

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

SUMMER 2021



MEET ANIYAH

Aniyah is expecting her first child and preparing to move in with her fiancé, Austin, and his five-year-old son. “I am not sure that we qualify for food because my fiancé has a job,” says Aniyah. “But with moving and being pregnant, well, we’ve had trouble making ends meet the past couple of months.” When we told Aniyah that all of KLF programs are self-declaration of need with no income requirements, she let out a sigh of relief. “Once I get settled, I am sure we will catch up. But this helps so much right now.”

I wanted to say thank you and tell you how much this delivery means to me.

- Linda
KLF Client

MEET ENZO

Enzo walks up and sets his backpack down before ringing the bell at KLF’s side door. A staff member greets him by name. “Just the usual things—thanks,” Enzo says quietly as staff start pulling together food items for him. Enzo carries everything he owns in his backpack, including his food. He doesn’t have any cooking facilities or cold storage, so staff know the specific items he can use. Enzo doesn’t say much, but he’s always very grateful for the food he receives. The staff member hands him a bag of food. Enzo spends a moment tucking the items into his backpack before wishing staff a good day, nodding farewell, and heading down the street.



MEET LINDA

Linda contacted the Call Center a few hours after we delivered groceries to her home. She asked if she could be transferred to a manager. “I just needed to talk to someone in charge,” Linda said when the Program Manager answered. “There is nothing wrong, but I wanted to say thank you and tell you how much this delivery means to me. I just had major surgery and can’t get around very well. Money has been tight, so the groceries help so much.” Linda pauses for a moment and then continues, “But what means the most is the kindness of your delivery team. I really enjoyed talking with them. It made my day, and I thought someone should know.”



– A NOTE FROM JEN –

CHECKING IN WITH ROXANNE FREY, MELZER PANTRY VOLUNTEER

In 2020, KLF's Grocery Pantry (GPP) model changed from in-person shopping to curbside pick-up. The pandemic required a swift response from our staff so those struggling to meet their basic food needs could still safely access our services. With months of the new service model under our belt, we're preparing to reopen some pantries for in-person shopping, but not without surveying our clients beforehand to understand their preferences (see page 3 for survey responses). We also felt it was important to get feedback from our volunteers. Roxanne Frey, a five-year KLF volunteer, can be found pitching in at our Melzer Pantry three days each week, which makes her input valuable as we move forward to serve clients in the next chapter of the pandemic. — Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director

Q: In your opinion, what has the general tone of KLF's clients been while adapting to the change in the GPP service model?

A: Clients have adapted nicely in that they seldom have to wait for their food to be packed into their vehicles, loaded onto bikes, etc. The employees working in the pantry are superheroes in my opinion! Kudos to Seth, Humza, Jay, and Leo!

Q: What has impressed you most about KLF's ability to meet clients' needs during the pandemic?

A: Attention to detail! They go out of their way to accommodate dietary/special needs for the clients. I am reminded of a quote from Maya Angelou, "I have learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Q: What most excites you about resuming in-person shopping at some pantries?

A: Interacting with the clients—sharing recipes, helping with nutritious selections, and simply spending time with them. Volunteers always hope to make a positive difference in a client's life on days they help them shop for groceries.

Q: What advice do you have for a client who may be struggling to decide which method to receive groceries from KLF (in-person, curbside pick-up, or home delivery)?

A: If time or transportation is a concern, it may be easier for a family or individual to select either home delivery or curbside pick-up. We have an awesome warehouse crew and experienced truck drivers.



Roxanne Frey helps prepare grocery items for same-day curbside pick-up.



WELCOME TYESHA

Tyesha Williams recently joined our staff as a Warehouse Assistant. In this role, Tyesha will assist with all aspects of the warehouse including receiving product, picking orders, welcoming volunteers, helping with caseworker pick-ups, and delivering food orders. She is a hard worker, and we are fortunate to have her on our team. If you happen to see her while visiting or volunteering, we encourage you to say hello to help welcome her to the KLF team.

