

FOOD FORTHOUGHT

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020



MEET IMANI

Imani drove up to receive her grocery order while still wearing her work uniform. Her appointment was at 5:00 pm, one of the later shifts held to accommodate different schedules. She stopped at KLF right after her shift ended and commented on how tired she was from such a long day. As we worked together to fit the boxes of food into her trunk, she laughed, “Let me help — I’ve gotten really good at fitting as much as I can into this car.” Her face brightened as she exclaimed, “But we move into our new house in October! We’ve been homeless for over a year, and it FINALLY worked out. I can’t wait to have a place to call home.”

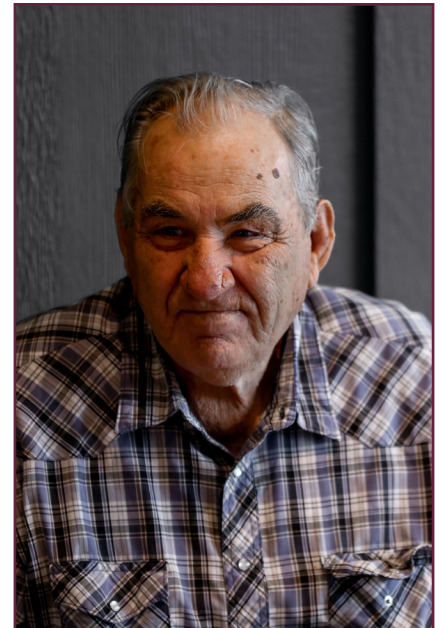
“I really value and appreciate this food.

And I enjoy talking with the people who deliver it!

— Emmett, KLF Client

MEET EMMETT

We first met Emmett through our partnership with the Area Agency on Aging. They contacted KLF and said that Emmett lived alone and was in need of food assistance. Although he had a car, his health no longer allowed him to drive. When we stopped by his home for the first time, he quietly answered the door, standing next to his Navy veteran flag. As he watched us unload his groceries, his eyes grew wider and wider. “All of this is for me?” questioned Emmett. Since that day, we have delivered to Emmett several times. He recently told the Area Agency on Aging, “I really value and appreciate this food. And I enjoy talking with the people who deliver it!”



MEET FAREEDA

Fareeda arrived for her appointment with several of her children in her car. They peeked out the windows, smiling and waving at KLF staff as they brought out a cart full of groceries. When Fareeda called to make her appointment, she mentioned that she didn’t need any meat because her family only eats halal. She didn’t want to take something that they wouldn’t use and she would rather it go to someone else in need. The Call Center staff told her that we always try to have halal meat in stock and that we would make sure it was included in her order. Fareeda was very surprised to hear this and responded, “Thank you, thank you — this means so much to my family.”

— A NOTE FROM JEN —
MEET JILLIAN BRYANT, KLF PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Jillian Bryant joined KLF as a social work intern in February 2020. Her time in the Call Center and Melzer Pantry gave her significant experience learning KLF's pre-COVID service model. Jillian was able to finish her internship after KLF switched to its temporary model in March and then was hired as a Program Coordinator in early April. For this newsletter, we sat down with Jillian to get her perspective on how things have changed since the early days of her internship and how KLF continues to meet the needs of the community. — Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director

Q: Much of your time in the past six months has been spent at KLF's side warehouse door, often called the Caseworker Door. What does a typical day look like at this location?

A: It's hard to say — there is no typical day! Because the inside of our facility is closed to the general public due to COVID, this door is truly a catch-all. Each day presents a mixture of walk-up clients needing food, caseworkers picking up orders, and donors dropping off food donations. It's always different depending on the day.

Q: You often don't know who will be at your door on any given day. Talk about how KLF remains flexible to meet the unique needs of different community members.

A: It's so important to remain flexible and open-minded. Most of our walk-up clients are homeless or in transitional housing. Each case is different. We need to assess the situation and see what food resources make the most sense for an individual or family. Equality isn't necessarily equity. Making sure we address the unique needs of a client makes all the difference. It's the same when working with caseworkers.

Our partnerships with agencies like *Communities in Schools* and *El Concilio* help us reach a multitude of families we couldn't reach otherwise. But again, we must stay flexible and work with these agencies to meet the unique needs of each family they serve.

Q: What are some of the things that you've observed or that have surprised you in your work?

