



CORALVILLE ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY NEWSLETTER

THE PANTRY IS LOCATED AT 203 1ST STREET IN CORALVILLE.

MAY 2016

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I had the privilege of taking some time off the first week of April.

If you're like me, the transition from vacation-mode to work-mode can be a challenge. There's something just not right about going from beach to board meeting within 24 hours (and hey, I even like my board!).

Somehow, I was able to get back on track fairly quickly. My main motivation came in the form of a compelling story told by one of our board members who teaches nutrition education in the ICCSD elementary schools.

At our April board meeting (when my mind was still on the beach), she recounted a recent morning when one of her students was having difficulties focusing and, inadvertently, getting into trouble. She asked the student if he was hungry and offered him a fresh pear, the snack for that day's lesson. He gobbled it up within seconds. He quickly asked for another, explaining that he hadn't eaten since lunch the day before because there wasn't any food at home. He missed school breakfast that morning because he was late, and was scared he would get into trouble if he asked for a plate just minutes before class started. Knowing she might not have enough pears for the rest of the class, the teacher offered the student a second pear, and then another, to help ease the hunger pangs.

Her message: **we have hungry kids in Coralville—she sees it every day. We're making progress, but we still have lots of work to do.**

I'm ready to continue working with you, the Coralville community, to make sure no child or adult in this city goes to bed hungry.

John Boller
Executive Director

MARCH 2016 STATISTICS

Families Served: 304

Children Served: 428

Individuals Served: 1,101

Food Distributed: 16,620 LBS

FIGHTING CHILDHOOD HUNGER IN CORALVILLE

During school breaks, children in our community often go hungry. The Free and Reduced Lunch Program and breakfast programs in local schools fill a need for hungry students during the school year, but those important programs do not continue during school breaks. Weekends, Winter Break, Spring Break and Summer Break present challenges to families with children who benefit from and rely on programs that help provide food during the school year. There is currently a gap in programming to help families, specifically children, in the Coralville community.

Since the beginning of the year, the food pantry has been working hard to find ways to support the needs of Coralville children. A recent collaboration with the Coralville Public Library has created a program providing nutritious snacks to young library patrons on days off from school. What began as a way to measure the level of need among the children has become an illustration of the library's commitment to supporting the youngest members of our community without stigma. This collaboration has helped uncover and alleviate some of the signs and symptoms of child hunger, while furthering the welcoming and supportive environment that is our public library. We are continuing to broaden the impact of this program and are exploring further ways to partner with the public library to fight hunger.

The food pantry has also implemented the School Break Nutrition Program, funded by a Community Foundation of Johnson County grant and generous support from food drives in multiple Coralville faith communities. This program provides families with children food to help supplement the loss of school lunches and breakfasts during breaks. Our first distributions over spring break were a success and the pantry will continue to have multiple distributions during the summer months as well.

Through these programs, the food pantry is working to raise awareness about the issue of child hunger and food insecurity in Coralville as well as provide community members a way to get involved, support our children, and tackle the broader issue of child hunger in Coralville. We look forward to seeing how these programs can be expanded in the future and welcome community involvement!



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Our mission is to engage our community in providing food for our neighbors. It is the goal of CEFP to foster collaboration with all Coralville residents, businesses and organizations to end hunger in our community. Every \$1 donated to the Coralville Ecumenical Food Pantry becomes \$5 worth of food. Help us continue to provide food for our neighbors in need by making a financial gift today.

Thank you for your support!

DONATIONS CAN BE SENT TO OUR MAILING ADDRESS AT:

**CORALVILLE ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY
PO Box 5523
CORALVILLE, IA 52241**

Secure donations can also be made online at www.cefoodpantry.org

We are a 501(c)(3) organization (Tax ID #: 42-1136292)

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

In January, University of Iowa Master of Social Work student Jessica Gallegos began her semester-long practicum with the food pantry. Driven by a passion to help others and a love for kids, Jessica viewed the opportunity to work with the pantry as a perfect fit. Dedicating at least 13 hours to the pantry every week, Jessica's areas of focus have been childhood hunger, cultural competence and inclusivity, and nutrition.

Throughout the semester, Jessica has engaged in thorough research to determine how the Coralville community can better address the issue of childhood hunger. She sparked critical conversations with community partners to introduce potential intervention strategies such as backpack programs, school pantries, and more accessible summer meal programming. Her efforts inspired the creation of the "Feed Your Body, Feed Your Mind" collaboration with the library, which now offers healthy snacks to children visiting the library during school breaks. Jessica also helped organize the pantry's School Break Nutrition Program distribution during Spring Break.

Inside the pantry, Jessica has worked alongside volunteers to coordinate monthly recipe sampling stations designed to encourage healthy food choices. She also compiled an extensive collection of simple and healthy recipes for the pantry to offer clients down the road. Jessica has also helped the pantry in breaking down language barriers.



A Spanish speaker, Jessica has helped make the pantry more accessible to customers who are part of the Latino community of Coralville by translating signage, forms, brochures, and parts of the website.

Jessica feels that taking any opportunity to give back is something everyone in the community should partake in. "I think there are certain issues in the community that we can do something about and that's why I think it is important to give back to any community, whether you live there or not."

We are so grateful for Jessica's hard work and dedication and we wish her all the best as she moves on with her studies. Her contributions to our organization and to our community will have a lasting impact.

These Kirkwood Community College construction and carpentry students and staff have been hard at work getting our new facility ready to go. They've been busy demolishing walls, planning layouts, securing materials donations, and are in the beginning stages of building walls. We are so grateful for their expertise and energy!



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

A congregation committed to helping the poor and hungry, Coralville Community of Christ Church saw an opportunity to assist neighbors in the community by partnering with the food pantry.

Community of Christ is actively involved not only with the food pantry, but also with many other local groups including: the Coralville Parks & Rec Department, Boy and Girl Scouts of America, and Coralville Central Elementary School. The congregation hopes it is responding to the call to "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Community of Christ's biggest contribution to the food pantry comes in the form of hosting a monthly Bridge Club Luncheon fundraiser. Each month, members of the church join forces with pantry volunteers to provide a full-service luncheon for members of The University Club. Each luncheon draws nearly 40 women, who pay an entry fee to socialize over a delectable meal before playing a few rounds of bridge. Community of Christ generously donates a large portion of the funds from the monthly luncheons to the pantry, which enables us to put food on the table for those who need it most.

The congregation is always in need of volunteers to help sustain the Bridge Club Luncheon fundraisers and encourages anyone who is interested to get involved (email volunteer@cefoodpantry.org for more info). We thank Community of Christ for including us in such a fun and successful partnership that works to help better the lives of many in our community.



DONATION FORM

Every \$1 donated to the Coralville Ecumenical Food Pantry becomes \$5 worth of food.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

YOUR CONTRIBUTION: \$5 \$10 \$25 \$50
 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other Amount _____