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## Regina Brewer interview for a Wright State University History Course

Kristi Verboon

Regina Brewer

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## Profile

Narrator Name: Kristi Verboon

Interviewee: Regina Brewer

Author: Kristi Verboon

Date of Interview: 28 Feb 2011

## For:

An interview with Regina Brewer

Course Name:HST 485-03

Professor Marjorie McLellan

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## Key Words:

Saint Vincent de Paul

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Shuster Center

Melissa Parjean

Pastor Lache

Good Neighbor House

Sinclair Community College

## Summary

Regina Brewer has worked with the homeless of Dayton Ohio for a couple of years now and it all started by taking a lost pregnant woman and her children to the Saint Vincent de Paul homeless shelter. Not knowing anything about the shelter, the sight of the many homeless people living outside of the shelter frustrated her and she felt compelled to do something. She began passing out lunches, supplies and doing anything she could to help. Her strong need to help the less fortunate stemmed from her childhood and helping her family with different community services and homeless outreaches and this has only grown stronger with time. She has since got her family, church and three young children involved and stresses the need to help others in the community. In 2010, homeless women that Regina had helped at the shelter a year prior, nominated Regina and she won the Ten Top Women of Dayton Award for all of her community work. Some day she hopes to have her own facility and non-profit organization to further assist the Dayton area.

**Name of the project director: Marjorie McLellan, Department of Urban Affairs and Geography, Wright State University**  
**Archives or repository**

**Interviewee- Regina Brewer, 2010 Ten Top Women of Dayton Recipient**  
**Interviewer name Kristi Verboon**

**Others present- none**

**Place- Sinclair Community College Library**

**Date- 28 February 2011**

**Length of recording: 01:11:22**

**Original format:**

**Setting- The interview took place on the second floor of the Sinclair Community College Library in a secluded hallway.**

**Key words:**

**Saint Vincent de Paul**

**Crones and Colitis Foundation**

**Homeless shelter**

**Dayton Daily News Ten Top Women of Dayton**

**Shuster Center**

**Melissa Parjean**

**Pastor Lache**

**Good Neighbor House**

**Sinclair Community College**

**Indexed by- Kristi Verboon**

**Index**

**0-0:00:17 Thank you and release form questions**

**00:0:17-00:06:46 How Regina Brewer's community work started**

After helping a random lady and her children find their way to Saint Vincent de Paul homeless shelter, Regina recognizes Dayton's homeless problem and describes her urge to help, especially at Saint Vincent de Paul shelter.

**00:06:46-00:12:42 Childhood and adolescent years**

Regina recalls helping with her aunt's outreach shelter and the importance of serving and giving to others in need as a young child then into her rebellious teen years, becoming a mother and finding God. She believes her family introduced the importance of helping those less fortunate and that has influenced her community with the homeless work today, therefore, she wants to instill those needs into her three children's lives as they help pass out food at the homeless shelter.

**00:12:42-00:17:20 Role Models and Mentors**

Regina gives credit to her Aunt Marjorie, her father, her Pastor Lache, her prayer partner, Ms. Betty, and her professor, Mr. Derrick Allen ,who have all in some way, encouraged and supported her community work.

**00:17:20-00:20:45 Other important causes and organizations**

Regina expresses her interest in raising money for the Crones and Colitis Foundation and other causes through 5K walks and the little boy who inspired her. She also expresses her love for Saint Vincent de Paul in downtown Dayton, Ohio.

**00:20:45- 00:24:48 In what other ways are your children involved in your community service?**

Regina expresses the importance of her children caring for those who are less fortunate and how they should do what they can, including passing out lunches and visiting nursing homes. They are also encouraged to give by donating one of their own Christmas presents to sick children at Children's Medical Center.

**00:20:48- 00:26:46 Regina's community service impacts others**

Regina has influenced her family and church members to get involved in many various ways including donating time and resources, outreach ministries and food pantries.

**00:26:46-00:31:42 Lessons learned**

Regina strongly believes one should be grateful and appreciative of you have and not to focus on what you don't have. She also appreciates her children's good health, her sound mind and her general well-being.

**00:31:4-00:36:00 Obstacles and Frustrations**

Regina recalls her once low self-esteem and financial worries that used to get in the way of her dreams.

**00:36:00- 00:38:09 Looking back, would you change anything?**

Regina only regrets not being able to start her work earlier.

**00:38:09-00:39:20 Future projects**

Regina expresses her hopes of one day owning a facility and managing a non-profit organization to better serve those in need.

**00:39:20- 00:42:58 Winning the Ten Top Women of Dayton Award**

At first, Regina was astonished and shocked that she had been nominated for the Dayton Daily News Ten Top Women of Dayton award. She recalls comparing herself to the other women and feeling inferior to the other recipients but she appreciates the experience and is honored to be a winner of the award.

**00:42:58-00:45:10 Sources of encouragement and strength**

First, Regina owes her strength and encouragement to God then to her father who sacrificed and worked diligently for his family as a single parent with three children.

**00:45:10-00:46:42 Advice for young women**

Regina's advice for young women today is to get an education, help those in need and get personal priorities in order.

**00:47:00-01:11:22 Back to Ten Top Women Award**

At first, Regina does not believe that she would be nominated for the award as she was unknowingly nominated by a homeless woman she reached out to a year ago. Regina talks about the overall experience: the preparation, meeting the other recipients, the interviewing, the commercial and the recognition ceremony.

## **Oral History Interview**

### **Name of the Project**

**Name of the project director: Marjorie McLellan, Department of Urban Affairs and Geography, Wright State University**

### **Archives or repository**

**Interviewee/narrator name- Regina Brewer**

**Interviewer name- Kristi Verboon**

**Others present-none**

**Place- Sinclair Community College Library**

**Date-28 February 2011**

**Length of recording: 01:11:22**

**Original format:**

**Transcribed by Kristi Verboon**

## **Interview transcript**

Verboon: I'm Kristi Verboon sitting here with Ms. Regina Brewer on 28 February, 2011 at 2:30. I would like to thank you so much again for coming out.

Brewer: You're welcome.

Verboon: And do you have any questions about the release form you just signed?

Brewer: No I don't.

Verboon: Alright, so to start out, could we talk about your involvement with the community and why it is so important to you? You can break it down however you want or put it into subjects or projects, whatever you need to do.

