FOODFORTHOUGHT

LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING 2022







MEET MICHAEL

When Michael calls, you can hear the desperation in his voice. "I really hope you can help me," he begins, "I've had quite a day." Michael tells us that he and his three kids were supposed to move into a new apartment with their Section-8 housing voucher that day; however, there was a delay on necessary repairs. Because they had nowhere else to go, the State put the family in a hotel with hopes that the apartment would be ready soon. "We appreciate the room but have very little food to get through this in-between time. Especially not food we can make in a hotel room!" When we told Michael that KLF could deliver food appropriate for a mini-fridge and microwave, he sighed with relief. "That's the best news I've had all day!"

MEET ISABELLA

Isabella contacted KLF for the first time. "I'm just getting over COVID," she shares. "I'm past the five-day quarantine of the CDC, but my employer requires fourteen days. I'm out of sick time at work, and I am going to be counting pennies until my next paycheck." She says a friend suggested she contact KLF. "I hate to ask for help, but this was very unexpected," says Isabella. She schedules an appointment to pick-up at a pantry later that day.

MEET LILAH

When Lilah needed food assistance in the past, she requested a delivery because she no longer drives due to her eyesight. This day, however, she wants to go to a pantry. "It's a big day. My granddaughter is going to help me with errands." Lilah chuckles, "This is as exciting as it gets at my age!" While most pantry locations are still in a curbside pick-up model per client request, KLF's pantry at the Douglass Community Association offers in-person shopping for those that want that opportunity. "Let's do that," says Lilah. She explains that she likes to check ingredient lists and pick items that are low sodium.

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

A NOTE FROM JEN





For this newsletter, we sat down with Lead Pantry Coordinator,

Humza Rahman. Humza oversees daily operations of our Melzer Pantry, which is located adjacent to our main warehouse. He also manages our pantry inside the Douglass Community Association. Humza joined our team in November 2020 as a Program Assistant and has worked in every aspect of our program delivery.

— Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director

Q: In your role as Lead Pantry Coordinator, you oversee operations at the Douglass Pantry and the Melzer Pantry. How are these two experiences similar? How are they different?

A: It's really about client preference. The same quantity and variety of food is available at both locations; however, we re-opened the Douglass Pantry for in-person shopping in November 2021. While most clients prefer curbside pickup, there are some who really enjoy selecting their own items.

Q: What are some of the challenges facing the KLF pantry system?

A: Keeping up with demand. Our service numbers have doubled since the summer. At Melzer, we schedule up to 20 households every half hour all day long. Keeping up with that pace while customizing orders to family size and special dietary needs can be a challenge.

Q: What items are requested most by clients?

A: We serve a lot of families with special dietary and cultural needs, such as gluten-free or Halal only. And sweets and snacks — especially families with kids! Personal care items are also a frequent request. We don't purchase personal items; we get them through donations.

Q: You have been at KLF for just over a year. What has surprised you most about working at KLF?

A: It surprised me not only how much KLF does to help others, but also how many clients will go out of their way to help each other. Offering rides, sharing food that they won't eat, helping carry food orders — for all the negativity we see, it's nice to see when people care for each other.

WELCOME NEW STAFF!

Meet new additions to the KLF family! **LaDon Wilson** joined our team as a Warehouse Assistant. In this role, LaDon will help deliver orders to pantry sites and mobile food distributions. He will also assist with unloading food deliveries and pulling pantry orders. **Andra Pati** is our newest Program Assistant. Andra volunteered at KLF for several months, and we knew she would be great as a full-time staff. You will find Andra helping in the Call Center, at the Caseworker Door, and in our pantries.

WITH HEARTFELT THANKS!

We are saying goodbye to several important KLF team members. Carol Cormack, Office Coordinator, is retiring at the end of March. For the past five years, Carol has helped KLF run smoothly by working with our vendors and managing the facility. So much of her work has been behind the scenes and often unrecognized, but we appreciate her beyond words. Meg Gernaat has been connected to KLF since 2015 when she joined the staff as our Marketing & Communications Coordinator. In 2017, she left that role, but continued as our contract graphic designer for four more years. Meg has recently taken another position in the community but has left a lasting mark on our organization with her designs. Leo Goddeyne and Rob Kakuk recently completed their 2nd term on our Board of Directors. We deeply appreciate their time, valuable input, and dedication to this volunteer leadership role!











