

# SanTan Sun News

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Relentlessly local coverage of Southern Chandler

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## Chandler woman a St. Vincent de Paul fellow

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Contributor

A recent Arizona State University graduate in Chandler has made a difference in her community working at The Society of St. Vincent de Paul as a Leadership in Action fellow.

Morgan Dircks graduated in May with a degree in marketing from the W.P. Carey School of Business and Barrett, The Honors College.

She began the St. Vincent de Paul Leadership in Action Fellowship the summer before her senior year and just finished her third semester there.

"It's been awesome," said Dircks, adding that her fellowship experience, which has "solidified for me 100 percent a career in the nonprofit sector, specifically human services."

The goal of the Leadership in Action Fellowship is an emphasis on fellows' personal growth as they're provided opportunities to develop leadership skills and gain an understanding of nonprofit operations while making an impact in the community, according to



**Morgan Dircks**

the society's website.

Morgan experienced that first hand as she "built leadership skills, personal

skills, work skills and experience" over the course of the fellowship.

There, Dircks developed the society's virtual volunteer program, which was instrumental in maintaining normal operations throughout the pandemic and is now a permanent program.

She also wrote multiple home guides that were sent out quarterly to provide volunteers with different projects and opportunities that can be done from home.

Many of these opportunities were designed by Dircks herself.

Dircks was also able to work with different nonprofits, including Pathway to Work, which prepares adults with developmental disabilities to engage, contribute and work in their communities.

This was possible because Dircks planned engagement events through Zoom to connect the community with nonprofits.

The Leadership in Action Fellowship emerged from the pandemic when students' internship opportunities were dwindling.

"The fellowship was such a

well-rounded experience that I don't think I would have gotten in any other environment," Dircks said.

The semester-long program, open to current university students or recent graduates, provides compensation up to \$2,500 through funding support from local donors.

It engages fellows in a collaborative framework that includes one-on-one mentoring, biweekly educational panels with staff from the society's departments, and biweekly "Fellow Forum" gatherings, providing fellows an opportunity to run their own meetings, set agenda topics and share their experiences.

Dircks is currently working for St. Vincent DePaul by filling in for someone on maternity leave. In the future, she will continue working for nonprofits as she has "been able to see the power of community within nonprofits."

"Everyone there has a passion for helping people," Dircks said. "When people come together then we can all work together to make the world a better place." ■