

FOODFOR**THOUGHT**

SUMMER 2022



MEET RENATA

Renata is a mother of an eight-year-old and a nine-month-old. She is a hard worker and has been promoted to store manager at her place of employment. Even so, the wages are low, and her little family is living in a motel room. “Most of my money goes to our car and the motel room,” shares Renata. “I’m signed up for SNAP benefits but won’t get any funds for another two weeks. We won’t last that long. We could really use help with food, and the baby needs formula.”



MEET SHIRLEY

Shirley reaches out to KLF for the first time. “With the recent inflation of prices, I was wondering if my husband and I would be eligible for food assistance,” Shirley inquires. “We are on a tight budget — I’m sure like everyone else in the county right now!” Shirley schedules an appointment that day to pick up at one of KLF’s pantries. “Thank you so much — I just never thought I would need this service.”



MEET KELVIN

Kelvin works full-time from home every day of the week. His job requires him to be on the phone almost exclusively, so it’s difficult for him to break away. “My work schedule does not allow me the flexibility to get to any pantries in Kalamazoo County. I really don’t know if you can help me,” Kelvin states. We tell Kelvin about our home delivery program. He says he lives in one of the rural communities neighboring Kalamazoo and is concerned that we won’t deliver outside of the city. When he learns that we deliver all over Kalamazoo County, Kelvin is very relieved. “I’ve just hit some hard times, and this is such a blessing right now.”



While the client stories featured above are true, their names and images have been changed for anonymity.

A NOTE FROM JEN

We're checking in with Jeff Herman who serves as KLF's Procurement & Inventory Manager.

Jeff was recently promoted to this position because of his skills in warehouse analytics and inventory operations. He stays busy securing much of the food that moves through our warehouse and working closely with the Services Department to identify items most needed by clients.

— Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director



Jeff Herman, KLF's Procurement & Inventory Manager

Q: How long have you been with KLF and how has your role evolved?

A: I joined the team at KLF in March 2020. It was all hands on deck as we navigated the early stages of COVID. I spent most of my time in the pantry helping implement the new curbside model. As time went on, I moved into the Pantry Coordinator role and learned more about the functions of our inventory database and client food needs. In 2021, my role shifted to analyzing warehouse processes. I look forward to digging deeper into procurement and inventory management.

Q: What are the biggest challenges KLF faces regarding food procurement?

A: Most people are surprised to learn that KLF is purchasing between 50 – 75% of its inventory, depending on the current availability of USDA food. The skyrocketing cost of food, freight, and fuel has been a significant challenge. As more families turn to KLF because of rising costs, we are feeling a financial pinch on a macro level. Staple food items, such as bread or meat, have

doubled in price over the last few months. When you are buying half a truckload of an item, that's a big deal! Sometimes we find a great price only to lose the savings with steep shipping costs. In other situations, we've had to wait 4 – 6 weeks to receive an order, making it difficult to keep essentials in stock.

Q: What goals do you have for summer and into the fall?

A: In addition to seeking the best prices on purchased food, we also hope to strengthen relationships with food donors throughout Southwest Michigan. Donations from grocery stores, farmers, and food manufacturing plants have always been extremely helpful. Food drives, especially the recent Letter Carriers'

drive, help us secure items that are difficult to buy in bulk. This time of year, we get donations from vendors at the Farmers Market – when the day is over, we are there to pick up any produce they don't want to take back with them. Unfortunately, most grocery store chains have corporate policies that only allow them to provide food donations to Feeding America affiliated partners. That can be challenging for an organization like KLF that is a local, independent hunger-relief agency.

Q: In what ways can our community help with these challenges?

A: I am constantly amazed by the generosity of our community and how people contribute in whatever way they can – food, funds, and their time. It makes my job much easier, of course. But, more importantly, it's really rewarding to see such commitment to hunger-relief and reduction of food waste.

KEY FACTS About Childhood Food Insecurity

1 in 7* U.S. children live in households with food insecurity

* COVID-19 has increased that number to as many as **1 in 4**

CHILDHOOD FOOD INSECURITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

Poor Health Status	Developmental Risk	Mental Health Problems	Poor Educational Outcomes

FOOD INSECURITY MAY PRESENT IN A FAMILY AS:

Food Anxiety	Diet Monotony	Decreased Nutrition Quality	Inadequate Food Intake



Teaching Children to be PHILANTHROPIC

What are the best ways to teach children and teens about the value of philanthropy?

At every age, there are easy steps you can take to show young people the value of giving and to help them experience the sense of joy that giving brings.

Elementary School

- Talk directly about giving, why it is important to you, and where you have given in the past.
- Encourage a “saving — giving — spending” model with any allowances or financial gifts.
- Volunteer or donate as a family.
- Share children books, shows, or movies that have charitable messages or explore different social issues that charities support.

Middle School and High School

- Teach financial literacy. Giving has a place in discussions about spending and saving, especially as teens begin to learn the value of earning their own money.
- Help teens identify causes they personally find important. They are more likely to be engaged if the cause interests them. These causes may not be the same ones that interest you.
- Teens often have service hour requirements for school. Encourage them to volunteer at different agencies to learn about a variety of charitable causes.

College-Age and Young Adult

- Encourage membership on committees at their favorite charities.
- Many institutions of higher education have social justice or charitable clubs.
- As young adults begin taking responsibility for more of their personal expenses, they may be less likely to set aside funds to donate. Continue conversations about giving not only with dollars, but also with volunteer time.