Top row: new staff members LaDon Wilson and Andra Pati. Second and third row, departing team members Carol Cormack, Meg Gernaat, Leo Goddeyne and Rob Kakuk.

THANK YOU to Our Volunteers,

















NEED A SPEAKER?

Are you looking for someone to speak to your staff, group, or congregation?

We are happy to talk to your group in-person or virtually about food insecurity in our community.

For more information, contact Greta Faworski, Associate Director, at Greta@kzoolf.org or call 269-488-2617 x208.

MONTHLY GIVING COUPONS

GIVING COUPON: MARCH COUPON #216

With your support, KLF marches on strong, like a lion.

Donation Amount

Food Wish List: Cereal

GIVING COUPON: **APRIL** COUPON #217

Your gift keeps hope blooming this spring! Thank you!

Donation Amount

Food Wish List: Baking Items (flour, sugar, cooking oil)

2021 AT A GLANCE

Food Distributed at 78 Different Locations



Grocery Pantry Program

71,087 food orders
26,920 unduplicated individuals
5,648 unduplicated households
1,067 new households
9,210 home deliveries



Mobile Food Distributions

132 food distributions held 8,620 recipients



Targeted Outreach

8,351 food packs distributed to homeless encampments **3,040** households served through partner pantries



Weekend Food Program

9,633 packs distributed at 13 different school buildings



Commodities Supplemental Food Program

475 senior citizens, on average, served monthly

TOP 25 Year-End Drives OUR COMMUNITY IS SO GENEROUS!

Between September 1 through December 31, 2021, we had over 50,000 pounds donated through food drives and individual food donations. Here are the top 25 food drives by total pounds:

Kalamazoo Central High School	10,885
The Refinery	3,990
Comstock Public Schools	2,370
St. Monica School & Parish	2,298
Linden Grove Middle School	1,645
OptiMed Pharmacy	1,627
St. Michael Lutheran Church	1,526
Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan	1,273
Parchment Rocket Football	1,250
Byce & Associates, Inc.	1,218
First Presbyterian Church	1,077
Westwood Christian Reformed Church	990
Edison Neighborhood Association	955
Kalamazoo Country Day School	700
CRB Group	695
Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo	679
DeNooyer Chevrolet	649
Kalamazoo Public Schools Transportation Departmen	t 637
Mulder's Moving & Storage	610
Southern Heights Christian Reformed Church	605
Kalamazoo Podiatry, P.C.	587
Zoetis Global Manufacturing & Supply	570
Home Builders Association	565
Bethel Baptist Church	559
Milestone CDC	497



Eliminating barriers in how people gain access to food is a pillar of food equity. While there are many barriers to food access, securing food that meets medical and cultural needs is one barrier often overlooked or not addressed due to cost. Individuals who are glutenfree, lactose-free, or low-sodium due to medical conditions can struggle finding food assistance that supports their special dietary needs. These items tend to be more expensive or harder to find, however, are critical to one's overall health when living with certain medical conditions or allergies. When these food items cost two to four times as much, SNAP dollars don't go nearly as far for an individual or family.

"Federal programs like WIC provide only limited ability to substitute in allergy-proof foods, and school districts can be uneven in their approach to modifying school meals, with many having abandoned the effort all together during the pandemic," says Emily Brown, creator of the Food Equality Initiative (Food Bank News, Feb. 16, 2022). "Special dietary needs should not be considered an afterthought in hunger relief," continues Brown.

In addition to supporting dietary medical needs, cultural and/or religious food needs can also be challenging for charitable organizations when serving a diverse community. When serving the Muslim community, for example, it is necessary to source halal

animals to be slaughtered and processed in a certain way. Halal food can be hard to find and expensive for both Muslim families and charitable organizations.

Special dietary needs should not be considered an afterthought in hunger relief.

Emily Brown
 Creator, Food Equality Initiative

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes is dedicated to addressing special dietary needs as much as possible. When sorting community food donations, we set aside items that address the needs of those with medical food restrictions. Some items, such as almond milk and Ensure, are regular staples in our warehouse. We routinely source halal meat and work closely with partner agencies to identify culturally appropriate food, especially for refugee families. When scheduling pantry pickups and deliveries, clients are asked if they have any dietary restrictions or allergies. While we are often limited by inventory and cost, we try to support the food needs of families as effectively as we can.

