

home
HEART



Our HIGHLIGHTS



OVER 12,000 ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY VOLUNTEERS ARE DOTTED ACROSS VICTORIA – IN BUSTLING CITIES AND SMALL COUNTRY TOWNS. THEY PUT SHOES ON GROWING FEET, FOOD ON TABLES, HEAT HOMES IN WINTER, EDUCATE YOUNG MINDS, LISTEN IN TIMES OF CRISIS – AND MUCH, MUCH MORE.

Our VALUES

VINNIES' VALUES ARE AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO — THE PROOF IS IN OUR STORIES WITHIN THESE PAGES.



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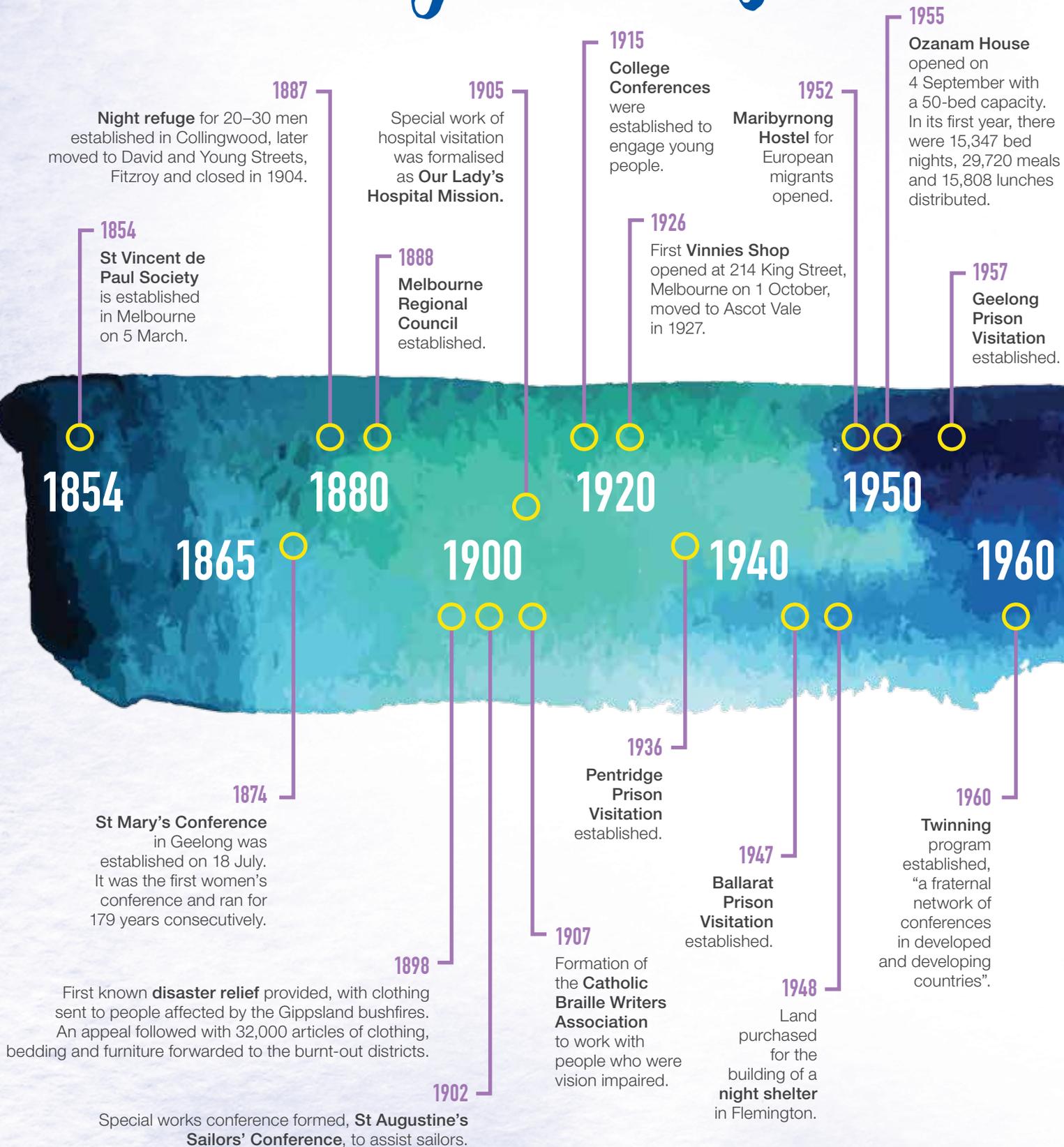
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"The strongest bond of true friendship is charity, and the exercise of good charity is the practice of good works."

— BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM,
ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
FOUNDER

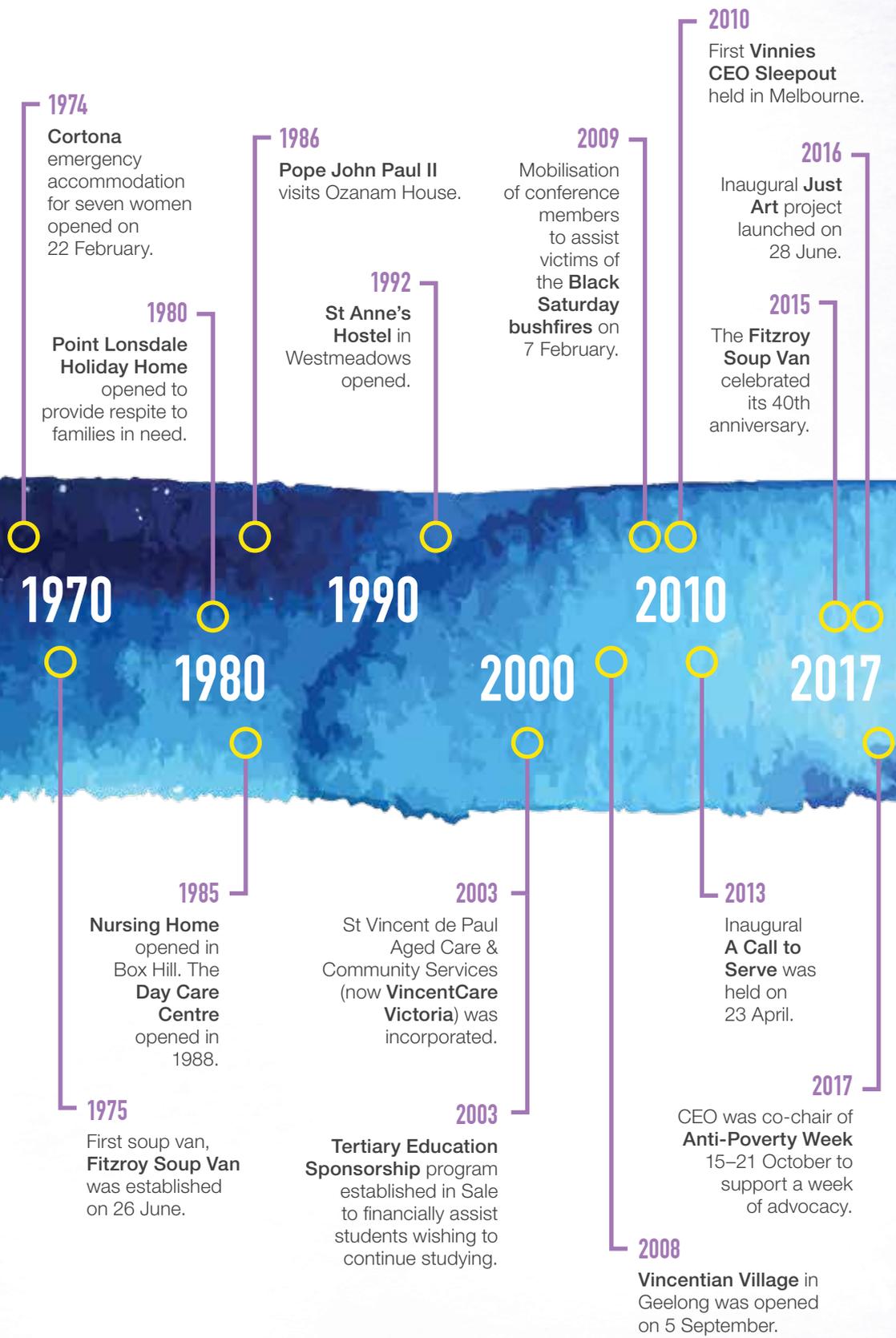
Note: Our organisation's official name is the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Inc. However, over the years and throughout this document we have used abbreviations and variations. The most recognisable of these are: the St Vincent de Paul Society, the Society, Vinnies Victoria and Vinnies.

Our journey SINCE



1854

2018



VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT expands to two locations Melbourne (21 June) and Geelong (28 June).



MEALS DELIVERED
757 people assisted per night by the soup vans.



WORKFORCE
97% of our workforce are volunteers.



HOME VISITATION
313,180 people assisted through our core work of home visitation.



