



Grace Notes

HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED



Rita (Volunteer) and St. Vincent de Paul's charitable pharmacy work together on both sides of the counter in a unique, heart-warming situation.

Blessing in Disguise

Rita's blessed to be on both sides of pharmacy counter

Ngozi (pronounced ing-o-zee) is Rita's African birth name in Igbo (from Nigeria). In English it means "blessing".

Blessings come to us when we least expect it. That is the story of Rita and St. Vincent de Paul's charitable pharmacy.

"I have been coming here over a year to pick up my mom's medication, and one day I asked about volunteering," recalled Rita. "I didn't know if I could, since my mom was a patient here."

Rita, who is currently a nursing assistant at Brookdale Senior Living in Madison, was always curious, but gained interest in the pharmacy through her visits. She was anxious to volunteer after words of encouragement from both Managing Pharmacist Yolanda Tolson-Eveans, RPh, and Pharmacy Technician Cheryl Dull.

"Yolanda and Cheryl said 'of course!' and I was ready to start," continued Rita. With a supportive husband, four children and her mother at home, Rita now volunteers twice a week.

"I came here to get help for my mom, and now I am the one helping. It is a surreal feeling to be on both sides of the counter at the same time."

Rita's mom, who emigrated from Nigeria four years ago, has diabetes and helps take care of Rita's four children, ranging in age from four to 15. The insulin required to treat her diabetes can cost up to \$450 per month depending on need and dosage.

"My mom and family are grateful for the assistance. If not for St. Vincent de Paul, it would fall on me to pay for my mother's insulin, which is expensive, and we could not afford it while raising four children."

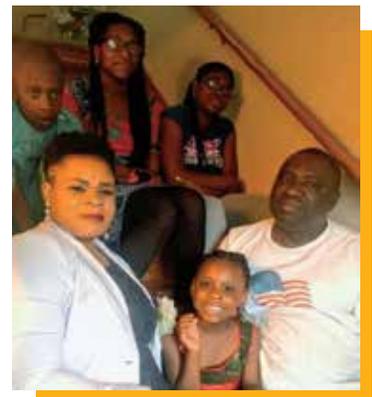
"I feel so happy and I'm helping people that need it, like my mom," Rita said. "Everyone here is grateful for the opportunity to assist others in need, and it is a blessing to get to know everyone in the pharmacy."

"This is a unique situation, and we're more than glad to have Rita," said Cheryl with a big smile. "Not only is she is amazing and a joy to work with, but she catches on quickly and is very efficient. I'm glad she was determined to volunteer with us!"

Ngozi has indeed been a blessing.



Rita and her mom



Rita and her family

"When I told my kids I would be volunteering at the place that helps grandma, they said 'oh, that's cool!' They love it and so does my mom."

From Latvia with Love: Gundega's past fuels today's generosity

"My mother couldn't understand garage sales. If you no longer need or want something, give it to someone who does," remembered Gundega Korsts.

She and her husband, Jim, embody this idea as Sustaining Samaritans (monthly givers) and legacy donors who have named St. Vincent de Paul Madison in their will. Gundega has a unique connection to St. Vincent de Paul and appreciates what we do for the community.



Gundega and her husband, Jim

"My family and I were World War II refugees from Latvia who emigrated to the United States in 1950, after five years in a refugee camp," Gundega reflected. "We didn't have a lot, but we had each other! We were introduced to the organization through a Boston-based St. Vincent de Paul thrift store. We purchased everything except furniture, including many good books, and hauled it home on the streetcar."

Despite dealing with difficult times and with most of their money directed toward food and rent, St. Vincent de Paul's thrift store offered Gundega's family an opportunity to make a new home and establish some normalcy in their lives.

"My mother used to laugh at me for treasuring such ordinary china and aluminum from St. Vinny's. It's not the dish or the pot, I said, but the love and memories I experienced at our table," Gundega remembered.

Many years later and full of memories from past treasures found at St. Vinny's thrift stores, Gundega has turned her attention to being a part of St. Vincent de Paul's mission of helping neighbors in need.

"I love it that the stores raise money along the way for more direct aid where it is most needed and to whom it's most needed."

On being Sustaining Samaritans

"We used to give money at the end of the year, but we switched to monthly contributions in order to be part of a predictable income stream. That's much better for budgeting, on both sides. By spreading it out over the year, we can easily give more than when we tried to find it all in December."

On why St. Vincent de Paul is in their will

"We expect to keep giving monthly as long as we live, but that will end some day, so we've included St. Vincent de Paul in our will. We'll be gone, but St. Vincent de Paul's love and work keep going. Yes, we've provided for our children and grandchildren, but the people who find their way to St. Vincent de Paul are also our family.

"Something more from us at the end just feels right."

Want to become a Sustaining Samaritan? Mark the remittance envelope included in this newsletter or contact Nancy Hansis, Development Director.

Is St. Vincent de Paul already in your will, trust or other estate plans? Thank you! Please let us know about your plans because it helps us plan for the future.