LEARN MORE

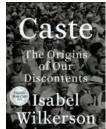
Explore these critically acclaimed books, shows, and podcasts to learn more about hunger, poverty, and other social issues.

Children LULU HUNGER MONSTER Frik Talak Anymark II Borg Marry Lulu and the

Hunger Monster

READ





Adult

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents

Broke in America Seeing, Understanding, and Ending U.S. Poverty

Broke in America: Seeing, Understanding, and Ending U.S. Poverty

WATCH





LISTEN



Podcast Elevating Voices, Ending Hunger





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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.





while dropping off mail. On average, this drive collects over 75,000 pounds of food for KLF.

It's a big event that takes a lot of volunteers. Interested? Contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Ray Kuerth, at ray@kzoolf.org.

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

LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING 2022

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Jillian Bryant, Program Navigation Coordinator
Carol Cormack, Office Coordinator
Tiffany Douglas, Warehouse Coordinator
Greta Faworski, Associate Director
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Kristen Heggie, On-Call Program Coordinator
Jeff Herman, Warehouse Analyst
Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director
Sara Johnson, Administrative & HR Coordinator

	Larry Kelly, Program Assistant	217
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Helen Gunderson Billie Gunderson & Brad Nehring

Ramon Hamilton Eldon & Carol Hamilton

Robert Harper

Max & Barbara Sine Juanita Harris

Chiquita Elmore-Barbee

Kristen M. Harris Chiquita Elmore-Barbee

Don & Eva Harwood Ronald & Kay Harwood

Jay Scott Heckler Jav & Diane Heckler

Bob & Peggy Hegel Judith H. Halset

Peggy Hegel Kathryn VanArendonk

Dolores Heidanus

Harold D. Heikes Terri Dunlan

Rita Heller Richard & Katrine Nichols

Louise Hoffman Marvin Hoffman Charles Hord, Sr.

Phyllis Hord Kathy Hovermale Tiffany & Dominic Buschini

Ruthann Humphrey Stephen Humphrey

Jeffrey Scott Imbordino

Ernesto Jabasa, Jr. Maria Suing

John M. Jacobowitz, M.D. Virginia Jacobowitz

Martha Jenkins Lawrence L. Jenkins, Jr.

JoAnn Johnson Alice Lossie

W. Donald Jones, M.D. Carole & Gregg Nelson

Beverly Jones Goldsmith Inez Pochyla Robert H. Jongeward, Jr.

Bruce & Laura Goethe **Bob & Mary Juneman** Mary Ann Borr

George & Ruth Kinas

Janie & Robert Kinas

Richard King Christina King

Harold & Edythe Kiser Robert & Susan Kiser

Robert Knight

Andrew & Mary Allan Jill Almassy Kay Bach Steven & Deborah Bizzis Marilyn Boersma Sara Pitt-Van Buren Sue & Joseph Carr

Donna & Donald Crampton Lisa Creed Karen & Kenneth Cvr James Glaser & Coleen DeWitt

Robin Greenwood Christine & Thomas Hamilton Jamie & Frank Jeremy

Richard Konwinski Wendelin & Janet Lee Mever Ronald & Joan Molitor

Susan Keltsch

The Philip Molloy Family Matt & Leslev Schofield Robert & Judith Shrimplin Jerry & Rhonda Simpson

Jack & Sally Slattery Chris Stolsky Sharon Surna

Jo Ann & Richard Swope Al & Sandy Thompson Elizabeth & Cal Vandenberg Robert & Marrijane Walker Kristianne & Blair Zordell

Marie & Fred Zuidema

Lorraine Knuth Irene Booth

Marguerite Kolb Grant Kolb

Janine Kolodzieczyk David & Angelita Kolodzieczyk

Henry & Virginia Korinek Douglas & Susan Korinek

Frank Kovach Barbara & Mark Pearson

William & Gladys Kozar William & Ellen Kozar

Julius Kozerski Ed & Jeanne Kozerski

Martin & Mary Kozerski Sharon S. Kramer

Margaret Possert Joanne & John Kraska

Michael Kudlas & Janet Graham Angela Brightwell

Kurt

Don & Colleen Stimley

Susan Lake

Kerry Lake & Paul Arkinstall Lance Lambert Martha Vandelinde

Alice Lansdale Dorothy Balok

Alicia & Lidjia Boner Lisa Goodenough

(in MEMORY, continued)

