

FOOD FORTHOUGHT

SUMMER 2020



MEET MALENA

Malena works as a medical assistant. She doesn't own a car and usually rides the bus to work. After paying rent and basic expenses, there isn't much left over. Normally, she can get by with inexpensive food items from the store down the street—a jar of peanut butter and a loaf of bread can go a long way. In April, she was struggling and decided to reach out. Getting to work was a challenge because the buses weren't running. Many of the grocery store shelves were bare, including the less expensive items on which she relied. Malena reached out to ask for help, and we set her up for food delivery that day. Later, she wrote to say, "Thank you. I'm crying. This is the first real meal I've had in months."

“Thank you.
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first real meal
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—Malena, KLF Client

MEET JALEN

Jalen, a young man in his mid-30s, pulls up to the pantry door. He's picking up food for himself today, but also food for two of his neighbors. There is an older gentleman who lives next door who has a chronic medical condition and trouble getting around, so Jalen usually helps him out with errands. Down the street, there is a large refugee family who is nervous about using social services but needs the assistance. He doesn't make much at his minimum wage job, but he's grateful for his health and mobility. Jalen enjoys helping his community so much that he is going back to school in the fall with hopes of working at a non-profit someday.



MEET CALVIN

Calvin arrives at KLF in his pickup truck. In the bed of the truck are tools he uses when hired to do the occasional odd job. "I haven't had much work lately," he shares. "Things have been tight." Calvin's grown daughter and two granddaughters are living with him right now. They were doing okay for a couple of months due to extra federal food assistance, but that has recently run out and they are low on food. "My grandbabies need to eat!" he states as we start to load the back of his truck with groceries. When he sees the box of produce, he talks about how much his granddaughters love fresh fruit and will be excited when he arrives home.

A STATEMENT FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Weeks ago, we lost George Floyd due to a violent altercation with police. Days after, it happened again with Rayshard Brooks. Both instances sent shock waves through our nation— through our local community.

I sat down to write a statement in response to these unnecessary deaths many times over, but nothing I wrote seemed sufficient to capture the sadness, the disappointment, and feelings of hopelessness. I struggled to make the words sound less than hollow or shallow.

But here is what I know:

When we lose our Black and Brown men and women to violence it should affect us all. The Black Lives Matter movement, which has been re-energized in recent weeks, has shown us that we must all be a part of the fight. We are all obligated to do more than simply witness this injustice and then go on with our day. We must take the time to acknowledge the problem we, as a nation, face and realize that it runs deep. We must recognize that injustice comes from a long history of valuing people of color as “less than”. It creates a power dynamic that reinforces systems of oppression.

When I think of KLF’s place in the community, I understand that charity work is created to do something good for a community. We want to ensure that individuals and families have the food they need to lead a healthy, active life. However, we can, actively or passively, slip into the habit of treating those we serve as if they have some sort of deficit. It can flow from the premise that the giver has the expertise to decide both what the community needs and how to provide it. At its worst, charitable organizations are only accountable to themselves and their donors. If we approach our work as a “us” versus “them”—with sympathy instead of empathy—we will continue to be a part of the problem.

So, at the KLF Board Meeting on June 17th, it was decided to form a committee of the Board—made up of Board members, volunteers, and community members—to review our programs, policies, and statements and to ensure that our work is approached equitably and inclusively. Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes is committing to stepping up and doing the hard work. We commit to listening in a way that recognizes complex challenges and opportunities. We commit to training our Board, staff, and volunteers so that we know better and do better. We are willing to be vulnerable, expose our “good intentions,” and turn it into work that dismantles the systemic racist machine and builds a more equitable future.



Jennifer E. Johnson
KLF Executive Director



Our Community is So Generous!

We’ve always known that there is tremendous kindness in our community. However, since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, we have seen an amazing outpouring of food and fund donations, lunch donations for staff, and well wishes. Your generosity makes everything we do at KLF possible.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Above: We save your kind notes and words of encouragement for what we’ve dubbed our “Cheer Board”. Your support helps keep our staff and volunteers going!

