For most people, there’s an assumption that if you work hard and do your part to contribute to society, your efforts will be rewarded in the form of self-sufficiency. The long hours spent away from family are worth it when it means you’ll earn enough to cover basic needs and have the ability to maintain a small savings. The reality is that, for many, long hours on the job don’t provide enough to cover basic needs, and they find themselves on the constant verge of financial disaster. What’s worse is when a temporary injury leaves someone struggling to makes ends meet unable to work at all. That’s the reality Omar was faced with earlier this year.

“I’ve always worked hard, and it happened at the worst time,” Omar solemnly shares. “I am also supporting another family member right now so we’re both in a bind.”

Omar lost his job when he found himself unable to work due to a back injury. As a result of losing his job, he was evicted from his apartment located within a senior retirement complex. He’s saddened by the situation not only because he’s left scrambling to find a new place to live, but also because he has always played by the rules.

“I paid taxes all my life. I don’t drink or do drugs. I have no criminal record. I even have teaching credentials. This just feels so tragic,” Omar says.

Despite feeling defeated, Omar didn’t let his disappointment tarnish his work ethic, and he’s very grateful for KLF’s services. After months of living on the streets, he shares that receiving help with groceries has allowed him to put money towards the gas he needs to get to work and finally cover the security deposit for a new apartment.

Now working two jobs, he looks forward to leaving his situation behind him. Unfortunately, the feeling of financial uncertainty is a not-too-distant

DECEMBER 2017/JANUARY 2018
- A NOTE FROM JEN -
This time of year can be especially trying for those
struggling to make ends meet. This is a season
synonymous with tables dressed in old family recipes
and gathering with gifts in hand for friends and loved
ones. But for the nearly 40,000 people in Kalamazoo
County who grapple with hunger each day, the
holidays are a time to simply get through in hopes that
the flip of the calendar will bring a reprieve from the
relentless stress of poverty.

We’re fortunate to be in a community that stands
strong for neighbors facing hardship, and we
encourage you to start the new year alongside us to
fight hunger here at home. A few ways to get involved
over the next year include:

**DONATE**: Each dollar donated to KLF provides three
full meals for someone in need, and donated food
provides food variety within our 24 pantries.

**VOLUNTEER**: KLF relies on an average of 450
volunteers per week to make our programs possible.
Visit kzoolf.org to see how to get started.

**ADVOCATE**: Share KLF information via e-mail and
social media with your friends, family, and followers to
raise hunger awareness and encourage people join the
fight to end it.

**READ A BOOK**: Gain a greater understanding of the
underlying causes of hunger in America by reading
a book like *$2 A Day: Living on Almost Nothing in
America* by Kathryn J. Edin.

**SPUR CHANGE**: Learn about, and advocate for, better
policies and legislation surrounding the root causes of
hunger and poverty - fair wages, family leave policies,
food access, housing costs, etc.

Thank you in advance for your gift and support of
our mission. From the KLF family to yours – happy
holidays.

We wish you and
yours a healthy and
joyful new year.

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**COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: MAPLE HILL AUTO GROUP**

There’s no better place to be for the holiday season
than Kalamazoo County. When the giant Santa Claus
appears downtown, that’s often the cue to grab the
lawn chairs and head to Michigan Ave. for the Holiday
Parade or to lace up your sneakers and enjoy the
colorful decor at Run Through the Lights. For many,
these events have become family traditions. For one
local business, they’re one of the many ways in which
they give back.

Maple Hill Auto Group has been the presenting
sponsor of the Kalamazoo Holiday Parade and Run
Through the Lights for many years. Jim VandenBerg,
owner of the business, has a big heart for those
struggling with basic needs. He has also been a
longtime supporter of Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes.

“Everyone should experience a little magic during the
holiday season, even if they’re experiencing hardship,”
said Jim VandenBerg. “We support these programs
to bring joy to the entire community and to encourage
people to extend a hand to others as they celebrate
the season.”

VandenBerg understands that the holidays can be a
stressful time for families trying to make ends meet.
His father passed away when he was nine leaving
his widowed mother, Louise, to provide for herself
and her three children. For a time, the family utilized
Aid to Dependent Children, a program that provided
financial assistance to kids whose families had low
or no income. Louise was determined to provide the
kind of life she and her husband had envisioned for
their children, and her hard work and determination
eventually allowed her to send her kids to college.

We want to thank Jim VandenBerg and the staff
of Maple Hill Auto Group for all they do for our
community. The holiday season wouldn’t be what it is
without their support.
TOUR OUR SPACE

It’s amazing to witness the community spirit that comes alive during the holiday season at Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes. We invite you to be a part of the action by touring our facility, located at 901 Portage Street, with us! No RSVP required!

