



Grace Notes

HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

One destination meets many needs

Food, medicine, furniture, dignity

Moises and Rosa have been long-time St. Vincent de Paul—Madison clients. On one September afternoon, the couple visited the Food Pantry and Charitable Pharmacy using our newest service, a free Uber ride!

Thanks to a partnership with Project Finish Line, our Charitable Pharmacy is proud to offer patients free rides to and from their COVID-19 vaccinations. As transportation is a common barrier to receiving healthcare, offering free rides increases the pharmacy's accessibility.

The couple's afternoon began with a phone call from a pharmacy volunteer in their preferred language, Spanish. The volunteer confirmed the plans that Uber would pick up the couple and bring them to St. Vincent de Paul. Upon arrival, the car first accessed the drive-through Food Pantry and was loaded with fresh produce, bakery, meat, eggs and pantry staples.

Talking with a volunteer pharmacist, the couple checked into the pharmacy and awaited Moises' prescriptions. After discussing his current health, Moises received his flu vaccine. In previous weeks, the couple were one of dozens of patients to receive their first and second doses of a COVID-19 vaccine through our pharmacy.

In talking with the couple, volunteers heard that their granddaughter had been sleeping on the floor. Was the couple aware St. Vincent de Paul provides furniture vouchers? Staff



"I like St. Vincent de Paul because they have so many resources and treat people very well. There is so much here." Rosa, Charitable Pharmacy Client

contacted the couple the next morning to connect them with a furniture voucher so their granddaughter could receive an air mattress.

Throughout the afternoon a pharmacy volunteer provided Spanish translation for the couple to ensure they received the correct information. Another pharmacy volunteer brought Moises his prescriptions. With photos and diagrams, she explained each medication and any new changes. The bottles contained instructional stickers in Spanish and clear patient guidelines.

After receiving a flu vaccine, after loading the car full of pantry staples, after receiving essential medications, after talking with staff and volunteers about their current situation, the couple went back into the Uber to head home.

Your support can provide a client with life-saving medications, pantry staples, furniture and more!





Serving in Hope

Ernie Stetenfeld, Executive Director & CEO

The motto for the International Confederation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is “**serviens in spe.**” That’s Latin for “**servicing in hope.**” I have found

opportunity to serve in hope with the Society for 30 years, first as a volunteer, then as a staff member since 2005, and now as our Madison District Council’s executive director, a role in which I’ve been privileged to serve since 2017. In all of that time, what has given me hope?

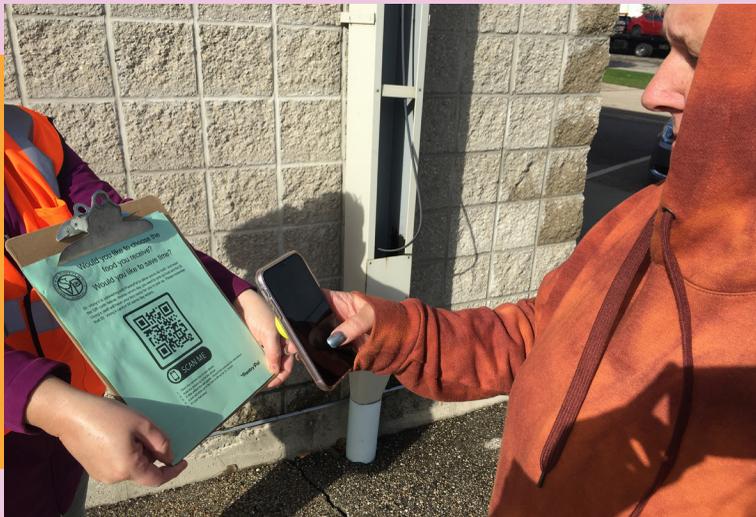
You have. Whether you’re a donor, member, volunteer or corporate partner, you have recognized that St. Vincent de Paul serves a crucial purpose here in Dane County, and you have decided to participate in our

mission. I’m grateful for your compassion, your generosity and the service you provide or support.

I am especially pleased to express gratitude on behalf of our neighbors in need, who rarely have the opportunity to do so directly to you. **Thank you.** Through your generosity, we will continue to help people like Moises and Rosa, who needed a ride to pick up their medications and were able to pick up food as well. And we’ll keep developing better ways to serve clients such as Jill, who can now order food from our pantry online to save time and prevent waste.

I believe that inside all of us is a yearning for a world in which we will **serve in hope together** to help our neighbors in need. Won’t you please help build that world? **Won’t you be their neighbor?**

Pantry Pal: Ordering food made simple



Jill* found our Food Pantry one year ago while driving through town. She uses our new online food-ordering system, Pantry Pal, to select and pick-up her canned goods, meat, fresh produce, dairy and bakery. “The online ordering system is less wasteful than receiving items I might not be able to use,” Jill said. “I can choose exactly what I want.” Jill also brings food to an elderly neighbor.