VINNIES SHOPS
Seven new shops opened to help provide income for Vinnies.

State President's MESSAGE

AFTER SIX MONTHS AS STATE PRESIDENT AND MORE THAN 11 YEARS VOLUNTEERING ON THE FRONTLINE, I HAVE DEVELOPED A DEEP APPRECIATION FOR THE ROLE OF VINNIES VOLUNTEERS AND OUR SUPPORTERS IN BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH HEART.

This financial year, we assisted 313,180 people through our core service of home visitation. Put simply, our volunteers take calls for help and support people at home or in an assistance centre. They listen, assess their needs and respond with practical support.

Vinnies volunteers provide the basics – help with food, utilities, education expenses, and more – with a goal of preventing crisis. We help, face-to-face. On a broader scale, however, Australia is reaching crisis point in addressing the issue of poverty.

Allow me to share a story that shows how. A woman with three children was recently experiencing homelessness. She was staying with family and friends, short term, but her needs were immediate and growing. She craved certainty, independence and safety. Her major expenses were for food, rent, furniture storage and education for her children. Vinnies was able to help her with financial and material aid on all fronts, and even guide her to a local housing agency to source secure accommodation. They did so with great care and compassion.

Her story shows just how little room there is in a typical household budget for the 'unexpected'. Things like a relationship breakdown, loss of employment, a sick child or an elderly parent in need. In these scenarios, and many others, people are forced to ask for help.

Last year we delivered more than \$15 million in material aid during home visits. Our volunteers in Vinnies Shops, Vinnies Soup Vans, and a variety of other services, gently changed lives too – so I encourage you to read on to learn more.

Your role as a supporter ensures that we can focus on answering their calls for help. So on behalf of our 12,000+ volunteers, I would like to say thank you, wholeheartedly.

KEVIN McMAHON
State President



Chief Executive's MESSAGE

OUR PHILANTHROPY REPORT, 'HOME + HEART', HIGHLIGHTS HOW GENEROUS GIFTS OF TIME, RESOURCES AND FUNDS HELP TO EMPOWER OUR VINNIES VOLUNTEERS TO DELIVER ACTS OF KINDNESS AND IMPROVE LIVES.

Within this report, we have captured stories of our work, demonstrating how we live our values of commitment, compassion, respect, integrity, empathy, advocacy and courage. Proudly, these values have underpinned our organisation since it was founded.

Our history on pages 2–3 shows that Vinnies volunteers were opening safe houses for women, when family violence was not spoken about; welcoming migrants, when Australia was fearful of newcomers; and all while pioneering a sustainable social enterprise, Vinnies Shops, to provide aid to local communities.

Vinnies volunteers have always led a special kind of social movement. This year we have supported energetic advocacy; offered greater financial support through our home visitation service; sustained ethical streams of fundraising; opened new Vinnies Shops; and cultivated partnerships with businesses and individuals who, like us, care deeply about the health of our communities.

As CEO, I am proud to say that in our 164th year in Australia we continue to respond to people experiencing the greatest need in Victoria.

Our 2018 Vinnies CEO Sleepout events united an incredibly concerned group of business, community and political leaders in Melbourne and Geelong, to talk about the realities of poverty. Together, we raised over \$1 million to offer hope to Victorians experiencing extreme hardship.

Our Vinnies Soup Van service continues to play a major role in offering food and friendship to some of the most isolated people in our communities. Its reach was extended to more regional and metropolitan areas, thanks to the help of generous major donors who put much-needed new soup vans on the road.

Our education and tutoring programs, together with greater financial support to fund back to school expenses, helped to ensure young people could fully participate and reach their full potential in the classroom, and beyond.

These are things we can only achieve with your help. So I extend a most sincere thanks to all our supporters for being our valued partners in providing hope to people in need.

SUE CATTERMOLLE
Chief Executive Officer



A call for **HELP**

AT VINNIES' BUSY WELFARE ASSISTANCE CALL CENTRE IN BOX HILL HAVING A COMPASSIONATE EAR ON THE OTHER END OF A LINE CAN BE, QUITE SIMPLY, A LIFELINE.

It's just before 10.00am and call centre volunteer Genevieve has arrived at the Vinnies' central office in Box Hill to begin her shift.

Genevieve is a well-known face in the building. She will clock up a decade as a call centre volunteer this October and during that time she's fielded thousands of calls – some sad, some grateful and some loaded with distress.

"It's not always easy," says Genevieve, "However, it helps that Vinnies has two part-time supervisors who share the emotional load and are on hand for support anytime the volunteers need to debrief."

As one of the largest welfare assistance centres in Victoria, and supported by a small team of professional staff, Vinnies' dedicated call centre volunteers provide a first point of contact for people seeking assistance with a range of pressing needs including food, education costs, utilities, medical costs and more.

Lynne, one of the two call centre supervisors, has been working in the call centre for four years.

"On average we will receive about 300 calls a day," she says. "It really depends. Yesterday we took 427, with most of them coming in the morning. We simply cannot get to every single call, and we can't help everyone, and, I won't lie, that's very challenging. Once you start at the call centre, you quickly find a way to deal with it, because the good stuff is so, so rewarding."

A recent report from the Edith Cowan University showed that in Australia 36 percent of people experience low or very low food security at some time in their lives, so it's no surprise that requests for food are top of the list from people who phone in.

However, as Call Centre Co-Supervisor Sue explains, the prevailing need in the community follows no formula.

"I didn't realise how much hardship and heartache was out there until I started fielding these calls," she says. "Even during the most difficult conversations, somehow, I feel good about them. We manage to talk through the issues, calm people down, and find a good outcome."

Compassion, they both say, is the biggest requirement for the job – and the Vinnies' call centre team has it in abundance. They know that every call they take is making a difference to the people they are helping.

"Many people are so fragile and they have to pluck up a great deal of courage to call Vinnies," Lynne explains. "Yesterday, a grown man was crying on the phone for no other reason than relief. Relief that there was someone listening to him on the other end of the phone. He needed to talk and I was there for him."

Genevieve nods in agreement. She says that having a compassionate ear on the other end of a line can be, quite simply, a lifeline.

"I feel a great sense of purpose being here. There are people really struggling out there, they need help, and it's such a pleasure if you're able to provide that help or direct them to someone who can. It's lovely."



COURAGE

"I didn't realise how much hardship and heartache was out there until I started fielding these calls."

— SUE





Victoria: IN GOOD HANDS

VINNIES HAS OVER 12,000 LOYAL AND DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS ACROSS VICTORIA WHO, IN THE LEGACY OF OUR FOUNDER BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM, WORK TIRELESSLY TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

Vinnies empowers communities from within and for 164 years, our locally-led social justice activity has helped to build communities that truly care. This map shows Vinnies' services currently operating across the state. These acts of kindness are often borderless, happening seamlessly and constantly.



	CONFERENCES (STATE-WIDE)	283
	VINNIES SHOPS	110
	COMPEER	2
	EDUCATION	6
	VINNIES SOUP VANS	7
	VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT	2

Delivered with compassion

OUR SERVICES



CONFERENCE *work*

VINNIES HAS 283 LOCAL VOLUNTEER GROUPS ACROSS VICTORIA, KNOWN AS CONFERENCES, WHICH PROVIDE A 'HAND UP' TO PEOPLE IN NEED.

In response to incoming calls for assistance, our conference members visit people in their homes, or in a local community assistance centre, to listen and provide practical assistance. Food, vouchers, clothing, furniture, budget support, back to school expenses – no act of charity is foreign to us.



VINNIES *Shops*

THERE ARE 110 VINNIES SHOPS IN VICTORIA, ONE OF THE STATE'S OLDEST AND MOST RESPECTED SOCIAL ENTERPRISES.

Vinnies Shops provide a major source of income for Vinnies' local welfare programs, and are supported by an extensive network of generous volunteers and material donations from the community. The shops give new life to pre-loved goods; stock a range of new, affordable products for low-income shoppers; and provide a direct source of material aid for people experiencing hardship.



YOUTH & *education*

VINNIES VOLUNTEERS ARE COMMITTED TO EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE.

They offer tutoring programs, reading clubs, breakfast programs and tertiary entrance support programs. These programs are tailored to the needs of local communities such as tutoring programs for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and financial assistance to alleviate the burden of back to school expenses. Kids Camps and Kids Days Out, run by Young Adult Conferences, also create a welcoming environment for kids in need of support, respite and fun.



VINNIES *Soup Vans*

VINNIES SOUP VANS OPERATE AT SEVEN SITES IN REGIONAL AND METROPOLITAN VICTORIA. THE SERVICE WAS ORIGINALLY LAUNCHED BY DEDICATED UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND HAS BEEN OPERATING FOR 43 YEARS.

The service is run almost exclusively by volunteers, delivering meals, friendship and support for people experiencing poverty and homelessness. Shared meals create an environment for regular, face-to-face conversations, which can help people experiencing crisis to survive, recover and ultimately regain their independence.



