

PLENTY

Summer 2018

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

food gatherers
fighting hunger where we live

Setting the Table for Healthier Meals

Thank you for making sure all kids get to “eat their broccoli”! Your generous support provides healthy food to our neighbors, and teaches them to prepare it in kid-friendly meals. Because of you, local families can now set the table for a lifetime of healthy eating!

Many parents are eager to serve unfamiliar produce, such as beets, kale, and pineapple to their children, but they can't afford to buy foods that their children may not eat. Since 2011, Food Gatherers' Healthy School Pantry Program (HSPP) has distributed fresh produce at local schools where children are most likely to be hungry. Each month we provide boxes of fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income families at participating schools, increasing access to nutritious food and providing a wide range of healthy food options for families to try.

HSPP families appreciate the healthy food, but many do not have the basic tools or know recipes to easily prepare delicious meals. With one-time grant funding, Food Gatherers distributed Kitchen Kits with a cutting board, measuring spoon and cup set, a vegetable peeler, a variety of spices and seasonings, plus recipes and nutrition information. The grant allowed us to provide Kitchen Kits to 660 families. With your support we can distribute even more.

“The Kitchen Kits encourage families to enjoy the fresh produce they receive every month,” says Erin Freeman, Community Food Programs Coordinator, who manages the HSPP. “The tools make it easier to prepare the fruits and vegetables, and the recipes and seasonings

provide ideas for tasty ways to cook them.” The Kitchen Kit recipes, provided by Cook Smarts, suggest ingredients and seasonings to make dishes that appeal to a diverse array of culinary tastes.

“We've been using the cutting board to cut up several veggies at once so we can cook and freeze them. Makes it easier for our daily, busy schedule, too. We also use all the other seasonings so we can prepare food without salt that tastes great!”
—Amanda, Perry Early Learning Center

The Kitchen Kits are a hit! Families report that they eat fresh produce more regularly because the tools make peeling and chopping simpler and faster. Families also enjoy the time spent preparing healthy flavorful meals together.

“My 10-year-old son loves to cook with me. My son is learning how to use the cutting board to properly chop fruits and veggies. He's got several kitchen items, including some spices, just for his use. We both love it!”
—Tracy, Brick Elementary

A student at Holmes Elementary School in Ypsilanti takes her new Kitchen Kit home along with a monthly produce box.



Learn more about the Healthy School Pantry Program: www.foodgatherers.org/HSPP

Your support keeps healthy meals on kids' tables.
Make a gift to keep their plates full: www.foodgatherers.org/donate



Community Gatherers Award

We celebrated the critical work our colleagues at the Washtenaw County Health Department do everyday to fight food insecurity and address health disparities in our community. Pictured from left to right are Ruth Kraut, Ellen Rabinowitz, Susan Cerniglia, Jimena Loveluck, Ariane Reister, and Sharon Sheldon.

Gatherer of Distinction

Domino's has been a generous funder and food donor for decades! They were a key donor in our warehouse expansion and staff regularly donate their expertise and muscle in our daily efforts to fight hunger. Jeannette Sharp and Rachel Krumm came to the Spring Gathering to accept Domino's award.



Spring Gathering

Each year we gather to honor people and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to Food Gatherers. Here are this year's award winners!



Great Gatherer Award

The Batemans are renaissance volunteers, serving at Grillin', the Community Kitchen and the warehouse since the nineties. Scott Roubeck (left), Community Kitchen Manager celebrating with "Weekly Warriors" Frank and Lindsay Bateman.



Gatherers of Plenty Award

Farmer Bill has been growing a bounty of vegetables for Food Gatherers for nearly three decades with a little help from his friends. Farmer Bill Schmid and Colleen Crawley hold the award surrounded by the Mindful Eating Team of the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor.

Rescuing Food, Rescuing the Environment

We were thrilled to receive the 2018 Washtenaw County Environmental Excellence Award for Waste Reduction and Recycling! For 30 years, Food Gatherers has kept enormous amounts of edible food from ending up in a landfill. Using our fleet of refrigerated carrot trucks and food-safety trained staff and volunteers, we rescue perishable food from more than 250 food donors and deliver it to over 170 community agencies to fill the plates of our neighbors who do not have enough food.

In fiscal year 2017, more than 40% of all the food we distributed was rescued—that's nearly three million pounds

of milk, eggs, cantaloupes, turkeys, bagels, yogurt ... even a 50-lb chocolate Santa. You name it and in our 30 years, we have rescued it!

"What a perfect win-win combination: we feed people and help reduce greenhouse gases!" says Eileen Spring, President and CEO. "We can only do this because hundreds of businesses donate food and thousands of volunteers sort, package and distribute it. Although the public clearly benefits from our waste reduction effort, it is not subsidized by the government. The financial support of generous community members and private individuals make it possible."

You can support food rescue through Food Gatherers: www.foodgatherers.org/donate



Every school kid should look forward to the freedom and fun of summer but when free breakfast and lunches end, thousands of kids face hunger instead. Meet Up & Eat Up, the national Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), helps keep summer fun by providing healthy regular meals to kids whose families struggle with food bills.

