

FOOD for THOUGHT

Promoting a Hunger-Free Community Since 1982

APRIL/MAY 2016

LOU'S STORY

Lou is a quiet guy who works hard and doesn't ask for much. Perhaps that's why it came as a shock to his coworkers when they found out he was utilizing the services of Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes to make ends meet.

Before moving to Kalamazoo to pursue a barbering degree, Lou worked for a retail warehouse store in Holland, Michigan. He was employed through a temp



agency so when things at the store slowed down, he was one of the first to lose his job. He knew starting over in Kalamazoo where he didn't have a support system wouldn't be easy, but he was determined to make a go of it.

When finishing his barbering degree didn't pan out, Lou got a job at a local supply company. While he was grateful to have a new job, he found he was still

having trouble paying his bills and having enough left over for food; that's when he turned to Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes.

"I used to volunteer at a food pantry in Holland," Lou explained. "I sort of knew what to expect." Lou knew he would be on a tight budget while getting back on his feet, but he never expected to utilize KLF's services as part of his acclimation to a new city.

"Some of my coworkers found out I was going to Loaves & Fishes for food," Lou said. "When management found out, I was given a raise so I could afford to purchase my own food. We're one big team, where I work. They take care of their people."

Lou is thankful for the opportunities he's been given by his new employer and is also thankful for the resources KLF provided while he was reestablishing himself. When asked what advice he would give to others who may be in his situation, he replied, "If there's a service like KLF in your community and you're going hungry, utilize it. That's what it's there for." ■

Name changed for anonymity

- ANNUAL - AWARD WINNERS

ANNE WEND LIPSEY
FOOD JUSTICE
People's Food Co-op

COMMUNITY PILLAR
Maple Hill Auto Group

FOOD INDUSTRY SUPPLY HERO
Rajzer's Farm Market & Greenhouses

GOLDEN LOAF
(GROUP AWARD)
St. Martin of Tours Episcopal Church

GOLDEN LOAF
(INDIVIDUAL AWARD)
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Gull Lake Community Schools
Kalamazoo Public Schools
Parchment School District
Portage Public Schools
Vicksburg Community Schools

WILLIE WEBSTER
OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER
Gloria Copeland

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NOTE FROM JEN

It's not unusual to see the look of surprise on a person's face when I reveal to them that Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes relies on the help of approximately 1000 volunteers to make our food programs possible. This astonishing fact is usually met with inquiries about our services and how we're able to retain so many dedicated individuals. Dedication, I often explain, is the very heart and soul of our volunteer force.

Many of KLF's volunteers have played an active role in allowing us to feed hungry people since the 1980s. With these longtime volunteers comes a wealth of knowledge and a deep passion for helping those in Kalamazoo County who need a hand. These devoted individuals are also instrumental in our ability to recruit and retain a quality volunteer base – eagerly taking new philanthropists under their wings and welcoming them to the KLF family.



Our volunteers come from all walks of life. They're all ages. They're all races and religions. They're business professionals, college students, service club members, and retirees. With them they bring unique skills that allow us to operate, most days, like a well-oiled machine. At

KLF, this diversity melds together to blur the lines of what makes us different and, instead, emphasizes what becomes possible when a group of people comes together for a common purpose: to feed hungry people. ■

Executive Director

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: MELODY STIRK KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY

With 36 years in real estate in the Kalamazoo area, Melody Stirk is no stranger to the many things that make our community a great place to live. But she also knows



there are people struggling to make ends meet. She is dedicated to giving back, and feeding hungry people remains close to her heart.

"I can't stand having people hungry. One out of every 5 kids is hungry. So 4 out of 5 can help – why are people still hungry?" Melody continues, "I'm just shocked that there is anyone hungry in this city of so many resources." She also regularly encourages local farmers to consider donating

excess produce to Loaves & Fishes to help get more fresh product into the hands of those who need it.

Melody contributes monthly because she knows that hunger is a year-round issue and there are times when KLF experiences fewer donations, but need remains high. Over the past ten years, Melody has donated nearly \$40,000 of her income from real estate sales to support Loaves & Fishes. "I give monthly because there is always someone hungry. There are so many people in our community who can donate just \$5 or \$10 dollars a month to help wipe out hunger." Reflecting on her own life, Melody remembers when she was just starting out and barely had enough to live on. "I will never forget that and give back now that I am able."

In addition to helping KLF, Melody is active in supporting the Gospel Mission, Girl Scouts, Animal Rescue Project, and Toys for Tots. The local art community is also a passion because it's part of what makes our community a great place to live.