A: It surprised me how many of our clients don't have internet access, cars, or phones. They walk everywhere they need to go, including to our building to get food. It really demonstrates the importance of agencies like ours to be accessible and understanding. I've also been surprised by the generosity of our donors! We've had so many food donations over the past few months, including many items from our wish list. And the produce — so much beautiful fresh produce from individual gardens and farms!



Jillian preparing an order for a client just inside what has been dubbed the Caseworker Door.



Learn more
about this vital federal
food program at:
cbpp.org

KNOW THE SNAP STATS

In 2019, SNAP reached **38 million people** in the United States facing food insecurity.

12% of Michigan's population utilizes SNAP.

60% of Michigan's SNAP users are families with children.

40% of Michigan's SNAP users are families with members that are elderly or disabled.

Over **44%** of Michigan's SNAP users are in working families.

SNAP keeps **over 250,000** Michigan residents out of poverty each year.



FIGHT HUNGER
KLF'S 2020 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN
YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE
DONATE VIA MAIL OR ONLINE AT
KZ0OLF.ORG



The IRA Charitable Rollover Provision allows individuals who have reached age 70½ to donate up to \$100,000 to charitable organizations directly from their Individual Retirement Account (IRA) without treating the distribution as taxable income. If married, each spouse can transfer up to \$100,000 from their IRA.

For more details about the IRA Charitable Rollover Provision, contact your tax advisor. To see other ways to give to KLF, visit kzoolf.org/donate.

FROM FARMERS TO FAMILIES

On August 21st, Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes (KLF) was honored to host a small celebration of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farmers to Families (F2F) Food Box Program. This program was launched in May 2020 as part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. The F2F program was designed to purchase and distribute agricultural products across the county and to alleviate food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of the program, KLF partnered with participating food distributors to receive a variety of family-sized dairy, meat, and produce boxes. These fresh items have been a fantastic supplement to the food KLF was already providing and have helped our local and regional farmers during a rocky time. The F2F program, a tremendous resource over the past summer, is scheduled to end during the fourth quarter of 2020.

It was quite an honor for U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue to be in attendance at the August 21st event. Congressman Fred Upton, Michigan Farm Bureau President Carl Bednarski, and several F2F food distributors were also in attendance. We appreciated the national recognition that this event gave Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes and our efforts during the past six months.



U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue addresses the crowd on August 21st outside Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes.

MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

GIVING COUPON:
OCTOBER
COUPON #202

Each dollar you donate is turned into enough food for three nutritious meals.

Donation Amount
\$ _____

Please send your contribution by October 23rd.

Food Wish List: Soups & Stews

GIVING COUPON:
NOVEMBER
COUPON #203

We're thankful for people like you who give generously to those in our community.

Donation Amount
\$ _____

Please send your contribution by November 27th.

Food Wish List: Canned Veggies

hooray
FOOD DONATIONS
JUNE — AUGUST

Throughout June, July, and August, we received 38,711 pounds of food donated by individuals, farmers, and stores.

This includes lots of fresh produce from personal gardens!

38,711 POUNDS

Thanks for sharing and for supporting our mission!

hosting a drive?

Utilize our Food & Fund Drive Kit!

Utilize our Food Drive Checklist to help jump-start your drive and stay organized. Included in the kit are social media graphics to promote your drive, printables, and more!

Look for the "Host A Drive" button on our homepage at kzoolf.org.

On August 5, The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners voted to put the **Housing for All Millage** on the November 3rd ballot. This millage, crafted by the Kalamazoo County Public Housing Commission and community leaders, **aims to combat homelessness that affects community families with children as well as single adults.**

If passed, this eight-year millage would help 200+ families each year with rapid rehousing and rent subsidies. The millage would also incentivize private and non-profit housing developers to create up to 900 permanent affordable housing units throughout Kalamazoo County.

On average, over 1,300 school-age children living in Kalamazoo County experience homelessness. Additionally, a “point-in-time” count conducted by the federal government in January 2020 found 702 people in Kalamazoo County identifying as homeless.

Each day, KLF helps dozens of individuals and families facing homelessness, often due to low wages, a lack of affordable, safe housing, and underemployment. The passing of this millage would significantly help the clients we serve and would help eliminate systemic poverty.

It is calculated that a countywide .75 millage would raise approximately \$6.2 million annually and cost just \$37.50 per year for homeowners with a house at a market value of \$100,000.

on the ballot november 3rd “HOUSING FOR ALL” MILLAGE



WHO WILL THIS MILLAGE HELP?

Families with children and single adults throughout Kalamazoo County.



WHAT WILL THE MILLAGE DO?