COMPEER *programs*

THE VINNIES COMPEER PROGRAM LINKS PEOPLE LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS WITH FRIENDS IN THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY.

Through inclusive activities and conversation, they have an opportunity to thrive. The aim of this program is simple and noble – to create stronger opportunities for connection and engagement, helping to alleviate social isolation and loneliness typically associated with mental illness.



WELFARE ASSISTANCE *call centres*

OUR MAIN WELFARE ASSISTANCE CALL CENTRE RECEIVES MORE THAN 300 CALLS A DAY FROM PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HARDSHIP.

A generous group of volunteers give their time to listen, record requests for help and pass requests on to local volunteers (conference members) who provide emergency welfare assistance on the ground. Call centre volunteers are an important first point of contact to Vinnies and regularly provide a caring ear when people are experiencing crisis.



SCHOOL *engagement*

VINNIES HAS A RICH HISTORY OF ENGAGING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUILD VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP SKILLS, FACILITATE FUNDRAISING, LEAD ADVOCACY, RUN VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS AND MUCH MORE.

Vinnies encourages young people to live their faith through action using the 'see' (education and awareness), 'think' (formation and reflection) and 'do' (community service and fundraising) model. Good works are facilitated through the Mini Vinnies program for primary school students and College Conferences for secondary school students.



COMMITTEES *that care*

VINNIES' VOLUNTEER-LED STRUCTURE ALLOWS FOR A VARIETY OF CAUSE-CENTRIC COMMITTEES TO RESPOND TO SPECIFIC AREAS OF NEED.

Examples include the Overseas Development Committee, which supports people in developing countries; the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee, which facilitates research, advocacy and supports new settlers. The Emergency Response Liaison Committee also coordinates an important, locally-led response to natural disasters.

Home + heart

CONFERENCE WORK



\$15,355,996

MATERIAL AID
DELIVERED VIA
HOME VISITS



313,180

PEOPLE ASSISTED



3,678

HOME VISITATION
VOLUNTEERS (MEMBERS)

IN A WORLD THAT MOVES SO FAST, IT'S HEARTENING TO SEE VINNIES VOLUNTEERS STILL MAKE THE TIME TO RESPOND TO CALLS FOR HELP. ALL OF THIS HAPPENS, FACE-TO-FACE IN PEOPLE'S HOMES OR COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CENTRES.

They put food on tables. They heat homes in winter. They put school shoes on growing feet. They find safe accommodation for families escaping family violence. They see the signs of crisis and respond when it happens, always without judgement.

This is the work of Vinnies' home visitation volunteers, known as conference members. There are 3,678 conference members hard at work across the state and they are a very special part of a very special mission. They have been providing localised community support in Victoria for 164 years, since the St Vincent de Paul Society was first established in Australia.

The home visitation program is a cornerstone service of Vinnies, inspired by the work of the organisation's founder – a brave and determined 20-year-old university student, Frederic Ozanam – who formed the St Vincent de Paul Society in 1833 in Paris. Frederic's first act of charity was delivering firewood to a widow whose husband had died in winter. He then made it his personal mission to help people, as hunger, disease, poverty and hardship gripped the country.

Today, Australia is facing very similar challenges. More than 725,000 Victorians and close to three million Australians are living in poverty. While the drivers of poverty and its potential solutions are complex, Vinnies' home visitation service is a legacy of the 'love thy neighbour' sentiment that was central to Frederic's values. It is designed to give people a hand-up and to prevent crisis – and is deeply valued by the people who need it most.



Spotlight: RISING NEED

Vinnies volunteers are not only called on to provide assistance with the basics, but to understand the causes of disadvantage and to advocate for long-term change. Vinnies volunteers believe in fostering attitudes of respect and empathy for people doing it tough and advocating for their right to live with shelter, food, access to education and work and above all self-respect.

Vinnies' generous donors are vital partners in delivering this service, which is showing no signs of slowing down. According to the latest statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), published in 2017 as part of 2015–2016 Household Expenditure Survey, the average Australian family spent \$1,425 a week on housing, food and education costs.

Cumulative pressure on household budgets translates to very real and desperate calls for help from people on the frontline – and thankfully, with the support of Vinnies' donors – conference members are there to listen and to ease the burden. A problem shared, is a problem halved, after all.

ALARMING GROWTH IN DEMAND FOR VINNIES' HOME VISITATION SERVICE BECAME THE BASIS OF A WIDESCALE ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN DURING ANTI-POVERTY WEEK.

Vinnies Victoria recorded an average 40 percent rise in demand for financial welfare assistance in the past three years – and in some areas, the rise was as high as 68 percent. This prompted a significant focus on home visitation in the last financial year.

This service was the beneficiary of funds raised from the 2018 Vinnies CEO Sleepout events, the 2018 Winter Appeal and the new Everyday Kindness Regular Giving Program. Vinnies also sought to educate the community about the merits of home visitation and inspired meaningful advocacy about 'hidden' poverty on Australia's home soil too.



Vinnies

GAVE US HOPE

VINNIES VOLUNTEERS QUIETLY PROVIDE A COMPASSIONATE HAND-UP IN TIMES OF CRISIS, SOMETIMES, IT'S JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS, AS DANIELLE* WRITES.

My name is Danielle and I'm 24 years old. I have four siblings, but grew up only with two younger sisters due to the fact that my father snatched my two older brothers – at gunpoint – and took them back to Syria when I was a baby.

My Mum had arrived in Australia from Syria with my father when she was in her early 20s. My father was extremely violent and controlling, and refused to let my mother socialise or learn to speak English. A family friend finally helped her to secretly escape.

With little money, spoken English, or prospects, Mum and I went from being on the street and sleeping on people's couches to constantly moving between different women's refuges.

Life didn't improve much after Mum re-partnered. My step-father (the father of my two younger sisters) gambled and drank away every cent Mum earned. Leaving that behind we had to start again for our safety and future. At times we had to sleep on the floor as she couldn't afford beds.

To say life was tough is an understatement, which makes what I'm about to explain so extraordinary. One year, a few days before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. Standing there and carrying the biggest food basket I'd ever seen were two smiling strangers – Vinnies volunteers.

It wasn't just the food that had me jumping up and down with excitement; it was the hamper of presents that the volunteers had brought along too. It was only years afterwards that I realised that someone who had never met us had taken the time to find out our ages and gender to bring presents for us.

Vinnies was also there when Mum was struggling to pay the bills. I distinctly recall going to the post office with a voucher that Vinnies had given us, and Mum with a big smile on her face knowing we could afford to live a little better that month.

Thanks to Vinnies we went to Luna Park, the Easter Show, as well as other events during school holidays. There were also weekends away – a luxury beyond our wildest dreams.

This went beyond charity; it went to the core of our recovery as a family. For the first time in a long time, my Mum – my beautiful, selfless Mum – had people who were interested in her unique needs. The volunteers would come in and sit down with her and help her with her English; they'd not only ask if she needed anything, but would gently enquire about how she was feeling.

For someone who never got to socialise, having a caring person drop in and ask simply "Are you okay?" was a godsend. Literally.

Even as a child, what I saw in Mum's smile when the Vinnies volunteers came to our house was pure happiness. These volunteers have been great role models for us kids – in fact, we're still in contact with one volunteer all these years later.

Today, my family is stronger than ever, and I just would like to say "thank you". Without Vinnies being such a big part of our lives, I don't know where we would have ended up.

** Name has been changed to protect privacy.*



*"This went beyond
charity; it went to
the core of our
recovery as a
family."*

— DANIELLE



Bright minds + opportunities

EDUCATION



5,000
TUITION HOURS
PROVIDED



\$1,167,637
FOR SCHOOL
EXPENSES



136,233
CHILDREN ASSISTED
THROUGH HOME
VISITATION

YOUTHFUL ENERGY HAS ALWAYS FORMED PART OF VINNIES' WORKS, THANKS TO THE LEGACY OF THE SOCIETY'S 20-YEAR-OLD FOUNDER, BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM. YOUNG PEOPLE BRING A LENS OF COMPASSION, AND ABOVE ALL, A YEARNING TO LEARN.

Yearning to learn is society's great leveller – and why Vinnies volunteers believe, wholeheartedly, that education should be accessible to everyone.

In recent years, through the works of Vinnies' home visitation program, it's become increasingly obvious that access to critical things, such as accommodation and food, and school resources like books, shoes and uniforms, can mean the difference between a child having an opportunity to fully engage in their education or risk falling through the cracks.

For that very reason, Vinnies volunteers have provided \$1,167,637 worth of assistance in the past financial year to families who would otherwise be limited in their ability to even send their kids to school. So where did this money go?



- 24.36% Uniforms and shoes
- 21.40% Books and stationery
- 20.72% School fees
- 1.95% Extra-curricular fees
- 9.26% Camps and excursions
- 10.26% Information technology
- 1.15% Travel expenses
- 10.90% Other education expenses



Spotlight: FOOTSTEPS OF FREDERIC

With education comes opportunities and pathways out of hardship, which is why Vinnies has entire programs dedicated to not only engaging and supporting vulnerable young people, but also cultivating the next generation of young leaders.

