

Elderly Club leader retires

After 20 years of working in a variety of roles at Veritas, Mia Golea has retired. Her work was celebrated in a special devotional and reception time on February 22.

Mia's work with Veritas began when she became the first manager of the International Café. She took care of the paperwork necessary to start this for-profit business, never easy here in Romania.

Mia's real love, however, was caring for people, so when asked to consider leading an Elderly Club in the Baragan area of Sighisoara, she went door-to-door to see if people were interested. The club began, grew rapidly, and exists today as one of three Elderly Clubs. Mia worked with clients in all three locations.

Mia expressed her care for the elderly in quiet service. She knew their names, their family histories, their preferences, their struggles. She laughed and cried with them. She baked cakes and visited those who couldn't leave their homes, she visited them in the hospital. Dorothy Tarrant said, "She brought joy, peace and hope into many fragile lives."

Of all her jobs, Mia enjoyed most working with the elderly. She said, "They needed attention and it felt good to be able to give it." At the time of Mia's retirement, it was decided to have the Elderly Club that meets at the Nazarene Church become a program of the church, rather than one of the clubs within Veritas. So, now as a volunteer, Mia continues her work with these club members. This was very important to Mia, both for the clients so their club wasn't disrupted, and for herself.

The Veritas staff wish Mia God's grace and presence as she enters this new stage in her life.



Mia Golea



Jonathan, Mia, Petra and Roberta look at the scrapbook gift given to Mia.



Steluta
Gocica

Teen program revived

For several years, the teen program has dwindled in numbers due to the lack of a program director. However, Steluta Gocica has returned to Veritas after four years working in other locations. She has been named the Coordinator of the Adolescent Program as well as part-time Human Resources Director. There are now 15 teens attending the program Monday through Thursday from 2 – 5 p.m. Steluta worked as director of the Children's Program in her earlier 10-year employment at Veritas but has ably stepped into the role of Program Director for this age group.



Teens making martisoare, small pins given to women to wish them good luck.

Steluta is hired as part of the EU grant, with specific requirements to teach eight competencies to the teens. Recent activities worked toward two of these competencies: entrepreneurship and science. The teens made pins for Martisor and developed a business plan for promoting and selling them. The pins were sold at the International Café and although they didn't make a lot of money, the project was a good learning experience. One of the girls, Mirela said, "I enjoyed so much making martisoare! I would like to have a business like this as a group."

Roberta
Bustin in
her NASA
suit.



In mid-March the teens began to study science with the help of Roberta Bustin. Roberta taught chemistry in college and worked as a NASA scientist in the summers. Her first lesson included information on space and each teen was able to set off their own rocket. They were even able to hold an authentic space shuttle tile and see how it was insulated. Roberta will continue this series once a week for several months, leading the class in discussions and experiments in ecology and chemistry.



Roberta
demonstrates
how a torch
does not burn
through a
space shuttle
tile.

Steluta is enjoying her new role, especially because she worked with most of the teens when they were in the Kids' Club. Being able to build on the relationships she had with them, in this stage of their lives is very gratifying. Teaching social competencies for Steluta means teaching teens that they are God's creation, and that God can be the solution to their problems. Steluta says her purpose is, "to make them stick with God."

Interaction between clubs brings understanding

The teen and special needs clubs meet in the same building. An incident one day began with an unkind remark made by one of the teens about the adults with disabilities they pass on their way upstairs to their own club. Steluta recognized the teaching moment and led activities and discussion on how it feels to live with a disability. During the discussion, one of the members of the special needs club (Attila) came upstairs, cheerfully greeted everyone in the teen group with a handshake, and then stayed for a bit. Since it was his birthday, the teens sang La Multi Ani (Happy Birthday) to him and were surprised when he danced along to the singing. Shortly after that he went around the circle shaking hands to say goodbye and went back downstairs.

Although not planned, Attila's presence that day helped adolescents better understand people with disabilities and they discovered they liked Attila. At the end of the day, the teenager who used to talk badly about people with disabilities was the most impressed and said he did not know it was so difficult to have a disability.



Teens experience what it is like to have a disability



Special Needs Club participates in Carnival

Scottish lad volunteers at Veritas

James Clarkson moved to Sighisoara in February of this year. He is volunteering in Romania under the Nazarene Church and spent the summer and fall of 2018 living in Brasov. On James' Facebook page he describes himself as, "Just an ordinary guy following God's call to do extraordinary things." For Veritas, that has meant using his skills with technology to set up networked computers for the teen club, and answer questions from staff who are experiencing problems with their computers. James' degree from Abertay University in Dundee, Scotland, was in accounting and finance. But if he doesn't know how to do something on the computers, he knows how to find the answers. He has saved staff a lot of time and stress! James also volunteers one afternoon each week with the Special Needs club.



James Clarkson

James says of his time in Romania, "It's challenged me to do things outside of my comfort zone: trying new foods, trying to learn a new language; working with children. People have been very hospitable and helpful."

Veritas has benefitted from James' desire to follow God's call by coming to Romania. We wish him the best as he returns to Scotland at the end of May, where he will continue his education.



Board and Leadership Team Look to the Future

On February 23, the Veritas Board of Directors and the Staff Leadership Team met for a day-long strategic planning session. The EU grant that has provided much-needed funding for the past two years, will end in the summer of 2020. New board member Joshua Herndon led the board in a strategic planning process. A committee was formed to look specifically at possibilities to expand activities that will help raise funds at the House on the Rock; and the Leadership Team will continue to work together to look at each activity and program area of Veritas, considering what we're doing in light of our mission statement which is:

Veritas is a Christian ecumenical organization that seeks to make a positive difference in the lives of the people of Sighisoara through services to the community and people in need, through a variety of educational programs and intercultural exchange.

How can you help?

The hard work of strategic planning will continue for staff and board members as we face an uncertain financial future. We ask for your prayer support, and for your donations. Our programs are making a difference in people's lives and your participation through gifts and prayers will allow Veritas to continue to serve the people of Sighisoara.

How can you give?

In the U.S., write your check to Missio International or Nazarene Compassionate Ministries and mail to Veritas Advisory Board, 6450 Weatherfield Court, Suite 3, Maumee, Ohio 43537. Be sure to put Veritas in the memo line. U.S. donors can give tax deductible donations online at <http://veritas.ro/get-involved/u-s- donations/>

In the UK, donations can be increased through Gift Aid by sending them to the Titus Trust. Mail c/o Dr. Paul Tarrant, 129 Mains Drive, Erskine, Renfrewshire, PA8 7JJ or directly to the Titus Trust (IBAN GB85 BOFS8013 5306 0009 36) Bank of Scotland, Bridgewater Shopping Centre, Erskine, Renfrewshire, PA8 7AA.

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