



2210 Gladstone Dr.
Pittsburg, CA 94565

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pittsburg, CA
Permit No. 307



St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County 2025 Winter Newsletter



St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County | 2210 Gladstone Drive | Pittsburg, CA 94565
Phone (925) 439-5060 | Email info@svdp-cc.org | Online at www.svdp-cc.org

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Federal Tax ID 94-1448577

Spreading Hope: The Power of Your Support

This past holiday season, your generosity brought hope to over 20,000 families in need across Contra Costa County. With your support, St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County Vincentian volunteers gave food, gifts, rental aid, and the warmth of knowing people care. You showed families they're not alone.

"The people here are amazing and so kind. We're so thankful," Auri shared. "This means a lot. It gives my daughter something to look forward to." He came to SVdP's St. Joseph Church Conference (branch) in Pinole. He wanted a special holiday for his daughter but didn't know how. Thanks to you, Auri, and 70 families received gifts and clothing. Deacon Ben Agustin donated \$50 food gift cards.



Auri & his daughter received food, clothing, and gifts thanks to you

In Antioch, Vincentian volunteers at Most Holy Rosary SVdP Conference spread Christmas cheer to 100 families, providing groceries, clothing, and gifts with the Gabriel Project. Josette, who is caring for her ailing parents, calls this support a true blessing. At my conference at St. John Vianney Church in Walnut Creek, our Angel Tree program gifted 77 families, including 140 children, with books, food cards, and gifts.

Your support kept families warm, fed, and housed this winter while bringing them holiday joy. Our Vincentian work helps us see Christ in those we serve, and in that special connection, they see Christ in us.

Thank you for making this possible,

Claudia L. Ramirez, Executive Director

Keep Our Community Beautiful — Donate, Don't Dump

Every second, 2,150 pieces of clothing are thrown into U.S. landfills. Every year, over 9 million tons of furniture is thrown into landfills, much of it still usable. That's mountains of waste polluting our air, water, and land —waste that never had to exist.

But you can change that.

When you donate to St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County thrift stores, you keep items out of landfills and in circulation. Your gently used clothes, furniture, and household goods become treasures for someone else instead of trash for the planet.

And it doesn't stop there. Every purchase at our thrift stores funds programs that feed families, prevent homelessness, provide free medical care, and so much more—all while reducing the pollution ruining our environment.

Thrift shopping is one of the most impactful ways to protect the environment, cutting your carbon footprint by 82% compared to buying new.

Got furniture to give? SVdP offers a free limited pick-up service. Visit svdp-cc.org to find out how to schedule a pick-up. Drop-off locations in Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, and Brentwood make donating easy.

Got a vehicle you no longer need? If it's still running, SVdP can match it with a family in need, giving them a reliable way to get to work and school. If it's not working, we'll auction it, using the proceeds for programs that feed, clothe, shelter, and heal our community. Donating is easy, tax-deductible, and life-changing for those we serve.

Before you toss your belongings, ask yourself: could this help someone? Whether you're cleaning out your closet or upgrading your home, your donations make a difference—helping families, reducing waste, and building a more caring community.

SVdP Thrift Store locations:
2210 Gladstone Dr, Pittsburg
8890 Brentwood Blvd., Brentwood
2815 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill
www.svdp-cc.org

Why My Husband & I Choose to Give Monthly to SVdP

My husband, Kevin, and I have always believed in the power of people helping one another, especially in times of need. That’s why we are proud monthly donors to St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County.

Every day, SVdP volunteers meet people at some of the hardest moments of their lives—parents struggling to keep a roof over their children’s heads, individuals trying to rebuild after a crisis, neighbors who just need a little support to get back on their feet. They don’t just offer assistance; they offer kindness, dignity, and hope.

I’ve seen firsthand how SVdP’s help changes lives. By giving monthly, I’m ensuring SVdP’s volunteers have the resources they need to continue their life-changing work.

Supporting SVdP is also a way to live out my faith. There’s something beautiful about people coming together to lift up their neighbors, and at SVdP, this spirit of compassion shines through every act of service. Since SVdP’s work is accomplished through the dedication of volunteers – you’re giving to a nonprofit that ensures your gift is used to it’s fullest potential to help others!

Monthly giving just makes sense. It provides reliable, steady funding so SVdP can plan ahead and respond quickly when families are in crisis. It’s an easy way to make a lasting difference—one that adds up to real change over time.