Brewer: Ok, my involvement with the community; I'll actually tell you how it began. I was just, I was with a client, I'm a home health aide, so I was with a client and we were at the Good Neighbor House and we were just sitting around talking and we kept seeing this lady walking back and forth. She had two kids with her, small kids in a stroller, one was in a stroller and the other she was holding the hand and she was pregnant. She kept walking back and forth right in front of us and I just looked and was kind of like "uh, are you okay? Are you lost"? She was like "Well actually yeah I'm lost and I'm looking for Saint Vincent De Paul" and so I was like uh,

okay, I don't know where that is. She said it was on Apple Street and I'm thinking okay, I have no idea where that is and come to find out, the pay phone that we gave her a quarter for didn't work, so I went and got my cell phone and I'm looking around like okay, where is this place? And finally I called and they told me where it was. So I said well we're, I looked for it and said is it off of Third Street and they told me where it was and come to find out, it was like two or three seconds from where we were, it was like right around the corner. So I got her and her children in my van and I took them around there and when I looked at Saint Vincent de Paul, I passed it and kind of went down in an alley way and I didn't know there was the park and the river and all that stuff back there. There were so many people around Saint Vincent and in the back of Saint Vincent, all these people just sitting in the grass, so I was like hey they must be giving away something free, you know I didn't think, and I let her out and I stopped and I was just curious and I asked one of the men well "Why are you here" and he said "I'm homeless". And I was like "Do you go in Saint Vincent de Paul" and he said "No, I don't get a chance to go into Saint Vincent because sometimes it's over crowded." He said "I sleep out here." And he started pointing out to other people who I guess they became like family and they sleep in the back of Saint Vincent de Paul in tents. So I went back there to look for myself and I've never seen homeless people, I mean I've seen them like walking around, but never actually sleeping in the dirt; never seen anything like that before in my life cause there was so many people out there. And then when I go back in the car, I was kind of discouraged and frustrated, like why are there people sleeping outside, like literally like animals and it frustrated me. So I went home and kind of thought and prayed and was like what can I do, cause there's got to be something that I can do. So after a couple of days a thought came to me, you know, well gather up some stuff and help them. So I'm like, "Where do I go first?" and so I thought, I said ok, I have a friend; her name is Quanisha, she's always cooking something. I mean massive food, she's from the south so she cooks all the time and she has food. So, I would gather up food from her and my mom and people and we just started to pack lunches and just take them. We would go down to the bakery and get bread and stuff that was like fifty cents and stuff like that. And then the first time we took the lunches, my children and I would do this together, we would sacks, paper bag sacks and write scriptures on them. My youngest daughter would get frustrated because she couldn't write at the time so I was like just make pictures. So she would make picture of us and smiley faces and rainbows and stuff and we would take them down there. At first, I thought, well maybe I shouldn't take my children, cause it was just myself and my three kids, and I said no, they need to see something like this. So we packed up the lunches in tubs. I think the first time we did it we only did sixty to sixty-five bags I think and they just had sandwiches and juice and chips and like a little snack and thing like that in it. We went down there and I went ahead and locked my door let the kids stay in but I opened up the back of my van and went to the first person and said "Would you like something to eat?" and she was like "Sure" but the I just started passing out the bags and people were just coming form the back of Saint Vincent's and in Saint Vincent and we, I took maybe fifteen minutes to pass out all those lunches cause the people were just like "Thank you" and I've never seen somebody so gracious just to get a sandwich, you know. So after that, I

said there's something that we can do, and after that we began to go to Goodwill's and it wasn't expensive stuff but it was like blankets and tents and tarps. Then I had clients trying to give away stuff and I'm like oh, I could keep that and maybe they could make it into something or you know somebody might fit it and wear it. Then after that it started to become on a massive scale when I began to tell people, like hey, there's people who are homeless and we need to help them. My church got involved and the youth would go down there and we would barbeque and things like that, and it just became something like massive and we would go down there and help them like that. Then everything else started to scale and we started going to the nursing homes and things like that, so.

Verboon: Okay, so is that, let's see, and how long ago were you starting this?

Brewer: This has been almost about two years I believe, um, things have changes a little bit because now around Saint Vincent, they have signs around saying you can't even sit here, you can't stand here

Verboon: And they have that gate.

Brewer: Yeah they have a gate now and things and I believe they made the people that had tents, move. So it's actually slowed down a little bit so now we actually go inside the shelters and my church has now incorporated a food pantry at our church and things like that so we're trying to give there.

Verboon: So, could you tell me about your childhood and adolescent years and then if anything happened that lead your heart to this.

Brewer: Okay, well when I was a kid, probably before teenage years, um, my aunt Marjorie Wingfield, she actually had a center that was called Holy Name that was on Dakota Street and she had a church that was Holy Name also and they were right next door to each other and before this whole event and the award and everything, I forgot that we would actually go to that center and my mom would take us there and we would have to help. We had like chores, we would have to clean the uh, she had like a food pantry in one section, so we would have to clean the shelves ad dust and things like that. And we would go in the other half and we would have to fold up clothes and put them in the piles where they were. And she did, I believe she gave away stuff on a weekly basis, but now I'm starting to remember different things; like we were there all the time and we would help, so I kind of think it might have stemmed from childhood, my childhood past from helping my aunt do different community work cause she was involved with the community for a very long time. She actually won the Top Ten Women Award in, I think like 1970 something, and I didn't even know till my mom found out the award and she was like, did you know your aunt Marjorie won this award and I'm like, you never told me that. She had



the paper and everything, it was yellow but you could still see everything; the award, I mean it was amazing. Um, actually then when I became a teenager, whoo, I was so bad. I actually was really, really rebellious. I mean to the point where I was just getting in trouble all the time and um, just when I became about sixteen or seventeen years old, I just kind of changed; I became very different, I started to want to know things about God and things like that and I slowed down drastically from my past of being bad and all of that. Then finally, I actually got pregnant when I was eighteen so that slowed me down a lot. Especially after having my daughter, I knew I wanted her to have a good life, I want her to have a church home and things like that and then I got saved so my life just turned around drastically from how I was in my teenage years.

Verboon: Let's see, we kind of answered a couple of these, um...so did these experiences inspire or influence you and the person that you are today with your need to help other people in your community?

