scarcity, or a weapon of withholding and emotional abuse. For these kids who almost all are suffering from a sense of food insecurity and a very limited idea of what is good, tastes good, and is good for them, have to learn to trust that we

are going to feed them, and feed them well,” shared Beverly. “Every day we are scratch cooking for these children. We listen closely to what they say, and what they want and try to provide that for them while we are helping them learn to like new foods. I like the fact that the children at the Children's Home will never, ever have food withheld from them for any reason.”

Beverly went on to confide that all of her kitchen team members, including herself, are on the older side. They are kept pretty busy with meal prep and are sensitive to not interrupting any activity the children are engaged in, but they understand that she and her team fulfill roles that are close to grandmotherly. “When we get the chance, we love to show them positive

“When we get the chance, we love to show them positive attention.”

attention. We know that because they are here, they need more than just food and shelter.”

Even staff members from across the agency will gravitate to the comfort and solace of the Children's Home kitchen and Beverly's open trusting heart and listening ear. We celebrate Beverly Burns and 25 years of kitchen comfort, creativity, magic, and yes ... mercy.



“Let the Church always be a place of mercy and hope, where everyone is welcomed, loved, and forgiven.”
 – Pope Francis

Greetings Friends of St. Vincent Catholic Charities,

At this joyous time of year we have much to celebrate. It seems that our lives move into overdrive as we busily prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Yet in the midst of all the busy-ness of the season it is good to take moments for reflection and gratitude. We are so grateful for the enduring support that we receive from so many among you who understand and embrace our mission.



Inspired by the words of Pope Francis on the topic of mercy, on December 8th we stepped into our focused Jubilee Year of Mercy. With that in mind, this edition of our newsletter highlights some of the ways throughout the year that we offer you the opportunity to become actively involved in doing works of mercy for those in great need. This is our call for you to join us in providing vulnerable children the hope and promise for a brighter future; welcoming strangers to our community and giving them the very real opportunity of a life free from threat and oppression; and giving compassionate counsel to individuals and families seeking healing for their hearts and minds.

Whether you are actively involved in works of mercy or contribute your resources to help us in our daily commitment to works of mercy here at St. Vincent Catholic Charities, I am deeply grateful for your support.

May God bless you all!

Andrea E. Seyka
 Andrea E. Seyka
 Chief Executive Officer

2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathleen M. Braunlich, *Chair*
 Michael Maddox, *Vice Chair*
 Brian McVeigh, *Treasurer*
 Joseph D. Sambaer, *Secretary*

Joe Chahine
 John Coscarelli
 Patrick Dean
 Dr. Mitchell R. Dobrzelewski
 Deacon David Drayton
 Patricia Hepp
 James C. Kurt
 Jose A. Lopez
 Bruce Maguire, III
 Patricia Munshaw
 Kevin J. Neugent
 Michael Rhodes
 Robert F. Selig



COMMUNITY GENEROSITY IS BUILDING HOPE
Children's Home Pavilion & Construction

October 22 was a lovely fall day, with a beautiful reddish hue befalling the trees and a crisp autumn air. On this day over a year of planning and fundraising came to fruition. The Knights of Columbus Monsignor David M. Stotenbur Council #7237 visited the Children's Home to deliver the donation check from this past September's Children's Home Pavilion Golf Outing, raising the final funds needed to begin construction on the new pavilion.

Much like the old saying that it takes a village to raise a child (or a team of directors, therapists, nurses, youth advocates and more), it takes an entire community to make a large project like this come true.

“Since I’ve been here, the Children’s Home Pavilion has been one of my top priorities” said Director of Development Cindy Herfindahl. “To finally be able to have shovels in the ground and to provide a safe gathering place outside for our children warms my heart. We could not have been able to do this without the help from some very special people.”

The project began over a year ago with the assistance of Dr. Mitch Dobrzelewski, a current St. Vincent Catholic Charities Board Member and member of the Stotenbur Knight of Columbus, who saw the need for the Children's Pavilion, and was able to mobilize support with the local councils of the Knights of Columbus.

