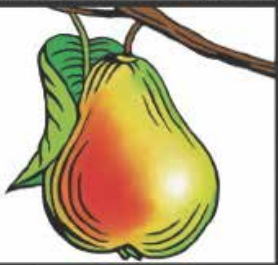


OAK PARK
RIVER FOREST



FOOD
PANTRY

CELEBRATING

40

YEARS OF SERVICE

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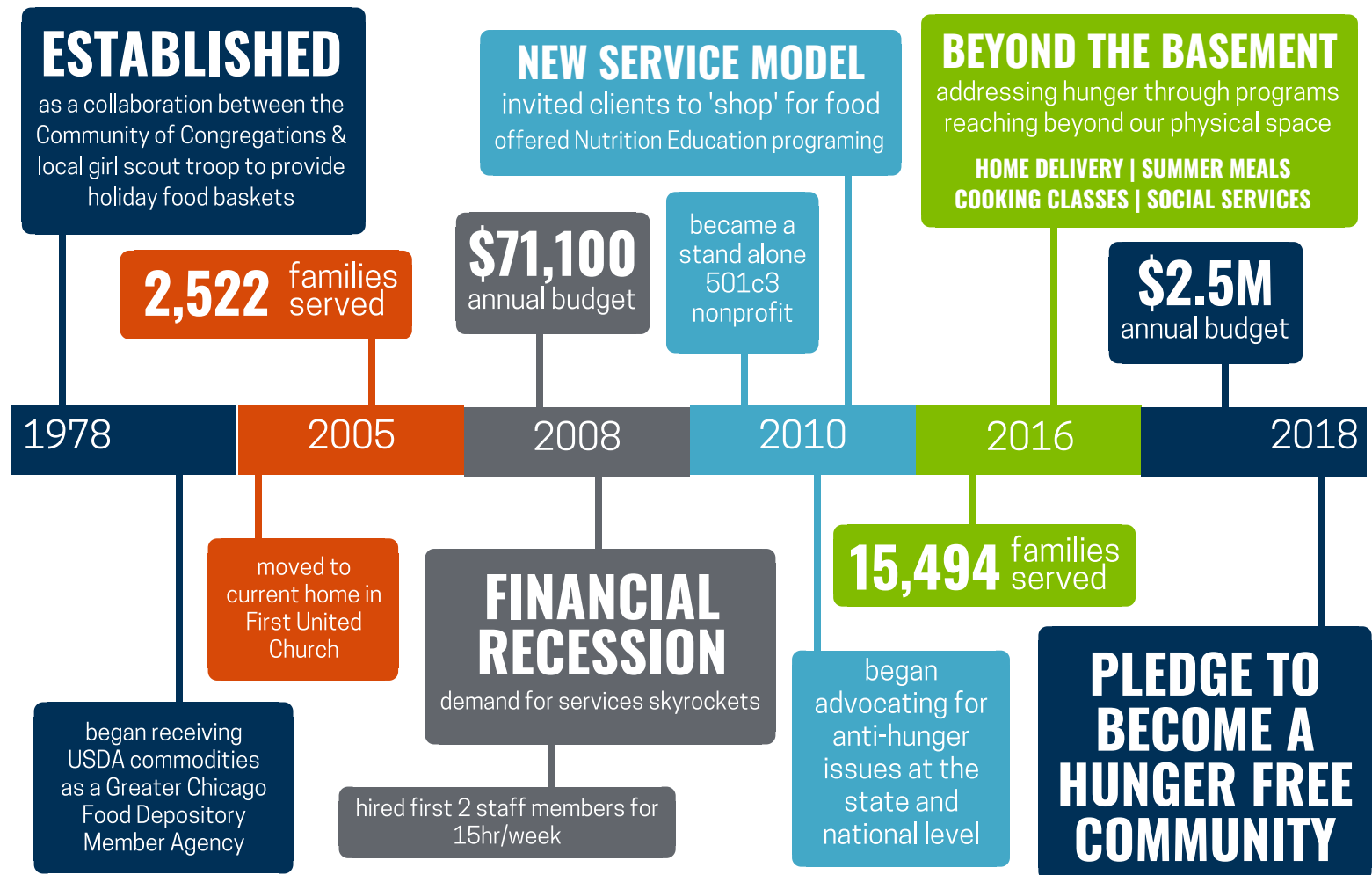
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PANTRY *Pulse*

