



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
of Contra Costa County

2210 Gladstone Dr.
Pittsburg, CA 94565

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



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
of Contra Costa County

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County

2026 Summer Newsletter



Simonette and her daughter smile as they meet at St. Agnes with Vincentians Jack and Anne.

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

To Find Safety, She Had to Choose Homelessness

Xavianna had to make a sacrifice most people cannot imagine: she had to choose to be homeless to find safety. To transfer her Section 8 housing voucher to Contra Costa County, she had to navigate a complex process that required her to be unhoused in her previous county before she could be approved in a new one.

"I had to make myself homeless to get approval to move counties," Xavianna explained. "And that is on top of not being able to find a place to actually live until you're approved."

During a rough winter, Xavianna became homeless. She said, "It was raining, and the winter was so cold this year. I was just sick constantly. I had no where to cook, so I was just eating garbage all the time and couldn't save anything. I had to use what money I had for a gym membership just so I could take a shower."

When Xavianna was finally approved to move her Section 8 between counties, she ran into one more hurdle. While her assistance covers rent, it does not cover the security deposit. She needed \$2,400 or she would lose the apartment.

That is when she connected with St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County (SVdP). Volunteer Vincentians met her at a local church to offer the compassion and help Xavianna needed. "They were just so sweet and you could tell they really cared," Xavianna recalls. "Meeting with them made me feel so much safer."

SVdP was able to help her with the security deposit and even provided food from the SVdP Emergency Food Pantry to help Xavianna get back on her feet while she found work. Today, Xavianna is a full-time caretaker for heart surgery patients. "I'm just so thankful," she says. "When I was at my lowest and needed help most, SVdP was there for me."



To qualify to move to a safer county, Xavianna had to make herself homeless.

From the Brink to a Brighter Future: Simonette's Story

Simonette's life changed in an instant when her husband, a local mover, suffered a traumatic brain injury in a severe accident. With her husband requiring constant care and an infant daughter to raise, the family's financial stability vanished. Simonette, who had spent years helping others on crisis hotlines, was now living a crisis of her own.

For months, she called every agency she could find. She said she only reached answering machines. While she waited for help that never seemed to come, the bills piled up until the family received an eviction notice. Simonette and her husband were facing being out on the street with their baby.

"I was so scared," Simonette said. "I called so many charities and applied for help, but it was frustrating. I just got machines, and no one was calling me back."

Everything changed when she connected with St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County (SVdP). For the first time in months, Simonette found a real person

was on the phone. Shortly after calling, volunteers Anne and Jack visited Simonette's family, offering support and genuine kindness.

"It was so nice just to talk to a human," Simonette said. "Anne and Jack were so caring. They helped me understand all my paperwork and what we had to do. They were so nice and great with my daughter. They really helped us feel like things would be ok."

Helping with rental assistance, SVdP kept Simonette's family housed. From there, they received childcare and employment resources needed to help get them back on their feet. Today, they are thriving. Simonette's husband is working, their daughter is in preschool, and Simonette is starting a new internship.

"I cannot express how grateful I am," Simonette said. "It was so scary to think we would be homeless, but we're doing so much better today." Your generosity provides the bridge families like Simonette's need to reach a brighter future.

Serving Others with Willing Hands, Open Hearts

We find our days full, not just because we are busy, but because the need in our county is great. Each phone call, neighbor visit, and plea for help is a reminder that our neighbors are counting on us for meaningful support. Families are seeking help, resources are stretched and our compassionate presence matters more than ever. Amid this demand, our mission remains clear and we, as Vincentians, are reminded that we are answering a calling, not just volunteering our time. We are here to serve our neighbors with dignity, compassion and faith, trusting that God is at work through our willing hands and open hearts.

Although this high demand for help can create a sense of urgency and fret, it should never overshadow the reason that we do this work with love, and the belief that every act of caring for our neighbors reflects something larger than ourselves. So rather than saying that we are busy, it may be truer to say that we are fully-engaged in the work before us. We are responding to what this moment requires, using every challenge as an opportunity to extend hope, offer help, and be present for our neighbors when they need it most.

Enjoy the stories that showcase how our help changes lives. Your support keeps us grounded in our mission and helps us do what we do.

Thank you!

Claudia

SVdP Microloan Program Helps Families in Need!

The SVdP Microloan Program is available to help people and families in need convert predatory payday loans or high-interest credit cards, and helps with emergencies
Email microloan@svdp-cc.org for more information today!



SVdP Executive Director
Claudia Ramirez

Kaiser Permanente Helps Feed, Clothe, Shelter, and Heal Families in Need



KP teams helped feed, clothe, shelter, and heal their neighbors!