Brewer: From my childhood I think it I did. I think it put something in me. As kids grow, you do put certain things inside of them and they might not remember at that time but I think my aunt and my mother; they were putting community service into me and they didn't understand they were doing that and I didn't understand that they were doing that but I kind of taught me how the process goes and things like that. Even watching my father, cause I was raised by my father, and um, watching him kind of sacrifice and watching him do things. My father did everything in secret and I think that's how I am and none of my family knew about this and they would just kind of get in my car and were like "Regina, why do you have all this stuff, why are you always caring stuff around?" I would have bags, I would have all kinds of stuff, tents and covers; they just thought my car was junky (Laughs). Then one day, my dad was like "Do you live in your car?" I'm like "No dad, it's something." Cause I didn't tell him, so I actually learned that from my dad. My dad gave to charities and stuff and I still wouldn't know to this day cause he does so much in secret because he doesn't want to get that notoriety I guess from it. So I watched him sacrifice and do things for us and it implemented in to me too like, do for others and you sacrifice for people if you care about them and things like that. So um, I think a lot of my childhood, um now I think back and I'm like wow I learned that from my parents or I learned how to give from my father or my mother. I watched them sacrifice and I watched other people in my life sacrifice; especially my aunt cause now that I think about it, it was times when the center didn't always have the funds to help a person with their bills or something like that and she would be on phone figuring out how they could get help then she would turn around and help them herself out of her pocket. So, I remember these things as a young kid, I think we were probably ten or younger and so I remember this stuff now like "Wow I remember doing that." She helped so many people in the community; we would have Halloween costume parties so the kids wouldn't have to walk around the neighborhood, she would host things like that for them and then she would have Christmas parties where the kids, we would get great gifts and it would be for the kids in the community just in case they didn't have things from home or something

like that and I'm like, I never really knew the community service she did until now; so I think she implemented a lot in my life

Verboon: That's wonderful, so that leads me to my next question; of course you're going to consider her as a mentor or role model

Brewer: Oh, Yeah.

Verboon: So you can talk about her or any others you had.

Brewer: My aunt; we didn't get to spend really a whole lot of time because she basically raised my mother because my mother and her brothers and sisters lost their parents at a very, very young age, so she raised them. We would go to my mom's house on the weekends that are when we would get to see her, she was a preacher and she raised children and I just saw her kindness and her giving spirit. She would implement so much in us, I remember staying in church shut-ins and things like that and she was such a wonderful person on the outside and in. Her life was basically striving to help others and then she died, oh it's been years since she's been gone, maybe about ten years I think. So people that have come in to my life now, of course my pastor and his wife, William Lache and Mother Lache; they are just awesome, they're giving. I see it all the time they will help people in the ministry. I mean they will take money out of their own pockets, like "Your baby doesn't have diapers? Why? Well let's go." I've seen my pastor buy people off the street clothing, I mean it's just, these people are just amazing. The pastor's wife, she'll just see a girl in there that might not have a lot or she might be a single mom and she'll take them out and do things for them like take them to dinner and all kinds of stuff and now I get to see that in my life again. They also teach me the word of God and help me along the way and things like that. But I have a prayer partner who is eighty-four years old and I never would think in my whole life, I'm pretty private, but this woman; I can talk to her about anything and we're complete opposites, well, not really, we're both; we're somewhat opposite. She has been a tremendous blessing in my life; she's a giver also, everything she has she's just like "oh just give it to somebody, make sure they have it." Just like, "wow", I mean she's amazing. And she also, she helps me with my kids. It's just like she knows me, she can look at me and say, "Are you okay?" and I'm really not I'll and try to smile and like "Yeah, I'm okay." And she'll be like "No you're not, come talk to me." So she implements things about God and giving in my life; like never quit giving because God will quit giving to you and put those little things out there. And then, another mentor in my life is my teacher, Professor Allen, I think, he's here at Sinclair, Derrick Allen. He has been a tremendous help, he actually um, before I got started going off on my own doing this, he had us do a Saint Vincent de Paul charity dinner. We were able to help with this auction and things like that. He said something so wonderful to us one day we were in class; he said he volunteers at The House of Bread. I kind of started thinking I've never heard a teacher actually talk about charity work and he spent about fifteen minutes talking about charity

work and he said why can't you give an hour or two out of your day once a month or something to help somebody else. He said "These are not people who are on drugs and people who are just lazy and don't want to work." He said "These are people who had a lot of money or have just fallen into hard times and these are people who want to work and lost their jobs. He said we go to the soup kitchen and we help them and things like that, and I'm like "Wow, that's amazing" so I wanted to see what he saw, so I went up there and I'm like "Wow, okay" but I didn't really get it until I actually saw the people sitting outside, oh man, just not bathed and their clothes were hanging on the river banks, it's very different if you actually see it up close. When you see it on TV, you're like "Oh man, that's a shame." But when you actually see someone living in a tent outside; it just changes your whole perspective about life.

Verboon: Okay, and are there any other important causes or organizations that you hold close? And why are they important to you? Or anything else that your involved with or any other groups?

Brewer: Um, some other stuff that I try to get involved with, I'm trying to do these 5K walks and runs and stuff. I was going to do the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk and didn't get a chance to do that but I did do the homeless 5K walk and um, that actually helps to raise money for different organizations, you know, when you run or walk in the 5K's. I actually like to do the runs or the 5K's now because of the fitness thing but it also helps raise a lot of money when you go out and campaign and you're like "Hey I need this or I need that." Just like the half-marathon that I'm going in June is for Crones and Colitis Foundation and that's like a digestive system disorder. I want to do this cause I met the honoree that we're running for; his name is Lucas and he's fourteen years old. If you meet this boy, I mean you would almost want to cry because he has some kind of glow and some kind of light to him. He doesn't even let his disease affect his life, he's worried about everybody else; he's worried about how it's affecting his parents and the money aspect of it. He's like "I know my parents don't have the money to keep buying my medicines." And the way he talked about how his disease affected everybody else's life, I'm thinking in my head that you can tell that he's in pain just talking to us. He's in pain everyday of his life but he was still worried about somebody else. I said "Man, this little boy, fourteen years old, has this horrible disease is thinking about others and here I am; I can walk and I have the activities in my limbs. I can't be selfish, I can't just think about myself. We need to also think about each other, we all need to start doing that. We need to think about how this can affect someone else. So I'm starting to want to do those, the runs, and to just get involved in different organizations cause I think once we help each other, it not only helps us and we feel good , but it's like we're all one body, you know, if one of us is affected then we're all affected. I do love Saint Vincent de Paul; they do a tremendous job, every year, every day keeping people. Some people might complain about it but for them to stay open and be as clean as they are and be as helpful as they are and the different resources that they have are awesome. And the men's Gateway Shelter is good too, the men that are in there, I mean, they humble them self just to go

in there. We went in there to do a barbeque, some of the people in my church and we took mostly men but it was like three of us, three women and the men went and witnessed to them and some of them just broke; just like I never thought I would be here and I never thought my life would end up like this. And for you to see a man just kind of break and humble them self and kind of cry and humble himself enough to go to a shelter; it just like a life changing event.

Verboon: Okay, so you spoke how you get your children involved with the lunches, how else do they get involved or how do you, I mean obviously it's important for them to see what you're doing and do they do anything else with you?