REMINDER

KLF accepts donations of fresh farm stand and garden produce!

We accept produce donations Monday - Friday, but encourage donations earlier in the week so we can distribute quickly. For information on making fresh food donations, contact Bob Stansifer at Robert@kzoolf.org.



Did you know that KLF is an official Monarch Waystation?

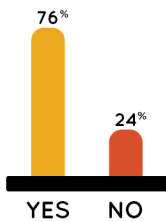
Developed and planted in 2019, a portion of our front landscape provides milkweeds, nectar sources, and shelter needed to sustain monarch butterflies as they migrate through North America.

To learn more, visit monarchwatch.org.

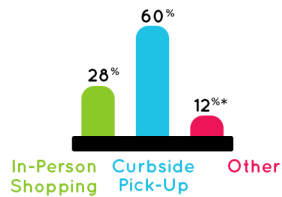
— KLF CLIENT SURVEY RESULTS —

Whenever an organization goes through a crisis, it can be difficult to know which direction to take once the crisis begins to subside. In the case of COVID-19, our entire community experienced a crisis together. To help guide our next steps as an organization, we turned to our clients to give us valuable feedback and insight. A short survey was administered to KLF clients during April and May 2021. **In total, 210 surveys were completed.**

Did you visit KLF before the pandemic?

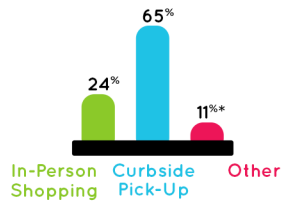


If you **previously** visited, which do you prefer:

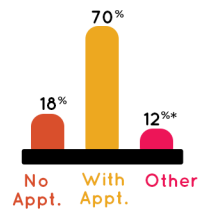


*Most common response was "no preference"

If you were new to KLF **during the pandemic**, which did you prefer:



Do you prefer food distributions with **OR** without an appointment.



MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

GIVING COUPON:
AUGUST
COUPON #210

Donate to help Kalamazoo County families experiencing hunger this month.

Donation Amount
\$ _____

Please send your contribution by August 13th.

Food Wish List: Whole Grain Pasta

GIVING COUPON:
SEPTEMBER
COUPON #211

It's Hunger Action Month! Every dollar donated to KLF provides 3 full meals.

Donation Amount
\$ _____

Please send your contribution by September 10th.

Food Wish List: Canned Meat

Whether a KLF client prior to the pandemic or new to our services, approximately **66% prefer the curbside pick-up model**. The other **33% prefer in-person shopping or the option to choose either model** depending on pantry or personal circumstance. These results suggest that a hybrid model may be most effective.

Seventy (70%) of respondents prefer to have a scheduled appointment while 30% prefer no appointment or have no preference. Our current model provides significant opportunities for both scheduled pantry appointments and no-appointment mobile food distributions.

Questions or comments about the survey? Please contact us at info@kzoolf.org.



TAKE A TOUR!

Get an up-close look at how KLF provides food for hundreds of people each week by touring our space!

We'll give you an inside look at how we procure, store, and distribute food, and we'll show you how our clients access our services.

To schedule a tour for you or a group, contact Greta@kzoolf.org or call 269.488.2617 ext. 208



NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Three community members were elected to the KLF Board of Directors at its July 21st meeting. **Dr. Laurel Ofstein** is an Associate Professor of Management at Western Michigan University with special interest in entrepreneurship and strategy. **Morgan Rogalke** is an attorney with Kreis Enderle with experience in estate planning, probate litigation, and elder Law. **Carrie Nicholson** is a Human Resource/Benefits Compliance Advisor for Nulty Insurance and has served on the KLF Human Resources Committee for several years. All three individuals bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the Board of Directors.

THE LASTING IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC

Recent data from *PayScale* reveals that it may take some Americans up to five years to recover from economic loss and setback during the pandemic. The United States saw cumulative job losses hit 23 million in April of 2020 with most of those jobs belonging to individuals without post-secondary education. In addition to job losses, many parents, disproportionately women, were forced to cut their hours or leave jobs entirely to care for children when childcare facilities and schools closed their doors.