A special amount of gratitude also goes to Nancy Passanante, who without her, none of this would have come true. Out of the goodness of her heart, Nancy made a significant contribution to the project, propelling the project from a dream to a reality.

The 24' x 30' foot structure will contribute to the homelike environment that the staff at the Children's Home provide for all the children. The pavilion will be used throughout the year as a gathering area for children and staff, providing shade, an area to eat, and the ability to act and feel like a child. In addition to a concrete floor and vinyl siding, the pavilion will also feature electricity and a water fountain.

THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS PROJECT:

- Peter and Brandie Bertsch
- Dr. Mitchell R. Dobrzelewski & DeWitt Optometry P.C.
- Fundraiser Golf Outing – Jim Sigmon
- Jackson National Life
- Knights of Columbus – State Council
- Knights of Columbus Council 3281 – St. Johns Council
- Knights of Columbus Council 7237 – Msgr. David N. Stotenbur Council
- Knights of Columbus Council 7311 – St. Michael's Parish
- Knights of Columbus Council 10006 – St. Martha Council
- Knights of Columbus Council 11099 – Msgr. John A. Gabriels Council
- Nancy Passanante
- Eugene N. 'Gene' Russell, PCE, LRB
- St. Francis Assembly

MISSION

The mission of St. Vincent Catholic Charities is the work of the Catholic Church, to share the love of Christ by performing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

VISION

The vision of STVCC is with faith in God and love for all we aspire to create a healthier community.

VALUES

- STVCC's Core Values:
- Compassion
 - Service
 - Faith
 - Stewardship
 - Integrity

Jubilee Year of Mercy

JOIN US IN CORPORAL & SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

2016

DECEMBER 8, 2015 - NOVEMBER 20, 2016

HERE IS HOW THE IMMIGRATION LAW CLINIC PERFORMS ACTS OF MERCY:

Provides immigration information and legal advice to those who are separated from their family or who need to seek asylum in the United States.

MERCY EXAMPLES – God calls us to perform Acts of Mercy such as these:

- Counsel the doubtful
- Instruct the ignorant
- Comfort the afflicted

People who donate to subsidize our effort would be offering those works of mercy by giving to ILC.

For more ideas on Acts of Mercy, go to stvcc.org/ideas-acts-mercy

Make a resolution to offer comfort and solace to those in need.

Be a mentor.

january

february

Lent Begins

What acts of mercy will you perform?

The Promise of Spring

Renew your commitment to give of yourself.

march

april

Immigration Awareness Month

Spring Into Giving Collection Campaign

Help a family have a new start.

National Foster Care Month

may

Will you open your heart and home to a foster child? Can you support a family that does?

june

Immigrant Heritage Month

World Refugee Awareness Week

Join us to celebrate the gifts of cultural diversity that our refugees bring.

Independence Day

july

Support those who seek independence from pain, persecution and oppression.

august

Operation Backpack

Fill a backpack with school supplies for children & adults seeking a new, better life.

september

Jubilee of Volunteers

Guardian Society

Learn how you can earn a place in our Guardian Society at our Annual Breakfast

october

Fall is a time of reflection.

How have you positively touched lives this year?

november

National Adoption Month

We celebrate new "forever families" for deserving children.

Holiday Giving Campaign

Share your treasure and transform lives.

#GivingTuesday

december

“BE AN ANGEL” HOLIDAY GIVING CAMPAIGN



You may have already seen the commercial on FOX 47 or the Giving Trees at the local malls, as our annual “Be An Angel” Holiday Giving is in full-swing for yet another Holiday season.

During the drive, you can pickup “Be An Angel” tags at Holiday Giving Trees located at the Lansing Mall and Meridian Mall, or at participating store locations in the Eastwood Towne Center. Each gift tag contains information on a specific item to be purchased and donated, which will go to the clients of St. Vincent Catholic Charities.

