

# PLENTY

winter 2017

MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING™  
AMERICA**

**food gatherers**  
fighting hunger where we live

## Healthy Pantry Conversion Project:

### Healthy Choices, Healthy Community



*Shaira Daya, MPH, RD, Nutrition Projects Manager, stands next to Food Gatherers' new produce bins in our shopper's pantry.*

Food Gatherers works not just to alleviate hunger, but also to improve access to fresh produce, protein, and whole grains for our neighbors in need. We have worked hard to procure healthier food, and are now focused on strategies to help clients make healthier choices.

Last year, in partnership with Washtenaw County Public Health, and with funding provided by Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' Building Healthy Communities Program, we designed and piloted the Healthy Pantry Conversion Project at nine food pantries. Reaching a total of 2,426 households each month, this project helped our partner agencies implement sustainable, low and no-cost strategies that encourage clients to select healthy food while shopping.

Our partner sites prioritized changes to their produce displays by redesigning their pantry layout and adding new tables, shelving, baskets, bins, and signage. To aid in these changes, we procured equipment, including double glass-door display refrigerators. We also developed a set of healthy food promotion resources for our partner sites, like shelf tags to highlight healthy food items, pocket-sized hints and tips to encourage clients to cook from scratch, and produce identification cards to help clients learn to store and prepare the produce they receive.

Several months ago, we applied some of these strategies at our own warehouse pantry, where many of our agencies come to select food for their clients. In just a few weeks, we tripled the amount of produce distributed!

Our agencies are already seeing improvements. "With the new pantry setup, we are able to [distribute] produce that, in the past, has been very difficult to get consumers to take," says the Food Pantry Coordinator for SOS Community Services. "Simply by changing the way it is displayed, people are now selecting beets, turnips, carrots, and other hardy produce that they would not have selected in the past."

The Healthy Pantry Conversion Project is just one of the ways your support of Food Gatherers is increasing access to healthy food for people in Washtenaw County. Thank you for improving the quality of health of our community.

**"It makes me feel like you care about me.  
You make the food look good and it makes  
me feel good about the food I pick."**

*— an SOS Community Services client.*



# From the President/CEO ~

**Our local office of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) estimates that 2,300 of our neighbors currently receiving food assistance will lose benefits in April of 2017.**

Due to high rates of unemployment, work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, had been waived since 2003. However, since the economy has recently improved, four counties in Michigan, including Washtenaw, have reinstated the work requirement for able-bodied adults without minor dependents. **If our neighbors are unable to work at least 20 hours a week, they will only be able to receive benefits for a maximum of three months in a three-year period, no matter how hard they are looking for a job.**

These new regulations place additional pressure on those who already face many barriers to employment. Many have limited education or English proficiency; they may lack reliable transportation; they may not have a valid state ID; and they may have been incarcerated. All of these realities make it harder to find work, and, unfortunately, wanting or looking for a job does not count toward the work requirement.

These single, childless adults rely on federal food benefits to purchase groceries each month, but they are frequently ineligible for other public assistance programs. Over 80% of the affected individuals have incomes below half of the poverty line (\$5,835 per year). **When our neighbors lose their benefits after their three-month time limit is up at the end of March, they will turn to Food Gatherers' network of partner programs to feed themselves.** We are working with local community advocates and DHHS office staff to ensure these changes are rolled out as smoothly and clearly as possible to prevent interruptions in benefits for our clients.

Thank you for fighting hunger where we live.

Gathering with you,



Eileen Spring,  
President/CEO



“With this climate of uncertainty in our nation and in our community, **the efficient distribution of nutritious food throughout Washtenaw County is more important than ever.** It’s because of your generosity that we can connect those who have enough food with those who have too little.”

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Revenue and Expenses Fiscal Year 2016

7/1/2015 - 6/30/2016

Food Gatherers is committed to sound fiscal management, accountability, and transparency. We're among the 1% of charities to be awarded a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's premier independent charity evaluator, for twelve consecutive years. Our full audited financial reports can be viewed and downloaded directly from our website at [foodgatherers.org](http://foodgatherers.org).