DECEMBER 13
4-5 PM

JANUARY 18
10-11 AM

If you’d like to schedule a date and time for you or a group to tour our facility, please call Greta Faworski at 269.488.2617 ext. 208, or email her at Greta@kzoof.org.

GIVING COUPON: DECEMBER COUPON #170

Get into the spirit of the holiday season by sharing a meal with someone in need.

Donation Amount
$____________

Please send your contribution by December 15th.

Food Wish List: Cooking Oil

GIVING COUPON: JANUARY COUPON #171

Resolve to give in 2018. Every dollar you donate provides three full meals.

Donation Amount
$____________

Please send your contribution by January 19th.

Food Wish List: Beef Stew

THANK YOU

TO THE OVER 400 VOLUNTEERS WHO HELP MAKE OUR FOOD PROGRAMS POSSIBLE EACH WEEK - THANK YOU. THIS WORK WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

FOOD FUNDS VOLUNTEERS ADVOCATES

The food and funds donated.
The hours spent assisting with KLF services and events.
The voices lent to conversations about local and federal food programs.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE IN 2017 TO FIGHT LOCAL HUNGER.
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, contact your tax advisor.

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes can provide a four-day food supply for less than three dollars. Because of our pennies-on-the-pound purchasing power, we’re able to stretch the funds you gift us to the max. We make a commitment to offering fresh produce, dairy, and meat in all of our pantries, which means we need to purchase those food items that aren’t typically donated. During our last fiscal year, KLF secured 27% of our food through the wholesale market.

While the monetary donations we receive make it possible to continue our vital food programs and serve nearly 700 people per day, food donations allow us to provide variety within our 24 Grocery Pantry locations. Last fiscal year, 8% of our food came from community food drives and food donations. Food variety is key to meeting clients’ needs in a way that respects their dignity. Clients are able to access food that allows them to maintain a diet based on their health, cultural, religious, or lifestyle needs.

Donations from our community (volunteer hours included) have always been the mighty force behind our mission. Whether you donate food, funds, time, or any combination of the three to our organization, know that they work in tandem to effectively carry out our mission and feed those experiencing hunger in our community.
TRIBUTES 9/11/17 - 11/06/17 Special thanks to those who honor friends and family through contributions to KLF.

IN HONOR OF
Lee Accorso
Sam & Barb Accorso
Larry & Nancy's Wedding
John & Joyce Petro
Margaret Carr
Kay Vermeulen
Bob & Jean Christie
Sue Gilbertson-Beadling
Pam & Al Cox
Jane & Jon Streeter
Harold Fitzgerald
William Fitzgerald
Helen & Ron Flaspohler
Anonymous
Frank & Toni Gross
Angela Gross
Phyllis Hepp
Jon Riccio
K Central Class of 1954
The Ladies of the 80s
Marvin King
Jon Riccio
Alexander Lipsey's Birthday
Rene Meave
Anne Wend-Lipsey
Wes & Annmarie Freeland
Ben Longstreth
Jane & Jon Streeter
Katie & Scott Longstreth-
Tokstad
Jane & Jon Streeter
Paul Matyas' Retirement
Mary Anderson
Karen McPhail
Dr. Mark Orbe &
Mrs. Natalie Jones Orbe
Katie & Andy's Wedding
Kari & Tony Benjamin Hamann
Kathy Shultz
Jane & Jon Streeter
Dr. Eric Shay
Anonymous
Christine & Andrea's Wedding
Sandy Mastromatteo
Maggie Woodruff
James Woodruff
Tom & Rachel's Wedding
Robert & Judith Shrimplin

IN MEMORY OF
Effie Bauer
Maria Maki & Brian Smith
Pat Bigelow
St. Martin of Tours
Episcopal Church
Linda Black
Janet Kovach
Esther Brush
Joseph Markus
Joyce Steeby
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Shirley Walter
Stan & Chris McGrew
Barbara Young
Anonymous
Johanna & Henry Yzenbaard
Mike & Shirley Lohrberg
The Yzenbaard/Hassing Family
Joyce Yzenbaard-Clark &
Patrick Clark

For corrections or mailing
database updates,
please contact KLF's new
Development Assistant,
Katie Paauwe, at
269.488.2617 ext. 206 or
Katie@kzoof.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

CONNECT WITH US

269.488.2617
Joan Atwell, Call Center Coordinator
Bill Brown, Warehouse Assistant
Paul Bushek, On-Call Warehouse Staff
Art Cole, Services Director
Carol Cormack, Office Coordinator
Bob Dekker, On-Call Warehouse Staff
Greta Faworski, Resource Development Director
Linda Fox, Call Center Coordinator
Lizbeth Fuentes Rosas, Bilingual Call Center Assistant
Joe Galaviz, Warehouse Coordinator

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STAFF / BUSINESS OFFICE

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DECember 2017/january 2018