Brewer: Um, what we do now is, since there not of age to go into Saint Vincent's or the Men's Gateway, so what we do now is they draw me pictures or they draw pictures for anybody or they bring home tons of artwork, so my idea was, cause its special to them, not to throw is way behind their back because that's what I used to do like "Oh we can't keep all this" and throw it away. But I came up with an idea that hey, we'll take it to the nursing home. So we take things to the nursing home and they fight over it like its precious gold. So my kids, they get amped, like "I'm going to make this for such and such!" And we go and we sing to them, cause the nursing homes don't mind the ages of the kids, we'll sing to them or we'll go and play games with them um, just different things like that. I haven't figured out what else we could do; I think we're going to adopt a park but were going to do it with our youth group at church and there going go and do things like clean. There're also going to do a 5K bike-a-thon or something this June. So I'm trying to get them involved in different things. This Christmas, they went to Children's Medical Center and they had to pick a Christmas toy from under the tree, they didn't know what it was

Verboon: One of theirs?

Brewer: One of their Christmas toys and then I kind of thought it was bad and I was like "Go ahead and open it and see what it is at least." And they had to take one toy from their little pot or whatever, their little pile and they had to give it to one of the kids at Children's.

Verboon: That's so good.

Brewer: And at first, they were like "Do I really have to?" but my oldest daughter; she said "Can we give more?" After she was able to see, because they were kind of thinking like "I got to give away my toy?" when they found out what it was and I was like "You can put it back if you want." But they decided not to, they were like "No, one of these kids might need this toy." or "They might feel happy" or "Will they not be sick if I" and I try to explain to them "well you know, they are sick" and things like that "and just because you give them a toy doesn't mean they will be cured but be happy." So they were finally like let's go and do it and see the kids and give the gifts. My oldest daughter said "Can I give more, what else can we do?" You know, they

felt great about giving and then it was wonderful because when they gave up one of their toys; our church did a “Toys for Tots” and like our elder sister Brenda, she gave my kids just little toys and stuff and they were like “Wow, we get all of this?” and she was like “Yeah, you can have it” and I was like “See, when you give; more comes back to you when you do that.” So they were like well okay “Who else can we give to?” you know. So I think it’s important for kids to see thing like that and to see sick children because now my kids, they appreciate a lot of things. They’re like “Mom, I love you thanks for cooking us.” When they used to take things like that, I can’t say that they took me for granted or the things they had for granted but when they able to see people sleeping outside; I mean there was a man literally sleeping in the dirt and sleeping out there and I explained to them and they cried and was like “Mom why is this and that?” they would get home and they would make up their beds and they (laughs) would just be grateful, and I was like “wow”. They need to see things like that, they need to see the sick kids and know that they are blessed and they are able to run and walk and so that’s why.

Verboon: That’s wonderful. So has your community involvement impacted any other aspects of your family or any other people?

Brewer: I think so, actually my mother and my father I think they always give to different places and I’m starting to see, they will call me like “Regina, hey we got some stuff for you to take” cause now they know what I’m doing. My sister actually, my youngest sister, she’s kind of busy right now but she’ll be helping me do some of my future stuff. And then my oldest sister had gotten involved with her church pantry and things like that. I think it’s really mostly impacted my church family um, more than anybody else because I got them more involved because I thought it was something that would benefit everybody as a whole especially in the church. We started getting leaders doing and things like that; they would come with us to barbeque and it just got people doing things just on a different scale. One of the elders in our church, elder Cornelius Henderson, he decided to do this thing which was awesome um, there was a girl he found out, he had her son or something like that. He took the boy home and they had absolutely nothing in their house. When I say nothing, I mean they nothing in there; no TV, no couch no nothing. And he ended up finding out that weekend cause the boy came over to play with his son, to spend time with him and his wife, they found out that his shoes were like two sizes too small. So he came up with this thing right before Christmas to furnish their whole entire home. So, I’m like “Wow”. And he, I think they put the Christmas tree up and put gifts under it and bought her kids clothes and things like that. I think just starting this has impacted different people in my life, so.

Verboon: What lessons do you carry away from the work you do?

Brewer: Um, number one is to be grateful. There was a time in my life where I just thought that I didn’t have anything. I’m like “Oh I don’t have a nice car or I don’t have a nice home.” Not to say that I was materialistic but the world that we live in, you look on TV and everybody is

glamorous and then when you look at yourself you're like "Oh I just got this little car, I just got this little apartment or I don't dress like everybody else." But it don't matter; none of that stuff matters, I mean, yeah it's good to look nice and it's great to have a great home and drive a nice car but really when it all boils down, it really doesn't matter. I've learned to just be grateful for the things that I have. I might not have a mansion and things and I probably don't need one. But I have a roof over my head, I have running water, I have healthy children. That was another thing I kind of took for granted; that my kids were healthy, you know I just expected them to come out and just be fine. But just going down to um, looking at Saint Vincent's and going down to Children's and doing some of the work at children's services I kind of look and I'm like "Man, I'm grateful because my kids are healthy." And it's pretty much like every day, they might get the common cold or something like that but their generally healthy children and I appreciate that. I also just appreciate life in general and I appreciate having a right mind. That's one thing, meeting some of the people; their mind is just not in order, it's just not there. I was talking to one of the ladies down at Saint Vincent's and she said "Really, Regina you have to have different mindset when you live out here because it's not normal. You become like animals, you get animal instincts she said because you're trying to survive and wear away the elements of the day. And she said "When I'm out here during the day, it seems like forever. Like the days are a hundred hours long." And so their mind set does change when they are outside. So, I'm like "Man, I'm just grateful for a right mind". And I remember meeting one man who said "Well they found me a home." He had been on the streets for I think about six or seven years and I never even thought how you can be on the streets for six or seven years in the elements in Ohio weather, oh my goodness, it's crazy. And you live on the streets? He said "Well they found me a home but I'm so used to being outside." And I said "You have an apartment now?" and they were telling him "Lucky, go home!" I think his name was Lucky or something or that's what they called him, there like "Lucky, go home, you got a place!" and he's like "No, I want to stay out here with you guys!" So you can kind of see some mental disorder cause he was trained to be outside and when he was able to have a home, it was not normal for him and he's like no I want to be out here, and it was just; that was amazing to me. Um, I've also learned sharing is the best way. I can't say that I was a selfish person, cause I don't think that I was, but I wasn't as giving as I am now. I don't give away everything, you know, but there are some times where I might not have it that day, cause you see so many people now out panhandling or they just stand out there and have their signs and things like that, now I'm more cautious like okay well if I don't have it this time then next time I'll have it or if I have some spare change or something I'll run to McDonalds and buy them something and like "Hey did you eat today?" and give it to them; I'm a lot more generous than I used to be. And I embrace that because throughout this, it has helped other people to give and people give right back to me, and it's just, cause you need each other. I was kind of almost in a box, um, I would be out but I was kind of one of those people like I could give out but I couldn't receive back. I'm like no I don't want anyone doing anything for me, that's not right, you know; but now I receive it cause we all need to kind of help each other; make giving and sharing contagious because we actually do need each other. The economy is

hard and for us to kind of say oh, we don't need one another, that's not true; we do need and for me to say that, cause I'm like I don't need anybody; that's how I used to be. Now I'm just seeing that we need each other like never before cause times are hard and if we keep going the rate we're going, man, it's going to be scary.

