

NEW HEIGHTS



St. Vincent Catholic Charities
PROVIDING HELP. CREATING HOPE.



INSIDE

White House team recognizes STVCC's support of refugees

How YOU can get involved with STVCC's Refugee Services program

L to R: Chelsea Lafferty, Assistant Director of Refugee Services, Jack Markell, White House Coordinator for Operation Allies Welcome, Andrea Seyka, CEO and Judi Harris, Director of Refugee Services

stvcc.org • HOLIDAY 2021



What is Christmas?
It is the tenderness of
the past, courage for the
present, and **HOPE FOR
THE FUTURE.**

— Agnes M. Pahro

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.

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A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Dear friends,

It's hard to believe I am writing my Christmas message as we approach the end of 2021.

This holiday season is again unlike any other, to cap off a year unlike any other. Throughout this season, and as we move into a hopeful, promising year ahead, I wish you moments of peace and healing amid the difficulties, connections with family and friends (even if they can't be in person!) and the warmth of memories from holidays past. Especially this Christmas, I'm reminding myself to pause to remember the reason for our joy – and trusting in the hope which does not disappoint us. Around the holidays, we're again reminded of those who God most closely associated with, the most vulnerable, the least, the lost. I am grateful STVCC continues to serve our community with an abundance of joy to make the love of God known in our world.

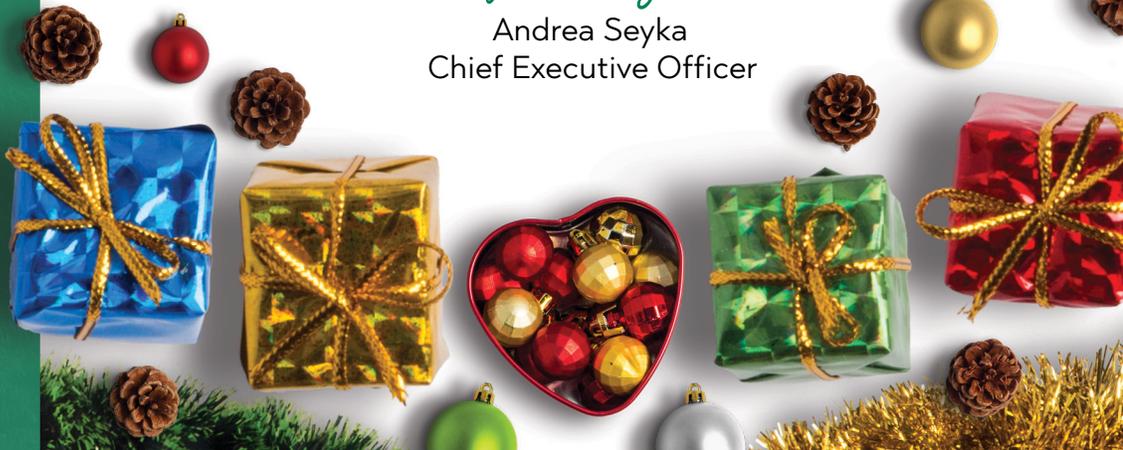
On behalf of everyone at STVCC, we are deeply thankful for your kindness and generosity. Through your support, time and donations, you have touched the hearts of many of our clients this Christmas. Thank you.

In this special time of reflection and celebration, please accept my prayers for a joyous and holy Christmas, and my best wishes for a safe, happy and healthy New Year. I look forward to 2022 – with hope – as we continue to serve our community.

Christmas Blessings,

Andrea E. Seyka

Andrea Seyka
Chief Executive Officer



LANSING IS LEADING THE WAY FOR THE NATION'S AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT PROCESS

FORMER GOVERNOR OF DELAWARE, JACK MARKELL, IS THE WHITE HOUSE COORDINATOR FOR OPERATION ALLIES WELCOME. MARKELL RECENTLY MET WITH STATE AND LOCAL LEADERS IN AN EFFORT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MICHIGAN'S BEST IN-STATE PRACTICES TO STEP FORWARD, SUPPORT AND WELCOME AFGHAN ALLIES AND OTHER IMMIGRANTS.