These include Mini Vinnies, College Conferences, Youth Conferences and Youth Members who support and lead a variety of fundraising and community support programs in schools and universities; school Breakfast Clubs to give children a nutritious start to the day; Kids Days Out to lift the spirits of vulnerable children; Roadshows to provide school-holiday activities for vulnerable children in regional areas; College Conference Days to showcase Vinnies' volunteer programs and social justice activities; tutoring programs for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and much, much more.

Research and advocacy is also a big priority. Now in its third year, the Just Art project provides an opportunity for schools across the state to respond to a social justice issue through works of art. This year's theme, 'Youth Poverty', inspired schools to participate and hold their own art exhibitions and lead a meaningful conversation.

Education matters – which is exactly why you'll be hearing a lot more from Vinnies about its education programs in 2019.

VINNIES IS COMMITTED TO CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO CONNECT WITH THE VINCENTIAN VALUES AND LEADERSHIP QUALITIES MODELLED BY THE SOCIETY'S FOUNDER, BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM.

The Footsteps of Frederic program was launched in early 2018 to give young people who are passionate about social justice an opportunity to do just that.

The retreat united 16 young leaders from across the state to reinvigorate Frederic's vision and agitate for change within their communities.

They participated in a range of activities that provided eye-opening examples of poverty and injustice which continue to divide communities in Australia.

One participant, Sarah Castricum, said: "In that environment you can talk about anything and everything, and feel comfortable to be yourself, surrounded by like-minded people who are trying to achieve the same goals as you."

These dedicated young leaders certainly have their goals mapped out – to follow in Frederic's footsteps, and to create practical, meaningful and sensitive solutions to pressing issues of the day like poverty, homelessness and food insecurity.



Giving + generosity

A LIFETIME OF generosity

FOR FORMER CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND COMPANY CHAIRMAN, JOHN RALPH, A LIFETIME OF GIVING AND BUILDING UP OTHERS DIDN'T START IN THE BOARDROOM – BUT IN A SCHOOL ROOM IN BROKEN HILL, DURING HIS YOUTH.

“I was a member of the junior conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society back then,” says the Melbourne-based philanthropist and major donor.

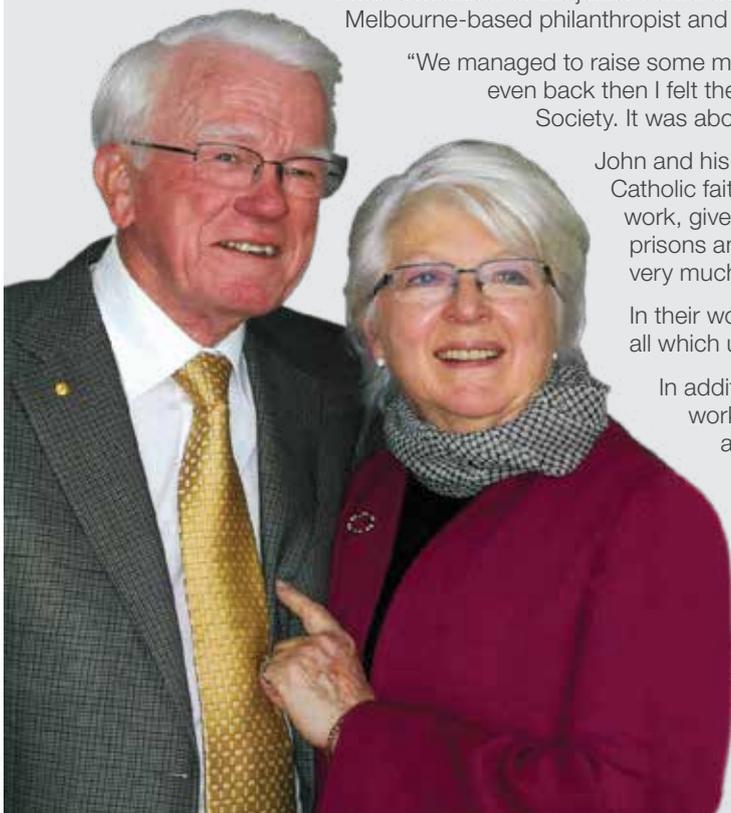
“We managed to raise some money – from memory it was a very modest amount – but even back then I felt there was something profoundly right about being part of the Society. It was about doing something for others.”

John and his wife Barbara's support is largely inspired by their strong Catholic faith, as well as understanding that volunteers who do the hard work, give generously of their time, visiting people at home, hospitals, prisons and beyond. In philanthropy, as in life, John and Barbara are very much a team.

In their words, volunteers are motivated by the “highest ideals”, all which underpin the good works of Vinnies.

In addition to providing more than \$110,000 to Vinnies Victoria's work over the past 25 years, both John and Barbara also actively support Vinnies' community works in Wagga Wagga and Broken Hill. Most recently, the Ralphs gave \$20,000 to the Vinnies NSW Drought Appeal.

“We support the Society in Melbourne because we live here,” he says. “We support the Society in Broken Hill because that's where I grew up and where we married and had our first child. And we support the society in Wagga Wagga, because we have a farm in that area.”



MAJOR DONORS

GENEROUS DONATIONS HELP TO SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO LEAD POSITIVE CHANGE. READ ON TO LEARN WHY THESE GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS CHOOSE TO GIVE TO VINNIES.

While money was tight during the early years when John and Barbara were raising their six children (they're now blessed with 18 grandchildren and two great grand-daughters), Barbara says that giving back was always part of their big-picture plan.

John says that while neither he nor Barbara seek, or are particularly comfortable with, receiving recognition for their philanthropy they both hope that their story can spark a similar altruistic drive in others.

"If it helps the charities that we're supporting to enlist help from others, then Barbara and I are happy to do it," says John.

"John has done very well in his business career, which means we're able to be generous," adds Barbara. "Ours has been a very fortunate life."

LEAVING BEHIND A *legacy*

JOHN AND MARIA DOWLING HAVE LEARNT A LOT DURING THEIR TIME AS VOLUNTEERS. PROFOUND THINGS, LIKE PEOPLE WITH VERY LITTLE OFTEN GIVE THE MOST; EVICTION CAN BE JUST ONE BILL AWAY; AND FAMILY VIOLENCE DOESN'T HAVE A POSTCODE.

"I couldn't believe how prevalent domestic violence is in our society," says John. "It's been really eye-opening, and, at times, terribly distressing."

So much so that the Dowlings – who are also proud donors – have decided to leave a bequest to Vinnies, a proportion of which will go towards services that assist women and children fleeing family violence.

As John says, "the work that the Society is doing in this space is something we are passionate about".

The Dowlings' commitment to Vinnies is far reaching. In addition to being members of the Camberwell East Conference and regular donors, they're involved with Matthew's Offering, a program that supports rural families of patients who have to travel to Melbourne for medical treatment.

As dedicated bequesters, the Dowlings passionately believe that dedicating a gift in their Will can "absolutely change lives" and leave a meaningful personal legacy.



Melbourne + Geelong

VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT



THE VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT IS A POWERFUL PLATFORM FOR ADVOCACY AND FUNDRAISING, WHICH CULMINATES IN A NO-FRILLS NIGHT, SLEEPING OUT IN THE COLD. IN 2018, LEADERS JOINED A HEARTFELT MOVEMENT TO UNPACK THE HOME TRUTHS OF POVERTY AND RAISED WELL OVER \$1 MILLION ALONG THE WAY.

Vinnies' flagship annual corporate fundraising event made twice the impact in Victoria in 2018 – hosted in two locations in Melbourne on 21 June and Geelong on 28 June. This was the very first time the event was extended to regional Victoria.

Vinnies Victoria CEO, Sue Cattermole, said the events were an invaluable meeting of minds and inspired influential leaders to unpack complex social and economic issues.

"They were encouraged to participate in a robust brainstorming activity at the event – a preview of what's to come in 2019, as Vinnies challenges leaders to proactively support people experiencing hardship within their own circles of influence," said Sue.

Proceeds from the events will be used to support Vinnies' home visitation service, which has seen demand rise by an average 40 percent over the past three years and up to 68 percent in some parts of the state.

"Visiting people in their homes and offering help is one of the primary ways our volunteers alleviate poverty and ensure people are empowered to keep a roof over their heads. Funds raised will help Vinnies to provide the basics – food, utilities, education resources, medical needs and more," said Sue.

The University of Melbourne and Kardinia Park Stadium Trust proudly supported the event as the venue sponsors. Thank you to everyone who slept out, donated funds or gave their time to support this important campaign – it was a noble example of the power of team work.

HOME TRUTHS OF POVERTY

This year's Vinnies CEO Sleepout theme #PovertyHomeTruths uncovered real stories of hardship that Vinnies volunteers see and hear, every day. Here's a small sample of 'truths' from the frontline.



