

FOODFOR THOUGHT

SPRING 2025



MEET HOWARD

When the KLF delivery van pulls into Howard's driveway, they see a United States Navy flag hanging from the front porch. Howard is a Veteran who takes great pride in having served his country in his younger years. Now retired and facing health concerns, Howard lives on a fixed income and finds it difficult to afford groceries along with growing medical bills. He learned about KLF from one of his healthcare providers. Because he no longer drives, Howard was pleased to learn that KLF could deliver to his home. "This food is so important to me," Howard shares with a KLF employee. "I want to give a big thank you to all the folks who contribute or help or whatever at Loaves & Fishes. You must all have big hearts."

MEET MORRIS

"I am currently on medical leave due to a workplace accident, and I'm struggling to feed myself on the insurance pay," Morris shared when he emailed KLF for more information. Morris' injuries were significant, and he will not be able to return to work anytime soon. "I can't pay my bills. My phone is shut off. My car isn't working, and I can't afford to get it fixed." After realizing that he can get grocery assistance from KLF, Morris expresses his gratitude and relief at having one less struggle to manage while he heals from his injury.



MEET TONYA

Tonya reached out to KLF in 2023 shortly after relocating to Kalamazoo. "I'm newer to the area and don't know about the resources here, but could use some help as I get settled," Tonya said. "I have three children, and my youngest is a very picky eater due to some sensory issues." Tonya received some groceries at that time and then didn't reach out again until a few weeks ago. "My refrigerator stopped working, and we lost most of the food we had," Tonya shared. She is saving up to buy a new refrigerator, but in the meantime, Tonya's family needs non-perishable items and food they can keep in a small cooler with ice. KLF put together items that didn't require cold storage and could easily be prepared in a microwave. After receiving her food, Tonya wrote, "We just wanted to say THANK YOU!! The kids are SUPER happy. My picky eater was grinning ear to ear!"



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

A NOTE FROM JEN

For this issue, we spoke with **Steve Perez** about his experience as a **Volunteer Delivery Assistant**. KLF's Home Delivery Program currently serves an average of 350 households each week, playing an important role in getting food to our neighbors in need in every community and rural area in the County. Volunteers are essential to the program's operations, bringing their time, support, and positivity to both KLF staff and clients.

— Jennifer E. Johnson, Executive Director



Steve Perez, Volunteer Delivery Assistant

Q: What does an average day as a volunteer look like? What are the highlights?

A: It's fun, getting to see people and helping people that need support. I'm usually here 2-3 days per week, and I really enjoy getting out on the road and keeping active. We start the day stocking the delivery van and are ready to go around 8 am. A volunteer is always paired with a staff member, so I also get to work with some good people like Tiff, Mike, Larry, Alisha, and Seth. They're all great.

Q: Who might find themselves in need of free grocery delivery? What kind of impact does this program have on our community?

A: The people we deliver to really need the service. Many people served through deliveries are elderly, have medical issues, or just don't have access to any transportation. At times, we're helping people that don't have much of a support system and are trying to get on their feet. It's a great program that helps a lot of people who need nutrition and the essentials.

Q: What brought you to volunteering with KLF? What would you say to someone who is interested in getting involved?

A: In the past, I worked in a medical setting and as a Chemical Operator at Pfizer. I also used to coach rocket football, and I enjoy traveling too. So, I like to stay busy. My mom used to volunteer with KLF, and when she passed, I knew I wanted to get involved. Once I retired, I was ready for something to keep me active, and this has been really enjoyable. **To someone thinking about volunteering, I would tell them that you get a lot more out of it than you put in.**



If you are interested in supporting our mission by donating produce, the spring and summer season is a great time to get involved.

Plant an extra row of fruits or veggies in your garden and donate your surplus produce to KLF!
Learn more at kzoolf.org/plant-a-row



Our donors have different giving goals and needs.