Verboon: What are some of the obstacles and frustrations you've dealt with in the past and have they changed anything about you?

Brewer: Um, I think like I was talking about myself; I think one of the biggest obstacles in my life was myself. I was always one of those kinds of people that I didn't need anybody and I was always very, very hard on myself; making mistakes and things like that. So it kind of made me push other people away, so when I would push other people away I was almost isolating myself. Like I would go to church and I would go to work and things like that but I never developed a relationship with anybody really fully and some kind of pushing myself and shunning myself away, I think actually blocked some of my progress because I think I would be further along than I 'm now without blocking people out and no I don't want to be around people. But just this whole experience has just brought me closer to people. I was so introverted and now I'm just so out there I'm like "Hey everybody!" I'm smiling all day and saying hi to everybody when I was always generally a happy person but I didn't want that barrier, I was no I don't want people around me. It was kind of weird but now that, just being able to see people and see the impact you can have on someone else's life; you're like hey I want to be out her, I want to help people, I want them to help me, you know, so I think that was biggest obstacle; just getting over self-esteem problems and stuff like that. And I think that's one of the biggest hindrances of people, if I can say that. Esteem, and I try to put uh, implement good self-esteem into my children cause I think it will take you along way if people had better self-esteem about themselves. We would probably all get along better and we could help each other along the way if we had better esteem but with me having really poor, low self-esteem, it made me not even know my self-worth. So, if I dint know my self- worth, I couldn't help anybody else, you know, with theirs. If anybody tried to help me with my self-worth it was like "whatever" cause I didn't value the way that I was or anything like that. So just this whole experience has been really, I know its God that's changed me but with this whole experience; it's helped him change me. So I can't give credit to no one else but God cause I know it was him. But, um, it just been a wonderful experience but I think that was just one of my biggest obstacles. Another obstacle that I thought was an obstacle, but I really wasn't; I kind of told myself I don't have the kind of finances to do this stuff, I don't have any money, I'm not rich, (laughs) you know, where am I going to get these resources and resources just became available. There are so many things; non-profit organizations they give away so much stuff. Kroger's was one of the places I just wrote a letter telling them what I was going to do and I'm like, I'll bring in pictures and verify everything and I'm not just trying to take this stuff; they give away so much stuff and Meijer's and different companies that you wouldn't think will donate and help you. Then people just start kind of coming together, like I

said my family was just like “ Hey, I have this old tent over here I’m trying to give this away, do you know anyone who wanted it?” It just seemed like God just sent resources. People would just call “Hey Regina, I heard you were collecting clothes for something or you know, come over here and get these fifty bags of clothes (laughs) and go through them.” So I thought that was an obstacle but it really wasn’t.

Verboon: Okay, would you change anything or would you do anything different, looking back?

Brewer: I would not change anything. The only thing that I would change is not getting started sooner. If I could have done this sooner I would have. I’m twenty-seven, I’ll be twenty-eight in April, and it took me all these years to figure out what motivates me and what drive me. I have tried so many other professions, I wanted to be a journalist, I wanted to do, I was in school for nursing for years trying to get my nursing degree.

Verboon: Is that what you’re doing now?

Brewer: I’m actually doing culinary arts now and I have one quarter left of internship and I’m done in the spring, after spring.

Verboon: Oh, wow

Brewer: So that’s what I, I’ve always loved pastry and decorating and things like that but I kind of got off track and I thought that becoming a nurse would be stable for me. I did like the aspect of the clients because I do love the elderly.

Verboon: And you do the home care.

Brewer: Uh hmm. I love the elderly, I can sit and talk to them all day; and I do. And they implement so much in my life but if I had known that there was so many people, I mean you know there are people less fortunate than you but you don’t think about it like that. You’re just kind of like “Oh man, people in Africa, poor people.” But you never actually think here in Dayton, Ohio, there are actually literally people that have the card board boxes and they have the blankets outside and even though you see it; you don’t see it, you’re kind of blocked away from it. And if I would have started this earlier, I’m thinking like maybe by now I would have a building or been like Saint Vincent de Paul or maybe I would have had a non-profit organization because this is what I really want I want to do in life. I want to go this way and I think if I would have had my way, I would have done this a little bit earlier.

Verboon: So that would lead me to my next question; are there any new events or future projects you would like to share?



Brewer: Actually I'm um,

Verboon: As you mentioned the 5Ks

Brewer: Yes the 5Ks and the half-marathon that I'm doing for Crohn's and Colitis. There's also a building that I'm looking into. I'm just enquiring about it right now, it's empty and it's actually what I want to do. I can't actually say exactly what it is but it's more on a non-profit community of CL basis so maybe I can refer back to this in a couple of years when I actually get the building. I can say "Hey, I had this vision for um." And it's dealing towards the homeless; I want a really nice building that I can help them in and I'm kind of enquiring about it now. I'm like okay, after I graduate then I can kind of stay focused on this project because if I get my way and I get this building, it will be so different that this city has never seen before so hopefully...

Verboon: Dayton needs something.

Brewer: Yeah, hopefully I can get this project underway.

Verboon: Wonderful. Okay, let's shift to receiving the Top Ten award and what does it mean to you.

Brewer: Well, at first I didn't even know about the award

Verboon: Okay then tell about how you found out about it.

