

Shining a light on St Vincent's

VOLUNTEERING

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THE ST Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) in Leeds transforms hundreds of lives through its Community Support Projects.

As part of Volunteering Week (June 1 to 12) the YEP is shining a light on such projects, including St Vincent's Support Centre which provides a variety of services - including English language teaching, debt advice, counselling, cookery classes, a cafe and a community shop - free of charge to local people.

But it isn't just service users

who benefit from the supportive and friendly environment - as volunteers like Anthony also find their lives transformed by the experience. The NHS accountant decided at the age of 49 that he wanted to become a teacher of English as a Second Language (ESOL). After being turned down for volunteering at other places due to a lack of formal qualifications, Anthony was invited to St Vincent's for an assessment of his classroom skills.

He was then able to gain hands on experience of his new career. Since completing ESOL training, Anthony has carried out two assignments in Spain as well as several in the UK.



VOLUNTEER WEEK: Students on the English class at St Vincent's

He said: "The open mindedness and flexibility of the SVP shows its kindness as an organisation. Whereas I had experienced several rejections for not having a formal qualification, the SVP showed an open and welcoming attitude, inviting me to sit down and talk to them.

They also provided me with excellent support and I never felt like I was on my own as a new teacher."

Anthony is just one example as many other volunteers at St Vincent's have also developed skills, built up their confidence and gained friends and experi-

ence by helping people in need in their local community.

To find out more about volunteering at the charity, visit www.svp.org.uk, call 0207 7033030, or email info@svp.org.uk.

ONLINE: For breaking news, visit www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk

IN BRIEF

STAGE SHOWS AT THE CINEMA

YORKSHIRE: Stage performances of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and *Richard 11* will be screened at cinemas across Yorkshire later this month. Participating cinemas include Vue Leeds Kirkstall, Parkway Cinema Beverley and Odeon Harrogate. Visit globeonscreen.com for dates, times and prices.

HEART CHARITY FUNDRAISER

CITY: A Beating Hearts charity fundraiser will take place at the Barocoo Bar, Call Lane, from 7pm on June 10. The event will feature DJs Karl Dennis, Tigga, Smooth D, Amrit Bharj and there will be a raffle. All proceeds will go to the British Heart Foundation. Visit www.justgiving.com/beatingheartz to donate.

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