Walking through the halls to her next class, Jasmine looks like a typical college student. She chats with friends about an assignment that’s due next week. She appears young and carefree. It’s easy to assume that homework and tests are her biggest concerns.

However, Jasmine often worries about much more than classwork. As a full-time student, it’s tough for her to get many hours at her part-time job—a job that pays minimum wage with no benefits. Most of the money she earns she puts towards rent, tuition, and car expenses. There is very little left for anything else. At times, she knows she must ask for help.

“I’ve gone to a Loaves & Fishes pantry a few times because I just didn’t have any money left for food,” says Jasmine. “I found it very helpful and was glad I decided to go.”

It’s easy to stereotype college students by assuming that their parents are paying for some or most of their expenses. But a 2018 study conducted by Temple University reports that 36% of college students struggle with food insecurity and a similar percentage don’t have stable housing. Nine percent of study respondents reported being homeless. When the study broke out the number of students attending community colleges, the statistics were even higher, with 42% reporting food insecurity. The reasons parallel Jasmine’s experience. The high cost of tuition, books, and housing leaves very little for basic expenses.

“The food I got at Loaves & Fishes lasted way longer than four days,” shares Jasmine. “I picked items, like ground turkey, that I could use in several meals throughout the week. I was surprised by the selection.”

Jasmine is responsible for all of her school and living expenses. She hopes that there comes a time soon when she won’t have to rely on others for help. Jasmine is taking several sociology classes and is very interested in how her generation can make a difference in the future. She plans to someday give back to others who are experiencing similar struggles.

But, for now, she is glad that Loaves & Fishes is there when she needs it.
MEET PETE McWETHY, KLF VOLUNTEER

Our warehouse is a very busy place with lots of moving parts. With only three warehouse staff members, we are so fortunate to have volunteers who help get things done and get food out the door. Pete McWethy is a longtime warehouse volunteer, most often found behind the wheel of a KLF truck on the road fighting hunger.

— Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director

Q: Why do you volunteer for KLF?
A: I volunteer to honor the memory of my father, Gilbert McWethy, who was a longtime volunteer with KLF at the First United Methodist Church pantry. I also look forward to the social and physical aspects of the job. It helps keep me fit.

Q: As a volunteer driver, you have experience with part of the KLF operation that not everyone sees. What do you think would surprise people to know?
A: As a driver, I encounter so many people who are part of the KLF network, including food donors and pantry volunteers. Most don’t realize how many caring people work together to make these programs possible. Everyone truly believes in the mission to make Kalamazoo County hunger-free.

Q: What changes have you seen at KLF over the past five years?
A: The most notable change I’ve seen is the new pantry openings within Kalamazoo Public Schools. There are full pantries at Washington Writer’s Academy, Northeastern, El Sol, Woodward, Spring Valley, Maple Street, Kalamazoo Central and, most recently, Lincoln. And smaller pantries at the other middle schools and Loy Norrix.

Q: If someone is considering volunteering, what advice would you give them?
A: There are a lot of options to choose from, so pick something that fits your schedule. Maybe choose an activity you have never experienced before. Try something new that will be fun and rewarding.

YOU’RE INVITED!

After several months of construction, parking headaches, and limited cooling space, our expansion is almost complete! Both the freezer and cooler will more than double in size, and the cooler will feature two different temperature zones. The extra 30 feet from the existing south wall of the warehouse provides a much larger volunteer space that will be used for repacking food, assembling weekend food packs, and creating monthly food distributions for the Commodities Supplemental Food Program. We hope you will visit and see how we’ve grown!
TAX CHANGES AND GIVING

TOP REASONS PEOPLE GIVE TO CHARITIES

- Belief in the mission
- Desire to make a difference
- Personal connection to the organization
- Personal satisfaction from helping others
- Religious beliefs
- Social connection from giving to a cause