Brewer: Now that I have it and I was nominated for it; it means a lot to me because, not that I didn't see myself as important but I just kind of saw myself as ... Regina, you know, average Joe. And for someone to actually see me as something different than a single mom and student at Sinclair the average kind of person: I think it put something inside of me, like Regina, you'll make it, just keep helping people or just keep doing what you're doing because you'll make it. And being able to be around the nine other women that won this award um, I think 2009 Marsha Bonhart; I'm like Marsha Bonhart? That's like my.. I don't know her but I see her all the time (Laughs) I'm like hey, it's Marsha. And the other nine women like Shawon Gillette, we still talk to this day, she was, she is a beauty salon owner and she's going to have her beauty salon and stuff at Children's, for her to do the wigs and the things that she does and the other women; just for me to be, I felt inferior to just be honest with you. We were sitting around this big conference table and they were like "Okay go around and say who you are." Someone was talking about nuclear science and tissue, and I'm like, I don't even know half these words and I'm kind of like sitting there in shock and I was embarrassed; like, "Why am I here?" (Laughs). And then Shawon went right before me and started talking about these wigs that she donates for Cancer patients

and stuff; I just kind of put my head down and thought. Ms. Miles, Denise Miles from the Dayton Daily News, she said “Okay Regina, you’re next.” And I said “Okay, I don’t even feel I need to be here, I’m just Regina.” And everybody started to laugh and I really felt inferior to these women because they do so much in the community that I was just like “What do I do?” but then I thought about it and just being able, people recognize me from the paper, like “I know you from somewhere.” And I’m like “oh you probably know my mom or something.” “No, I know you from the Dayton Daily News.” And I’m like “Wow, me?” “I’ve read your story and it was awesome.” And I’ve had people e-mail me and Rhine McLin even sent me a letter and I’m like “This is Rhine McLin!” (Laughs) just sitting here like “Oh my gosh!” just for people to, just for women in general to be able to receive an award like that I think is awesome because it shows you how far we’ve come. Women couldn’t even vote at first and women couldn’t even get jobs, we were basically like shoved in the home like you can’t do anything, you’re worthless. But now to honor women every year, spectacular women that just do so much in the community. It just shows how powerful we are really, so.

Verboon: Okay, let’s see what or who are your sources of encouragement or strength?

Brewer: My first has to be God, of course. He is my strength, he is my life, without him I would die, I would be nothing. And just reading his word just gives me strength and encouragement. My father is my strength, just to see the things he goes through on a day to day basis and the things that I remember him going through trying to raise three kids by himself. He is my strength because now I’m raising my three kids by myself pretty much. And it’s just like wow, my dad, if he could get up and like a lot of times we didn’t have a lot of money and we didn’t have a car and every single day, my father had perfect attendance at Dayton Public Schools for nineteen years. A lot of those years we didn’t have a vehicle and he would get up in rain, sleet and snow and walk from Jefferson Township to the Dayton Public Transportation, which I can’t even fathom on how many miles that is; I still haven’t looked it up. But he would do that and the only reason he would do that is because he had three little ones looking at him and if he was to lose his job then we would lose our home; and if he was to lose his job we wouldn’t have lights we wouldn’t have food, anything. So to see him do things like that and to see him sacrifice; and he didn’t have but he wanted to make sure we had. He is the best man ever and the best man that would even come close to my father is my husband when I get one. But just to see my father, is like, that is the strongest man I ever probably will ever know in my life. I love my pastor too because he is a strong man also and his wife, their encouragement in my life. And like I said my prayer partners and my teachers and things like that but those are the people that I keep glued to me and stuck in my life.

Verboon: What advice can you give to young women today?

Brewer: My first advice would be to go to college; that's my number one thing I believe. Well, number two, of course get a relationship with God so that he can lead you to the right path or what you need to do and then you can go off to college. I say go off to college or get a trade because it's your life. Since I've been in college, I've learned so much stuff and been able to implement it; communications and math and it's just broadened my; I think it's just given me a little bit of wisdom, just going and learning different stuff like "Hey, didn't know that!", the they have you read current events and thing things like that. So it helps you along the way if you get an education. I say to a young woman, when you're young, do everything you want to do; travel and get your priorities in order or save money, the things that really help. I say be generous and give. Keep your eyes open and see where you can help cause there's always help needed. Um, I would also say just get you together basically. That's my whole overall thing, if you get you together then you can help somebody else; if you don't have yourself together a lot of times, you won't be able to help anybody else. And I think that's our main focus; to help and serve one another here.

Verboon: Wonderful um, any other advice, stories or words of encouragement?

Brewer: Um, some other stories or sources of encouragement um, I would actually just say one other story that I would like to share about Ten Top Women Award was how I was nominated. The nominator was actually a lady named Cynidia Henderson who was a homeless lady. I actually remember who she is exactly now. She lived down in, behind Saint Vincent de Paul and she was one of the ladies that said, she said "Well, I know you guys are doing your best to help us." And we were at the barbeque with our youth and she said "Anybody, next time you come, could bring like toiletries and things like that to help us out." I actually really remember who she is because we would go down there and have Bible studies with her and the other people and the funny thing about it was how this women, I believe I told her my first name, I don't remember telling her any other information about me; she knew what church I went to because our elders would come down and we gave her a Bible and I wrote just something encouraging and I might have signed my name; I do remember putting Regina but I don't remember putting my whole name. But this woman, I don't know if she saw an ad in the paper or something on the internet or something about the Ten Top Women, and she decide to nominate me at a public library.

Verboon: You had no idea?

Brewer: I had no idea cause I hadn't seen this woman in a couple of years, not a couple of years but a couple of months or whatever or might have been about a year or so since I've seen her. And I finally get this call one day, it was a shock to me that I was even home because I'm usually busy and this lady calls and she's like "Hi is this Regina Brewer?" I'm like "Yes?" I'm like dang, who is this, who do I owe now? I'm like oh, my goodness so I'm kind of trying to disguise my voice (laughs) but I didn't. So I'm like "Yes this is Regina Brewer?" she's like "Hi,