News from Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry ANNUAL REPORT: JULY 1, 2017 TO JUNE 30, 2018

40 YEARS: FROM HOLIDAY BASKETS TO HUNGER-FREE



BEHIND THE PANTRY LIES THE PASSION OF ITS FIRST VOLUNTEERS



1990 Koko sorts food in the church classroom where the Pantry first set up operations. The Pantry later moved to a storefront on South Boulevard.



2009 Executive Director Kathy Russell and Director of Operations Michele Zurakowski stand with the Pantry's new delivery truck and driver. Prior to the truck co-share, transporting USDA food and bulk orders from the Greater Chicago Food Depository was unreliable.



2018 Board and staff traveled to Washington D.C. for the National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference and lobby day where they met with our national representatives. From Left to Right, Board President Betsy Backes, Board Vice President Stephanie Schrod, Executive Director, Michele Zurakowski, Board Member Donna Myers, Communication Lead Libby Stoffel, and Board Treasurer Melanie Halvorson.

A little before the holiday season in 1978, Girl Scout leader Patricia Funk had an idea for a service project: Her troop could help feed neighbors in need.

Funk, a leader of passion and action, reached out to the Community of Congregations to help launch the project. The interfaith organization said yes, and the Scouts went to work bagging food to give out.

That year a handful of families had meals for the holidays. But Funk and her troop didn't stop there. They continued feeding neighbors who were hungry. Calling their effort the Hunger Task Force Food Pantry and based out of Faith United Methodist Church, they soon reached 40 families a week.

Originally a short-term idea, this volunteer community operation grew into what is today the Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry.

"We didn't think that what we were doing would live for 40 years," says Sarah Jolie, a member of Funk's troop. "We knew people were hungry, and we knew we wanted to do something."

After Funk's troop disbanded, Pat Koko took over the hunger relief operation, which expanded its mission to provide food year round.

In those early days, the inventory and distribution system was crude, tracking food and recipients using plain index cards. The new Pantry began receiving one-a-month USDA commodities as a Greater Chicago Food Depository member agency. But deliveries could sometimes be delayed. More than once when the delivery truck broke down, Pantry volunteers rented a U-Haul truck and went to GCFD to pick up the food themselves.

Two volunteers, Leah Beckwith and Karin Pietrini, ran the Pantry after Koko. They laid the groundwork for today's organization, moving it to its current home at First United Church of Oak Park. By the time the Pantry passed its 25-year anniversary, more than 2,500 families were being served annually.

In early 2008, the Pantry hired its first two staff members — co-directors, Kathy Russell and Michele Zurakowski — at 15 hours per week.

By 2010, the Pantry served nearly 15,500 families annually. It had secured 501c3 status, formed a board of directors and implemented a solid fundraising and volunteer infrastructure. It also added anti-hunger advocacy to its portfolio.

The Pantry was growing in capacity and reach — hundreds of volunteers and donors and thousands of pounds of food donated. It had a \$100,000 budget and a new client-choice service model, and provided nutrition education. Two more paid staffers came aboard.

In 2012, Russell stepped down and Zurakowski became the full-time executive director, a role she continues to fill. Beginning that year, the Pantry made food insecurity its focus. It increased the amount of food distributed and the nutrient content of that food. It extended programs that set people up with the skills, knowledge, and resources to achieve food security.