One of the main reasons people give to charities is to help others in need. However, the tax benefits of charitable giving are important to many donors and are often factored into the decision to give. Because of this, charities have feared the impact of the Tax Cuts and Job Act that was signed into law in December of 2017. This Act increased the standard deduction from $12,700 to $24,000 for married couples which significantly reduces the number of people who itemize their deductions, including their charitable donations. This year, 19 million tax filers itemized their deductions compared to 46 million in 2018. While there are many factors that impact giving, it’s clear that the new tax law impacted charitable donations last year. Individual giving decreased by 3.4% in 2018—the largest decrease since 2009. Experts predict that the new law will lead to a $21 billion reduction in donations nationwide. This projected decrease is significant for charities, including Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes, who rely heavily on individual donations to sustain their programs and missions.

In 2018, approximately 60% of Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes’ funding came from generous individual donations. We remain humbled and grateful to everyone in this community who donates funds, food, and/or their time to make this work possible. We thank you in advance for your decision to continue partnering with us to fight hunger by supporting KLF.

Sources: Giving USA 2019, Tax Policy Center, Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
MORE THAN JUST POUNDS

Not all food has equal nutritional value. We all know this, and its something we frequently struggle with in our own lives. Every day we make choices about the food that will fuel our bodies and minds.

We strongly believe this type of choice should be available to everyone. **Access to not only pounds of food, but also healthy, nutritious food** is important to maintain physical and mental health, especially for children. Through relationships with farmers, grocers, wholesale partners, and community food donors, we seek to secure food that gives variety and choice in each food category. This includes fresh produce, frozen meat, fresh eggs, and quality grains. **Variety is important to address different dietary needs, especially food allergies and medical conditions.**

Food procurement can be tricky and very volatile. Dave Hafer, our Procurement Coordinator, spends his days pouring over price lists, making calls, and visiting our food partners. What’s happening on a global and national level has a direct impact on food cost and availability at the local level. Over time, it has become necessary to purchase more and more of our food inventory. We anticipate that in the coming year we will need to purchase at least half of the food we distribute especially because we are no longer receiving food through the Food Bank of South Central Michigan. Our newly expanded freezer and cooler will make it easier to buy food in bulk and keep our costs low. Food donations and food drives, of course, also remain a critical piece of the puzzle. These donations help provide variety and fill in the gaps during the food procurement process.

We used to look closely at the pounds of food we distribute, but now know it’s about more than just pounds. It’s about nutrition, variety and, most importantly, dignity of choice when selecting food for yourself and your family.

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START A NEW HOLIDAY TRADITION WITH A MONTH OF GIVING

Add an item to a box each day in November or December. At the end of the month, donate the box to KLF to help a family in need.

- Day 1: Oatmeal
- Day 2: Whole Grain Cereal
- Day 3: Peanut Butter
- Day 4: Jelly/Jam
- Day 5: Dried Spices/Salt and Pepper
- Day 6: Jar of Applesauce
- Day 7: Granola Bars
- Day 8: Box of Crackers
- Day 9: Package of Rice
- Day 10: Whole-Grain Pasta
- Day 11: Pasta Sauce
- Day 12: Meal in a Box
- Day 13: Cooking Oil
- Day 14: Canned Sweet Potatoes
- Day 15: Canned Green Beans
- Day 16: Canned Corn
- Day 17: Box of Mashed Potatoes
- Day 18: Canned Pineapple
- Day 19: Cranberry Sauce
- Day 20: Canned Tuna or Chicken
- Day 21: Canned Soup or Stew
- Day 22: Macaroni and Cheese
- Day 23: Mixed Nuts
- Day 24: Raisins
- Day 25: Can of Infant Formula
- Day 26: Baby Food
- Day 27: Vanilla Extract/Sugar
- Day 28: Dessert Mix
- Day 29: Ensure® or Meal Replacement Drink
- Day 30: Butter
- Day 31: Select Something You’d Like to Add

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HOLIDAY TRIBUTES

Holiday tribute gifts are a great way to honor friends and loved ones while helping others.