KATIE,
38

"My son died of an overdose and everywhere I turned the door was shut on me. I couldn't help but think that the rejection was due to the way he died. Vinnies just helped, no question."

LIZZIE,
26

"When you have to leave in the dark in the middle of the night you don't know what to take with you. It's embarrassing, but I need socks, underwear, a jacket. The basics."



VINNIES VICTORIA
HAS EXPERIENCED
A 40% INCREASE
IN THE NEED FOR
SUPPORT IN THE LAST
3 YEARS.
HELP US TO HELP THEM

#CEOSLEEPOUT.ORG.AU

2.9 MILLION
AUSTRALIANS ARE
LIVING BELOW THE
POVERTY - LET'S
DO OUR BIT.

THE 2019 VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUTS IN VICTORIA WILL BE AIMING TO RAISE \$1.1 MILLION DOLLARS TO SUPPORT VINNIES' EDUCATION PROGRAMS, WHICH HELP VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACQUIRE THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO EXIT THE CYCLE OF POVERTY.
REGISTER NOW: CEOSLEEPOUT.ORG.AU



VINNIES
HAS 12,000
VOLUNTEERS HELPING
VICTORIANS EVERY DAY
HELP US TO HELP THEM

#CEOSLEEPOUT

LET'S FACE
POVERTY HOME TRUTHS
AND SUPPORT
PEOPLE DOING
IT TOUGH

Highest
FUNDRAISER
2018
ROSE PIRROTTINA
VINNIES
CEO SLEEPOUT
HELPING LIFE
THE AUSTRALIAN

Good works + business

CORPORATE DONORS

STANDING UP FOR WHAT'S *right*

The highest fundraiser for the 2018 Vinnies CEO Sleepout, Gandel Philanthropy's Vedran Drakulic, issued a pointed challenge to business and community leaders as he spoke on the night.

"Next year, I don't want to be here giving an acceptance speech for being the highest fundraiser," he told more than 180 leaders. "I hope to see one of you standing here instead of me."

This was the third year in a row that the Melbourne CEO, OAM recipient and former Bosnian refugee had topped the leader board – raising more than \$135,480 in 2018 and \$267,989 since he first started sleeping out in 2015. That night, he realised it was time to pass on the baton.

"What I said was really a spur-of-the-moment thing," says Vedran, "Primarily I wanted to encourage all participants to raise more funds. If we have more than one participant raising over \$100,000, that means Vinnies can do more for those affected by homelessness."

Vedran's close involvement with Vinnies Victoria comes from a deep belief that homelessness should not exist in a country as prosperous as Australia.

"Gandel Philanthropy has been supporting organisations that are addressing homelessness for many years and we will continue to do so," he says. "Vinnies is one organisation that does crucial work in helping to alleviate homelessness and helping people get their lives back together.

"By supporting the Sleepout, we not only help to raise vital funds for the works of Vinnies, but also shine light on the complex nature of homelessness. It is everyone's business to address this."

Vedran's advice to other leaders worried about how to raise the big dollars is, "Join up and just ask. All the support I receive comes from friends, family, colleagues and even acquaintances."

Arriving in Australia from war-torn Bosnia as a refugee in the mid-1990s, Vedran has no doubt that Australia is a land of opportunity – but not for everyone.

"We are very lucky to live in this great country, but not everyone is thriving. It is our collective duty to help those less fortunate and ensure they can also lead productive and fulfilling lives. No matter how small or big your involvement is, every little bit matters."



EMPATHY

VINNIES WORKS CLOSELY WITH BUSINESS, COMMUNITY AND POLITICAL LEADERS TO ENSURE OUR VALUES INSPIRE 'GOOD' IN ALL CORNERS OF SOCIETY. CORPORATE DONORS ARE VALUABLE PARTNERS ON THIS JOURNEY.

TO FIND OUT HOW YOUR ORGANISATION CAN PARTNER WITH VINNIES AND CHANGE LIVES, PLEASE CONTACT OUR MARKETING & FUNDRAISING TEAM AT DONATION@SVDP-VIC.ORG.AU OR 03 9895 5959.

A MEANINGFUL *partnership*

John and Sharon Piccolo are a dynamic husband and wife duo, widely respected for their work in the property sector and philanthropy – John is the CEO of Woodards and both are on the board of The Woodards Charitable Foundation.

When it came to choosing a charity partner to extend their positive impact in the community they had a strong vision and strict criteria in mind.

“We wanted to partner with an organisation that focused on the issues that Woodards is passionate about, had a presence in the community and that we could develop a close, working relationship with,” says Sharon.

Anchored by a workforce comprised of over 12,000 volunteers throughout Victoria, Vinnies was a perfect fit for Woodards. Especially with a shared commitment to addressing housing insecurity and an understanding of the benefits of building stronger communities. And so, a meaningful partnership was born.

“In the past 12 months, issues such as homelessness, family violence and a lack of affordable rentals have been dominating the media. These issues are perennial and warrant sustained commitment from philanthropic partners who have the capacity to make a difference,” says John. “Partnering with Vinnies is our personal commitment to leading positive change.”

The pair didn't waste any time in sharing their vision. In March 2018, they united their networks to kick things off in style with a 1920s Gatsby-style fundraising ball at the iconic Myer Mural Hall.

Sharon and a team of Woodards employees worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the evening was a glittering success. Some 280 guests raised an incredible \$56,489, which funded the purchase of a new Vinnies soup van.

This was just a warm-up for Woodards. John Piccolo was also an event ambassador for the 2018 Vinnies CEO Sleepout in June and was the second-highest fundraiser in Victoria – due in part to his willingness to match third-party donations from his own pocket. He raised close to \$70,000. His campaign highlighted the willingness of family, friends and business associates to donate to a charity that is making a difference.

For John and Sharon, partnering with Vinnies has been an amazing adventure – and it's only just begun. It is the beginning of a meaningful and worthwhile relationship to support people in need.



Food + friendship

VINNIES SOUP VANS



208,355
MEALS PROVIDED



1,184
VINNIES SOUP VAN
VOLUNTEERS



757
PEOPLE ASSISTED
PER NIGHT

EVERY NIGHT, 365 DAYS A YEAR, VINNIES SOUP VAN VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE FOOD AND FRIENDSHIP TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, POVERTY OR PERSONAL HARDSHIP.

Vinnies Soup Van volunteers, or ‘Vannies’ as they’re affectionately known, are a special group of community-minded people who listen and extend a caring hand to help people – often in their darkest hour.

Every evening, in multiple locations across metropolitan and regional Victoria, the Vinnies Soup Vans are stocked up with soup, sandwiches, drinks and other essentials like toiletries and blankets. Then they hit the streets – rain, hail or shine.

Food security is a basic human right, but the Vannies provide much more than an evening meal (or often, as is the case, extra breakfasts and lunches too). Even though each stop is no more than 20–30 minutes in duration, with plenty of people waiting, there’s always time for safe and supportive conversation, free from judgement.

SOUP VAN	YEARS OF OPERATION	MEALS PROVIDED	PEOPLE ASSISTED PER NIGHT	VOLUNTEERS	OPERATING NIGHTS PER WEEK
Berwick	9	10,392	67	165	3 nights per week
Collingwood	20	41,548	133	220	6 nights per week
Endeavour Hills	4	5,641	55	90	2 nights per week
Fitzroy	43	99,366	272	479	7 nights per week
Footscray	29	45,426	142	193	7 nights per week
Moe	21	3,719	40	19	2 nights per week
Rosebud	1*	2,263	48	18	1 night per week
		208,355	757	1,184	

*Previously known as Mary’s Van in Rosebud

WHEN VINNIES SOUP VANS HIT THE ROAD:

FITZROY 
1975

FOOTSCRAY 
1989

MOE  COLLINGWOOD 
1997 1998



Spotlight: SOUP, WITH A SMILE

The soup vans have been operating in Victoria for 43 years and have become a stalwart Vinnies service, which has stood strong amongst the changing attitudes towards homelessness and poverty. The visible side of homelessness and poverty is never an easy thing for communities to process, but when it comes to the soup vans, humanity and compassion always reigns.

This year, following the 2017 Vinnies CEO Sleepout, the service had a much-needed facelift too. Five new soup vans were purchased with proceeds from this event and a further two soup vans were purchased thanks to a generous corporate donation from John Piccolo and the Woodards team. These upgrades were well overdue and have helped to ensure the fleet is safe and sustainable for years to come.

The goal now is to grow the service – particularly in regional areas, which are feeling the impact of sustained cost of living pressures and homelessness. In 2017 Vinnies welcomed a new service in Rosebud and with the help of generous donors, it is hoped to launch others soon too.

Thank you to everyone who has donated, offered a friendly wave or volunteered their time on the soup vans to keep them on the road – this is a service Vinnies is so proud to offer. A service owned and run by the community, for the community.