Zurakowski calls these "Beyond the Basement" programs because they meet different populations where they are instead of centralizing them at the Pantry site. The Summer Meal program feeds kids when school is out. Home delivery assists seniors and people with physical and mental health disabilities. The Pantry also connects families to income-support benefits and provides cooking and nutrition education.

The Pantry now serves over 44,000 people annually from 13 surrounding ZIP codes.

Many, many meals since those first holiday baskets, the Pantry has been there for its neighbors in need. It ends its fourth decade with a pledge to make sure no one in the communities it serves goes hungry.

RESCUE PARTNERS

Thanks to our generous rescue partners, thousands of pounds of food are diverted from landfills and given to our neighbors in need.



Oak Park Farmers' Market



Oak Park Bakery



REDUCING FOOD WASTE & HUNGER

27%

of fresh produce distributed was rescued from grocery stores



milk rescued from Fresh Thyme Farmer's Market



over 1,000 pounds of sweet corn rescued from Jewel Osco



50% MORE

fresh produce rescued than last year

globally, food waste creates

8%

of greenhouse gas emissions



REDUCING WASTE & INCREASING IMPACT

The Food Pantry gratefully acknowledges the generosity of its donors.

Donations July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

In order to reduce our printing costs, donations under \$100 are not listed in the print edition of this newsletter. A complete donor listing is available on the web-version at www.oprffoodpantry.org.

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Patricia Wagner
Ann Marie and James Walker
Ann Wallis
Marietta and Bob Walsh
Kathleen Walsh
Pam Walsh
Debra Walters
Doug Watt and Eleanor Long

If we have attributed your name incorrectly, please accept our sincerest apologies and email LaurenB@oprffoodpantry.org so that we can correct your name in our system.

YOU CAN BUY HOW MUCH?



EGGS
STORE: \$1.59
OUR PRICE: \$1.05
38% SAVINGS



RED ONIONS
STORE: \$1.50
OUR PRICE: \$0.54
64% SAVINGS



ORANGES
STORE: \$1.00
OUR PRICE: \$0.43
57% SAVINGS



CHICKEN SOUP
STORE: \$1.79
OUR PRICE: \$0.49
73% SAVINGS



QUICK OATS
STORE: \$1.89
OUR PRICE: \$0.49
74% SAVINGS



GROUND TURKEY
STORE: \$4.99
OUR PRICE: \$0.97
81% SAVINGS

By purchasing foods through our local food bank and a wholesaler, we pay far less than grocery store prices. The result? More food for people who need it.

THANKS TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS!

2018 CONCERT SERIES WITH LUCINDA WILLIAMS

HEADLINER:

Conagra Brands
Old Second Bank

OPENING ACT:

Forest Agency Insurance
Community Bank of Oak Park
River Forest
Gibbons, Fortman, & Associates
Sassetti CPAs
Law Offices of Mark Maciasz

SPOTLIGHT:

ARIV College Admissions Counseling
Forest Park National Bank
and Trust
Autobarn Volvo of Oak Park
Re/Max

HOSPITALITY:

Jill & Jim Kopecky
Kopecky, Schumacher, Rosenburg, PC

2018 HEALTHY CHEF CHALLENGE

The Beckwith Family
MB Financial Bank
Riveredge Hospital

If you're interested in sponsoring future events, please contact LaurenB@oprffoodpantry.org.

WHO DO WE SERVE?

While the economy and unemployment have improved since the 2008 recession, many people still struggle with hunger. Vulnerable populations – seniors, children, people with disabilities – are particularly likely to be food insecure.



85% households include at least one senior, person with a disability, or child



3.8 average # of visits per year to the Food Pantry



2.9 average size of households served by the Food Pantry

MEET CELENA

Celena has experienced more than a few bumps in life. She met her now-husband years ago when they were both without permanent housing in Chicago. After dating and eventually marrying, the couple moved to Houston, her husband's hometown. Unfortunately, their time in Houston was cut short by Hurricane Katrina. Forced to evacuate on short notice, they left Texas and returned to Chicago, homeless once again.

