



# Voluntary Action Center

the heart of service in Boone County

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vac@vacmo.org



## Holiday Program



For the 36th year, our community rallied to help neighbors in need through VAC's Holiday Program. With your support, we provided gifts and food for 3,291 individuals in 948 households! Families with children as well as elderly and disabled persons were helped to have a wonderful season through the generosity of organizations, offices, churches, schools, businesses, and individuals who sponsored them for the holidays. We thank everyone who helped! And our clients are thankful as well. Here are some of their words:



**Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Your generosity and kindness mean so much to our family as we go through a difficult time. We also appreciate that you took time to select special items for each of our children. This time of year can be a stark reminder of what we do and do not have. Thanks to you, our family will have more than enough.**

Thank you so much for going out of your way to ensure my family would have Christmas this year. It is because of good people like yourselves why I have faith that there will always be better days.

I appreciate the gifts from everyone who thought about me this Christmas. All my family lives many miles away. This means a lot to me. Everything you give to me makes a difference in my life. Many blessings for all the hands that help and make time to do this for me. Thanks for all you do.

I thank all the sponsors who participate in the Holiday Program. What you do brings so much joy to the less fortunate. I've seen the happiness on the faces of children who benefit from your generosity. It's a beautiful sight!  
I appreciate you all and may you continue to be blessed abundantly.  
You guys are the bomb.com!

THANK YOU FOR THE BLESSINGS YOU HAVE PROVIDED MY FAMILY THIS YEAR. THIS YEAR HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY HARD ON OUR FAMILY BUT BECAUSE OF YOUR KINDNESS THE HOLIDAYS HAVE BECOME A LITTLE EASIER. GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!

There is no way to put into words how grateful we are for this wonderful gift of Christmas for our child. My husband had to be off work for quite a while due to a broken foot and then our little girl was in the hospital for almost a month. My stress level has been pretty high. This helps so very, very much. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

*Thank you so very much for all the wonderful gifts! I have recently graduated college and was unable to work this entire semester. Your gifts have come in handy to help me surprise my son with a Christmas! Oh, I graduated with a 4.0! I am so thankful for you and VAC for making and participating in services such as this one. You don't know how much you truly saved our Christmas. Thank you so very much from the bottom of our hearts!*

Voluntary Action Center's 10th Annual -----  
**Trivia Night!**

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Friday, February 21, 2020 • Doors: 5:30 Trivia Begins: 6:30  
At the Knights of Columbus Hall, 2525 N. Stadium  
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\$200/8-person table to play! Prizes will be awarded to the best decorated table. We will have dollar games and a raffle!

Food from D. Rowe's will be available throughout the evening.

Beer from NH Scheppers, and soda will be provided.  
Guests are free to bring their own additional beverages.

Register Online by following the link at [www.vacmo.org/donations/trivia-night/](http://www.vacmo.org/donations/trivia-night/)

Supporting Sponsor:



**Simmons Bank**  
MEMBER FDIC



On January 30th VAC participated in Project Homeless Connect at the Family Impact Center. PHC is a bi-annual event that serves as a single access point for individuals and families experiencing homelessness to receive a variety of health and human services. Services this year included access to housing information, legal assistance, employment assistance, Medicaid and Social Security applications, transportation assistance, meals, and more. Over 140 individuals attended the event.

## Homes for Computers



Voluntary Action Center's Homes for Computers program provides reformatted computers donated by the City of Columbia to families with children in grades K-12. VAC partners with the City of Columbia and the Downtown Optimist Club to put on this program. In 2019, 37 families received a computer, and to date, over 650 computers have been given through this program.

Computer distribution takes place at the Downtown Optimist "Friend of Youth" building (1201 Grand Ave.) on Saturday, February 29, 2020. At that time, recipients receive training on Internet safety for both children and adults, provided by the Boone County Sheriff's Office.

Staffing and security issues limit this program to distributing City computers only. VAC is unable to accept other computer donations at this time. To find out how to recycle old computers and monitors, search the City's "Waste Wizard" by downloading the COMO Recycle and Trash app or visiting [CoMo.gov/Utilities/SolidWaste](http://CoMo.gov/Utilities/SolidWaste).

### **A Note from Nick: It's Personal**

When people come into our offices at VAC, they come for many reasons. There is a commonality among them, of course; they are all struggling in one way or another. But for each one the struggle is individual in nature because each person's struggle, every human being's pain, is their own. It cannot be fully comprehended by another. It is deeply personal.

And so we do our very best to be sensitive to the struggle, aware of the pain, and open to whatever the circumstances are that lead folks through our door. It helps when each of us working here remembers that, in one way or another, we have been there ourselves.

So have you, right? As I heard once in a sermon, life is completely fair; it breaks all of our hearts.

When our hearts are broken, when we are in pain, when we struggle we are grateful for the support we receive – in many ways – from friends, family, and even total strangers. Relief even for a moment can make it possible for us to move on.

VAC is here to provide a moment's care, a haven of support, a season of relief that allows our neighbors who are struggling to face the challenges life has brought them - and then move on.

Every donor has their own reasons for supporting VAC. That's personal as well. I suspect, however, that there is some commonality in this: we all know what it is to struggle; we all know what it means to know someone cares; and we all want to help.

Thanks for all your support for VAC's work. We take heart in everything you do.

## **Thanks to everyone who donated to VAC through CoMoGives in 2019!**

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, VAC received donations totalling \$23,710 from 100 individuals and finishing in seventh place for highest overall amount raised.

Additionally, VAC received a challenge grant of \$1,000 from the Community Foundation. CoMoGives raised a total of \$948,552.40 on behalf of 138 Columbia area nonprofits. Way to go Columbia!



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## **Bridge Builders Society**

Getting from here to there is sometimes hindered by unanticipated obstacles. A short span of support can make all the difference in making progress along life's road.

**The Bridge Builders Society** will provide a way over the divide between need and stability for many who live in our community.

Bridge Builders Society members are VAC contributors who make our work possible, who participate in carrying out our mission: To help low-income individuals and families bridge the gaps between crisis and stability and improve quality of life in Boone County.

Society members will receive an invitation to a special event in March that will offer recognition for their participation as well as the opportunity to be updated on critical VAC initiatives.

**Become a Member of the Bridge Builders Society by donating in 2020. You will be an important partner in meeting the real, critical needs of VAC clients - every day!**

Vanguard	1875	7500+
Innovator	1250	5000+
Trailblazer	750	3000+
Pioneer	250	1000+
Visionary	125	500+



**Bridge Builders Society**



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in Boone County

Voluntary Action Center  
403A Vandiver Dr.  
Columbia, MO 65202

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To learn more about how you can support VAC's services for low-income families in Boone County, contact Executive Director Nick Foster at [dir@vacmo.org](mailto:dir@vacmo.org). From donations of money or food or hygiene products to volunteering with our programs, you can help us to make a difference in the lives of many. You can donate online at [vacmo.org/donations](http://vacmo.org/donations).

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Trivia Night:** February 21  
**Bridge Builders Reception:** March  
**Spring into Action:** May

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