A REGULAR VISITOR TO THE VINNIES SOUP VAN IN FITZROY RECENTLY SHARED COPIES OF A POEM WITH THE VANNIES AND OTHERS LINING UP FOR AN EVENING MEAL, TITLED “A SMILE”.

“A Smile”
AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Smiling is infectious,
you catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner
and someone saw my grin.
When he smiled I realised
I’d passed it on to him.
I thought about that smile,
then I realised its worth.
A single smile, just like mine
could travel round the earth.
So, if you feel a smile begin,
don’t leave it undetected.
Let’s start an epidemic quick,
and get the world infected!

VINNIES IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS TO HELP KEEP THE WHEELS TURNING ON THE SOUP VANS. TO MAKE A DONATION PHONE 03 9895 5959.



BERWICK

2009

ENDEAVOUR HILLS

2013

ROSEBUD

2017

A warm smile AND A CUP OF SOUP

'VANNIES', AS THE VINNIES SOUP VAN VOLUNTEERS ARE AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN, ARE A PART OF A SPECIAL COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO INSIST THAT EVERYONE, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, DESERVES RESPECT. JUST ASK ONE VERY SPECIAL VANNIE, ALLAN GRAY.

Allan Gray is a man with a big heart.

The 83-year-old is a celebrated YouTube identity and 4WD expert, who travels the country filming useful hacks for navigating the outback. Truth be told, he's a little bit famous, known widely as the 'engine whisperer', 'David Attenborough of four-wheel drives' and 'Svengali of motor vehicles'.

But life in front of the camera isn't his sole vocation. He's also a proud Vannie for the Fitzroy Soup Van and every Wednesday night on Melbourne's inner-city streets, he's known fondly as 'Big Al'.

Having volunteered for over 12 years, Vannie-life is part of Allan's DNA. After serving cups of soup late into the evening, he's been known to sleep in

his car under a blanket, because he's too tired to drive home. He hasn't hesitated to give that very blanket to people on the street too, who, in his opinion, need it more.

Like many Vannies, he's known for a variety of selfless and private acts of kindness – but on the streets, he always brings a big smile and effervescence, even in the face of crisis.

"Seeing the need out there – and believe me, it's everywhere – I can't stand around and do nothing," says Allan.

'Nothing' is not an option, so in typical Allan style, he makes it his mission to spread love and joy, and make everyone feel included, respected and heard. One night in particular, epitomises the Allan way of making someone's day.

The Vannies were preparing to celebrate the birthday of a much-loved regular visitor to the soup van, Keith, who always arrived at the same stop, at the same time, in hunt of good conversation – and a single cup of soup, his soul food.

Keith always wears a big, broad smile underneath his bushy beard, but has weathered more emotional storms than most people have had hot dinners. His life story, like many others, is complicated – but shared openly and with great trust with the Vannies.

That night, he was in for a big surprise.

He sauntered up to the soup van and was genuinely taken aback when everyone joined in to sing him "Happy Birthday", and Big Al handed him a birthday present – a much-loved coffee-table book, *Humans Of New York Stories*. They all knew how much Keith loved reading.

For Al, the moment encapsulated life on the soup vans. As he explains, "I just love it," he says. "It's as simple as that. The soup vans provide more than food, they provide friendship."

Allan Gray's story screened on ABC's 7:30 Report on 24 April 2018.



RESPECT

"Seeing the need out there - and believe me, it's everywhere - I can't stand around and do nothing."

— ALLAN



Seen + heard

ADVOCACY



11% RISE
IN HOMELESSNESS
IN VICTORIA OVER THE
PAST FIVE YEARS



725,000+
VICTORIANS LIVING
IN POVERTY



40% RISE
IN DEMAND FOR WELFARE
ASSISTANCE FROM VINNIES VICTORIA
OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS

SEEING SOCIAL INJUSTICES AND OFFERING VULNERABLE PEOPLE SUPPORT IS INVALUABLE – BUT HELPING THEM TO BE SEEN, HEARD AND TO CHANGE THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES, IS TRULY POWERFUL. SUCH IS THE ART OF ADVOCACY, WHICH IS CENTRAL TO VINNIES' MISSION.

When it comes to advocacy, amplifying issues of importance in the public eye tends to spring to mind. However, what's different about Vinnies, is its unique approach to leading social change.

The art of advocacy at Vinnies does not rely on the loudest voice or placards in the streets. It is anchored by powerful conversations with people of influence; research that matters; and one-on-one conversations that help to examine and respond to lived experiences of injustice in the communities we serve.

Much of this work is volunteer-led, and supported by Vinnies' Policy & Research Unit and the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee.

At the core of Vinnies' advocacy is a commitment to issues such as environmental sustainability and recycling, through Vinnies Shops; the cost of living and major utilities, through Vinnies' Policy & Research Unit; homelessness and poverty, through the Vinnies CEO, Community and School Sleepouts; disadvantage, through the Vinnies Just Art project; and a variety of unique issues that impact individuals too.

Local volunteers provide a voice to challenge stories of social injustice, everyday. These local issues are symptomatic of what's happening on a broader scale – and Vinnies helps to build pathways to government departments, politicians, businesses and community services that can help.

Stories that matter, just like this.

A woman lost sight in one eye and could no longer drive, so Vinnies helped to acquire taxi voucher concessions through her local member of parliament. Tailored assistance for recently settled refugees in the Gippsland area, to help with job applications, language skills, legal aid and more. Writing letters to pay day lenders to reduce interest charges. Working directly with utility companies to delay or prevent disconnections. Quantifying the financial support offered to families for back to school expenses and compiling a report to show how charity is filling an essential gap in education support.

Our primary focus and measurement of impact, is when we change a life. Be it one life or many thousands – that is the true meaning of advocacy at Vinnies.

Spotlight: SWITCHED ON

VINNIES HAS PUT THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE RISING COST OF ESSENTIAL UTILITIES AND THE IMPACT THIS HAS ON LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS – IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP WITH UTILITY PROVIDERS, GOVERNMENT AND MEDIA.

The Victorian Energy Prices Reports delivered in July 2017 and January 2018 are part of a national, bi-annual project which have been produced by the Vinnies' Policy & Research Unit since 2008.

These reports provide useful tools for consumers to track and access the best prices for essential utilities, and help to ensure developments in a largely privatised utilities market remain ethical – especially for consumers doing it tough.

Vinnies' Policy & Research Manager, Gavin Duffy, is a respected industry commentator who is regularly called on to discuss these issues in the media and other forums.

Here's a small snapshot of media headlines this financial year.



Power to the people

Rooftop solar saves up to \$1200 a year

KAREN COLLIER
CONSUMER REPORTER

ELECTRICITY customers embracing solar are typically saving as much as \$1200 a year compared with those with no rooftop panels. New research suggests annual bills

and energy bills with solar are \$1100-\$1200 cheaper. Vinnies policy and research manager Gavin Duffy said an "energy rich and energy poor" divide was developing on time

Anthony Wiser, Australia's head of innovative products and solution technology including controlled battery storage when it was che

Education burden battle

School costs hurt families

KAREN COLLIER

"It seems the transition years from primary to secondary school and moving to schools

Energy costs forcing locals to go without

Liz Bell

SALE'S low income earners are going without food, medicine and other essentials in order to pay energy bills that are among the highest in the state, according to a recently released report.

Prepared for the St Vincent De Paul Society, the report reveals that Sale and Latrobe Valley residents pay more for their energy than most other Victorians, because of variations in energy infrastructure.

lots of "older poles and old wires".

The society has reported a 40 per cent increase in financial support for Victorians in need in the past 12 months, and has recommended that the energy market be subject to a regulatory framework to protect consumer interests, remove confusion and "trickery," and promote choice.

The report is published as part of the Victorian Tariff-Tracking Project, which has tracked electricity and gas tariffs in Victoria from July 2008 and developed a tool for consumers to track annual bills.

Sharing OUR VOICES

HELPING PEOPLE OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF DEBT TAKES A SPECIAL KIND OF ADVOCACY – SOMETHING THAT COMES EASILY TO VINNIES' 12,000+ DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is known as an organisation that gives a 'hand-up' to people in need, particularly those navigating financial hardship. Sometimes, these same people graciously share their stories.

Raising issues through the eyes of people experiencing them firsthand is an important part of Vinnies' commitment to advocacy. When people desperately want to be heard, it can be empowering to give them a platform to speak. Vinnies volunteers understand the delicate variables of ethical advocacy and always keep their best interests at heart.

In late 2017, following the release of the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data examining household expenditure, one such opportunity emerged. Sarah Farnsworth, a seasoned ABC television journalist, wanted to know what the ABS figures meant for the average Australian family already struggling to make ends meet. The real, human impact.

The figures spoke volumes – the average cost of living for Australian families had risen significantly to \$1,425 a week, up \$190 a week from the previous survey five years prior.

When it came to selecting an appropriate family to profile in the story, conference member, Margaret Gearon, took great care to find people with the courage to speak up.