"I remember I didn't even have an ID," Celena recalls. "And I remember I came here looking for help. I came [to the Pantry], and they helped me. They gave me money so I could get one. You can't find people like these people."

Since that initial assistance helped her get the documentation she needed to pursue employment, Celena's visits to the Pantry have diminished, but not ended. "I just love this Pantry. I love all of the fruits and vegetables because I'm kind of a health nut and my income can't get me the things I need all of the time. It's very convenient and they look out for your health."

She loves the fresh produce, the social services counseling, and the nutrition discussions during distribution. She's even tried some of the featured recipes at home, proudly noting, "I tried zucchini muffins. I came down here and got the zucchini, I got the flour, and made the muffins for breakfast and they were really good."

Celena doesn't need to use the Pantry as much as she once did, but she's happy to know it's here when she needs it. And she's always happy to go home with new recipes to try.



IMPACTING HUNGER FROM THE BASEMENT AND BEYOND



19,743

meals & sides
salvaged by the

**SURPLUS
PROJECT**

**HOME
DELIVERY**

of groceries to
711 SENIORS
& people with disabilities



485 PEOPLE

connected to ID
documents and income-
support benefits

**SOCIAL
SERVICES**

**FOOD
DISTRIBUTION**

14,200

families received an
average of 69
pounds of food



967

blood pressure checks
by volunteer nurses

**HEALTH
SCREENINGS**

**SUMMER
MEALS**

provided
11,500
meals & snacks to kids
& teens



246 PEOPLE

participated in store
tours &

**COOKING
CLASSES**

**NUTRITION
EDUCATION**

OVER 100%

increase in selection
of healthy items after
demonstrations



BUILDING TOWARD A HUNGER FREE COMMUNITY

We believe hunger is solvable. That's why we are working to create a Hunger Free Community. We're the first food pantry to join the Hunger Free Communities Network, an alliance founded by the USDA that supports broad-based, multi-sector coalitions committed to ending hunger. With help from the Alliance, we are working to better understand hunger in our community and identify underserved populations, gaps in programs that address hunger, and underutilized resources. We know this means we must accommodate growth in our systems and capacity. So, this year we've focused on bringing our infrastructure up to speed, updating and building out our technical capacity to collect and process data on programs, finances and volunteers.

Our new client tracking system helps us better understand how people use our programs, and will be vital to helping gauge progress towards becoming a Hunger Free Community. Our new financial system simplifies the process of tracking and reporting on budgets by program and better serves grant reporting needs. Finally, our system for coordinating scheduling and managing our 1,500 active volunteers is more streamlined. Infrastructure may not be sexy, but we can't build a Hunger Free Community without it.



CONTAGIOUS COLLABORATION

More than three years since its creation, the Surplus Project continues to redirect leftover cafeteria food to those in need. The impact is profound. Last year nearly 20,000 pounds of food – the equivalent of 18,000 meals – went to people in need instead of to a landfill.

“That food would have gone to waste. Think of all of the people who will benefit from those meals,” says Jackie Doherty, manager of Medical Staff Services at Rush Oak Park Hospital, and co-coordinator of the Surplus Project there.

The environment is also a winner. An estimated 30 percent to 40 percent of the U.S. food supply ends up in the waste stream. Globally, food waste contributes 8 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. Cafeterias are a prime contributor, with food typically comprising up to 45 percent of the waste produced by an institution.

The benefits of the Surplus Project go well beyond its environmental impacts. In the eyes of Alison Jordan, clinical lead nurse at Rush Oak Park Hospital, and co-coordinator of the program at the hospital, “It benefits everyone. As a nurse, we need volunteer hours, and it gets you away from our desk or your patients, and you feel like you're doing something good. It's been great to get to know people from other departments and the kitchen staff.”