At any age, one of the most effective ways to introduce your children and teens to philanthropy is to model charitable giving yourself. A 2018 study by the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy found that parental giving is directly linked with an increase in a child’s likelihood of giving.

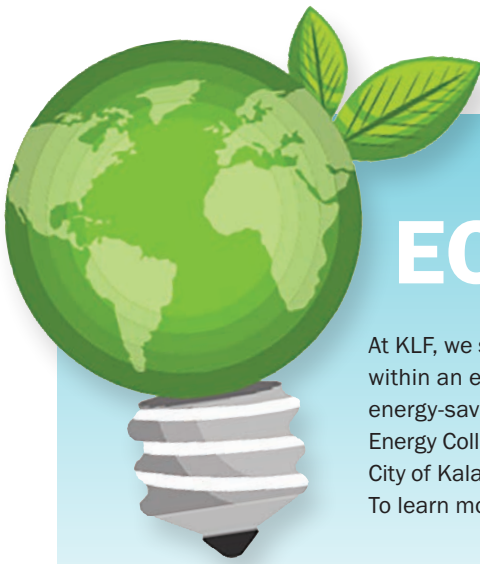


NALC UPDATE

This year’s National Association of Letter Carriers’ Food Drive on May 14th brought in a total of

87,757 POUNDS OF FOOD!

Many thanks to volunteers, postal staff, and all who donated to help us Stamp Out Hunger!



ECO-FRIENDLY EFFORTS

At KLF, we strive to achieve our mission in the most sustainable way possible. Although operating within an environmentally conscious framework is not always easy, we have chosen to invest in energy-saving initiatives that help improve our overall efficiency. By working with the Kalamazoo Energy Collaborative, KLF is one of several organizations partnering with Consumers Energy and the City of Kalamazoo to audit our energy use in order to reduce waste and lower overhead costs. To learn more about this collaboration, visit kzoenergycollaborative.org.

Here's a short list of steps we are currently taking to become more eco-friendly:

- Transitioning our warehouse and administrative offices to LED lighting in addition to existing motion sensing lights.
- Consolidating home-delivery routes in order to save on driving costs and fuel consumption.
- Utilizing Ecobee thermostats to regulate temperatures in the admin office during the work day and when the building is not in use.
- Working closely with our refrigeration contractor to understand the costs and considerations surrounding large-scale refrigeration needs.
- Installing mechanisms to control defrost cycles in our cold storage.
- Maintaining an on-site compost project that benefits from food waste.
- Increasing energy efficiency by implementing power management on workstations and using software to power down computers when not in use.
- Contributing to our local ecosystem with a monarch waystation on KLF grounds.

In what ways do you support sustainability efforts in your home, or within your community? Check out these minor changes that can have a big impact: consumersenergy.com/residential/save-money-and-energy/homeowner-tips.



HARVEST SOCIETY

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes
Planned Giving Program

MAKE AN IMPACT

Become a Member of our Harvest Society

One of the most common planned gifts to a charitable organization is a bequest. Bequests are gifts given to a charity after an individual's death as specified in their last will and testament. They are most often financial gifts but may also be gifts of personal property or stock. What an amazing way to leave a legacy and continue helping others after your passing! Since a gift can be made in a specific dollar amount or as a percentage of your estate, there are ways to support multiple charities and to ensure your loved ones are cared for as well.

For more information about supporting KLF through bequest or other planned gift, contact **Greta M. Faworski, Associate Director**, at 269-488-2617 ext. 208 or greta@kzoolf.org.



Summer 2022 Food Wish List

Consider grabbing a few extra items to donate to KLF during your next grocery run!

Donations can be dropped off at KLF's administrative office: 901 Portage Street from 8am – 4pm, Monday – Friday.

If you have a large food donation and are not available during these times, contact us for alternate arrangements.

- ✔ Kid-friendly snacks – string cheese, fruit snacks, graham crackers, applesauce
- ✔ Cereals and granola bars
- ✔ Juice and healthy beverages
- ✔ Baking supplies – cooking oil, cake mix, frosting

#220

JULY GIVING COUPON

Your contribution sparks hope for local families this Fourth of July season.

Donation Amount \$ _____

#221

AUGUST GIVING COUPON

Like a cool dip on a hot summer's day, your gift to KLF will refresh someone's soul.

Donation Amount \$ _____

TRIBUTES

Generous donations made to KLF in someone's **HONOR** or **MEMORY**. Donations made 4/1/2022 through 5/31/2022.

IN HONOR

Lee Accorso

Sam & Barb Accorso

Dr. Benjamin Avner

Dorothy Tydings

Sue Beading

Corinne Herschleb

Susan Beute

Harvey Beute
Carolyn Kozlowski

Janice T. Bundy

Karen George

Jim & Jean Bylsma

Sarah Greene

Elissa Cahn

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Rachel Packer

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Jackie Sperling

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& Food Dance Staff

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Promoting a Hunger-Free Community Since 1982

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P 269/488-2617 · F 269/343-3669
WWW.KZOOOLF.ORG

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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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES

Community Celebration

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND | 5:00 - 7:00 P.M.

KALAMAZOO NATURE CENTER

7000 N. WESTNEDGE AVE. | KALAMAZOO, MI | 49009

Please RSVP to Erin by September 15TH | 269-488-2617 ext. 206 or erin@kzoolf.org

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE. DONATING TAKES SECONDS AT KZOOOLF.ORG

SUMMER 2022

CONNECT WITH US



KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES IS A



STAFF/BUSINESS OFFICE

269.488.2617	EXT.	Ray Kuerth, Volunteer Coordinator	209
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