

Thanksgiving 2023

# Hope in Action

Your compassion to help neighbors in need



You give  
peace to her  
patients



Helping Our Neighbors In Need  
Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison

## Julie's Journal



Visit <https://svdpmadison.org/pantry-use/> to view a graph of food pantry usage over the last five years.

Do you believe in miracles? I do.

A sick child leads to a lost job leads to an eviction notice. Two Vincentians visit this neighbor at his home to see how they can help. Another neighbor overhears the conversation through an open window and organizes others in the apartment building to help cover his rent. Two loaves and five fish feed thousands in the Bible story. Two Vincentians and a group of neighbors save a family's home. **Miracles!**

Nearly 3,000 households used our food pantry in September. That number grows month after month. Rent increased 14% in Dane County in 2022 and will rise at least another 5% this year. Food prices will rise 6% this year on top of a 10% increase last year. Gas and utility prices remain high. People with limited incomes cannot absorb these cost increases.

Our fiscal year October 2022-September 2023 budget included \$320,000 for food and diapers. Yet nearly \$900,000 was required to meet the need. **Because of your generosity,**

**no hungry neighbor was turned away.**  
A miracle!

You are the miracle that faithfully meets the demand for food and personal care items that is nearly three times higher than it was before the pandemic. I am speechless with gratitude for you.

"The poor you will always have with you" (Mark 14:7). Unfortunately, this prophetic statement has never been more true. Yet because we believe in miracles, we have hope. Hope can come as words or gestures. Hope can also come as food, medicine, clothing, and furniture. When you help the Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison, **you build hope.** Thank you.

Because I believe in miracles, I believe in you.

Julie Bennett  
CEO & Executive Director

## Your care for your neighbors... your way

You can support your neighbors in ways most convenient or beneficial for you.

Legal name: District Council of Madison, Inc., Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Federal EIN 39-0824876.

### Online

Give securely using a debit or credit card, Venmo, or Paypal at <https://svdpmadison.org/miracle/>.

### Sustaining Samaritan

Multiply your impact through easy, automatic monthly deductions from your bank account, debit or credit card.

### Stock and bonds

Avoid capital gains taxes by donating appreciated securities. Contact Michele Dahl at UBS at (608) 831-8677 or [michele.dahl@ubs.com](mailto:michele.dahl@ubs.com) to complete your transaction.

### IRA Distribution

If you're retired and over 70 years of age, you can make a tax-free qualified charitable distribution (70 1/2 or older) or Required Minimum Distribution (72 and older) directly to charity.

### Estate gift

Continue your care for neighbors in need into the future through an estate gift. Name the Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison in your will or trust, or as a beneficiary of life insurance or retirement asset. Consult your advisor for the most advantageous option for you.



# Corporate volunteering to build a stronger community

The St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry is filled with some wonderful people: retired couples, college students, parents with afternoons to spare. **Another group of valuable volunteers are groups!** Whether corporate teams, church groups, or clubs, if you have time to spare, your help will be greatly appreciated. Lisa is a longtime volunteer at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. She shares how she got involved, what she likes about volunteering and how her workplace supports us as well.

### 1. *How did you first become involved with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul – Madison?*

In 2016, I joined AprilAire. Within the first week, my manager encouraged me to join a team of employees volunteering at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. The great experience I had helping people shop the pantry and getting to know my coworkers was the first of what became many evenings volunteering over the years.

### 2. *How long have you been volunteering?*

I've been volunteering since 2016. I volunteered at the food pantry during the pre-COVID years when people shopped at the pantry and now as people drive through to pick up food.

### 3. *What do you do as a volunteer?*

I have helped carry boxes of cold items as well as bags of bread, fruits, and vegetables to cars but **my favorite job has been directing traffic into the pantry.** When we are loading food into cars we don't usually get to interact with people driving through, but when directing traffic you get a smile as people are moving into the final stretch of the pick-up line and often a wave when they have their food and are heading home.

### 4. *Are there any special days that stand out to you as a pantry volunteer?*

In terms of group volunteering I'm told Thursdays are generally the busiest day of the week and time for the pantry. It isn't unusual to have a line of cars going down the street. Before holidays the line can even wrap back around as people wait to pick up food.

### 5. *What do you do when you're not volunteering?*

I am a marketer and have my dream job working for AprilAire in downtown Madison. I was first attracted to working at Aprilaire for two reasons. First, because I feel



Lisa loading cars with food in the outdoor drive-through pantry.

really good about what we do. Our mission is to make homes healthy. We offer families all the components of a Healthy Air System to improve the air they breathe in their homes. Second, because one of the company's values is being a "good neighbor." Making a difference in our community is engrained in the culture and is genuinely supported at every level of the organization.

### 6. *Can you tell me about AprilAire's involvement with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul – Madison and group volunteering?*

AprilAire and our parent company, Research Product Corporation, have been long-term supporters of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul – Madison. We provide two food pantry volunteers on Thursdays from 4:00- 6:00 pm, and periodically hold events for employees to donate personal care items for the food pantry or bedding, blankets, and other items to St. Vinny's Thrift Stores. We also sponsor the annual Care Café fundraising event. In the past we donated backpacks filled with back-to-school supplies for families coming through the food pantry and this fall we are looking into a couple group volunteer events at Lacy Garden to help with the fall harvest and preparing the garden for next spring.

**Join the volunteer team!** Part-time, flexible positions are available on weekday mornings and afternoons - soon, Saturday mornings too! Visit <https://svdpmadison.org/join-us/> or contact Zoe Lavender, Volunteer Coordinator, at [zlavender@svdpmadison.org](mailto:zlavender@svdpmadison.org) or (608) 442-7200 x71 to help.