I'm Denise Miles from the Dayton Daily News, I'm the event coordinator, I just wanted to let you know that you have won an award." I'm like, so I say "Quanisha, quit playing." One of my friends and we call each other Publisher's Clearing House and like "Hey you just won ten-million dollars, you know so I'm thinking it was her. And she's like, "No, my name is Denise Miles from the..." so I kind of listen to the voice and I'm it doesn't sound like her so I look at the number on the caller I.D. and I said 225, that's a Montgomery County number. So I just sat and I listened to her and she said "No, you've been nominated for the Ten Top Women Award." And I said "Why" (Laughs), like I was literally arguing with this women who's just trying to give me an award and I said "Why?" and she said "Well because of the community service you do." But I thought it was Melissa Panjean from Saint Vincent de Paul like oh, maybe Melissa put my name in or. But she said "Well, your nominator is Cyndia Hnederson." And I'm like "Cyndia Henderson? You mean Cindy Henderson?" cause my dad has a friend named Cindy Henderson but I have not seen her in years since I was a kid and I thought and I was like no, I couldn't be her. And she actually read a little part of it where Cyndia actually told them she was at the public library and she gave them my name then she knew that I went down to Sinclair; cause I was actually getting some of them to come here, I'm like " you could probably try to get financial aid and things like that." So she actually gave them the wrong Sinclair e-mail but I think Ms. Miles or somebody on their team, they looked up my information and I think they got my address and my number and things like that. read me a little bit of what Cyndia had said about me. She told me "Now this is a secret." I'm like "Dang, why?"(Laughs) and she said "Until your background check comes you can tell other people but until your background check clears, you won't be able to; you know tell anybody." So my whole thing was like, oh no background check? (Laughs) I was thinking like I didn't have a bad (laughs) background but I'm thinking of things in my head like, could that... you know, could I have a bad background check for that? What did I do, hmm... what else? (Laughs) You know, so I was just like, what if my back ground check doesn't come through? So I had to keep this a secret for almost a month cause one of the ladies went on vacation so she didn't get my paper work in time so then another lady had to transfer it to her so I was a pretty decent process. So finally she e-mailed everybody and said you can tell your family now. I think the first person I told was my beautician then I called my dad then I called my mom and everybody's response, except for my beautician, was "Why did they pick you?" (laughs) because like I said, none of family knew anything about what I was doing; they just figured well Regina just keeps a junky car and she's always collecting things and she's probably a pack rat at home and they know I'm not. But um, my father, his response was "You got a Top Ten Women Award?" And when I called my mom, she said "No you didn't. Why?" because she knew exactly what it was. So everybody else in my family was like "Regina got a Top...? Why?" and then when they began to find out why, it was just. But going back to the actual award itself, the banquet actually was phenomenal. I had been nervous because they did little things for the up and coming event. Like they had us do a commercial for Channel Seven and I was just like, oh no! It was funny because I began to train myself speaking in front of a television set. So I watched America's Next Top Model (Laughs), you know when they have the Cover Girl

commercial; I watched, I've never seen America's Next Top Model but I knew they practiced for the Cover Girl commercial and you have to do all that. So I learned from Tyra how to sit in front of the television and you have to be kind of overly perky but not too fake. And I sat there and watched probably six seasons and watched them all the way through and watched how they did the Cover Girl commercial and saw different commercials that they did and I said "Hey, I'm ready!" I went to Chanel Severn and the first take that I did because it was phenomenal and the lady was like "Wow, you're a natural!" and I'm like "Thank you!" (Laughs) you know, and I finally told her I've been practicing. So the last five clips she said "Let's just do for fun and she said the last one that we do just go all out." And they used the "all out" one, they didn't use the perfect one that I did, they used the one where I was like... (laughs). That was really a different kind of experience because I've been on television but not like that; to actually speak into the camera and say different things and how impact the community and how I want to inspire and things like that. They showed our commercials during the news break and ohh, it was something different. Then they hosted this banquet down at the Schuster Center; which it was gorgeous down there. They had probably over a hundred tables that sat maybe teen people. This banquet was filled with presidents and CEO's of businesses and things like that and our families of course. We had to prepare a two-minute speech, so of course two minutes felt like eight hours for us but I didn't write; oh, going back to the commercial, I didn't write what I was going to say until I was in the parking lot of Chanel Seven (Laughs) cause nothing would come to me. And so I was okay, I'm here and I don't have anything to say. So I sat in the parking lot and was like oh this great, I'm going to use that. But I wrote my speech the morning of, not that I'm not a procrastinator, cause I am, but I couldn't get what I really truly wanted to say. Ms. Denise Miles, she told us um, that the people, we weren't there just to honor people like "I give an honor to this person and this person because they're great." She said that we need to focus on who we were; and that was kind of hard for me, not that I couldn't just sit and talk about myself but I really didn't think it was about myself. And I wrote it the morning of and I took out my little time clock and I'm like okay, one minute and forty-six seconds, okay I'll slow it down a little bit. Then I timed it and it was one-fifty-five exactly. And what I decided to write about was the stories of people; I didn't want to write about myself. I wrote about the different people that I met. This one homeless guy, I believe he was a lawyer before he was homeless. And it was actually another lady who told me his story because he was so out of his mind. And when you looked at this man, you could look and tell and see greatness in him; even though he was really, really hairy and he was dirty. Just his face, he looked like he was a millionaire or something I mean, you could just see the greatness in his face and she told us that he had lost his parent, both of his parents in a fire and that kind of took a toll on him and like no less than a month later he lost his daughter and his wife in a car accident. And through depression and mental anguish and things like that; he lost his mind, literally. He stopped going to work, he was just overly depressed, bills started piling up and he lost everything. And, this man, you actually could look at him and tell he was something, but his mind; I mean, to lose your parents then a couple weeks later, lose your wife and your daughter. When I heard that story, you would just see him and he would talk to

himself and he would just start to scream. I'm like "Wow, this is a man who had a great career and probably one of the greatest futures ahead of him and here he is on the streets." So I wrote about him and then I wrote about a family I met and the father, the mother was actually a homemaker and she just took care of the domestic stuff, but the father was working full time and they didn't have the best of everything but they had a little something. He got laid off of his job then they had to dip into their savings and I believe they cashed in 401Ks and things like that, then the money, cause they couldn't find another job, the money ran out. Then they found themselves, they were in Saint Vincent de Paul, like man, how did I get here. Cause a lot of times, Saint Vincent, they will take families before they take anybody else, so they were fortunate enough to get inside Saint Vincent and to stay. But he was like "I'm still looking for work and I've been out of a job for about a year now, you know, so it was tough on them. Then a woman that I met that had four kids and she said for a couple of days, her and her children stayed outside and they were living in her car and said "Listen, I just couldn't keep up and then when I lost my job, I could keep up with anything else and we got evicted." And I was like "man", and in every story, I saw myself and said "Man that could have been me." Especially the girl with the four kids, I'm like "Man, that's like me all over again." Cause there are times when you do struggle in your life and you're like man, I gotta pay this and I gotta do this and sometimes you're like I'm stretching every penny that I have. So when I saw her and I saw her kids I was just like, man that really, really could have been me. So it just motivates me more to help cause I'm like that really could be me. And just that whole banquet, I just decided to focus on those stories then I was kind of able to just connect and say "Let's make giving contagious" I think I said let's start at Dayton Ohio and spread it all across the world. So basically, they were saying the title of my speech was "Making Giving Contagious." And another lady, hers was ,Shawon actually, it was the "Circle of Friends" And she was basically talking about the wigs she was providing for the cancer patients and basically she couldn't do it without her support system, just her family and her husband and different people in her organization. And Cathy Ponits, from "Care Source", I believe, she talked about her circle of friends and how things wouldn't be, that Dayton wouldn't be what it is without these different kinds of people. I mean, just to hear these stories of these phenomenal women; going around and renovating these houses in Dayton, that are run down and you would think no one wants them; they make them beautiful. So, um, the banquet its self; it brought us close together, the other nine women and myself. Arundi, who was the, she works for the B to B, she's the editor I believe, Arundi Cox. She hosted dinners and stuff and we went to Side Bar and things like that and we were able to talk with each other and things like that and we would just have little things. There was some other thing, I think we met up, oh it was practice, we met up and were able to talk and share stories. The day of, I was so nervous my stomach was cringing and so I called my prayer partner, Ms Betty, we call her "Smiling Betty" cause she smiles all the time and she said "Honey why are you nervous?" and I was like cause I gotta get up and speak in front of these people, what am I going to say, I'm just now writing my speech and I don't even have it all prepared." And I was just babbling on and she said "Well honey, all you gotta do is put your hand out, take God's hand and walk up there with

