

participants of "Changing Lives Forever," a St. Vincent de Paul Society program that tries to help people escape the cycle of poverty by pairing them with a mentor who makes the journey with them.

"I love that it opens people's eyes to the possibilities and gives them hope. It helps them to see they can have a future story. And it helps open the eyes of the facilitators who walk with them. If we aren't educated about each other, nothing will change. People in this program are living a stressful life in an unstable environment. When you understand that, you want to be able to help."

Rouse has had that same approach at St. Rita, where she has served as president of the parish council and a religious education teacher. She also serves as a member of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council.

She says she accepts the Spirit of Service Award on behalf of all the other volunteers of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

"Vincentsians believe that we should show people the face of Christ, and we should see the face of Christ in the people we serve. If you're doing that, you're epitomizing what we should do as Catholics, as Christians.

"As my mom says, it's all about love. The love of Christ is supposed to be spread from one person to another. That's what I'm trying to do."

### Phyllis Land Usher

When Phyllis Land Usher married her husband Bill, she joined a Catholic family that was dedicated to approaching



everyone they met with dignity and the love of Christ—which included taking care of the funeral arrangements of nearly every Little Sister of the Poor in Indianapolis since the 1930s.

### Phyllis Usher

Their marriage also introduced the Mississippi native to a world she hadn't known previously—the west side Indianapolis neighborhood surrounding St. Anthony Parish that Bill and then-pastor Msgr. John Ryan embraced.

"I fell in love with my husband, and I fell in love with the neighborhood.

Msgr. Ryan would call Bill to have him help people. My husband grew up in the parish, and knew all the people. He had friends from the statehouse to the gutter, and he treated them all the same—with respect. I saw helping people from a different light because I had not lived in a struggling neighborhood before. I saw how it opened your heart to wanting to help people."

The couple had been married 10 years when Bill died in 1993—a time when she could have left the neighborhood. Instead, the longtime educator stayed. She has continued in her husband's path, including serving as the president of the Usher Funeral Home. She has also set a new course of service of her own.

Known as "the fairy godmother of the west side," she has served as the president of the board of the Hawthorne Community Center, leading a successful \$3.5 million capital campaign.

She is also involved with Hearts and Hands of Indiana, an organization that helps low-income families and individuals become homeowners in the St. Anthony area.

She's had a longtime commitment to the Kiwanis Foundation of Indianapolis and Hope Academy, a public charter school for students in recovery from addictions.

And while her funeral home continues the family tradition of providing burials for the Little Sisters of the Poor, she's also the caregiver for a 90-year-old resident of the sisters' St. Augustine Home for the Aged.

"They are wonderful people," she says about the sisters. "It's wonderful to see how they tend to the people with such love and competence."

She has the same approach in her service to others.

"Bill encouraged me to never be on the sidelines. He thought I could do anything. That's how I found myself in this position."

### Tim Hahn

In nearly 20 years of helping people in need, Tim Hahn has been guided by this belief: "Whenever you take a little leap of faith, God won't be outdone in his generosity."

That belief took hold during the dozen years that Hahn worked with his mentor, the late Lucious Newsom, a