She invited the ABC journalist to meet with Peter and his partner Emily, who were desperate to tell Australia a thing or two about the debt trap. Three years ago, after having their youngest child, the young couple quickly realised they couldn't make the rent that month – or in the near future.

"We felt quite isolated," says Peter. "Things kept running away from us. Money would come in, but it got to the point that it always ran in the red. You can't be in the red for bills and stuff if you've got kids."

Thankfully, Margaret Gearon engaged her local conference to help the young family.

"For Peter and Emily, our primary aim was to take the pressure off the whole family, first and foremost, then to speak up for them and help them to establish and stick to a workable financial plan," says Margaret.

"We provided them with practical things like furniture, an iPad to assist the kids with NAPLAN tests, school uniforms, and a regular bread run. We also helped to set up a budget, which started with a generous upfront payment to clear utility bills in arrears, and have helped them stay on track ever since."

The volunteers also empowered the family by helping to secure car registration and a driver's licence so Peter could apply for work. Not to mention the little things that make family life a little more joyful too, like hampers and presents at Christmas time.

"Advocacy at Vinnies is about face to face support. It's about speaking up for a person when they can't speak up for themselves. This may include negotiating with Centrelink about a payment, speaking to a utility company about a payment plan or organising pro bono legal advice. I'm proud to say we have changed their lives for the better," says Margaret.

Sarah Farnsworth's report was informative and sensitive. The ABC evening news coverage reached audiences in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Brisbane and Perth, and more importantly, highlighted the real face of financial hardship which so often goes unseen in Australia.



"Vinnies allows us to get back on track, which helps me support my family." – PETER

Locals + Love

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING



\$44,708

RAISED BY LOCAL
COMMUNITY
FUNDRAISERS



\$91,977

RAISED BY VINNIES
COMMUNITY AND
SCHOOL SLEEPOUTS



22

SCHOOLS HOSTED
VINNIES SCHOOL
SLEEPOUTS

VINNIES VICTORIA CHANGES LIVES EVERY DAY AND MUCH OF THIS ACTIVITY IS DRIVEN AT A GRASSROOTS LEVEL, BY LOCAL BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS AND INTEREST GROUPS WHO POSSESS A WHOLE LOT OF LOVE FOR THEIR COMMUNITY.

Vinnies' community fundraising activities are initiated by community groups, workplaces, schools and people just like you. Aside from hosting a flagship event – like a school, community or corporate sleepout – there are a myriad of ways that people of all ages can join forces to make a difference.

Bosch Australia is one organisation leading by example. Bosch hosted its sixth consecutive corporate sleepout and awareness campaign in 2018. Its aim? To make a difference to people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

As part of the fundraiser, more than 60 employees, including Bosch Australia President, Gavin Smith, slept on a sheet of cardboard outside the company's Clayton headquarters, to experience a night outside in the cold.

Gavin has also participated in seven Vinnies CEO Sleepouts and empowers his workforce to donate eight hours of their working time each year to a worthy cause.

Bosch has raised more than \$130,000 over the past seven years for Vinnies Victoria and has made an invaluable impact in the local community:

- Bosch Australia employees regularly volunteer on the Vinnies Soup Vans and in the Vinnies Shop in Clayton.
- 90+ Bosch backpacks containing toiletries, beanies and blankets are distributed on the streets each year.

The Bosch team's service to Vinnies, over many years, is a fine example of how proactive leaders in business, community and government can all work together to tackle pressing issues like homelessness and poverty.





Spotlight: COMMUNITY ANSWERS THE CALL

BACK IN 2016, VINNIES VOLUNTEERS IN GREENSBOROUGH HEARD ABOUT THE PLIGHT OF A LOCAL MOTHER OF THREE GIRLS, KATHY JONES, WHO HAD BECOME PARALYSED AFTER A ROUTINE MEDICAL PROCEDURE. KATHY HAD LOST HER JOB, HER CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE – AND THEY FELT COMPELLED TO HELP.

Help is exactly what they did. Kathy's story, along with several other local families doing it tough in the area, inspired a noble community movement – the very first Diamond Valley Community Sleepout.

Since its inception in 2016, this particular sleepout has grown into a highly respected example of how Vinnies volunteers work collaboratively with local people and organisations to address rising need, in a very hands-on way.

Over the past three years, the event has raised more than \$62,000 to help people just like Kathy Jones and most recently in 2018, the event raised an impressive \$29,400.

Vinnies Victoria's Diamond Valley Regional President, and one of the event's key leaders, John Ellis, said the sleepout is a chance for the community to focus on what's really important – supporting local people who are in dire need of a hand-up.

"In the last financial year, our volunteers in the Diamond Valley Region visited 3,312 households, which included visiting more than 3,160 children, and provided valuable assistance to people in need of material aid and someone to talk to in times of crisis," said John.

The event helped to raise vital funds to support Vinnies volunteers in their efforts to reach out to people doing it tough – really tough.

"Right now in Diamond Valley there's a crisis in waiting," said John. "We're currently working closely with several families to help them out of the rental trap by providing the basics, which are critical for surviving and retaining their independence. Every dollar donated to our sleepout will help us to not only continue, but to expand this invaluable work."



**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HOST A
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY,
PLEASE EMAIL THE VINNIES
MARKETING & FUNDRAISING TEAM AT
DONATION@SVDP-VIC.ORG.AU**

Dandenong Tutoring Program

MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

VINNIES OFFERS A FREE TUTORING PROGRAM IN DANDENONG FOR NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS. IT PROVIDES EDUCATION AND LIFE LESSONS, WITH A MIGHTY HELPING OF HEART.

It's Saturday morning in Dandenong and at a large auditorium at St Mary's Primary School, there's a strange hush – despite upwards of 60 people, mainly children, sitting upright and ready in the room.

On any given Saturday, students aged eight to 18 come from 40 different schools from all over Melbourne to participate in the Dandenong Tutoring Program.

The program, which this year celebrates its 10-year anniversary, is one of four free educational services run by Vinnies Victoria, which provides assistance to students experiencing disadvantage or social isolation.

In quintessential Vinnies style, it's run by people who truly care about connecting communities. Volunteer tutors are trained

to not only improve learning, but also increase confidence, encourage collaboration and promote social inclusion. The program prides itself on providing a friendly, safe environment.

A great part of its success is its commitment to creating and sustaining relationships between tutors and students, and nowhere is this more evident than in its specialist one-on-one sub-program for children with additional needs, such as autism and mild intellectual disabilities.

As tutor Karen explains, "The same tutors come every week so the students feel confident and comfortable. We have students who initially just sat there. We had one little boy who was like that, but if he was here now, he'd be happily chatting away about the program. The change has been profound."

Qadrea is a former student who has become one of the program's greatest cheerleaders and dedicated tutors.

"I started as a student halfway through year 10," she says. "I was really struggling with homework, coursework and, well, life, really.

"It was really beneficial and, truly, if it wasn't for the program I don't know if I would have finished school. The program offered so much support. The tutors understand the pressure and can relate to you. They're there for you, and help with homework and coursework."

Currently in the middle of her teaching degree, Qadrea now helps primary school children to cope with everything to do with the curriculum – or the schoolyard.

"We chat about anything they want and then recap the past week and discuss the issues they have. Then we work together on their homework. The kids are so motivated and I think that's because we make learning fun."

She says it's great to give back to a program that gave her so much.

"I get to be creative and it helps me with my teaching. I love that it keeps me connected with kids – it's a real buzz to see a student who may have been struggling with maths or English starting to get it. That look on their face when it finally clicks. I mean, I love that."



INTEGRITY

*"That look on their
face when it finally
clicks. I mean,
I love that."*

— QADREA



Time + talents

VOLUNTEERING



6,000+
VINNIES SHOPS
VOLUNTEERS



299
HOURS OF TUTORING
BY VOLUNTEERS



12,000+
VOLUNTEERS
IN VICTORIA

**OUR WORKFORCE IS
COMPRISED OF 97 PERCENT
VOLUNTEERS. THESE
12,000+ INDIVIDUALS,
LOCATED IN COMMUNITIES
OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES
ARE THE BACKBONE OF
OUR ORGANISATION.**

Giving one's time is indeed a noble and rewarding act of community service.

The exchange that occurs between Vinnies and its volunteer workforce is as delicate as it is powerful, resting on foundations of a mission that has kept communities thriving for decades. A shared understanding that everyone has a right to be included.

This spirit of inclusiveness is what makes volunteering at Vinnies a two-way street. For many Vinnies volunteers, giving their time to volunteer is about making new friendships, gaining new skills and contributing in a practical way to support their community.





For the people they help, this value exchange is almost impossible to quantify. What is the real value of a shared cup of soup on a street corner, help in choosing a special outfit for a job interview, or a compassionate conversation with someone in the throes of an isolating mental illness?