LGBTQ HUNGER

More than 14 million American households identified as food insecure before the COVID-19 pandemic—rates that have only skyrocketed with over 10 million Americans who have lost jobs since March. These statistics are particularly troubling for the LGBTQ community which already faces disproportionate levels of food insecurity, employment discrimination, and higher rates of being uninsured due to a lack of financial benefits of marriage.

According to a recently updated Williams Institute report:

- > Nearly 27% of LGBTQ people, an estimated 3,029,000 adults, are food insecure
- > Women, people of color, young adults, and those with low incomes have particularly high rates of food insecurity
- > Among all food insecure LGBTQ adults, the majority (66%) identified themselves as female
- > LGBTQ adults are 1.6 times more likely than other adults to report that they did not have enough money for food for themselves or their families
- > More than one-third of LGBTQ people experiencing hunger over the past year were ineligible for SNAP

SEE HOW YOU CAN BE AN ADVOCATE FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING HUNGER AT KZOOLF.ORG



An excellent way to provide long-term support to our community is to name Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes as full or partial beneficiary of your life insurance policy.

To get started, contact your insurance agent. For information about other ways to leave a lasting legacy through giving to KLF, please contact Greta Faworski by phone at 269.488.2617 ext. 208 or by email at greta@kzoolf.org.

NEW FACES AT KLF

You may not be able to see these faces under their masks, but we want to introduce our newest team members. **Suzi Secondi** and **Sam Waldron** are busy moving food and coordinating mobile food distributions as our newest Warehouse Assistants. **Jeff**



From Left: Sam Waldron, Jeff Herman, Jada Redd, Suzi Secondi, and Jillian Bryant

Herman joined the team as a Program Assistant to help in the Melzer Pantry and with home deliveries. Following her internship at KLF, we hired **Jillian Bryant** as a Program Coordinator to assist with walk-up clients and caseworker pick-ups. That voice you hear when you call our office is **Jada Redd**, our new Administrative & HR Coordinator, who keeps us on track and assists with our Human Resources duties. This hard-working group joined our team during a very difficult time but rose to the challenge!

To meet the new needs of our organization during this time, we also made some changes with existing staff. **Bill Brown** moved into the role of Delivery Coordinator & Program Float. Bill organizes the home delivery schedule every day and helps in the pantries when needed. **Nadina Williams-Barrett** moved into the role of Community Engagement Manager. She will continue with the Kalamazoo Community Hunger-Free Coalition and will also oversee targeted outreach initiatives.

MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

GIVING COUPON:
AUGUST
COUPON #200

Help feed kids who lose access to school meal programs during summer months.

Donation Amount

\$ _____

Please send your contribution by August 28th.

Food Wish List: Pasta

GIVING COUPON:
SEPTEMBER
COUPON #201

Celebrate the harvest season with a gift that helps feed those in your community.

Donation Amount

\$ _____

Please send your contribution by September 25th.

Food Wish List: Canned Meat

— A NOTE FROM JEN —

MEET PHALON LEWIS, KLF VOLUNTEER AND BOARD MEMBER

Phalon Lewis was a dedicated volunteer and Resource Development Committee member before joining KLF's Board of Directors in December of 2018. His dedication hasn't wavered during the COVID-19 pandemic. Phalon has spent many hours prepping grocery orders in the pantry and warehouse. For this newsletter, we sat down with Phalon to get his perspective of how COVID-19 has shaped KLF's past few months. — Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director

Q: As a volunteer during the COVID-19 pandemic, how have you seen the demand for KLF's services change?

A: During this time, there has been a dramatic change in every aspect of the organization. Top priority has been to keep staff, volunteers, and clients safe during this pandemic all while serving the community. So many people are out of work, some have been experiencing difficulties with unemployment benefits making already tight budgets even tighter. Students are now learning from home, some in an environment where food is scarce. We changed our pantry model of clients coming in and shopping on their own to staff/volunteers shopping for them and walking groceries out to their vehicles, bikes, or bagging items up special for those on foot. We're grateful that we were able to change our model to meet our clients' needs. However, the change meant that our limited staff had to shift gears and step away from their office duties to keep business going in the warehouse and pantry. We're so fortunate to have a wonderful support system of volunteers; they show up eager to help each day.



