



# LOVE IN ACTION

A publication from  
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Phoenix

FALL 2023 | ISSUE 2



## Give help, get the credit

**HOW IT WORKS:** The state of Arizona provides an incredible incentive for taxpayers who donate to certain qualifying charities like St. Vincent de Paul. You can make monetary gifts throughout the year (up to \$841 for joint filers and \$421 for single filers) and get it right back on your Arizona tax return. You can even set up a monthly gift option to spread out the gifts over the year!

The Arizona Charitable Tax Credit is different from a deduction. A deduction reduces the amount of your income upon which the tax is determined. A credit reduces your tax liability as if you had already paid the tax.

**YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION:** With your support St. Vincent de Paul is helping seniors, families, and children in need in our community with food, housing, affordable healthcare, and much more. Last year SVdP served over 3 million hot meals, provided \$7 million in rent and utility assistance, and saw patients for more than 45,000 medical, dental, and wellness visits.

**For more information or to make your tax credit gift:**

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## One deposit away from homelessness:

**INSIDE:** How a helping hand opened the door to  
a forever home. **PAGE 4**

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## Message from the CEO

Shannon M. Clancy

### CAN YOU IMAGINE NOT KNOWING WHERE YOUR NEXT MEAL WILL COME FROM?

More and more people in Phoenix are facing this kind of hunger on a daily basis. But, thanks to your generosity, they can find help.

Because of you, St. Vincent de Paul provides these neighbors with food boxes and hot meals in kitchens throughout the Valley—including our Family Dining Room in Phoenix. As the cost of living continues to rise, our neighbors' need for help is growing.

Thankfully, your generous support has made it possible to increase the number of hot meals we serve from 4,600 per day to 7,000 per day!

This increased capacity is so important because our dining rooms are a major source of nourishment for people experiencing homelessness. They also allow sheltered families to stretch their budgets to help with housing stability.

In this newsletter, you'll find stories of neighbors whose lives you have changed.

Of course, as you know, St. Vincent de Paul's dining rooms and food box program provide more than just meals. Families gain access to additional supportive programs and referrals to community resources. Most important of all, they gain a network of staff and volunteers who care about them.

Your support of St. Vincent de Paul gives our neighbors full stomachs, full hearts, and a fresh start at life. Thank you for lending them a helping hand when they need it most.

Best,

*Shannon M. Clancy*

# 7,000

The number of hot meals we serve per day



## Feeding the hungry

# 3.25 Million

MEALS SERVED TO THOSE IN NEED LAST YEAR

# 6.2 Million

POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED THROUGH OUR FOOD BANKS LAST YEAR

## Meet one of the volunteers helping SVdP get more meals to shelters across the Valley

**DONNA WILLIAMS** is a U.S. Navy veteran and self-proclaimed “little girl from the Bronx”—the New York burrow and neighborhood that taught her about survival and the power of community.

Growing up in that environment forever shaped her to have a heart for giving back and supporting her neighbors, especially those in need. That's why, when St. Vincent de Paul put the urgent call out for volunteers, Donna didn't hesitate to come serve.

As local government opened more shelters in response to the Valley's homelessness crisis, SVdP stepped up to support those shelters, upping the nonprofit's production from 4,500 to more than 7,000 meals daily.

Such a lift is only possible with volunteer support like Donna's, who helps plate up shelter meals for two hours three days a week in SVdP's kitchen.

“It's busy and inspiring,” Donna said. “There's a lot of teamwork here. We're working harder knowing that there is more need out there.”

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## Andrea Allison and her daughter were one deposit away from homelessness.

Now the single mom works in real estate with dreams of helping other single parents on their path to home ownership

**ANDREA ALLISON WILL NEVER FORGET THE DAY HER PHONE RANG IN 2019**, and Vincentian volunteer Mary Ann Kneip was on the line with good news. St. Vincent de Paul would be able to cover Andrea's move-in deposit, rent and help with some furniture.