Pantry Pal was developed by Laura Mendyk and Julie Eichhorn. The current system is an online form, but the pair is developing a mobile app for food pantries. “Pantry Pal is incredibly honored to partner with St. Vincent de Paul to trial and build a platform that will simultaneously make acquiring food easier for those who need it and support the operations of the pantry. We appreciate the support of Chris Kane, Jenni Troia and Josh Hittesdorf (pantry staff) and their willingness to collaborate and engage in this journey with us,” Mendyk said.

“The food ordering system allows me to spend my work money on other bills and not have to worry about food. A lot of people feel shame asking for help, but sometimes you just need help. I am not afraid to ask.”

Jill, Food Pantry Client

* Name changed for privacy

Meet Alejandro Vergara

One pharmacy volunteer's continued dedication to St. Vincent de Paul

Alejandro Vergara serves as a current Charitable Pharmacy volunteer, Board of Directors member and long-time friend of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. His involvement and dedication to the organization is felt by clients, staff and fellow volunteers. As a Spanish interpreter, his communication with patients is essential.

Alejandro remembers growing up in Columbia where his father was an active member in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. His father visited people struggling with poverty on the outskirts of town. He provided clothing and food vouchers, among other items. When Alejandro moved to Madison in 1992, he wanted to reconnect with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and found fellow Vincentians at St. Bernard Catholic Church in Middleton.

Alejandro dove deeper into the organization through his involvement on the Board of Directors and as a pharmacy volunteer. Speaking on his involvement with pharmacy

patients, "It's a relationship," Alejandro said. "It is a chance to interact directly with people needing help. It is more than just giving medications."

Since April 2017, Alejandro has volunteered over 590 hours in the Charitable Pharmacy! "The reward I receive is unbelievable. I feel so good and want to inspire others to help. The more you give, the more you receive," Alejandro said.

Alejandro remarks that the best way to encourage others is to look around you. While we are all accustomed to our routines, he suggests taking a moment to truly look at the people around you— your coworkers, the person behind you in the grocery store, your neighbor. "The first step in helping is recognizing your own talents and that you are so privileged to be able to share and give back," Alejandro said.

We are extremely fortunate to have Alejandro as a volunteer and supporter!



"Alejandro has been a lifeline for our patients. He is an amazing man, extremely kind, compassionate and empathetic. He always has a helping attitude and takes the extra step to give just a little bit more."
Cheryl Dull, Pharmacy Technician

"Before Alejandro came, we did not have a way to communicate with our Spanish speaking patients. Alejandro was a huge step in being able to communicate with patients and gaining their trust."
Becky Mann, Staff Pharmacist

Your gift matters. Give now to support our Charitable Pharmacy!



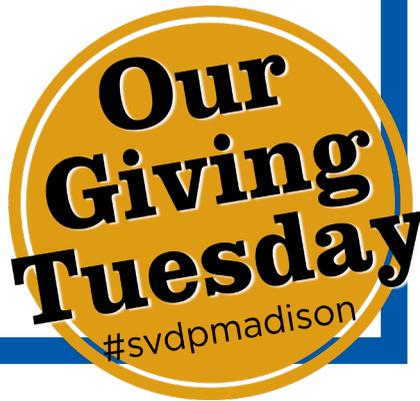
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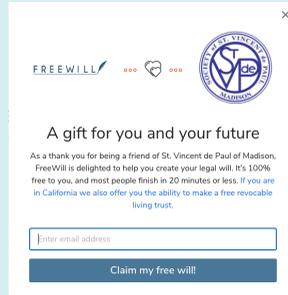
Your financial contributions continue to help our neighbors in need.

svdpmadison.org/donate

It's not too late to give your support on our busiest Food Pantry day:
November 23rd is **Our Giving Tuesday**.



FreeWill



As a thank you for your support, we recently partnered with FreeWill to offer you the opportunity to make a free legal will online. "Most of us know that the key to secure retirement is to plan ahead. Creating a will is a crucial step to include in retirement planning to ensure your final wishes will be honored," Eric Fleming.

Information on FreeWill's website is intended as general guidance and does not constitute legal advice for any specific individual. Please consult your attorney for legal advice.

Other Giving Options

Sustaining Samaritan: Easy, automatic monthly giving. Help support your neighbors in need all year long. Give securely online or directly from your bank account.

Stock and bonds: Avoid capital gains and ask your financial advisor to let us know of your intended gift through a transfer of stock. Michele Dahlk at UBS will help complete the transaction: (608) 831-8677 or michele.dahlk@ubs.com.

Personal chat: With several giving options, many donors find it helpful to have a conversation to discuss what is best for them, their family and their legacy. Contact Eric Fleming, Director of Development at:

(608) 442-7200 x34 or
efleming@svdpmadison.org