The KP teams packed food bags, healthy snack sacks, and hygiene kits for people living on the street. They also sorted clothing donations and built medical kits for clinic patients with high blood pressure and diabetes. Outside, they spread fresh bark to make the building look beautiful and welcoming.

KP is a major partner with SVdP. This teamwork is a vital part of how we are able to feed, clothe, shelter, and heal local families who are going through tough times. KP also provides financial support to the RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul, ensuring those without insurance have access to quality medical care. The volunteer experience made a big impact on the KP volunteers too. One KP team member shared, "This experience opened my eyes to all the amazing services SVdP offers. After volunteering, it makes me appreciate how much my family has."

We want to say a huge thank you to KP and their incredible staff. Thank you for stepping outside of your regular jobs to bring your compassionate hearts directly to our neighbors in need. By teaming up with SVdP, Kaiser Permanente volunteers showed what it truly means to care for the community.

In January and May, the St. Vincent de Paul Family Resource Center hosted two volunteer days with our amazing partners at Kaiser Permanente (KP). Large groups of volunteers came to help feed, clothe, shelter, and heal their neighbors in need. They were great days full of charity and friendship.

Together, these hard-working teams brought a huge amount of energy, kindness, and a true spirit of giving to our community. SVdP and our neighbors in need cannot express how thankful we are!

Driven by Generosity: Car Donation Helps Mother in Need

Since 2021, Fawn and her son were trapped in a cycle that felt nearly impossible to break. Hoping to secure their independence, Fawn invested in an \$18,000 vehicle, only for the engine to fail shortly after purchase. That left her with a crushing reality: a monthly payment for a car that sat useless in the driveway.

Fawn and her son live with disabilities, making reliable transportation a necessity. With no car, they were forced to make grueling walks to school, work, and the grocery store. Without reliable public transport nearby, they paid \$150 weekly on rideshare apps to get doctor appointments.

"It's been a struggle to get to and from work and school. Getting groceries has just been so hard," Fawn said. "Spending so much on Ubers made saving impossible. And it's impossible to depend on the bus when you really need it."

The turning point for Fawn and her son came recently. Thanks to a generous vehicle donation, St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County (SVdP) was able to match Fawn with a fully functioning car. SVdP carefully evaluates every donated vehicle to ensure its safety, and seeing Fawn drive away was a profound milestone for everyone involved.

"I'm overwhelmed with relief. My son and I are disabled. We feel so blessed for this car," Fawn said. "We won't struggle getting through the day. I can breathe again. I'm grateful to whoever gave this car to SVdP and a neighbor in need."

Fawn's story is a powerful reminder of how a single act of generosity can alter a neighbor's life. For those looking to retire a vehicle, a donation to SVdP does more than clear a driveway, it can be life-changing for a local family in need.

"I Want to Live to See My Grandchildren" - Iuminado's Journey to Healthy Living

Iuminado moved to the United States with a simple goal. He wanted to earn money to support his children back home in the Philippines, including his youngest daughter who recently started medical school. As a diabetic without insurance, however, his health was a constant source of anxiety.

"I tell my kids I want to see them every day, so we FaceTime," Iuminado said. "I've been scared because of my diabetes. I am blessed and fourtunate I found out about St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County (SVdP). They changed my life."

Without professional guidance or insurance, Iuminado tried to manage his condition alone. He didn't realize his diet was causing his blood sugar to spike dangerously until he became dizzy while driving for work. Fortunately, a friend told him about the RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul, and Iuminado made an appointment.



Iluuminado is seen by Nurse Debbie. Iluuminado learned to control his diabetes and received a new set of dentures thanks to the RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul and the Dentists on Wheels Pittsburg Free Dental Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul.

"I was eating rice 3 times a day," Iuminado said. "I had no idea that was raising my blood sugar! I could have died!"

At the clinic, volunteer doctors provided the medications he needed at no cost. Iluuminado took healthy cooking classes to learn how to properly manage his blood sugar. The nurses even connected him with the Dentists on Wheels Pittsburg Free Dental Clinic at SVdP, where he received a free set of dentures.

"All of the nurses and doctors are so nice," he said. "I want to live to be 100 and see my grandkids, and with their help I will."

Today, Iluuminado is thriving. Thanks to the dedicated work of the volunteer medical professionals and the support of our donors, Iluuminado is confident he will be okay.



Fawn and her son smile as they receive the keys to their new car from SVdP Transportation Manager Bonnie Casey.