Phalon Lewis, third in from the left, with fellow Flowserve employees volunteering at KLF's Portage Street warehouse prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: As a board member, what do you feel has been the biggest challenge for KLF during the pandemic?

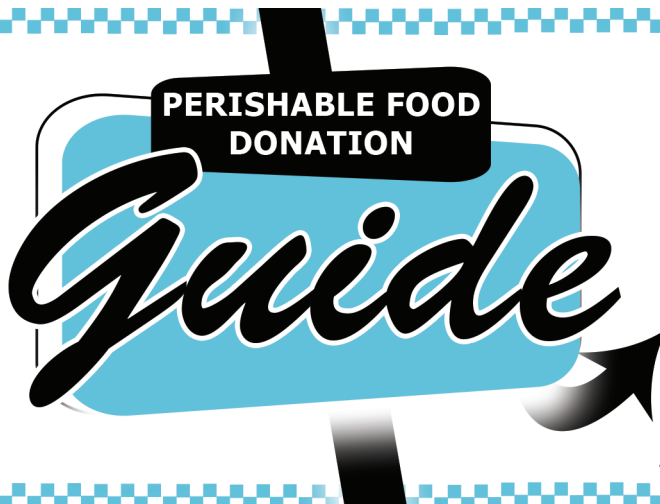
A: Many of our dedicated volunteers were in the high-risk category for COVID-19 so we were forced to close down dozens of our Grocery Pantry Program locations to keep them safe at home. We now serve clients from our main location on Portage Street, Monday-Friday, but this has been particularly difficult for some clients who are unable to reach us due to transportation challenges. We have tried to remedy this program with home deliveries. KLF has always tried to be nimble to meet community need, but this is new territory for us.

Q: Sum up the overall tone of KLF staff and volunteers these past few months in five words or less.

A: We're in this together!!!

Q: What are you most eager to tackle in the next six months with KLF's Board of Directors and staff?

A: I'd love to create more partnerships and cultivate new donors within our community to grow our programs. I would like for everyone to understand KLF's purpose as well as the number of individuals and families we serve each day.



What We Accept

- Fresh Produce From Your Garden, Grocer, or Farmers Market
- Fresh Baked Goods From A Local Bakery or Grocer
- Dairy and Eggs From A Grocer
- Meat Processed By A Licensed Butcher
(i.e. fresh frozen venison, beef, pork, chicken. etc.)

What We Don't Accept

- Home-Canned Foods
- Homemade Baked Goods
- Items From Your Fridge or Deep Freezer
- Leftover Catered-Type Foods
- Eggs From Your Backyard Flock

...and we always accept non-perishable items!

TRIBUTES Generous donations made in someone's HONOR or MEMORY. Donations made 4/1/20 - 6/30/20.

IN HONOR

Courtney Afton
Richard & Nancy Larsen

Kim Aldrich
Peter & Debbie Thompson

Todd Banks
Nicholas Banks

The Barger Family
Kris Pence

Sue Beute
Carolyn Kozlowicz
Harvey Beute
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Rebecca R. LaBelle

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Cathy Doan

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Randy Brown
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Harold Fitzgerald
William Fitzgerald

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Aleksandra Voznitza

Frontline Workers
Emily Hoffman
Robert & Donna Keller
Scott & Janet Nykaza

The Goddard Family
Joan Goddard

Adam Golubski
Martha Golubski

Carol Grant
Cheryl McKee

Greek Orthodox Church
Nan Goldenthal

Greek Philoptochos Group
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Erica Boyer

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Elizabeth & John Rohs

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Anna & Wayne Nicolen

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Karl Wildner

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Robert & Loree Bagley
Chris & Lauren Burns
Florence & Joel Orosz

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Dean Freng
Judy Joliffie

Kay Kline
Sue Phillips

Michael J. Kudlas
Bobbs Orr

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Mike & Shirley Lohrborg

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Rich Marotti

Cadin Matthews
Mary Janowiak

Kristine Mauro
Joseph Mauro

Tom Meyers
Philip Rosenberry

Michigan Municipal Managers Collaborative
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Peggy & Timothy Miller