him.” I’m like “Why is she telling me this, I need encouragement!” (Laughs) and you know what? I was nervous when we first got there, we walked inside the Shuster and they had my family go a different way, they had to go sit at the tables, and I went in this back stage part where they had. They gave us these gold pins, oh, from James Jeweler and they were like 24 karat gold pins that said Top Ten Women and then they gave us these beautiful blue corsages that had ribbon that said Ten Top Women and they gave us these goodie bags with Macy’s gift certificates we even got an umbrella that said Dayton Daily News Top Ten Women. So we were in the back like, yeah look at us! We were all just sitting back there and these women were just so organized; they had their stuff typed up (Laughs) and I’m thinking oh no!. I’m just now writing, I had this little crinkled up piece of paper and I’m just now writing my speech on the index cards and I’m looking around and didn’t want anybody to see what I was doing. Then Denise came in and said “Ladies your going to do a wonderful job and don’t be nervous” and were thinking like yeah, cause you don’t have to get up there, you know. We stayed back there for I think about an hour or so then we were able to come out and we were on this big stage and had a chance to look out on the crowd and it was really, really, nice. We had this wonderful pasta dish and dessert and things like that. So lucky for me, I was number one cause my last name starts with a “B”. so I had to be first but Arundi, she did such a great job introducing us; her and I met at the Golden Nugget to kind of go over some of the questions she was going to put in her introduction. We didn’t know what she was going to say about us before hand, but she did such a great job introducing us. Then we had to go up and say our speech and during a luncheon, they had our vignettes, or commercials playing so my family didn’t get a chance to see mine, but they got a chance to see it there. And afterwards, we all just kind of went our separate little ways; some of us will still talk, we’ll e-mail each other. But the banquet was just a really different experience because it was being taped of course then there was photographers everywhere um, it was very different. I got a chance to meet some really good people afterwards. I got a chance to meet the judges, some of them and t was just a really, really different experience for me; I’ve never been around that many prestigious people and people telling me “Oh my goodness, you did such a wonderful job, great speech and things like that and I’m like, wow I was so nervous. I mean literally, I was sweating, like okay guys don’t hug me too much, like whoo! (Laughs) You know but I was like so nervous but I was overwhelmed and it made me want to do more, may be not necessarily because of the notoriety but the people I was able to meet and I’m like, if this person can do this then I can do this, then we all come together, man we could just be explosive and we could help the city of Dayton get back on track. I think that’s what one of the goals, that the women, the Ten Top Women from decades before, I think that’s one goal they had in mind. They want to keep Dayton on track and put it on track cause it’s starting to go down a little bit but people are starting to restore it back to what it used to be. That’s pretty much it.

Verboon: Any other advice or parting words?

Brewer: Um, like I said I just truly believe that if we all stick together, we'll make it. Cause if one person lags; we all lag. If one person is down; we all are down. And it might not seem that way, we might think in all different countries we don't affect each other but we actually. We are actually all one unit, when one person, when one country's economy is down; ours is down too regardless of what it looks like over here. So if we all can just stick together we can learn how to love one another. I think that the most important, if we can see each other as a real brother and sister and have a brotherly sister love; I actually think this world would be okay and we wouldn't have so much poverty and people trying to commit suicide and things like that because a lot times they think no one cares; no one loves them and they feel like they've been left out. If we can, one person can't affect everybody, I mean like impact, I can't go to every state, but if everybody would do it and do your part in some kind of way. You don't have to go on the street and literally pass out food and different things like that; but giving or seeing a need that needs to be met or just simple things like smiling at everybody. I try to keep a smile on my face and kind of say "Hey how you doing?" even if I don't know someone because you know, it might encourage someone's day. I remember, my children and I, we were coming out of Meijer and we were just in a really, really happy-go-lucky mood. We just started to skip and sing and I was pushing the cart and I had my children around the cart and I would push it and do the skateboard thing and I would jump on it. And I finally put it in the thing and um, the little cart handle thing, we took the bags out and we just skipped to the car and we were singing and this lady stopped me and she said "You know what? You really encouraged me today." And we just started laughing cause I was embarrassed, I didn't know people were just sitting there watching me (Laughs), my big self running and skipping and stuff. She said "You really encouraged me today." And I said "Oh, Thank you." She said "This is my daughter." And I believe her daughter was a teenager and if not she had to be her early twenties or so and she said "I'm trying to wonder when did my daughter and I stop skipping, when did we stop?" and she kind of looked at her daughter and they started holding hands and stuff and I'm getting teary-eyed and she's getting teary-eyed. And I'm like, please, I don't want to start crying in Meijer's parking lot. But that kind of made my day and I say a smile can brighten up someone's day; it can encourage someone else. I know there's times when I don't feel really happy or something like that but I'll see someone else who's smiling from ear to ear and I'm like ,wow I wonder why there're so happy and it kind of perks me up. So, I mean simple things we can do; just say hi to somebody and if you see somebody walking that might not look, "Hey how you doing?". Be encouraging, just some words of encouragement can often help someone. So it doesn't have to be a grand scale giving finances or anything like that or giving food; just encouraging one another with smiles or words or e-mailing someone just randomly. Like "Hey, I was just trying to see how you are doing, have a good day." You know, because that does bring a smile to somebody, it's encouraging to help someone else. And then they want to do it "Oh well I'm going to send somebody a random e-mail, you know, so I think pretty much if we just encourage one another;



this world would turn around like that (Snaps fingers). If God saw our unity on one accord with each other, I mean, things would turn around. It wouldn't be as it is now. We wouldn't hear about so much violence going on and people robbing each other. I just don't think we would hear things like that because we're all trying to stick together and we're not all being crabs in a barrel trying to bring everybody else down; we're trying to encourage each other and bring each other up. So that's pretty much it.

Verboon: Okay, wonderful, thank you so much!

Brewer: You're welcome!