Provide temporary financial housing assistance and support services that lay the groundwork for ongoing housing stability as well as invest in the construction of quality, affordable housing.



WHERE WILL THE MILLAGE BE IMPLEMENTED?

In partnership with every school, school district, city, village and township in Kalamazoo County.



WHEN WILL THE MILLAGE GO INTO EFFECT?

In 2022, with the passage of a County-wide .75 housing millage on November 3, 2020.



HOW WILL THE MILLAGE WORK?

Through contracts with county public entities, non-profit organizations selected through an RFP process, and a variety of private and non-profit housing developers under the oversight of the Kalamazoo County Commission.

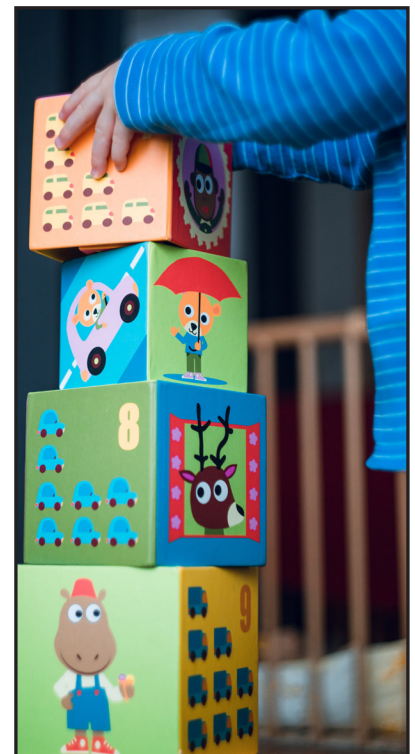
CHILD CARE COSTS: A GROWING CONCERN

In the United States, **the average cost of childcare for one child is roughly \$10,000.** Depending on a family’s structure (married vs. single household), it’s estimated that parents may allocate anywhere from 7-37% of their yearly income to cover childcare costs with single-parent households feeling more of a pinch.

There are programs to ease the cost of childcare for families that qualify, but funding is limited, **helping just 1 in 6 eligible children.** Many low-income households have made the tough decision to forfeit one parent’s salary to stay home or depend on non-paid relatives and friends to look after children. **Additionally, parents without access to affordable child care may have to utilize lower-quality care options to ensure they have the funds to cover other expenses like housing and food.** There is also a lack of programs for tweens and teens who no longer qualify for the types of after school care that some elementary schools provide. Additionally, a lack of childcare was cited as one of the main reasons parents and caregivers were unable to work during the pandemic (i.e. school child care programs and centers shut down).

Access to affordable, quality childcare allows parents to further their education and participate in the workforce resulting in improvements to a families’ economic circumstances and children’s social and emotional well-beings. The federal budget has increased funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant over the past two years, but more actions are needed at the local and state levels to truly solve the United States’ child care accessibility and affordability dilemma.

Sources: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, American Enterprise Institute, and MarketWatch



TRIBUTES Generous donations made in someone's HONOR or MEMORY. Donations made 7/1/20 - 8/31/20.

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For corrections, mailing updates, or to change how your newsletter is delivered (via USPS, email, or both), please contact Mandakini Brophy at 269.488.2617 ext. 206 or Mandakini@kzoof.org.



Promoting a Hunger-Free Community Since 1982

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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.KZOO.LF.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



The newest member of our fleet – our Home Delivery van!

KLF'S HOME DELIVERY PROGRAM

KLF's home delivery program was born in response to COVID-19 closures and concerns. When many of our pantry locations temporarily closed in the spring, we were concerned about our clients being unable to get to a pantry. We also knew that many people, especially senior citizens, were worried about leaving their homes due to compromised immune systems. So we took the show on the road and began making deliveries. While this program grew out of response to the pandemic, we plan to make it a regular part of our programming and will expand it in the future.

hitting the road

70%

The approximate percentage of deliveries going to seniors.

15-20

The number of home deliveries we do each day.

1,945

The total number of deliveries we've made since March!

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020

CONNECT WITH US



KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES IS A



STAFF / BUSINESS OFFICE

269.488.2617
Brent Boswell, Program Assistant
Mandakini Brophy, Dev. & Communications Coord.
Bill Brown, Delivery Coordinator & Warehouse Float
Jillian Bryant, Program Coordinator
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
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201 Sam Waldron, Warehouse Assistant
212 Nadina Williams-Barrett, Comm. Engagement Manager

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