Thank you, Melody Stirk, for your unwavering dedication to feeding hungry people! ■

THE UNDENIABLE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS

How much would you guess the estimated hourly value of a volunteer's time is worth? Would it shock you to know that it's estimated at over \$23 per hour? The economic value of the 60+ million volunteers in the United States is over \$160 billion per year. Volunteers supply critical services like fire fighting, counseling, caring for the homeless, and stocking shelves at local food pantries. At Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes, we know firsthand the dramatic impact a dependable volunteer base can have on the ability to achieve a mission.

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes is responsible for overseeing 23 pantries in our community, all of which are manned by volunteers. In addition to our Grocery Pantry Program, we operate four additional programs that rely on volunteer time to provide food at 71 sites countywide, including schools and low-income senior housing complexes. Without our volunteer base, hunger in Kalamazoo County could look dramatically different. The 700+ people we serve each day would look elsewhere for food or more likely - go hungry. The 10,500 local children who struggle with hunger each day would be more worried about overcoming hunger pangs to get to sleep at night than getting adequate rest so they can do well in school. Each and every day our world is touched by the generosity of volunteers. Our rivers, parks, and highways are clear of trash due to their efforts. Our children learn valuable skills from coaches, mentors, and tutors. Kind faces greet us at community events. We can't imagine what life would be like without their selflessness; can you?

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes is extremely grateful for its volunteers. Whether they are able to give one day per year or one day per week, their donated time makes all the difference to so many in our community. Those efforts have a ripple effect that span beyond Kalamazoo. If you're thinking about donating your time, we encourage you to do so regardless of the amount of time you have to give. Sometimes all it takes is a moment to make a lifelong difference for someone else. ■



Celebrate the parents in your life with a gift in their honor or memory!
We'll send, or you can pick up, a special KLF donation notification card to celebrate the gift made in their name.

For more information, please contact
Greta at 269-488-2617 x208
or greta@kzoolf.org.

THIS MOTHER'S DAY & FATHER'S DAY GIVE THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

- Start a fun tradition of donating to KLF in a parent's name.
- It's a great gift for a parent who has everything.
- It's a thoughtful way to help local parents struggling to put food on the table for their children.
- It's a meaningful way to honor parents and grandparents who have passed away.
- It helps people in need at a time of the year when our services are most in demand.

“Knowing you will have food on the table [for your children]—I don't know how to describe that relief.”

- Susan, Mother & KLF Client

JOIN THE MOVE MENT

KLF

Are you interested in helping make Kalamazoo a hunger-free community? We've got a place for you! Attend a brief volunteer orientation to get started.

Sign up with Volunteer Coordinator Cherise Buchanan at 269.488.2617 ext. 209 or Cherise@kzoolf.org.

ORIENTATION DATES

**SATURDAY
APRIL 9**

**WEDNESDAY
APRIL 27**



SAVE THE DATE!

This year's CROP WALK is
SUNDAY, APRIL 24TH

Grab friends and family and join us in Bronson Park at 1 p.m. to walk to help end local and global hunger.



This year's NALC Food Drive is
SATURDAY, MAY 14TH

Help this year by leaving non-perishable food for your mail carrier. Look for specially marked paper bags in the mail soon!

CAN WE BETTER SERVE YOU?



Would you prefer to receive communications from KLF electronically or via snail mail?

We'd love to help with that! Please contact

Laura Winther at 269.488.2617 ext. 206 or

Laura@kzoolf.org to change your mailing status.

MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

GIVING COUPON:

APRIL

COUPON #151

We stretch every donated dollar to help those in need. Thank you for your support.

Donation Amount

\$

Please send your contribution by April 15th.

Food Wish List: Canned Tuna

GIVING COUPON:

MAY

COUPON #152

Consider making a Mother's Day donation in someone's name.

Donation Amount

\$

Please send your contribution by May 20th.

Food Wish List: Canned Veggies

KLF VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Are you itching to make a difference in your community? Do you know a group of like-minded people who want to get involved too? Now is a great time to start your own volunteer group with KLF!

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes welcomes volunteer groups that do everything from sorting food and manning pantry shifts to helping prepare our newsletters for mailing. Our volunteer coordinator works hard to schedule group rotations during the work week to fit their schedules while helping KLF run smoothly.



Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes is seeing more corporate volunteer groups come through our doors. Businesses like Old National Bank, Kalsee Credit Union, Greenleaf Hospitality Group, and Stryker encourage employees to volunteer on a regular basis to give back to the community during work hours. Check with your employer to see if they have a community volunteer program in place or if they'd be interested in starting one.

If you're interested in being a part of the KLF family as a volunteer, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Cherise Buchanan at 269.488.2617 ext. 209 or Cherise@kzoolf.org.

