

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**St. Vincent's Medical Center and Aquarion Water Company
Launch 3rd Annual "House of Hope" Food Drive**

BRIDGEPORT, CT, September 4, 2013—St. Vincent's Medical Center and Aquarion Water Company are launching the 3rd Annual "House of Hope" Food Drive, running from September 16 until November 15 to reduce hunger throughout the Greater Bridgeport area. **A ribbon cutting will be held on Monday, September 16 at 11am at the House of Hope at the entrance to St. Vincent's Medical .**

Visitors to St. Vincent's Medical Center, employees of the hospital and Aquarion, and the public are being asked to drop off donations in the "House of Hope" – a special shed located at the hospital entrance for the duration of the drive.

Items collected will be delivered to area food banks, which last year received more than five tons of food from the drive. This year the goal is six tons.

The organizers ask that only nutritious, non-perishable, non-expired items be donated. They suggest canned fish, meat, soup, stews, fruits and vegetables as well as pasta, peanut butter, cold cereal and powdered milk.

"We are happy to once again partner with Aquarion to help bring food to so many families in the area in need," said St. Vincent's Medical Center President Stuart G. Marcus, MD, FACS. "Our employees and the public have displayed great generosity and enthusiasm for this project, which is so in keeping with our mission of serving the sick and poor."

"Aquarion is delighted to partner with St. Vincent's Medical Center to offer assistance to individuals and families who require a lift," said Charles V. Firlotte, President and CEO of Aquarion Water Company. "As the difficult economy continues to negatively impact local families, we hope to make the holiday season a bit brighter."

Serving this year as co-chairpersons are Lucille Bentley, RN, and Kareem Wali of St. Vincent's and Carolyn Giampe of Aquarion.

Last year's drive also raised \$3000 in monetary donations which organizers turned into more than \$6000 worth of food thanks to the generosity of [Big Y in Monroe, who offered a "buy one get one" arrangement.](#) [Stew Leonard's](#) also donated 100 turkeys to the House of Hope last fall.

This year's collection will benefit The Spooner House in Shelton, Bridgeport Rescue Mission, The Thomas Merton Center and the St. Vincent's Family Health Center all in Bridgeport

People wishing to make a monetary donation to the House of Hope may do so at the hospital information desk. Gift cards to grocery stores will also be accepted.

For more information, please contact St. Vincent's: **Lucille Bentley at 203-576-5130 or Kareem**

Wali at 203-576-5221.

St. Vincent's Health Services (SVHS) is a member of Ascension Health, the nation's largest Catholic and largest non-profit healthcare system. SVHS offers regional centers of excellence in cardiology, surgery, cancer care, orthopedics, diagnostics, women's and family services, behavioral health, senior health and an array of specialized services. SVHS comprises St. Vincent's Medical Center, a 473-bed community teaching and referral hospital with a Level II trauma center, providing a full range of inpatient and outpatient services with more than 500 affiliated physicians in more than 50 medical and surgical specialties and subspecialties; St. Vincent's College, St. Vincent's Special Needs Services (SVSN), and St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation. St. Vincent's Medical Center has received the "A" Hospital Safety Score from the Leapfrog Group two years in a row, and is one of only two hospitals in the state to receive both the Leapfrog "A" and Nursing Magnet® recognition for nursing excellence. U.S. News & World Report named St. Vincent's Best Hospital in Fairfield County and all of Western Connecticut for 2013-14 and high performing in six specialties. St. Vincent's serves as the principal clinical partner for the new Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University. St. Vincent's is also a teaching affiliate of the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and of New York Medical College. St. Vincent's MultiSpecialty Group, an affiliate of St. Vincent's Medical Center, is a clinically integrated network of primary care and specialty care providers in the community and in the hospital. Serving southwestern Connecticut, St. Vincent's Health Partners (SVHP), a physician hospital organization, provides a strategy to improve patient care most efficiently through active coordination of care and data sharing. For referral to a St. Vincent's physician or more information on programs and services, call the toll-free Care Line at 1-877-255-SVHS (7847) or visit www.stvincents.org. www.facebook.com/pages/St.VincentsCT. www.twitter.com/StVincentsMC

About Aquarion Water Company:

Aquarion Water Company is the public water supply company for more than 625,000 people in 47 cities and towns throughout Connecticut, as well as serving customers in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It is the largest investor-owned water utility in New England and among the seven largest in the U.S. Based in Bridgeport, Conn., it has been in the public water supply business since 1857. Across its operations, Aquarion strives to act as a responsible steward of the environment and to assist the communities it serves in promoting sustainable practices.

For more information on Aquarion Water Company and its subsidiaries, please visit www.aquarionwater.com or www.facebook.com/aquarionwater.

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