Leo Leolofi Anonymous

Gerd Lemke

Ellen L. Plano

Margaret Lester

Cheryl Stout

David & Betty Levene

Amy Krueger

Jane Leversee

Kathleen Fleece

Mike Lienman

Howard Steiner

Brad Lindsey Becky Moise

Peter C. Livingston

Darla Betts

Dr. Frances E. Lohr

Michael J. Clark

Lynn & Darlene Lohrberg Mike & Shirley Lohrberg

Bill & Florence Louden

Dorothy Louden

Maxine L. Louden

Lori Klutts

Linda Renauld Lutz

Robert & Norberta Renauld

Thomas Mackey J. Dale & Cheryl Westbrook

Pat MacPherson

Kathleen Fleece

Colleen Magnan Mr. James A. Magnan

Katie Maltby

Fran Mason

Robert & Jean Cox

Paul Mejia

Genevieve & Harold Mellein

John & Deborah Melleir

Mary Melzer The Ellie Fund

Matt Meyer

Irene Booth

Irene Miley

Susan & David Riker

Jack & Francine Milito Jack & Karen Milito

Robert A. Miller

Sheila & Eric Goole

Kathy Mizeur

Gary Bischof & Karen Helmeke Gale & Kathleen Newell

Marilyn Mizsak

Sandra L. Simonds

Richard & Marylou Moberg

Tom & Christine McNett

Joyce Morse Sue Mater

Emma Myaard

Kenneth & Carol Blalock

Charlene Naylor

Inez Pochvla

Neva Nehring

Billie Gunderson & Brad Nehring

Dorothy Nelson

Eric & Regena Nelson Maurice & Jo Anne Nelson

Pamela Nelson

David Nicholas William & Susan Shields

Marge Nightingale

Keith & Lyn Bailey

Ruth Noblett

Dennis & Carol Chandler

Max & Mary Ogrin

Chavelo Olivarez

Rosa Linda Olivarez

Sara A. Oliver

Catherine A. Larson

Roy & Priscilla Olton

Pamela Olton

Roy Olton

Dorothea Bradford Barr

Greenleaf Trust

William & Susan Johnston

Mrs. Elizabeth Upjohn Mason

Shelley & Joel Miller

Bertrand Olton

Ellen L. Plano The Laura Pyle Family

Conner Shepherd

Jan Slinn

Ronald & Margaret Strzelecki

Brian Louis Oman

Don & Mary Lou Oman

Jaimie Oorbeck

Martha Vandelinde

Mark Osinski

Shannon & Joel Carr

Lynn M.P. Griggs

Richard Ostericher

Nancy Fish-Stone & William Stone

Charles & Helen Overbey

My Parents & Brothers

Shirley Kloosterman

Richard L. Patterson

Marcia & George Maentz

Patricia Paul

Sally Kudlicki Virginia Killian

Cynthia Peck

Nancy Peck

Ken Peregon Michelle Klee

Richard J. Plum

Bruce Patrick

Jeff Ply Carol & Charlie Ply

Andrew Porritt

Meg & Matt Gernaat

Sally Putney Sandra J. Kristen

Thomas R. Pyke

Susan Pyke

Douglas Rapp

Judy T. Rapp

Robert T. Rapp Judy T. Rapp

Guyton Ray Terri Johnson

Richard & Rita Raynes

Judah Gesmundo & Paul Raynes

Noreen Reardon

Ruth Baillie

Philomena & Tony Catullo

Karista Gallick Ron & Nancy Kraemer

Betty Lou Norris

OIG Legal Shana O'Marra

Marcia Strong Phillip Torrone

Arthur & Harriet Reddaway

Elizabeth & Peter Wuts

F.L. Reed

Rebecca R. LaBelle

Marian Reed

Dee Wielenga Renauld

Robert & Norberta Renauld

Jessica Renauld

Robert & Norberta Renauld

Alvina & Oswald Renauld Robert & Norberta Renauld

Ronnie Richardson

Steven Patterson

Daniel J. Rix Carol Rix

Fred & Ardis Robinson

Robinson Industries, Inc.