Jackie adds, “[The Surplus Project] is a collaborative effort. We couldn't do this without the nurses and kitchen staff. We have such a good group of people who are willing to help.” It's a collaboration that's spread to cafeterias and social service providers across Oak Park, River Forest, Berwyn and Chicago's Austin Neighborhood, and now includes 15 local partners: seven donor cafeteria sites and eight recipient sites.



10 TONS
food from local
cafeterias repackaged
into meals &
distributed to people
in need



23 CARS
off the road = the
carbon savings
from the Surplus
Project



Volunteers pack leftover cafeteria food into ready-to-eat meals that are microwave-ready

SURPLUS PARTNERS

City BBQ, Berwyn
Dominican University
Ebenezer Food Pantry
Loretto Hospital
Mills Park Tower
New Life Ministries
Food Pantry
New Moms
Oak Park River Forest
Food Pantry

Oak Park and River
Forest High School
Oak Park Township
Senior Services
Riveredge Hospital
Rush Oak Park Hospital
Sarah's Inn
West Cook YMCA
Youth Outreach Services

VOLUNTEER STORY

Brian began volunteering a year ago, when he was looking for a way to get involved with the community. He now volunteers at both of our twice-weekly distributions.

“It feels good,” he says. “Being a part of [the Pantry] means I get to be a part of something bigger than me.

“It’s funny,” he adds. “I used to live right by Scoville Park, but didn’t start volunteering until I moved to Berwyn.” That’s when a friend who volunteered at the Food Pantry recommended it to him.

For Brian, volunteering is a way to connect with other people and live his values. “It’s more than feeding people. It’s nourishing the community. As a culture, we’re deprived of empathy the further away we get from each other. The more time we spend with one another, we feed a part of ourselves that’s lacking.”

When a foot injury prevented him from working his usual valet shift, Brian signed up to register clients at food distribution. “[Registration] can be challenging. It’s a great place to exercise empathy and help what can be a stressful ordeal. The people we serve exercise a lot of patience.”

Once his foot healed, Brian went back to his usual valet shift. He likes this job because he interacts with people more personally. He vividly recalls a woman who had left her home because of a domestic violence situation just the night before. Brian and another valet, “got to her car with the groceries and she became overwhelmed. And we ended up in a group hug. And I had a chance to be someone there for her. It was very meaningful to me.”

On the whole, he says, “there are sad situations, but there are way more smiles here.”



VOLUNTEER HONOR ROLL, FY2018

More than 1,200 volunteers have given their time to the Food Pantry in FY2018, but because of space limitations, we cannot list them all. We are grateful for ALL our volunteers.

200 Hours or More

Judith Hamje
Nancy Hartman
Charles Lake
Brian McHatton
Jay Michaels
Donna Morris
Mark Pepp
Mark Puccetti
Donna Steele
Paul Stern
Pam Walsh

100 to 199 Hours

Joe Banks
Mena Boulanger
Blanche Cameron
Paul Clark
Charlene Cliff
Carolyn Crowder
Noel Dunn
Trudi Eblen
Ronald Elling
David Endless
Connor Ficca
Cheryl Gandolfi
John Garofalo
Bill Grady
Laura Hall-Schordje
Mike Hanes
Willie Mae Harris
Joel Heinz
Christine Hicks
Peter Jaffe-Notier
Denise Jones
Laura Jordahl
Alison Jordan
Bill King
Susan Kram-Kumler
Kathi Kyrias
Judy Longman
Laura Lopez
Pam Merker
Barbara Moline
Jerry Murray

Greta Nekrasova
Samantha Neuman
Elizabeth Parson
Ann Puccetti
Ryan Ramos
Bianca Ribaud
Thomas Roche
Thomas Schouten
Sarah Sears
Kathleen Walsh
Barb Weakly
Claudia Zinanni