"It was huge," Andrea says. "I mean, you do feel like you have no other options so many times in life . . . felt relieving, like I could finally breathe for a moment."

Mary Ann and her husband, Pete, serve out of one of SVdP's more than 80 community pantry and assistance

# \$3,200

The average amount to keep someone housed



centers located in Catholic churches across central and northern Arizona. Specifically, the Kneips are Vincentian volunteers at St. Gregory's Catholic Church, which offers bill and food assistance to the surrounding neighborhood where Andrea had just put in a rental application for an apartment.

Andrea had been working two or three jobs most of her life to support herself and her daughter, Amiyah, who was eight at the time.

It was tough to afford a place on her own, so she rented a room for herself and Amiyah in a house. But Andrea sought a better family environment away from her roommates' alcohol use — one where she and her daughter could thrive and be the best versions of themselves.

"I think as a parent, your children give you reasons for moving on and being strong," Andrea says.

She just needed a little help from SVdP with the upfront cost of getting into her own apartment. What she didn't expect was the support and relationship that extended well beyond SVdP cutting a check.

"You want to go farther than whatever your guidelines say," says Mary Ann, who shares that she often gets close with the families she helps serve. "You feel like their advocate, and you want to find a way for this to, at least, for right now, be fixed."

The Kneips later visited with a food box to help welcome Andrea and Amiyah into their new home.

"You expect to just get this food box and like everybody kind of moves on from that," Andrea says, "but Mary Ann was really quick to follow up with me and bring me another food box after that. And then she would text me, 'Hey, I'm thinking about you. How are you?'"

Four years later, Andrea and Mary Ann still keep in touch, but not because Andrea needs assistance.

After a move to Prescott, Arizona, and landing a solid gig in real estate, Andrea has a cozy apartment where she and Amiyah, now 13, and her grandmother live together. Andrea's saving up to buy her own home, and with her real estate knowledge, plans to purchase other properties to help single mothers in need of stable and affordable housing.

It's her dream of paying forward the kindness that Mary Ann and Pete showed her all those years ago.

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## The blessing of a food box

**SANDRA AND HER DAUGHTER, KATHERINE,** came to Arizona from the East Coast in search of long-lost family. Unfortunately, their family didn't wish to reconnect, and Sandra and Katherine found themselves with no support system and unable to work full-time because of physical disabilities.

Since then, they have scraped by on Sandra's Social Security Disability check. Katherine works part time cleaning to help support her two children that also live with them.

It is St. Vincent de Paul's food boxes delivered by Vincentian volunteers that help their family make it through each month. Operating out of

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the local Catholic parish, SVdP's neighborhood food pantry provides them with essentials like milk, eggs, meat, and lots of canned goods—helping to offset grocery bills so that the family can put finances toward rent and utilities.

"St. Vincent de Paul has been really a blessing to us. Because of our fixed income, getting toward the end of the month, you start getting low on food," Sandra said. "It helps out especially with feeding the grandkids."

## Dining room connects Diriki to rehousing services

**DIRIKI LEWIS HAD A STRING OF HARD LUCK**, so he moved to Arizona looking to find education, but instead found himself in the midst of a housing shortage. He spent five years on and off the street where he frequented the St. Vincent de Paul Mesa Dining Room to get a hot meal and see friendly faces.

Little did he expect that the dining room would be the answer to his housing. The supervisor there, Christel, was able to work with Diriki and find him a place just off Mesa's Main Street.

Thanks to funding in support of SVdP's Housing 2025 goal to permanently rehouse 2,025 people experiencing homelessness, SVdP was able to pay for Diriki's first month of rent, as well as furnish his new apartment, so he could focus on building stability and saving up for the future.

Now, he has a safe place to call his own mere blocks from where he was sleeping on the street. He takes the Valley Metro Rail to work at Arizona State University every day as a janitor, and he hopes to start his own business soon.



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# 375,000

the number of Arizonans who can't afford to pay more than \$625 a month for rent and utilities