Rick Rodbard

Carolyn & Brad Kennedy

Odis Rodgers Sandra L. Simonds

Adolfo Luis Rojas Barquero Rochelle Rojas

Antonia H. Rostami

Steve & Sue Ossewaarde

Mr. Jeffrey Rostami Darrell M. Rostami

Mr. Jeffrey Rostami

Mary Rupp

Kathleen & Thomas Spettel

Daniel Russell Terry Hluchyj &

Richard Roosenberg

Pat & Jeane Ryan

Douglas & Susan Korinek Margaret & Charles Ryski

Mary & Mark Marshall

Marilyn Scheel Mr. John F. Scheel

Martin & Emma Schmitt

Robert & Norberta Renauld

Peter Schmitt Beverly Schmitt

Joyce Schuring Emilie & Eric Murphy

Edward J. Sehy Kathy J. Sehy

Richard Sepanik

Louise & Ron Bower

Alan Serlin

Michelle Serlin

Marty Shaw Theresa Hudson

Rusty Wire Shelburne

David & Roxanne Linton Foster L. Sherwood, Jr.

Mariorie Sherwood Chrystal Shoemaker

Anonymous

Glen Shugars Clifford Davidson

A.W. Sinha

Ms. Elizabeth G. Roelofs

Betty Sinkula Diane & Chris Hansen

Joani Siwik Richard & Susann Arlington

Roy & Sandy Howard Christine & Andrea Siwik

John Smiertka

Jude & Barbara Daniel

Debbie Smith Rick & Sharon Cronkite

Tom Sonday

Ms. Charlotte Hubbard Kalamazoo Antique Auto Restorers

Debra Jean Spalding Steven Patterson

Ray & Lorraine Spears Susan Cosby

Audrey Sperla

Jack & Karen Milito Johanna Sprouse

William & Diane Hutchens

Robert Stafford

Kay W. Haas Ilan Stenesh

Doug & Marie Renauld Stone Robert & Norberta Renauld

Aarend & Verl Stoppelberg

Kathleen Fleece Mary June Swanson

Lee & Kris Dyer

Ronald Swisher Marjorie & Duane Westrate

Burt TenBrink Cheryl TenBrink

Pranab B. Thakurta Amrita Thakurta

John Thomasma

Doug & Judy Labs Joe Thorstenson

Jan & Dave Wilder Richard G. Tomlinson

David & Marilyn Milko BethAnne Hauserman Townsend

John & Lenore Armstrong Merrell & Mae Tucker Diane Dobbins

Rosemary Turpin

Linda Comptor

Bud Tyler

Jennifer Johnson

Shirley Tyndall Danny & Shirley Thompson

David Urban

Michael & Cherri Corning

Sanjay Valvani Shri & Swerun Valvani

Bob & Kathryn VanDis

Michele Rohi

William VanMeter Ms. Elizabeth G. Roelofs

Richard VanOosterum

Anonymous Anonymous

Joyce & Joseph Budge

Chuck Culver

Judy & Robert DeHaan

Kathy Dilsaver Shirlee & Dennis Gernaat

Kim & John Hemmingway Betty Mitscher

Mary Ellen & Donald Overbeek Wayne & Susan Petto

Bruce & Linda Prince Max & Barbara Sine John & Cynthia VanOosterum

Melvin Visser Irene & Terry Woldring Olly Visser

Anonymous

Olga & Roon Visser Ineke Way

Shirley Walter Stan & Christine McGrew

Barney & Florence Westra

John Westra

Karl W. Westra Shirley Westra Karl W. Westra

Mark Wheeler

Karen & Curtis Finch Clarice White

Alec MacDonald Peter Wiegand

Clayton Gallap & Rose Kirsch

Mike Williams Elisabeth Scheuer William Wolthuis

Barbara Albanese Barbara D. Young

Randall & Laverne Alleyne

Henry & Johanna Yzenbaard Mike & Shirley Lohrberg

Walter Zischke Julia Beyerle

Aloysius Zukowski Michelle Serlin

Ginger Zukowski Michelle Serlin