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Laurel & Mike Jefsen

Becki Moffett-Moore
Pamela Wadsworth & Russ Cucurcu

Vi Murphy's Birthday
Francis & Toni Gross

Janet Nykaza
Madeline Nykaza

Chuck & Lana Ocvirek
Rachel Packer

David Ostrom
Holly Wolf

Robert Ostrowski's Birthday
Jack & Lenore Wilson

Our Family's May Birthdays
Robert & Loree Bagley

Our 50th Anniversary
Karen Ann Klott

OUT/Take the Peninsula
Jon Solomon

Ann & Don Parfet
Wendy VanPeenan & Rod Malcolm

Pasta Pals
Shirley Bumgardner

Sandra Rebecca Pollens
Robin & Steve Pollens

Edith Rasmussen
Robert & Mary Poel

Colleen Retherford
Anonymous

Michael F. Rice
Millie Lambert

Tom Robertson
Karen McPhail

Roberta Rogers
William & Mary Gephart

Sandy Rozelle
David Rozelle

Deb Russell
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Sara Sine

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Dr. Marissa Versalle
Kathleen Versalle

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Angela Henson
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Brenda Lewman
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Carrie Tyler
Chris Gasparovich
Chris Hurst
Christee Khan
Craig Aerts
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Gary Arndt
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Heather Hill
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John Moroney
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Kimberly Schouburg
Kimberly Webb
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William Carbary
Yongmin Sheng

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Sandra J. Krister

Dr. & Mrs. Paul Wienir
Stuart & Tamara Ostrowsky

Chris Willson
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Barbara VanDyken

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Dennis & Karla Willmann
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Timothy & Louann Palmer

Maggie Woodruff
James Woodruff

Woodward Elementary Teachers

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James Yankoviak
Steven Yankoviak

Susan Young
James Young

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Patricia & William Perkins
Trena & Terry Smith

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Jerome & Kathleen Amrhein

Mark Angelucci
Karen & Douglas Pollich

Justin Bailey
Karen & Douglas Pollich

Tom Barber
Sharon Ferraro

Dora Barnosky
Mary Wyckoff

Cindy Beachler
Charlotte Hubbard & Marshall Beachler

James Bieghler
Amy Clark
Julie Somers

Gary Booth
Barbara Garvin
Christine Shirtcliff
Jack Hulmes Jr.
John & Leatha Hower
Mark Thompson
Merle Allard
Richard Maynard
Susanne & Mark Vickers
Sylvia Kaplan

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Margaret Brigman
Merita & Dan Gabriel

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Mary Allwardt

Thelma Buckham
Susan & Jack Kreling

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Melinda Boccia & Brad Page

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Kevin Lynch

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Marge Carr

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Donald & Lynn Somers

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Joseph & Julie Cernik

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Lauritta Cilian-Chung, M.D.

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David & Carol Cleveland

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Lawrence Groggel

Patricia Coleman
Ms. Elizabeth G. Roelofs

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Erma Commissaris

George Commissaris
Erma Commissaris

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Matt Rodbard

Gloria Copeland
Brian & Carol Copeland

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Martha Vandelinde

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Lorene Cook

Ralph M. Deal
Michael McCarville

Dennis Deneau
Ralene Deneau

Brian Desmond
Lorene Cook

Alyce DeVolder
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Joseph Dillon
Ms. Colleen M. Berger

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Gregory & Barb Widener

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Tom Hagadone & Pam Miller
Laura Pyle

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Michele C. McLaughlin

Robert Eisenberg
Shirley Scott

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Allan & Rita LaReau
Angelina Domke
Cheryl & Bruce Briney
Dawn Pantaleo
Paul & Patricia Stevenson
George & Judy Bruzza
Jerry & Barbara James
John & Gloria Beatty
John Allen & Kyle Keiser
Kris Bazali & Rod Walters
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Marilyn & Mike Maurer
Mary Oudsama
Raymond & Priscilla Becker
Robert Fender
Sandra DuPuy
Sharon & Don Schmidt
Wesley Todd