Gifts can be dropped off at each participating mall, or at the Children’s Home through December 22. When dropping off your gifts, please remember the following:

- Gifts should be unwrapped
- Attach the Angel Gift Tag securely to the gift
- Please do not remove price tag sticker on the gifts (we do not need the receipt)

When you enter our property, please follow the driveway to the back of

the property, and follow the road around the Children’s Home, which is the building on your left (look for directional signs on the property). Drive to the far west end of the Children’s Home and look for the gymnasium double doors and ring the doorbell. Because it’s considered a loading zone, we hope that you understand that we must unload your vehicle as quickly as possible so we can accommodate others who may be behind you. Volunteers and staff will be available to receive donations through December 22. Other drop off times can be arranged upon request.

For more information on Holiday Giving and the drop-off schedule, please visit stvcc.org/holiday-giving or contact Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator Dr. Thomas Woods at (517) 323-4734 Ext. 1203 or at woodst@stvcc.org.

THE REASON FOR THE SEASON OF GIVING

As the holidays approach, we often turn to thoughts of family and gratitude.

It’s a time of year when we have a chance to take stock of our lives and our relationships, and reach out to help others in need. Interestingly, most giving to non-profits occurs in December with an even greater percentage of support occurring in the last few days of the year.

There are numerous worthy non-profit organizations in our community. The support of these organizations dovetails nicely with what Pope Francis has named the upcoming year as the Jubilee Year of Mercy. These merciful acts are the things that help those who are most

vulnerable – people who need food, clothing, shelter and comforting.

Have you thought about including St. Vincent Catholic Charities in your year-end giving plans? Your gifts will make a difference to the children who have experienced severe trauma and have been removed from their homes. It will make a difference to a refugee who is trying to make a new home here after fleeing persecution and harm. It will make a difference to the families who are going through a crisis – trying to learn how to care for their children or lose them. It will make a difference to a couple who adopts a child.

And ... so much more.

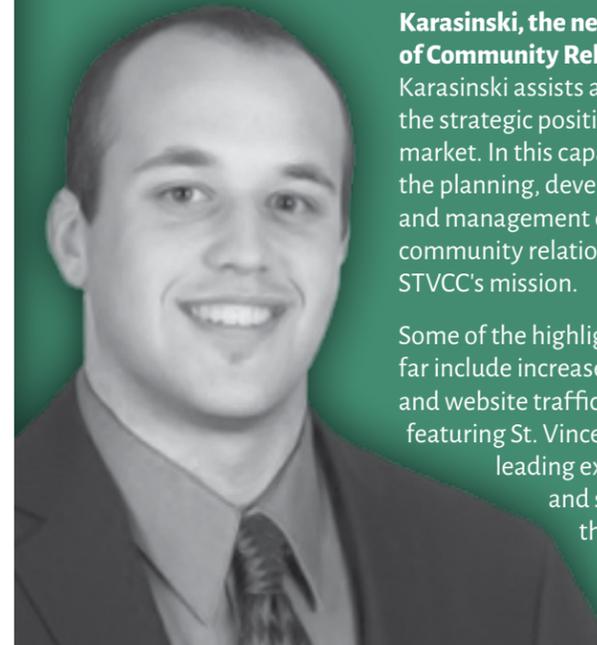
A gift of any amount is appreciated. Cash gifts can be made up to 12 midnight on December 31, 2015 by going to our website at stvcc.org.

Gifts of stock can be made as well by transferring assets to our account. Please call Cindy Herfindahl at (517) 323-4734 Ext. 1201 for details.

At STVCC, the holidays are a happy time of year to celebrate the generosity of our community. We are grateful for your support of children and families who come to us in their time of need. You help us help them.

Consider STVCC for your year-end support this year! And, thank you.

MEET OUR NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS & MARKETING



This past May we were happy to introduce a new member to our organization, John Karasinski, the new Associate Director of Community Relations & Marketing. Karasinski assists and supports the agency in the strategic positioning of STVCC in the local market. In this capacity, he is responsible for the planning, development, implementation and management of marketing, media and community relations’ strategies in support of STVCC’s mission.