Donated goods and services,  
primarily perishable food

72%

Contributions

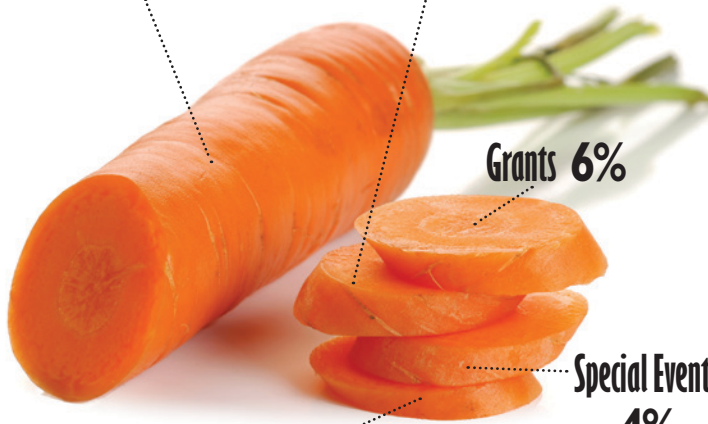
16%

Grants 6%

Special Events

4%

Food Bank Sales 2%



Food Rescue, Food Purchases and Distribution

90%

Community Kitchen &  
Job Training Program

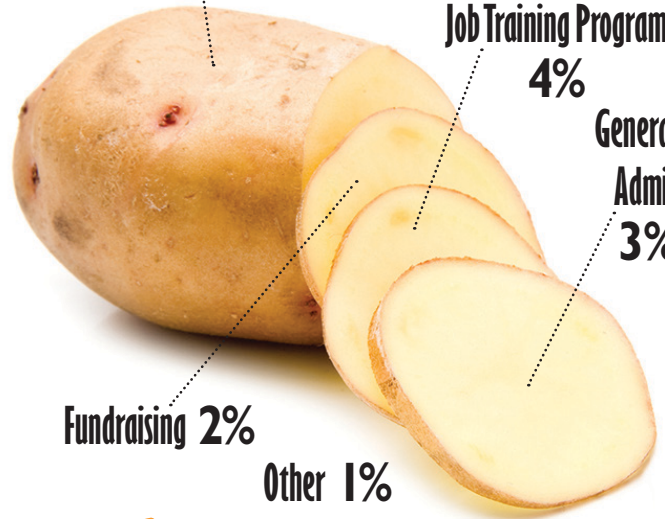
4%

General &  
Admin

3%

Fundraising 2%

Other 1%



### Total Revenue \$13,081,452

Contributions.....	\$2,106,314
Grants.....	\$801,503
Special Events.....	\$526,898
Donated goods and services, primarily perishable food.....	\$9,393,785
Food Bank Sales (our partner programs receive purchased food for a fraction of the retail price).....	\$229,568
Other Revenue.....	\$16,185
Interest Income.....	\$7,199

### Total Expenses \$13,205,910

Decrease in Net Assets: (\$124,458)

#### Program Services

Food Rescue, Food Purchases and Distribution.....	\$11,932,386
Community Kitchen.....	\$445,245
Job Training Program.....	\$60,729

#### Supporting Services

General and Administrative.....	\$438,466
Fundraising.....	\$328,042
Disposal of Property and Equipment.....	\$1,042



## Your gift matters!

We are working to "meet the need" by increasing access to nutritious food for all those for all those that struggle with food insecurity, while maintaining our programs at the highest level of service. We can't do it without you. **Thank you for your support.**



# Meet Janie

Throughout her life, Janie has been a leader. Working in the federal government, she held many leadership positions and was appointed to many committees. The walls of her apartment are peppered with certificates for her numerous accolades – all earned while raising two amazing daughters as a single mom. She loved to travel and pick up antiques along the way.

Then one day, while on the job, Janie's heart stopped. After being revived and stabilized by Michigan Medicine, she was diagnosed with a respiratory illness, and later, ovarian cancer. As her health continued to fail, Janie fell on hard times. She lost her home of 24 years, said goodbye to many of her beloved antiques, and moved into a senior living community.

**Janie needed help getting groceries, so she contacted Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (JFS). Food Gatherers provides fresh food to agencies like JFS so they can provide excellent support services to our neighbors.** JFS staff helped Janie furnish her new apartment with a new kitchen table and chairs. They check in on her once a week, take notes during her doctors' appointments, and provide her with monthly food deliveries.

Janie also receives two meals a day through Ann Arbor Meals on Wheels, another one of Food Gatherers' partner programs. She has always believed in "eating sensibly," and the fresh fruits and vegetables she receives from Food Gatherers help her continue to do so.

She has been through so much, but she never lost her will to fight. When her daughter was finishing her Ph.D., she told her doctors, "I'm going to that graduation." And she did. After surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy, Janie has been cancer-free for 18 months!

We thank you for supporting Janie, and helping thousands of Washtenaw County residents like her receive healthy food with dignity and respect.



Janie, a recipient of Food Gatherers' services, showcases the flag flown over the U.S. Capitol in honor of her 34 years of service to our government.

## Upcoming Events:

### Washtenaw Reads: Food Gatherers

Thursday, February 16, 7-8 PM

Saline District Library,  
555 N Maple, Saline

Washtenaw Reads is a library initiative that invites us to read and discuss a chosen book each year. Featured for 2017 is *\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* by Kathryn J Edin, and H Luke Shaefer, Ph.D. Join Markell Miller, Food Gatherers' Director of Community Food Programs, and learn about Food Gatherers programming and how it relates to the Washtenaw Reads *\$2 a Day* book. To register, call (734) 429-5450.

### Spring Match Challenge March 6-31

Your gift provides twice as many meals to our neighbors in need with our Spring 2017 match, thanks to the generosity of Harold and Kay Peplau. Gifts made during the challenge will be matched dollar for dollar!

### Grillin' for Food Gatherers

Sunday, June 11, 3-8 PM

Washtenaw Farm Council  
Grounds

Join us for our annual Grillin' fundraiser! Enjoy a meal hot off the grill along with side dishes, drinks, and desserts from more than fifty local restaurants. Live music, a silent auction, a raffle, and kids activities round out the festivities. Your ticket purchase provides 150 meals to our hungry neighbors.



#### Washtenaw Coordinated Funders



Ann Arbor Area  
Community Foundation



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ANN ARBOR  
SAINT JOSEPH MERCY HEALTH SYSTEM



coordinatedfunders.org



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