

A Message from President & CEO, David K. Kneipp



As we reflect on the year behind us, we're reminded that our work is rooted in faith, serving others with compassion, humility, and love.

At **VOA South Central Louisiana**, we are called to walk alongside those who are hurting, offering shelter, recovery, and hope to our neighbors in need. This mission is more than services; it's answering the call to love one another through action.

Charitable giving is an opportunity to reflect that faith in tangible ways, helping ensure that no one is forgotten and that every life is treated with dignity and grace.

Thank you for being part of this calling.

Dave

Businesses Become Heroes for Louisiana's Children and Our State's Future



We are so grateful to all of the Louisiana businesses that donated to VOA through the **School Readiness Tax Credit Program** in 2025! We received donations from more than 120 businesses in the Greater Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Acadiana, and Central Louisiana areas. Thanks to these donors, we are not only ensuring that every child receives quality early care and education in Louisiana, but we are also enabling parents to enter the workforce worry-free, knowing

their children are in a safe,
nurturing learning environment.

Here are just a few ways tax credit dollars helped improve early childhood education in Louisiana last year:

- **37 teachers attended our New Teacher Bootcamp** to learn how best to reach and teach young learners. The goal is to help reduce the rate of teacher turnover within the early childhood workforce.
- **Eight early learning centers** received complete classroom makeovers through our **Project PlaySmart Makeover Program**, with a **total investment of \$100,000**.
- **75 low-performing centers** received additional educational support to increase their **CLASS assessment scores**.
- **18 teachers** attended and graduated from VOA's "**Teacher Institute**", a 9-month program that enables teachers to earn their state-mandated Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate.



Hope Under the Tree: A Celebration of Giving

Thank you to all the donors who stepped up again this past holiday season in our effort to make Christmas merry and bright for the neediest of our clients. Thanks to your generosity, VOA's **Hope Under the Tree Christmas Annual Giving Program** provided more than **550** adults and children with gifts selected from their wish lists. In all, we received more than **2,000** gifts, generating more than **\$65,000** in in-kind donations!





Our heartfelt thanks goes out to the many supporters who made it all possible, including **VOA South Central Louisiana's Board of Directors** (*pictured below*), who provided gifts for adults with disabilities living in our Community Group Homes and even sponsored a delightful celebration dinner for the group at a local restaurant.



Counting our Blessings: Community Partnerships

So much of what we do in the community would not be possible without the support of other agencies and businesses who partner with us throughout the year. **Day of Caring**, for example, is a fun-filled community service day coordinated by the **Capital Area United Way (CAUW)** and **ExxonMobil Baton Rouge**. VOA is thankful to have been chosen for two service projects in 2025. The first provided funding and volunteers for our "Community Courtyard for Seniors". This amazing group of volunteers (*pictured below*) spent the day at **Oak Park** the week before Christmas sprucing up the back patio, pressure washing, adding a new seating area, and restoring a picnic table for the seniors

to enjoy. A second **Day of Caring** community project enabled another group of **ExxonMobil** volunteers to design and paint a Louisiana-themed children's mural for the **Kid's Zone** at our **One-Stop Homeless Services Center**.



Also In December, VOA was awarded grants from the **Rotary Club of Baton Rouge Foundation** and the **William Edwin Montan Charitable Trust** to help provide critical supplies and essential services for individuals, children, and families experiencing homelessness in the Baton Rouge community through our **One-Stop Homeless Services Center**. These grants will be used to fund critical outreach supplies for the **Day Respite Center**, such as hygiene kits, laundry supplies, shower necessities, weather protection items, and more! We are grateful for those partnerships.

2025 Thanksgiving: Love In Action



Thanksgiving was particularly wonderful in 2025, thanks to the many volunteers and donors who generously contributed to our annual **Stuffed With Love Thanksgiving Meal Kit** drive. This year, 177 meal kits were donated, packed with all the non-perishable food items and a gift card for a protein of choice, to create a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Thank YOU for making the holiday season so much brighter for the veterans, families, and children we serve!