## Neighbor story

*The St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry supports professionals caring for our most vulnerable neighbors.*

# Partnership with ConnectRx Wisconsin aids moms and babies

For Jawana Echols-Anderson, “every phone call, every pantry run; to me, I’m saving my race. One patient at a time in Dane County. I live and breathe this work.”

Jawana is a community health worker (CHW), at ConnectRx Wisconsin; a program that provides support to African-American / Black high-risk moms during pregnancy and up to one year after the birth of their child.

Jawana and her CHW colleagues have their work cut out for them. Babies born to Black mothers in Dane County are two times more likely to be born at low birth weight, often leading to significant health challenges and higher mortality rates.

**Thanks to you,** Jawana has an important ally in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison. You are saving lives and improving long term health for our fragile neighbors.

## Addressing non-medical needs to improve overall health

ConnectRx Wisconsin was designed to address social determinants of health like transportation, housing and food insecurity for specifically Black moms and provide them with support so they and their babies can thrive. Jawana and her team show up “wherever the patient needs.” They’ll attend housing hearings, write letters of recommendation, loan out technology so clients can apply for jobs, or pick up food and personal care items for patients; a combination of advocacy and education.

These community health workers can rely on St. Vincent de Paul — Madison as full-service partners to fulfill requests for clothing, furniture and food. Along with her colleagues, Jawana picks up roughly ten orders of food from our food pantry for her patients each week. Pantry2Home (online food ordering system) is an especially meaningful service as it saves time and gives their patients the flexibility to choose their own food. Jawana credits the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry and particularly Pantry2Home as positive “gamechangers” for her clients.

## Continued benefits of online ordering

**You are making a difference today** that will last generations.

- For moms like Nora\* all she needed was to bridge the gap between maternity leave and full-time work. While she only received 33% of her income on maternity leave, she still received 100% of her bills. For her, saving money on food and personal



care items by using the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry meant she could pay her rent and keep her home cool this past summer with her newborn.

- Selene\* only needs help with food every so often, about once a month, and calls Jawana when she's low on items. Jawana places Selene's order through Pantry2Home, picks it up and delivers it to her. Selene doesn't have to worry about traveling across town with her newborn or squeezing in a visit to the pantry during her lunch break.
- Tahira\* speaks only Swahili. In her culture, it's unusual to ask for help, so Jawana is proactive about clarifying what she needs when she reaches out. Through their relationship, she's learned that Tahira's older kids don't like canned goods, so Jawana focuses on ordering fresh produce, meat, diapers, wipes and household items.

Nutritious food is essential for maternal and infant health. For moms on limited incomes, it's difficult to afford high quality produce, meat and pantry staples. Jawana explained that transportation and a lack of money are two of the biggest hurdles her patients face.

Access to quality food is especially challenging when moms don't have reliable transportation, and it's difficult to travel by public transportation with small children. Pantry2Home saves time for neighbors in need, eliminates food waste, and meets any dietary restrictions or cultural preferences.

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**"We benefit from using St. Vincent de Paul because you do have diapers, wipes and some of those household items. So that makes it a one-stop-shop."**  
- Jawana

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"Being able to come here, drive up to a special spot to get the online orders has really saved a lot of time of getting the resource," Jawana said. "We benefit from using St. Vincent de Paul because you also do have diapers, wipes and some of those household items. So that makes it a one-stop-shop. We can come here and get everything that a patient needs in one location."

In 18 months, ConnectRx Wisconsin has welcomed 137 babies into the world and celebrated 25 first birthdays. **You have helped make this happen.**

*\* Names changed to protect the patient's privacy.*

## **You have helped**

fill hundreds of online orders containing fresh produce, pantry staples, baking supplies, diapers and household cleaners since Pantry2Home's inception. Neighbors either pick up these orders in-person at the pantry or schedule an at-home delivery. Since August 2023...

**234 households** *received food delivered to them*

**692 people** *ordered food online*

**4 staff and volunteers** *required to receive, process and fill one online order*





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

### Our mission

We are a Catholic lay organization in which members join together in friendship to grow spiritually by providing person-to-person services to our neighbors in need.

### Your crucial support

Your compassion and generosity changes the lives of thousands of people each year in Dane County. Donate online now by scanning the below QR code or call (608) 442-7200 x34.

Contact Eric Fleming at [efleming@svdpmadison.org](mailto:efleming@svdpmadison.org) or (608) 442-7200 x34 to leave a bequest in your will or estate to care for future needs of our community.



## Welcome Elisha!

### New Senior Director of Human Resources

In August, we welcomed Elisha Santiago-Barudin as our first Senior Director of Human Resources. She will spearhead key initiatives in talent management and employee development while supporting a continued positive work environment across our program and retail operations. The spirituality and service of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison particularly appealed to her.

*"After delving into the profound spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul, I am inspired by his example of selfless service and love for others. A cherished quote of his that resonates with me is, 'Love is inventive to infinity,'" Elisha said.*



## Save the Date



**Wednesday, May 1st, 2024**

**7:30 am– 8:30 am**

**Alliant Energy Center, Madison**

Mark your calendar for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison's 9th annual fundraising breakfast for our neighbors in need.

**Sponsorships are now open!** Get your business in front of 400+ people who honor the dignity of all people and care about alleviating human suffering. Join your peers in support of essential food, medicine, clothing and furniture to our neighbors in need. Contact Eric Fleming at (608) 442-7200 x34 or [efleming@svdpmadison.org](mailto:efleming@svdpmadison.org).