50 to 99 Hours

Antoine Allen
Janet Anderson
Linda Bachelder
Anna Balakrishnan
Dolly Baldwin
Jane Barker
Michael Bartik
Matthew Bartnik
Barry Batia
Linda Bolte
Timothy Boonprasarn
Wendy Bottomlee
Sharon Bresnahan
Latasha Brown
Leslie Brown
Patrick Brown
Sakina Calcuttawala
Mary Colchamiro
Dinny Coleman
Sue Cossey
Maureen Darcy
Roman Ebert
Lana Geselbracht
Lisa Giers
Johann Gonzalez
Doris Green
Laura Gutierrez
Joseph Gwozdz
Bobbie Hald
Joan Iatrides
Michelle Iocca

Bill Janulis
Julie Justicz
Hannah Klein
Judy Klem
Melissa Klett
Vicky Lekovish
Joanne Libfeld
Brenda Lopez
Debra Lorson
Sandra Luckins
Conor McCarthy
Kim Meares
Kelly Mitchell
Jeffrey Mueller
Gerald Noah
Jean Noble
Paul Obrecht
Maya Rawal
Debbie Redleaf
Sophie Reeds
Andrea Riles
Catherine Rison
Lynn Robinson
Jane Santilli
Nancy Sjostrom
Orly Slobodkin
Darlene Smith
Patricia Snider
Michael Swaine
Yiorgos Takoudis
David Terebessy
Audrey Todd
Kenneth Van Spankeren
Phyllis Voosen
Lindsay Wallaert
Mary Jane Welter
Tracy Wilson
Marla Wisuri
Derek Withers
Valerie Woods
Jane Yang
Cathy Yuen
Paul Zimmerman

25 to 49 Hours

Suleyman Ahmed
Daniel Anaya
Richard Anger
Nasrin Asgharzadeh
Alexis Attard
Scott Barrett
Robert Becker
Edward Kelly Becvarik
Karen Berman
Ethan Bielowicz
Simone Birriel
Fredric Birt
Michael Brennan
Veronica Brooks
Evelyn Carissa
Susan Carmona
Morgan Carnes
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Barbara Cimaglio
Anne Costello Johnson
Linda Cox
Donna Culver
Margaret Delaney
Max Demeter
Joe DiUlio
Reeves Dominique
Cai Dongcheng
Virginia Donoghue
Vickie Engelhardt
Kristina Entner
Fidaa Fatani
Kathleen Fiorito
Julian Garcia Bariel
Ben Ginsberg
Kerrigan Gong
Wendy Greenhouse
Nancy Guarino
Susan Guensburg
Janet Guevara
Anders Gullberg
Jane Hanneman
Brittany Hante
Yuria Haraguchi
Krystle Hasapis

Nolan Hernandez
Amy Hunt
Cynthia Jared
Jimmie Johnson
Patricia Joy
Ariella Kahan-Harth
Jude Kasiak
William Kasiak
Tom Kelley
Brianna Kellogg
Jennifer Kerr
Kristian Kirkeiner
Doug Kittredge
Joshua Klein
Adam Kozlik
Alice Laria
Mary Larocca
Bob Larson
Katie Larson
Susan Larson
Gavin Liesse
Kalea Liesse
Safia Livingston
Jane Llewellyn
Maureen Luschen
Pete Malecki
Laura Manola
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Kristyan Wenc
Anita White
Darryl Williams
John Williams
Bryce Wilson
Reid Wilson
Trevor Wilson
Keith Wittman
Gretchen Worley
Qianqian Zhao
Mary Kay Zima



FINANCIAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2018

Ten years ago our financial report looked much different. Our budget was a fraction of the size, much of which was directed to holiday food baskets. Today we are providing more healthy food year-round to people in need than ever before. We continue to grow with your help and support, and look forward to what the next five, ten, or 40 years have in store for our work together.

