



Getting Back on Track with a New Beginning

Jasmine and her three children visited the NNEMAP food pantry for the first time to get food to “fill in until payday.” She is in training at Hot Chicken Takeover and is excited to start her new job. “I’m learning to do everything in the restaurant,” she said proudly. “This is the new beginning we’ve been waiting for.”

Her family moved to Columbus from Youngstown in August. Jasmine was out of work for more than a year, and when her husband was suddenly laid off with no prospects for more work, things looked bleak. “My husband is a hard worker and would have two or three jobs sometimes, but there just isn’t work available there anymore,” she said. Their church pastor encouraged them to move to a city with more opportunities. He gave them gas money and helped them relocate to Columbus.

As Jasmine described the changes in her young family’s life during the past five months, she teared up. “God led me here to get my life back on track. So many blessings. Just like with this pantry. It’s close to our home, and we can choose the foods we like. That’s important for my kids.”

Tanisha, 7, was excited about the yogurt they got, while Trina, 8, couldn’t wait to have frosted flakes with bananas. Three-year-old Trey was

especially excited about peanut butter and a piece of candy a pantry volunteer gave him.

Your support makes it possible for families like Jasmine’s to get fresh food to “fill in” when money is tight. Thank you on behalf of our neighbors who struggle with hunger every day. 

NOTE: Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.



Foodbanks, Partners Pitch in during Hard Times

Recovery from devastating storms continues long after the skies clear and water recedes. In October, Mid-Ohio Foodbank sent personnel and supplies to Texas and Florida to assist in relief efforts after hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

Feeding America works with food banks in affected areas to identify specific needs during recovery work and then reaches out to the national network for help. Mid-Ohio Foodbank provided a forklift driver, truck driver and a specialist in agency relations and capacity building to assist food banks in Beaumont and San Antonio, TX. Additionally, the Foodbank sent a semi-truck load of paper towels and laundry detergent to Florida. That product was donated by Big Lots (also see article “Logistics Experts Put Their Skill to the Test”), and transportation was provided by Kurtz Bros. The Feeding America network is also assisting with recovery efforts in Puerto Rico.

One Mid-Ohio Foodbank employee shared about her experience from the field in southeast Texas:

“In my travels, I met the most inspiring people. People who had been working and/or volunteering to serve the community non-stop since the storm ended. People who had lost everything and were staying in trailers on their daughter’s property or sleeping in the sanctuary of their church while they figure out where they would go next, but refused to stop serving their community. And, not

just ‘their’ community. I heard over and over that, since the storm, the sense of camaraderie and collaboration between churches, neighbors and organizations from all backgrounds, cultures, faiths and races had never been stronger, and people really felt that these partnerships and relationships would last long after Harvey was a distant memory.”

She also shared the story of one Texas food pantry manager – one of many compelling examples of the relief effort – and how he got food to neighbors in need:

Joe Moreno, Church on the Rise Food Pantry - “The water in this area was three feet deep for nearly ten days after the storm. People couldn’t get to the pantry. Oh, they needed food; they just couldn’t get to me...so, I loaded my F-250 with food and bar soap and drove it to the make-shift camp up the hill. I wasn’t sure the truck would run through the water, but she did and she kept doing it, until the water was gone.”



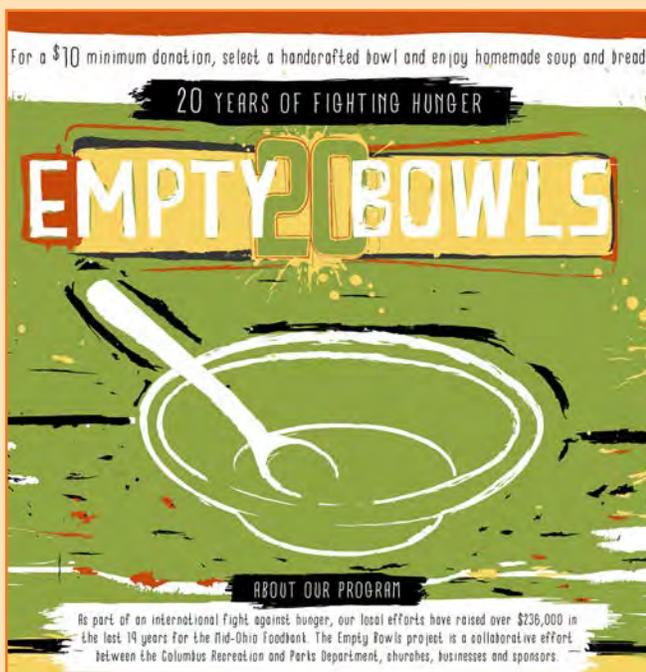
Local Partners Help Hurricane Victims



Lancaster Vineyard Church Pantry volunteer Randy McKinley picks up boxes donated by Mid-Ohio Foodbank to support an effort by the church to collect two semi-truckloads of food and supply donations for hurricane victims. The overwhelming community response generated a need for 1,500 empty boxes! This is just one example of how our agency partners support hurricane relief.

20 Years of Filling Plates Through Empty Bowls

The Columbus Recreation and Parks Department, as part of an international fight against hunger, marks the 20th anniversary of the Empty Bowls program in 2017. Each year, families and friends gather to enjoy homemade soup and bread in handcrafted bowls of their choosing. In partnership with churches, businesses and other sponsors, donations from every bowl of soup have really added up, raising more than \$236,000 for Mid-Ohio Foodbank. Thanks to your support, Empty Bowls is sure to surpass the one million meal mark this year. Learn more at www.columbus.gov/emptybowls. Thank you for fighting hunger one empty bowl at a time. 🍲



Logistics Experts Put Their Skill to the Test

Big Lots associates from all over the country gathered at the Greater Columbus Convention Center for their annual day of training and took “team-building” to the next level. The exercise involved a large-scale packing event to benefit thousands of central and eastern Ohioans. Vendors such as High Ridge, C&D, Unilever, Kimberly Clark, Sun Products, Georgia Pacific and Ontex donated 6,000 units of personal and home care products for this unique project.

The 1,100 associates packed 5,600 personal boxes for our neighbors in 25 minutes!

The project made toiletries and household cleaning products – expensive items – available to clients who can’t afford them. These boxes arrived at the Foodbank’s warehouse on a Thursday afternoon and all were ordered by partner agencies and allocated by the next morning, which speaks to the need for these items among our families.

We didn’t just stop there. Mid-Ohio Foodbank also sent a semi-load of paper towels and laundry detergent – product left over from the packing event – to Florida for hurricane relief. 🍲

Thanks to Big Lots and all our corporate partners that step up to meet the needs of hungry people.

A Souper-Super Hero

Tricia Keels hosts dinners from October through May around Columbus to help feed hungry people. Tricia and her volunteers serve homemade soups from slow-cookers and encourage guests to make donations to Mid-Ohio Foodbank and other hunger-fighting organizations.

She founded Souper Heroes in 2012 after her then-7-year old son complained of being hungry while getting ready for bed. He'd had dinner and was stalling, probably wanting something sweet. But Tricia then thought of how real hunger is for so many kids at bedtime.

Since then, Tricia has raised more than \$20,000 and provided more than 80,000 meals for hungry neighbors. Souper Heroes is branching out. There's a starter packet for new event hosts, which is available for download at www.souperheroes.org/shop/starter-kit.

Tricia's work was recognized recently when she was named a finalist in the Dispatch Media Group's "Every Day Heroes" awards.

"My goal is to have independent hosts with Souper Heroes events all over Columbus, around country and all over the world," she said. 🍷



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