- Your gift stays local.
- For every dollar gifted, you’ll provide three meals for someone in need.
- KLF can provide you with, or mail, special gift recognition cards for your gift recipients.

For more information about tribute gifts or donating to KLF, contact Greta Faworski at 269-488-2617 x208 or greta@kzoolf.org.
TRIBUTES  Generous donations made to KLF in someone's honor or memory. Donations made 7/1/19 - 8/31/19.

IN HONOR OF

Lee Accorso
Sam & Barb Accorso
Anna, Wayne, & Jim Nicolen
Lynn Morrison
Christine Castle
Marianne Andreach
Lisa Decker & Cameo DeWalt
Specialized Staffing Solutions
The Michael Ferguson Family
Michael Palmer & Barbara Graham-Palmer
Shirley Freeman
Corinne Herschlieb
Ingrid Gardner’s Birthday
Joy & James Gardner
Sue Gilbertson-Beading
Corinne Herschlieb
Gold Star Families
Shirley Kloosterman
Vince Groppi’s Retirement
Victoria Elkins
Msgr. Michael D. Hazard
Catherine & Christopher Hurley
Dawn Jaqua
Robert & Susan Kiser
Jennifer Johnson
Jon Riccio
Kalamazoo’s Hungry People
J. Dale & Cheryl Westbrook
Pam Kingery’s Retirement
Darrell Roose
Florian Kochanny
Cheryl Benson
Darlene Lohrberg’s 90th Birthday
Mike & Shirley Lohrberg
Elizabeth & Craig Martin
John Post Landscape
Kristine Mauro
Joseph Mauro
Bill McCurdy’s Wedding
Sarah Mastrandrea
Madison McMullen
Robert Lihost & Pamela DePierre
Our 45th Wedding Anniversary
John & Deborah Mellein
Chuck & Lana Ocvirek
Rachel Packer
Michael F. Rice
Millie Lambert
Jan & Tom Tiderington
Becky Swartartz
Cheryl Westbrook’s 75th Birthday
J. Dale & Cheryl Westbrook
Lenore & Jack Wilson
Robert & Lois Ostrowski
The Wiser Family
Dr. & Mrs. John Trittschuh

IN MEMORY OF

Jill Adamski
Jane & Jeff Puvogel
Barbara S. Allen
Jill Frenthway
George Beyerle
Julia Beyerle
Linda J. Black
Janet Kovach
Patricia Breen
Kay Baetsen
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Gertrude Hoekstra
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Robert & Norberta Renaund
Michael Matthews
Sharon Scotese
Fred Meagher
Nancy & Shawn Hagen
Charles Miller III
Doreen Debiek
Kathy Mizur
Vincent H. Mizer
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Tom Pyke
Susan Pyke
Dick Rafferty
Shirley Bumgardner
James Lee Remick
Maria Maki & Brian Smith
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Robert & Norberta Renaund
Alvina & Oswald Renaund
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For corrections, mailing database updates, or to change how your newsletter is delivered (via USPS, email, or both), please contact Mandakini Quiñones at 269.488.2617 ext. 206 or Mandakini@kzoolf.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 MOBILE FOOD INITIATIVE

- The goal of this program is to provide supplemental grocery items to people who need them in Kalamazoo County.
- There are no eligibility requirements or paperwork to fill out. Food is free to Kalamazoo County residents.
- Each MFI distributes various perishable and non-perishable food items, including fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein.
- Food is distributed on a first come, first serve basis at 5 designated locations per month. No appointment needed.
- KLF periodically partners with local organizations/businesses to host additional pop-up MFIs in underserved areas of the county or during critical periods such as school breaks.
- For more information about the Mobile Food Initiative and to see upcoming distribution locations, visit kzoof.org/get-help or call 269.488.2617. Spread the word to others!

CONNECT WITH US

KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49001-3005
FOOD REQUEST LINE: 269/343-3663
P 269/488-2617 · F 269/343-3669
WWW.KZOOLF.ORG

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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019