If you’re looking for a simple way to help, I invite you to join us. A little each month, can mean everything to someone in need. And receive a welcome gift for joining the monthly giving club. Learn more at svdp-cc.org. **SVdP makes me so proud to be a part of Contra Costa County - a community that truly loves and cares for people in need.**



Barbara Hunt

SVdP Launches Micro Loan Program to Fight Predatory Lending



We’re excited to announce the launch of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County’s Micro Loan Program! This initiative provides low-interest loans of \$500 to \$2,000 for individuals with stable income but no financial cushion for unexpected expenses like medical bills, security deposits, or car repairs. The program also helps convert predatory payday loans — which can charge up to 600% interest — saving borrowers thousands of dollars.

“This program is a chance for systemic change,” said SVdP Board Member Ron Costanzo. “It isn’t just charity, but a real opportunity for people to build better lives.”

The SVdP Microloan Program will help families find stability. Payday loans trap families in cycles of debt, with 80% of borrowers forced to reborrow within 31 days. SVdP’s Micro Loan Program offers a compassionate alternative. Borrowers will take part in a home visit with trained Vincentian volunteers, who will assess their needs and provide financial literacy education to help them manage their finances and avoid future debt traps.

“Some people spend years going from payday loan to payday loan just trying to cover the interest,” said SVdP Vincentian Services Manager Stephen Krank. “For those on a fixed income, a single emergency can be devastating. But with a program like this, they can get real help, build credit, and turn their lives around.”

A similar SVdP program in North Texas has already converted 568 payday loans and issued 96 emergency loans, helping families avoid over \$2 million in interest and fees. Now, Contra Costa families will have the same opportunity to escape predatory lending, regain stability, and build a stronger financial future—all thanks to your support.

Not Alone: How SVdP Helped Ashley Get Back on Her Feet

For over two years, Ashley, a former event planner, struggled to rebuild her life after a mental health crisis left her hospitalized and unable to work. The stress forced her onto disability, drained her savings, and left her in debt. She turned to St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County—and found the support she needed to stay housed and regain stability.

“Thank God I found SVdP,” Ashley said. “They helped me through a really dark time and made me feel like I wasn’t alone.”

Ashley remembered from her church how SVdP volunteers help people in need. With nowhere else to turn, she reached out and was connected with Barb, a SVdP Vincentian volunteer from our conference (branch) at St. Mary in Walnut Creek, who listened to her story with compassion.

“It was amazing just to sit with someone who truly cared,” Ashley said. “She didn’t judge me—she just listened.” SVdP volunteers visited Ashley at home to understand her financial situation and help her find a way forward. They provided rental assistance and guidance on budgeting, giving her the boost she needed to regain control of her life.

Today, Ashley is back at work as a restaurant hostess and feeling happier and more in control. “I’m really thankful for the volunteers at SVdP,” she said. “They prayed with me and helped me believe my life could move forward again.”

Thanks to more than 700 dedicated SVdP Vincentian volunteers, people like Ashley don’t have to face hardship alone.



SVdP Vincentians form deep connections & lifelong friendships with those they serve.

Free Medical Clinic Helped Sergio Get Back to Work & Live Pain Free

Sergio takes pride in his work as a mechanic, but when severe headaches began disrupting his life, he felt lost. Having no health insurance, and in debilitating pain, Sergio wasn’t sure where to go or what to do. He said the bill from a local hospital scared him, because he couldn’t afford to pay and afford food and rent.

“I started getting really bad headaches,” Sergio said. “It started making me take time off of work. If I don’t work, I don’t get paid, and rent and food are just so expensive – I was scared.”

Without insurance through his job, Sergio couldn’t afford a doctor or an emergency room visit. As his symptoms worsened, fear took hold.

“My headaches got really, really bad. I was in a lot of pain for days,” Sergio said. Just when he needed it most, a lifeline came through for Sergio. His aunt, who knew about St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County, knew that SVdP operated a free medical clinic for the uninsured.

“My aunt told me to go to SVdP and get help,” Sergio said. “The doctors diagnosed me with high blood pressure. They got me medicine and showed me how to fix my diet, and told me what could happen if I didn’t. They saved my life!”

Sergio said he was thankful that the doctors and nurses at RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul were so kind. “The doctors and nurses were so nice,” Sergio said. “They really took care of me.”

With his health back on track, Sergio is back at work, grateful for the care and support he received. For neighbors like Sergio, SVdP a lifeline of hope, healing, and a fresh start.



Sergio is feeling great and back working - thanks to you!