While the United States' unemployment rate has fallen sharply since April 2020—down 5.9% from 14.4%—it's important to note the type of jobs on the recovery trend. According to the *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*, hours worked in low-paying occupations fell by over 28%—that's almost 20% more than high-paying professions. And economists have seen a large increase in the number of unemployed young adults who are not enrolled in school or job training programs. The aforementioned statistics, combined with the labor market's slow rebound, are cause for concern.

There are devastating ripple effects of long-term unemployment and economic disruption. Families have drained their savings to stay afloat during the pandemic, unemployment benefits may not amount to a pre-pandemic salary, and financial uncertainty and lack of services can take its toll on mental health and relationships for both adults and children. Those desperately trying to find work that will support themselves and their families may also deal with unconscious biases due to work history gaps, sometimes seen as a red flag by employers.

While recent strides made to combat COVID-19 seem to be helping, the pandemic recovery is far from over. It could be years before those hardest hit by the pandemic can go to bed at night without worrying about how they'll pay the rent or put food on the table.



The pandemic has most impacted food-insecure families or those one paycheck away from not making ends meet.

TRIBUTES Generous donations made in someone's HONOR or MEMORY. Donations made 5/1/21 - 6/30/21.

IN HONOR

Dr. Benjamin Avner
Dorothy Tydings

Simon Boehme
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Nancy & Ron Crowell

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Kathleen & James Chenoweth

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Andrew Parsons

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Andrew Parsons

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Leigh Ford

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Angela & Joe Gross

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Suzanne Birgy

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Jon Riccio

Eric Lum
Shirley Horn

Char Marsiglia
Deborah Davis

Kristine Mauro
Joseph Mauro

Mark & Sheryl Miller's 50th Wedding Anniversary
Sheila & Gary Bigelow
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Chuck & Lana Ocvirek
Rachel Packer

Kumud Patel's 70th Birthday
Chetan & Sheela Vyas

Gladene Pattison
Clyde & Dolly Simeroth

Greg Peet's Birthday
Rex & Carol Grant

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Andrew Parsons

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Kay Moon

Karen Emily Siegart
Anonymous

Jack & Roy Ann Smith
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Sheela Vyas' Birthday
Chetan & Sheela Vyas

KCHCS's Hotline & Expo Team
John Waugh

Hungry Children in the Summer
J. Dale & Cheryl Westbrook

IN MEMORY

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For corrections, mailing updates, or to change how your newsletter is delivered (via USPS, email, or both), please contact Greta Faworski at 269.488.2617 ext. 208. or Greta@kzoof.org.



Promoting a Hunger-Free Community Since 1982

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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

ONSTAFF GROUP PRESENTS THE 2021

DOLLAR DRIVE-THRU

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5TH | 6AM-6PM

HOW YOU'LL HELP

Stop by one of four locations on August 5th to help fight childhood hunger!

100% of August 5th Traveler's Café and Pub sales will be donated to this amazing cause!

TUNE IN TO 103.3 WKFR

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TRAVELER'S CAFÉ AND PUB
PORTAGE ST. NEAR THE AIRPORT

OLD NATIONAL BANK
DRAKE NEAR COSTCO

PANERA BREAD
WESTNEDGE BY SOUTHLAND MALL

KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES
901 PORTAGE ST.

OR ONLINE AT KZOOLF.ORG



SUMMER 2021

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 Desmond Allen, Warehouse Assistant
 Mandakini Brophy, Dev. & Communications Coord.
 Bill Brown, Delivery Coordinator & Program Float
 Jillian Bryant, Program Coordinator
 Carol Cormack, Office Coordinator
 Seth De Los Santos, Melzer Pantry Coordinator
 Greta Faworski, Associate Director
 Leonardo Fernandez, Program Assistant
 Lizbeth Fuentes Rosas, Program Coordinator
 Kristen Heggie, On-Call Program Coordinator
 Jeff Herman, Warehouse Analyst

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