

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Community Kitchen and Resource Center

Volunteer Positions

Currently, approximately one hundred people volunteer over 30,000 hours of service annually to impoverished families with children, indigent men and women, disabled veterans and elderly clients, many for whom their only meal of the day comes from the Center. Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Center's service. Volunteers may elect to serve weekly in the kitchen, work in the social services office, provide community outreach, participate in fundraising activities, offer pro-bono professional services and technical support or participate in any combination of volunteer services and activities. Typically, most volunteers provide service in the kitchen in addition to one or more activities throughout the year.

Kitchen and Dining Volunteers

The St. Vincent de Paul Community Kitchen and Resource Center serves over 5,000 nutritious, hot meals a month to nearly 200 people—almost 65,000 clients a year—who come through the Center's doors every day, including holidays and weekends. The volunteer kitchen shifts begins around 5:00 a.m. for food prep volunteers. All kitchen volunteers are usually present before 6:45 a.m. for assignments and set-up. The shift ends at 11:00 a.m. with final cleanup. Meal service occurs between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. The Center provides an attractive dining area where clients and guests may eat freshly prepared food peacefully in a clean environment. Volunteers may choose to serve daily or weekly shifts that are compatible with their personal schedule. Volunteers are trained to supervise food preparation, cook, and serve meals. Volunteers also may assist in end of shift cleanup of the kitchen and dining areas. Some volunteers with backgrounds in food service or experience in the kitchen serve as head chefs, sous chefs, prep cooks and shift coordinators. Let the executive director know what shifts or days work best for you.

Social Service Volunteers

Volunteers who wish to work in the social services department are provided specific training to work directly with clients. Social service volunteers perform data-entry in the Tampa Bay Information Network system (TBIN) to track client services, provide social service referrals, maintain records and meet with clients to assess needs. TBIN and social service shifts begin by 8:00 a.m. and end at 11:00 a.m. More experienced volunteers may serve as social services volunteer coordinators. If you are interested in learning more about social services, let the executive director know.

Community Outreach Volunteers

Volunteers may provide outreach in the community through home visits or by providing information about the Center at tabled events at interagency and neighborhood community fairs. Volunteers who attend tabled events are provided the fliers and materials needed in order to inform and educate attendees about the Center and its program services. Let the executive director know if you are interested in representing the Center at community information affairs and interagency events.

Fundraising Volunteers

Fundraisers may be organized by the Center or by donor organizations. Volunteers are critical to the success of the fundraisers, which can be a lot of fun. Examples of fundraising events include the St. Vincent de Paul Friends of the Poor Walkathon, which is held annually. Third Friday event raffles are also held in nearby Safe Harbor each month. Donor organizations also join the Center for publicized “Volunteer Days” that are a way to meet new people in the community. Consult the Center’s calendar for monthly events to sign-up.

Pro-bono Professional Service Volunteers

The Center is always in need of volunteers with special skills. Technical support, technological expertise, accounting skills, legal review of documents, marketing strategies, health program and policy guidance, utilities, construction and handyman skills are just a few of the more specific areas where pro-bono professional work can uniquely support the Center’s efforts to serve the poor and needy. Let the executive director or board president know if you are interested in offering your professional services in some pro-bono capacity as we may have a need to match your expertise.

Volunteer Board of Directors

The Center’s eleven-member volunteer board of directors, consisting of St. Vincent de Paul Society members each of whom belongs to one of the local Catholic parishes, meets monthly. It is a diverse board of Vincentians who dedicate more than a nominal amount of time to the mission of the Center. Board members serve as volunteers in other capacities in addition to serving on the board, attending fundraisers and participating in as many events on behalf of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul as they can to benefit the Center’s clients. Board members frequently participate in other service organizations or serve on boards in other organizations. The Center’s board currently consists of small business owners, a builder, corporate officers, health professionals, an attorney, and real estate professionals. If you are an eligible volunteer who is or wishes to become a Vincentian with an interest in serving on the Center’s board, let the board president know.