Vinnies volunteer opportunities are many and varied, but here are just a few:

- **Vinnies Shops:** retail support in-store
- **Compeer:** friendship program to support people living with mental illness
- **Tutoring Programs:** education support programs for students from culturally diverse backgrounds
- **Vinnies Soup Vans:** food and friendship delivered through soup vans in regional and metropolitan areas of Victoria
- **Vinnies conferences:** frontline welfare support, delivered via home visitation or community assistance centres
- **Welfare Assistance Call Centre:** call centre role to triage and direct calls for assistance within the community

Spotlight: SUSTAINABLE SHOPPING

IF YOU EVER NEED AN EXCUSE FOR RETAIL THERAPY, WITHOUT GUILT, VINNIES IS THE PLACE TO SHOP.

Proceeds generated by Vinnies Shops help to fund vital, local works of charity. Every generous material donation and sale supports vulnerable local people to access the basics – food, utilities, education, medicine and more.

The very first Vinnies Shop opened its doors in Melbourne in 1926, and since then the shops have become a quintessential part of Victoria's volunteer economy. Thanks to funds raised through the shops and its fundraising programs, Vinnies relies on less than one percent government funding – which is a remarkable social enterprise model.

Vinnies Shops are long-standing leaders in promoting sustainability. By selling pre-loved goods, Vinnies diverts an enormous volume of waste from landfill. The shops support other recycling initiatives too – like partnering with local manufacturers to refurbish and sell recycled mattresses, and sharing surplus books with local schools.

Now occupying 110 sites on streetscapes across the state, Vinnies Shops are in a unique stage of evolution. They're still a source of direct aid for people in need – more than \$1.6 million in material goods were delivered from Vinnies Shops this financial year – but new initiatives like the 'Vinnies Own' range are taking shape, too. This line of low-cost products has generated over \$1.5 million in revenue in the past financial year, up 164 percent in the past 12 months.

It's heartening to know that shopping at Vinnies is helping to do a whole lot of good. So go on and treat yourself.



VINNIES WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE.
TO FIND OUT MORE OR TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST,
EMAIL VOLUNTEER@SVDP-VIC.ORG.AU

Vinnies Shops

LIFE SKILLS WITH LOVE

WHAT'S PRECIOUS AND PRICELESS ABOUT VINNIES SHOPS GOES WELL BEYOND WHAT'S STOCKED ON THE SHELVES OR DISPLAYED ON THE HANGERS.

Maybe it was something in the air or maybe it was just his mum's concerned voice in his head, but a year ago something inexplicable compelled Darren to walk through the doors at Vinnies Warburton.

What the 25-year-old can tell you, at length, was that at the time he was thoroughly sick of being unemployed. Since finishing school in 2012, Darren had just about knocked on every door only to be turned away because of a 'lack of experience'.

Darren hadn't had the easiest start to life. Born with mild cerebral palsy, he's always struggled to fit in, but one person who quickly saw something special in this 'really shy' young man was Vinnies Warburton Shop Manager, Donna.

"Very early on Darren realised that we needed help," says Donna. "We were short on volunteers and Darren started volunteering with us and then very quickly came in four days a week. He's incredibly reliable and, dare I say, enjoys the gentle ribbing from other volunteers. It was really a two-way street because we needed help and he seemed to really enjoy coming in."

Not only are proceeds from Vinnies Shops used to help fund Vinnies' programs and services, it's not unusual for the shops to provide a community service of another kind, too.

At Vinnies Warburton, Donna says that it didn't take long before Darren started showing another side to himself, such as a "smile that lit up the room" (his nickname's not 'Dazzler' for nothing, says Donna) and a hunger to learn, sharing with the other volunteers his dreams of working in the automotive industry.

"Once he gained confidence we started working with Darren to help prepare him for interviews. With each interview he got a little closer, and I'm very pleased to report that on his fourth interview he found employment and potentially even an apprenticeship, with a lovely family-run company."

Darren's loyalty to the Vinnies Shop continues with his Saturday shift.

"We're lucky to still have him on Saturdays, because not having him here during the week has been a huge loss," says Donna.

As for the 'Dazzler' himself, he knows that he wouldn't be where he is today without Donna and the other volunteers, or 'vollies' as he affectionately calls them.

"If I was to give another young person words of advice I'd say, 'Don't lose hope. Keep trying and show that you're legitimately interested, and at some point you'll get to where you want to be.'"

"Our volunteers became so important to Darren and he became so important to us," adds Donna. "He's done an amazing job and, dare I say, his mum's not the only one who's proud of him."



COMMITMENT

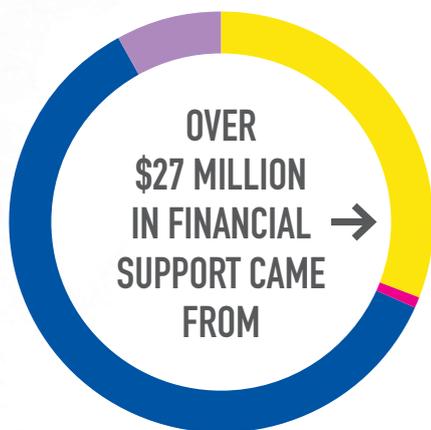
*"Our volunteers,
became so
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so important
to us."*

— DONNA

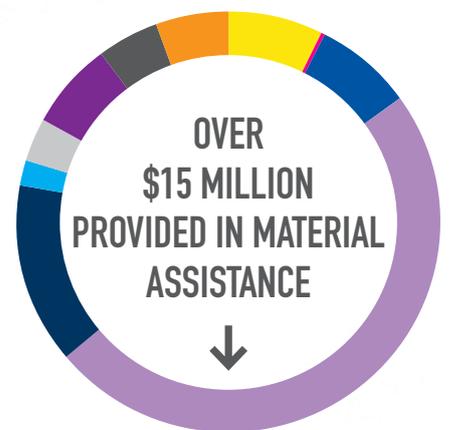


Financial SUPPORT

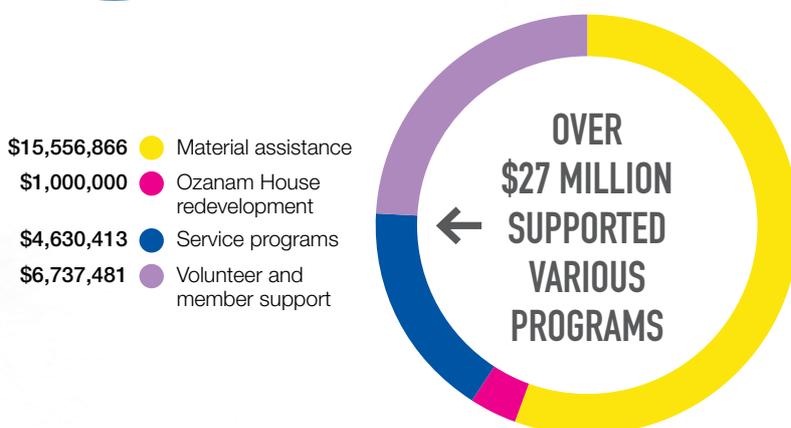
VINNIES SPENT OVER \$27 MILLION IN THE 2017-2018 FINANCIAL YEAR DELIVERING PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING DISADVANTAGE. THIS INCLUDED EXPANDING OUR SOUP VAN SERVICE, PROVIDING MATERIAL ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE IN NEED AND HELPING TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY THROUGH OUR EDUCATION PROGRAMS. ADVISORY COMMITTEES ENSURE STRONG GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP OF FUNDS TOO.



- \$8,495,660 Fundraising
- \$245,058 Government grants
- \$16,560,937 Retail sales
- \$2,215,027 Other



- \$1,151,007 Accommodation
- \$45,592 Counselling
- \$1,167,637 Education expenses, student study grants, youth services
- \$7,604,654 Food purchases, food vouchers
- \$2,159,545 Household goods
- \$301,325 Medical
- \$499,886 Overseas projects
- \$1,069,274 Other programs
- \$723,373 Transport
- \$834,574 Utilities



- \$15,556,866 Material assistance
- \$1,000,000 Ozanam House redevelopment
- \$4,630,413 Service programs
- \$6,737,481 Volunteer and member support

Thank YOU



THANK YOU TO ALL THE INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITY GROUPS, SCHOOLS, BUSINESSES, TRUSTS AND VOLUNTEERS WHO SUPPORTED THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY VICTORIA IN THE 2017-2018 FINANCIAL YEAR.

Vinnies recognises that people give in a variety of ways; some give their time, their skills or gifts-in-kind – while others give financially. We are grateful for all who support us. Thank you to the thousands of individual donors who have given generously over the past 12 months. In particular, we have received a number of lasting legacy gifts through the Bequest program. Particular acknowledgement is given for these thoughtful contributions that provide for the future needs of the communities and people we serve.

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DESIGN: Bite Visual Communications Group

PRINTING: Doran Printing

PHOTOGRAPHY: Multiple contributors. Consent is required to reproduce images within this report. Please note some library images have been featured to protect the identity of our clients.

The St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's Philanthropy Report editorial team would like to thank the vast community of writers and photographers who have contributed to capturing our year in review.

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