VOA is Back in Operation at the One-Stop Homeless Services Center


On April 1st, 2025, **VOA South Central Louisiana**, in partnership with **St. Vincent de Paul**, once again took over operational control of the **One-Stop Homeless Services Center** on North 17th Street in Baton Rouge. Not only does this facility line up directly with our mission, but it also enables us to do much more for those who struggle with homelessness in our community.




The **One-Stop Homeless Services Center** allows us to serve more than 1,200 individuals facing homelessness each month, connecting them with essential support and services including basic needs, case management, and medical, dental, and legal services. There's also a **Day Respite Center** on site which provides facilities where our clients can get out of the elements, take a shower, wash their clothes, get water and a snack, and use the computer.

We are in need of local business and community partners to help support us in this vital community endeavor. **Contact Vice President & Chief Development Officer Shannon Abney** at (225) 408-3794 or shannon.abney@voascla.org for details on how your organization can get involved.

VOASCLA Named 2025 Best-in-Class Employer



NAMED A
2025 Best-in-Class Employer



VOA South Central Louisiana was recently recognized as a **Best-in-Class Employer** based on results from **Gallagher's 2025 US Benefits Strategy & Benchmarking Survey**.

U.S. Organizations are ranked according to how they support their employees' physical, emotional, career, and financial wellbeing. VOA is honored to be selected as an organization committed to its people and strategic approach to benefits, HR, and compensation. Our dedicated employees give their best every day, so they deserve only best the in return.

Save the Date for Our Annual Celebration for Change Event

Mark your calendar for our **17th Annual Celebration for Change** fundraising event to be held **Tuesday, May 5th, 2026** at the Manship Theatre.

This year's event will highlight our Early Childhood Program, **Partnerships in Child Care**. Join us to learn how VOA impacts not only the youngest learners in our state, but also empowers those who educate them, and enables parents to further their education or enter the workforce, knowing their children are in a safe and productive learning environment. I'm sure you agree, there is no



CELEBRATION FOR CHANGE

better investment than Louisiana's children.

With this year's event falling on Cinco de Mayo, it promises to be a festive celebration for all who attend! For details or to sponsor the event, go to voascla.org/cfc.

Quota Gala to Benefit Dedicated Children's Space at the One-Stop



VOA South Central Louisiana is delighted to be a beneficiary of **Quota Baton Rouge's** annual **Stars for a Cause Gala** this year! The event, which is set for Friday, March 20, 2026 at the **Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel**, is designed to bring the community together for one fun-filled night to benefit children across the Baton Rouge area.

Proceeds will support unmet needs for children through four organizations, including VOA, where funds will help create a safe, child-friendly space at our **One-Stop Homeless Services Center**. Other beneficiaries are **Capital Area CASA**, the **Foundation for East Baton Rouge Parish School System**, and **St. Lillian Academy**.

The evening consists of dinner, entertainment, and a live auction featuring celebrity memorabilia, including a guitar signed by rock legends Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Carlos Santana and Bruce Springsteen, along with luxury travel experiences. We'd love it if you could come out and support the event! For tickets and more information, [click here](#).

Our Sincere Thanks to YOU!

Thanks to generous volunteers and donors like YOU, VOA helps more than **39,000 of our community's most vulnerable residents** each and every year! We are so grateful to all of you for enabling us to fulfil our mission to reach and give hope to those in need.



THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts. We look forward to partnering with you in 2026!

DONATE NOW

MORE WAYS TO HELP IN 2026

If you prefer a hands-on opportunity to give back, there are plenty of ways you can help. You can donate your time by **volunteering in one of our programs** or **donate items** to help those we serve.

Here are just a few ways you can help:

- Put together outreach bags to be distributed at our One-Stop Homeless Services Center
- Create special Easter baskets for children in our Therapeutic Foster Care program this spring
- Donate toiletries and housing essentials for our Community Care Closet for seniors at Oak Park Plaza

For a full list of volunteer/donation opportunities, click here or contact Sarah Eunice at sarah.eunice@voascla.org or (225)964-1738.

To learn more about our programs and services, go to voascla.org.



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