Of course, it's with the help of our incredible volunteers that we can have such an impact on hunger. While the value of their labor does not appear in our financial statements, we could not have such a healthy report without them.

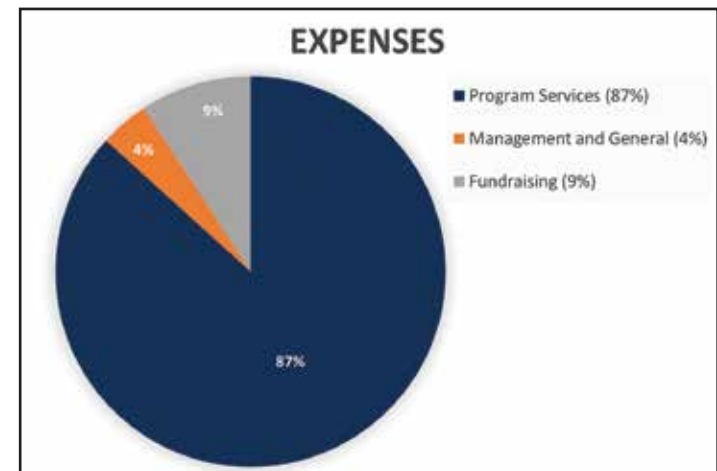
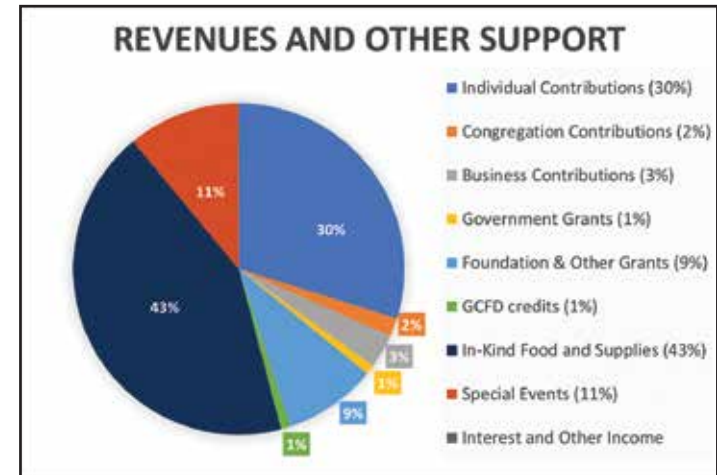
OAK PARK RIVER FOREST FOOD PANTRY FINANCIALS AS OF JUNE 30, 2018:

Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	851,251
Grants receivable	13,000
Prepaid expenses	11,245
Property and equipment	50,434
Total Assets	925,930
LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable	10,951
Accrued payroll	20,987
Total Liabilities	31,938
NET ASSETS	
Board designated	442,897
Unrestricted	366,281
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	809,178
Temporarily restricted	84,814
Total Net Assets	893,992
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	925,930

Statement of Activities

REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT	
Individual Contributions (30%)	577,743
Congregation Contributions (2%)	34,680
Business Contributions (3%)	64,741
Government Grants (1%)	17,627
Foundation & Other Grants (9%)	175,921
GCFD credits (1%)	17,981
In-Kind Food and Supplies (43%)	834,527
Special Events (11%)	211,551
Interest and Other Income	1,698
Total Revenues and Support	1,936,469
EXPENSES	
Program Services (87%)	1,758,755
Management and General (4%)	82,454
Fundraising (9%)	187,165
Total Expenses	2,028,374
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	-91,905
NET ASSETS	
Beginning of year	985,897
End of year	893,992



PANTRY Pulse

This year we are celebrating a milestone: our 40th anniversary! With 40 years in the rearview, we're excited to take the next steps towards a Hunger Free Community. Join us in looking back at this year--and the last 40--to see the great good we've been able to accomplish *together*.



—Michele Zurakowski, Executive Director and Betsy Bakes, Board President



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FY2018 HIGHLIGHTS