Don't have a will? You're not alone! Consider including a bequest to us in your estate plans.

**Call or email Nancy Hansis for details:
608-442-7200 x405 or nhansis@svdpmadison.org
Tax ID: 39-0824876**

Immunization station! Good health for all at SVdP

St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy free flu shot clinics benefit clients, students



Everyone should have the opportunity for good health here at the pharmacy.

“St. Vincent de Paul holds free flu shot clinics for the general health of uninsured people and as another free service to the patients and shoppers in the food pantry. We also give flu shots to the men at Port St. Vincent de Paul.”

- Yolanda Tolson-Eveans, RPh,
Managing Pharmacist

“We get to practice immunizing and get the unique experience of educating people on good health and healthy habits.”

- Ethan, UW-Madison Pharmacy student

“Serving the community I grew up in is very fulfilling for me. The patients are always grateful and this is yet another way that we can help our community.” - Theresa, RPh, volunteer pharmacist

“I like how I can come here, get food from the pantry, and then get a quick flu shot. It’s easy and everyone is really nice and friendly.” - Kerry, food pantry shopper and flu shot patient

St. Vincent de Paul Free Flu Shot Clinics

- Held on 12 dates from September 12 to December 12 at our charitable pharmacy
- Remaining dates include:
October 19, 24, 31
November 14, 23, 26
December 5, 7, 12
- Each clinic staffed by one licensed pharmacist and three to four UW pharmacy students

130

Up to 130 neighbors in need will be immunized at a total cost of about \$3,000



Won't you be my neighbor? Pharmacy brings SVdP, Urban League together

Radhika has always wanted to be a pharmacy technician.

Since moving to the United States in 2012 from her native Nepal with her husband and two young children, she has set her sights on pursuing her goal thanks to the cooperative efforts of the Urban League of Greater Madison and St. Vincent de Paul.

“I moved to Madison last December, but struggled to land pharmacy technician jobs because of my lack of experience,” said Radhika. “That’s when I reached out to the Urban League for help.”

The Urban League, just a 5-minute

drive from St. Vincent de Paul’s service center, enrolled her in its first-ever Intro to Pharmacy Technician program. “St. Vincent de Paul is the only partnership we have for internships,” emphasized Urban League Employment Specialist Laura Hiebing. “There is a need for pharmacy technician positions around the community and SVdP’s pharmacy internship is a perfect fit.”

“We were excited to learn about the pharmacy and the help they provide to the community. This program also gives both of us a chance to find out other ways we can work together, especially as neighbors!” Laura added.



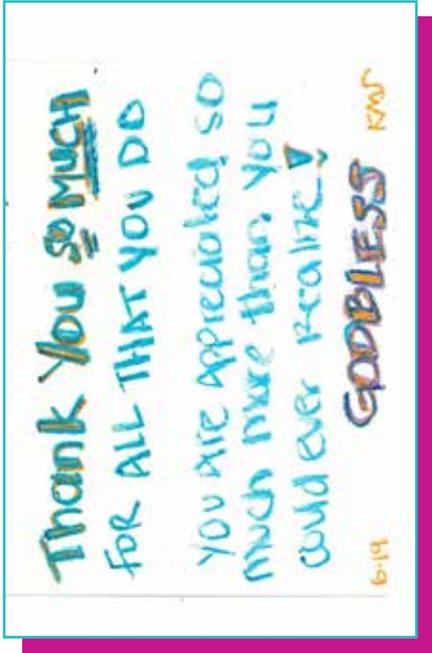
Radhika learns from Pharmacy Technician Cheryl

“My experience here has been very good. It is so comfortable here and feels like home. This is different than regular pharmacy, and I can say it feels good in my heart to help people.” - Radhika



District Council of Madison, Inc.
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
PO BOX 259686 • Madison, WI 53725-9686

Address Service Requested



Generous gifts = grateful hearts



**St. Vinny's...
More than
a store!**



DID YOU KNOW?!

Your goods donations play a big role in our voucher program! We give away nearly **\$500,000** in furniture, clothing, beds and bedding, housewares and portable cribs each year.

ASK ABOUT ROUNDUP at St. Vinny's stores!

Thanksgiving is right around the corner. Support the **food pantry in October** when you RoundUp at the register!

Meet Brooke! The new Senior Director of Retail Operations

From starting as a cashier to establishing two St. Vinny's stores (Stoughton and Sun Prairie), **Brooke Trick** has been a key contributor over her 17 years at St. Vincent de Paul. The Edgerton native recently stepped into her newest role as Senior Director of Retail Operations, overseeing seven Dane County thrift stores and the processing center.



Brooke Trick
Senior Director of Retail Operations

"Thanks to the generosity of donors and shoppers we are able to offer fulfilling careers in thrift that support our important mission in Dane County. There is great opportunity for me to grow our system to meet the needs of our customers, donors and ultimately those in need in Dane County."