Some of the highlights of Karasinski’s tenure so far include increases in social media followers and website traffic, public relations coverage featuring St. Vincent Catholic Charities as the leading expert in refugee resettlement, and successful events including the Operation Backpack collection campaign and the Guardian Society Breakfast.

Karasinski possesses over four years of professional marketing and community relations experience. He most recently served as the Senior Marketing Coordinator with Walsh College in Troy, MI, where he lead the digital marketing and social media efforts, oversaw a Marcom award-winning website redesign, and the implementation of academic tactical marketing plans.

Karasinski graduated from Michigan State University in 2011 with a Bachelors of Arts in Marketing with a Sales Communication Specialization. He also holds a Master of Business Administration degree with a Specialization in Marketing from Walsh College, which he completed this month. Karasinski is originally from Livonia, MI and currently resides in Okemos, MI.

REFUGEE PRE-PAYCHECK PERIOD ASSISTANCE

Every year, regardless of race, nationality, or religious beliefs, we welcome an average of 600 refugees from all over the world. Our clients are men, women and children who have often experienced tremendous trauma and loss. The resettlement process is inherently very stressful and we do everything we can to make sure they know that they are welcome, that they are cared for, and most importantly, we want people to know that they have a safe home to go to every night.

To that end, this year, STVCC has developed an initiative for any individual or group who wants to help refugees through their journey to self-sufficiency by helping a family with one month’s rent. The average rent for a family of 4 in Lansing is \$500 - \$600. Refugees often end up in a vulnerable housing situation once

they start working. This is because as soon as they start working, their benefits are immediately stopped and their first paycheck may not arrive for a few weeks or even a month. For many families, money is scarce during the time between starting a job and receiving their first paycheck; we call this their “pre-paycheck” period. Many struggle to pay rent and put food on the table during this time. Supporting a family with one month’s rent during the pre-paycheck period has a tremendous impact. We want our new arrivals to be encouraged to start working as soon as possible and not to worry that starting a job will put them in financial jeopardy or make them homeless.

Anyone interested in helping a new family pay their rent during their “pre-paycheck period” can send a check to STVCC Refugee Services and write “Refugee Housing Assistance” in the memo line. STVCC Refugee Services greatly appreciates your continued support for refugees and your heartfelt generosity.



A MESSAGE TO OUR FRIENDS

Online
www.STVCC.org
Convenient
Safe and Secure
SHARE



When you
LIKE our
Fan Page
and share

our posts, you help
us spread the good
news about **STVCC**.

WHY A JOURNEY OF HOPE?

Our Journey of Hope is a one hour gift of your time to St. Vincent Catholic Charities, and it may very well turn out to be a gift back to you.

Several things occur during a Journey of Hope... first we get your undivided attention to help you understand, in a very personal way, what our agency is all about.

Second, even those who think they know us may continue to confuse STVCC with St. Vincent DePaul – we clarify any misunderstanding or confusion on that front.

Third, if you were searching for meaning and an opportunity to give of yourself, after a Journey of Hope you will have so many ideas on how you can help.

And last, if you want to make a donation or a sustaining commitment to St. Vincent Catholic Charities, now or in the future, a Journey of Hope supplies you with real, personal, and poignant examples of our on-going acts of care and mercy.

Attending a Journey of Hope is the first step in what can be a very fulfilling journey. Won't you join us?

To join a Journey of Hope, please contact Rhonda Abood at (517) 323-4734 Ext. 1205 or at aboodr@stvcc.org



LIKE ALL OF OUR FAN PAGES ON FACEBOOK • facebook.com/St.VincentCatholicCharities

facebook.com/STVCCAdoptionandFosterCare • facebook.com/ImmigrationLawClinicSTVCC • facebook.com/STVCCRefugeeServices

OUR JUBILEE YEAR
OF MERCY



St. Vincent Catholic Charities
PROVIDING HELP. CREATING HOPE.
2800 W. Willow St. Lansing, MI 48917

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