TRIBUTES

1/1/16 - 3/5/16 Special thanks to those who honor friends and family through contributions to KLF!

IN HONOR OF

Aunt Judy

M. Robert & Linda Black

Anna Banner

Margaret & Tim Franklin

Bob Black

Linda Black

Joe Black

M. Robert & Linda Black

Sammi Black

M. Robert & Linda Black

Lily Black

M. Robert & Linda Black

Justin Black

M. Robert & Linda Black

Jessie Black

M. Robert & Linda Black

Jeane Candido

Robert & Elizabeth
Candido

Catholic Deacons

Joe & Becky Schmitt

Marlene DePierre

Robert Lihosit & Pamela
DePierre

Timothy Fallon

Clarion Group

Juanita Goodwin

Ervin Armstrong
Patricia Coles-Chalmers

Sierd Hoekstra, Jr.

Gertrude Hoekstra

Albert Hoekstra

Gertrude Hoekstra

Jamie Jeremy

Linda Poquette

Jennifer Johnson

Jon Riccio

Jack Oudsema

Clyde & Mary Stevens

Collin Palmer

Michael & Barbara Palmer

Patients & Families of

Drake Road Orthodontics

Drake Road Orthodontics

Susan Paul

Mark Paul

Dan Pope

Dan & Barb Barber

Joan Rentschler

Adam Rentschler

Robert & Loree Bagley's Children

Robert & Loree Bagley

Isaac Rubin

Eli Rubin

Joyce Vandermay

Donna Johnson

Julius VanDerSlik

Edward & Marilyn Davis

IN MEMORY OF

Bette Anderton

Carl & Gale DeKleine

Robert & Marion Barr

Thomas Barr

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Bermo Enterprises, Inc.

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Gertrude Hoekstra

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Marguerite Kolb

Grant Kolb

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Joyce K. Thran

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Robert & Norberta Renauld

Rose Struble

Hunter's Place Condo
Association

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Diann Korowin

Donna & Tim LaMaster

Barbara & Edward Owens

Karen & Mark Peper

Cynthia Vieta

Katherine Walz

Those Who Died on February 20, 2016

Ronald & Donna Holmes

Richard G. Tomlinson

Kate Barnes

Tucky & Chuck Elliott

Clara Van Til

Thelma J. Van Til

Kathleen Vander Broek

Deborah & Randall Schultz

Marilyn J. Smith

H. Raymond & Sharon

Vinstra

Chuck Webster

Roon Visser

Ineke F. Way

Shirley Walter

Kent & Anne Southworth

Mrs. R. Weltevreden

John Weltevreden

Florence, Barney and

John Westra

Karl W. Westra

Michael Woodhams

John & Peggy Costello

Thelma Wuerffel

Rev. Dale & Ruth Krueger



Promoting a Hunger-Free Community Since 1982

901 PORTAGE STREET
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49001-3005

FOOD REQUEST LINE: 269/343-3663
P 269/488-2617 · F 269/343-3669
WWW.KZOOOLF.ORG

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
KALAMAZOO MI
PERMIT NO. 1693

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



KLF'S CASEWORKER PANTRY

Our caseworker pantry helps get food into the hands of vulnerable and homebound clients through local human service professionals.

- The Caseworker Pantry is open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Caseworkers can call 488.8918 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. to make a referral and request pre-packaged pick-ups based on a family's size.
- Food is picked up at KLF located at 901 Portage Street, Kalamazoo.
- Pick-ups include a four-day supply of food, both perishable and non-perishable, for each member of the household.

*At least one hour lead-time is appreciated for warehouse staff to assemble pick-ups.

LAST FISCAL YEAR,
KLF'S CASEWORKER PANTRY SERVED:

2,280 { **1,393** ADULTS
INDIVIDUALS **887** CHILDREN

APRIL/MAY 2016

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Staff / Business Office

269.488.2617
Joan Atwell, Call Center Coordinator
Cherise Buchanan, Volunteer Coordinator
Mary-Elizabeth Bell, Finance/Office Coordinator
Paul Bushek, Warehouse Assistant
Art Cole, Services Director
Joe Cook, Warehouse Assistant
Bob Dekker, Warehouse Assistant
Greta Faworski, Resource Development Director
Linda Fox, Call Center Coordinator
Joe Galaviz, Warehouse Assistant

EXT.	Kathy Gernaat, Operations Director	212
201	Meg Gernaat, Marketing Coordinator	218
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222	Phyllis Hepp, Organizational Development Director	210
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207	Deb Josephson, Services Coordinator	214
211	Marvin King, Food Procurement Specialist	224
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201	Mary Foley-Wilson, Accounting Coordinator	222
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