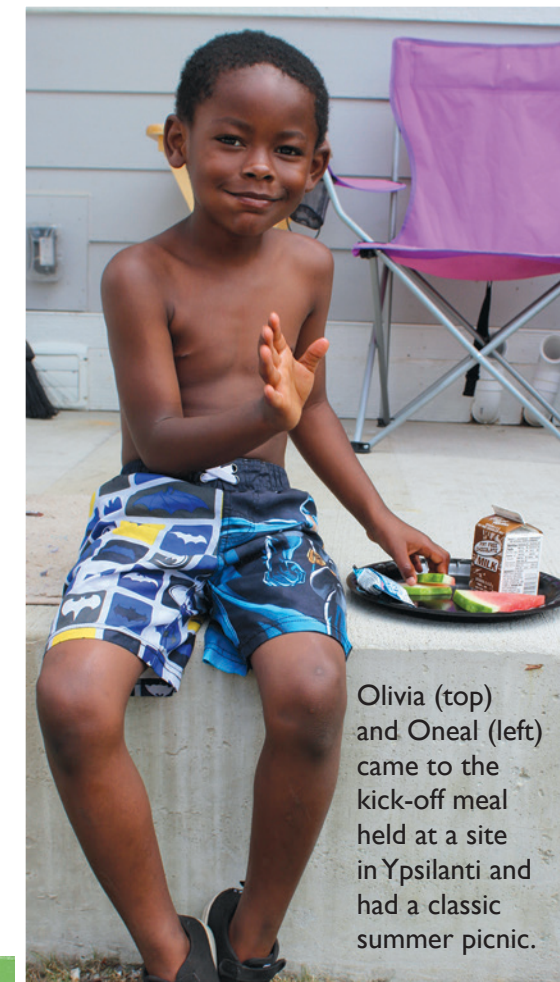
Hunger Doesn't Take A Summer Vacation

Food Gatherers began sponsoring SFSP in 2009. Since then, we have steadily increased the number of SFSP sites and children served. We recruit organizations in communities with the highest numbers of children enrolled in subsidized school lunch programs, to serve meals twice daily throughout the entire summer. In 2017, nearly 40 Meet Up & Eat Up sites served more than 33,000 meals and snacks on-site and provided 727 boxes of fruits, greens and other vegetables for families to enjoy at home. This summer, with your support, we will reach more kids by expanding our outreach efforts, and adding new partner sites in high need areas.

"Operating SFSP is challenging," says Markell Miller, Director of Community Food Programs at Food Gatherers. Planning and site recruitment starts in January. In spring, program staff contract with vendors to prepare and deliver meals and train site operators. They actively supervise sites over the summer and process all the program paperwork and accounting. "The hard work pays off," Miller states. "By managing the administrative complexities of the program, Food Gatherers helps retain program sites that keep more kids fed until school starts."

To entice more kids to come, the sites offer activities and educational activities. "We give the kids jump ropes, coloring books, and soccer balls so they can make friends, exercise and have fun," says LeRonica Roberts, Community Food Programs Coordinator. Interns from the School of Public Health also help the kids and their families learn about nutrition, healthy food choices and cooking healthy food on a budget.

"Meet Up & Eat Up is about more than the food," Roberts says. "It brings people together, gives them a lift and builds stronger, healthier communities."



Olivia (top) and Oneal (left) came to the kick-off meal held at a site in Ypsilanti and had a classic summer picnic.



Learn more about SFSP in Washtenaw County: www.foodgatherers.org/summerfood

Find all SFSP sites in Michigan: www.mcgi.state.mi.us/schoolnutrition/

Generous gifts from private donors allow Food Gatherers to sponsor SFSP. Every year, the costs of sponsoring the program exceed the reimbursement received from USDA, the national program sponsor. Gifts from individuals cover the extra costs and enable us to provide fresh produce boxes along with the meals.

Share Your Food Gatherers Memories

As we approach our 30th anniversary, we appreciate the contributions of all the people who made our work possible over the years. We truly could not have come this far without you! To acknowledge the community effort Food Gatherers represents, we invite you to submit stories and photos of your favorite Food Gatherers memories. Below is just one of the stories we've received so far. We hope it inspires you to submit your own to: anniversary@foodgatherers.org

For more history on our organization, visit the new digital Food Gatherers archive created by the Ann Arbor District Library. It contains photos and articles on Food Gatherers' activities published in the former *Ann Arbor News* from 1988 to 2009 when the newspaper ceased publication. Find the archive at: aadl.org/foodgatherers



Asmaa Fatani, Volunteer

"I always used to think how can I make a difference in people's lives. One day, I found my answer when I was driving. I saw a Food Gatherers truck on my way home. I searched about it, then I registered and started to volunteer in Food Gatherers in the warehouse and community kitchen. Every time I volunteer there I feel so happy. Food Gatherers gives me a great vibe.

Happy 30th Anniversary FG!"

Gathering in D.C.

In February, Food Gatherers staff attended the National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference co-sponsored by Feeding America and Food Research and Action Center in Washington, D.C. They met with anti-hunger, anti-poverty and child advocates, as well as government officials, to share information and learn how to: strengthen the quality and reach of federal nutrition programs; conduct effective outreach and implement best practices from other programs; fill in the gaps in food service for millions of low-income children; and identify creative ideas for new and innovative approaches to ending hunger. They also discussed anti-hunger policy with Michigan's senators Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters. Read more about the conference at: www.antihungerpolicyconference.org/



Markell Miller (left), Director of Community Food Programs; Erin Freeman, Community Food Programs Coordinator, and Anikka Van Eyl (right), Social Work Intern

Upcoming Events

Mow Down Hunger Fall 2018

During the Mow Down Hunger Campaign, Weingartz will match new or upgraded monthly donations to Food Gatherers! The goal is to provide one million meals.

Hunger Action Month September 2018

You can build awareness about hunger during September, Hunger Action Month, the national campaign sponsored by Feeding America. Participate in 30 Ways in 30 Days, wear orange on National Hunger Action Day (September 13), call your legislators, and more. Check Food Gatherers' website in August for more information: www.foodgatherers.org.



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