AS MID-MICHIGAN'S DESIGNATED REFUGEE resettlement agency, STVCC has now welcomed over 17,000 refugees from 54 different countries.

"I want to thank Judi and her team at St. Vincent Catholic Charities... they are doing an extraordinary job," said Markell during his press conference. "I came to Michigan, particularly Lansing, because of the reputation that they've already developed in terms of the innovation and the support that your city and your state are providing to the folks of Afghanistan."

As Afghan newcomers arrive, STVCC's Refugee Services team is considered the "one-stop shop" for refugee resettlement. "Our team prepares to welcome refugees by organizing and executing airport reception, case management, health screenings, orientation, benefits/school enrollment, employment – and much more. We do everything we can in order for our clients to be as self-sufficient and productive as possible," said Judi Harris, STVCC's Director of Refugee Services.

"Refugees and immigrants bring a tremendous wealth of culture and economic impact to our communities, and we stand ready to support them and help them survive and thrive here in Lansing," said Andy Schor, Lansing Mayor.

"We look forward to continuing our efforts and partnerships to create a vibrant ecosystem that supports refugee and community wellness in Michigan."

State Refugee Coordinators continue to coordinate and leverage state and local resources, working with local resettlement and other agencies throughout the state to ensure new arrivals are welcomed and well-positioned to attain self-sufficiency and integrate into their communities.

School districts across the state also serve as vital partners to ensure all students and their families have the academic and career readiness skills needed for success in their new home.

"We are focused on welcoming newcomers to Lansing, and how we can help them learn and grow and find a path that's right for them," said Benjamin Shuldiner, Lansing School District Superintendent. "We provide promising pathways for each and every student so they have the solid career and academic readiness skills that prepare them for success in their new community."

"What's interesting about the resettlement process, it's not an easy thing to do," said Markell. "What has to happen is Judi has to work with the local community and the school district to say 'how many kids can the school district accept?', 'is there housing available for families?'. It's highly involved, it's highly personal."

Markell continued: **"I am visiting a number of communities across the country where things are going particularly well so we can learn from those communities; it's very fitting that we visit Lansing and the state of Michigan because I think you are all doing so much we can share across the country. You should be proud of the work you're doing with refugees. Lansing is truly a model for the rest of the country, and I look forward to taking your story on the road so the entire country can learn from you."**



In-Kind Donations

We've updated our "most needed items" list and we're accepting gently-used or new donations!

Visit stvcc.org to be directed to our Amazon and Walmart registries to have items shipped directly to STVCC's campus.

Thank you for your holiday generosity!

PLEASE NOTE: Though we are accepting gently used furniture, we are currently NOT accepting clothing donations.





St. Vincent Catholic Charities

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2800 W. Willow St., Lansing, MI 48917

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

You have touched the hearts of STVCC's clients this Christmas season WE THANK YOU!



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to learn how you can get involved:

 @St.VincentCatholicCharities

 st.vincentcc

stvcc.org • (517) 323-4734

VOLUNTEER WITH ST. VINCENT CATHOLIC CHARITIES

We're looking for volunteers to assist our Refugee Services Program! Here's how you can get involved.

Become a family mentor: connect with a new Refugee family arrival and determine the new family's needs (examples below)

Connect with community resources and recreational activities

Shop for various needs

Tutor school-age kids

Assist parents learn English

Visit and answer questions

Deliver food to a Refugee family:

deliver hot meals from restaurants and community kitchens for clients in transitional housing; deliver food pantry boxes to families in permanent housing

Assist with housing set-up

Other occasional special requests

Assist with transportation

Deliver holiday gifts or other special deliveries

Please note: while coordinating all activities with case managers, volunteers should be comfortable with limited supervision and very sparse interpretation support.

FILL OUT OUR VOLUNTEER APPLICATION AT stvcc.org/get-involved/volunteer TODAY!