Charles Fenwick
Shirley & Allan Heavey

James Forden
Lurline Hubbard

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Judith D'Arcangelis

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Dennis & Kathryn Compton
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Karen Grant

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Gauline Houtkooper
Prudence D. McCabe

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K. Norman & Rosemary Copeland

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Geana Goorhouse

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Lawrence Groggel

Kurt Groggel
Lawrence Groggel

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Steven Patterson

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Mary McCormick
Douglas Nichols

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Robert & Norberta Renauld

Alvina & Oswald Renauld
Robert & Norberta Renauld

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Ronald Snow

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Charlotte Hubbard & Marshall Beachler

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Francine Raffel

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Florence & Joel Orosz
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Betty Jo Waugh
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Barney & Florence Westra
Karl W. Westra

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Karl W. Westra

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Joyce & Marshall Draper

Barbara Young
Anonymous

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Michael Zann
Corinne Zann



Promoting a Hunger-Free Community Since 1982

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
KALAMAZOO MI
PERMIT NO. 1693

901 PORTAGE STREET
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49001-3005

FOOD REQUEST LINE: 269/343-3663
P 269/488-2617 · F 269/343-3669
WWW.KZOOOLF.ORG

Our Mission

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes will feed hungry people and engage our community in the fight to end hunger.

Our Values

- Respect
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Stewardship & Accountability
- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Urgency
- Service

COVID RESPONSE SERVICE UPDATE

Like everyone, our days are filled with uncertainty and concern for the well-being of our families and community. We long for normalcy, but also accept that this public health crisis will be around for a while. It is essential that Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes continues to be flexible and relevant in an ever-changing landscape of need. Extra government benefits issued in the spring are ending, cases of COVID-19 are on the rise, and the future of the 2020-2021 school year is uncertain.

With this in mind, we are prepared to support our community however is needed.

CURBSIDE PICK-UP

For the foreseeable future, we will continue to provide pre-packed food assistance in our curbside pick-up model. While most appointments are being scheduled at our main pantry, we are slowly opening some of our outlying pantries as they are ready. This includes our pantries at the Portage Community Center and Douglass Community Association as well as key sites on the east, west, and north sides of Kalamazoo. **Since mid-March, we have served 11,700 unduplicated individuals and provided nearly 27,000 four-day food orders.**

HOME DELIVERIES

Our home delivery program helps us support individuals whose normal pantry may be closed or who are unable to leave their homes for a variety of reasons. We deliver to people of all ages; however, many of our deliveries are to senior citizens. **Since mid-March, we have made over 1,300 home deliveries, 65% to senior citizens.**

STAYING SMALL; STAYING SAFE

KLF has always had amazing volunteers. To keep everyone safe, however, we continue to only allow small groups of volunteers in the building at this time. We will let everyone know if there are any changes to this moving forward.

SUMMER 2020

CONNECT WITH US



KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES IS A



STAFF / BUSINESS OFFICE

269.488.2617
Alyse Breckenridge, Senior Program Manager
Mandakini Brophy, Dev. & Communications Coord.
Bill Brown, Delivery Coordinator & Warehouse Float
Jillian Bryant, Program Coordinator
Paul Bushek, On-Call Warehouse Staff
Carol Cormack, Office Coordinator
Seth De Los Santos, Warehouse Assistant
Greta Faworski, Senior Director of Resource Development
Lizbeth Fuentes Rosas, Program Coordinator
Joe Galaviz, Senior Warehouse Manager
Jeff Herman, Program Assistant

EXT.
214 Dave Hafer, Procurement & Transportation Coordinator
206 Kristen Heggie, On-Call Program Coordinator
217 Kim Hinds-Lepsy, Services & Education Coordinator
201 Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director
217 Ray Kuerth, Volunteer Coordinator
222 Nate Mattson, Financial Analyst
217 Gina Nowling, Douglass Pantry Coordinator
208 Jada Redd, Administrative & HR Coordinator
201 Suzi Secondi, Warehouse Assistant
211 Sam Waldron, Warehouse Assistant
201 Nadina Williams-Barrett, Comm. Engagement Manager

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