To make it easier for you to help alleviate hunger, we accept financial donations in the following ways:

Cash	Automatic Bill Pay	Donor Advised Funds
Check	Venmo	IRA Qualified Charitable Deductions
Credit Card	PayPal	Planned Gifts
Direct Debit	Apple Pay	
Stock	Google Pay	

Recurring monthly gifts can be set up through credit card, direct debit, PayPal, or bill pay through your financial institution.

For more information on giving in any manner, please contact

Greta Faworski, Associate Director,
at 269-488-2617 x208 or greta@kzoolf.org



DID YOU KNOW?

IN 2024
volunteers
donated over
17,000 hours!



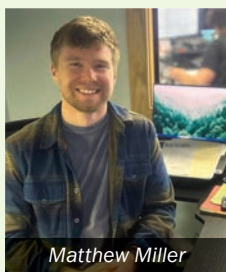
IN 2024
KLF hosted over
450 groups!



We ALWAYS need
volunteers and groups!
Contact Jillian today to get started!

Jillian@kzoolf.org
269-488-2617 ext.209
Kzoolf.org

Hello and Farewell



Matthew Miller



Jacques James



Katharina Padilla



Mark Lane

In mid-March, we sadly said goodbye to **Humza Rahman**, who was a strong part of our team for nearly four years. Humza is moving out of state for new opportunities and will be missed at KLF!

Filling the role of **Program Operations Manager** is **Matthew Miller**. We are happy to have Matthew on board, as he recently earned his Master of Social Work from the University of Michigan and has a variety of experience in nonprofit and governmental entities.

Jacques James has shifted roles from a temporary team member to an official **Program Assistant**. Jaques will assist with evening pantry operations and other program areas as needed. We're glad to have him on the team and appreciate his flexibility and dedication!

Katharina Padilla will be working as a **Program Assistant** in all client-facing program areas. Katharina's educational focus is on community and global health, and she has worked closely with issues facing unhoused community members.

Finally, we're excited to have **Mark Lane** fill a newly created position as **Warehouse Operations Manager**. Mark's role will focus on supply chain management, logistical efficiencies, and warehouse safety. Before being hired, Mark was a dedicated volunteer with past career experience in project management, team management, and process efficiencies within large organizations. His skills will make a great addition to the team!

FEDERAL UPDATE:

Is KLF Impacted by Recent Funding Cuts?



During the past few months, non-profits throughout the country have been faced with uncertainty and significant challenges due to recent governmental funding cuts. Fortunately, only 3% of KLF's revenue comes from government sources; however, we do receive a tremendous amount of food through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). **Depending on the year, the USDA food we receive is valued between \$2–\$3 million dollars and accounts for 30–50% of the food we distribute.** KLF works closely with the Michigan Department of Education to implement several USDA charitable food assistance programs in Kalamazoo County. **Below is an overview of these programs and how they have been impacted.**



The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and Commodities Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) — KLF receives TEFAP food through several funding streams, including the Credit Commodity Corporation (CCC). **On March 25, 2025, we were notified that 17 TEFAP-CCC trucks we were expecting over the next six months had been cancelled. The value of the food product is over \$300,000.** While KLF will pivot and purchase some of the items we were expecting, the cancelled items are primarily meat and dairy, which tend to be more expensive. At the present time, there does not seem to be any cuts to the other TEFAP funding streams, and we will still receive some USDA product to support our programs, including both fresh and canned fruits. No changes to the CSFP program have been made at this time.



The Local Food Purchasing Assistance Program (LFPA) — KLF partners with KVCC's Valley Hub to administer the LFPA program (originally funded through the American Rescue Plan Act). It has been a tremendous asset for our area, boosting local farmers and providing fresh product to charitable food programs throughout our area. It has allowed individuals facing food insecurity to obtain more fresh produce, which ultimately has a significant impact on health and healthcare costs. While the ARPA stream of funding is set to expire this year, LFPA was scheduled to continue through the Farm Bill. **On March 10, 2025, we were notified that this program would end in September 2025 and would not continue as previously planned.** LFPA has not only allowed KLF to provide an amazing variety of fresh produce and locally produced products, but also it has been life-changing for many farmers in our area. The elimination of LFPA will have a significant impact on KLF and the farming community.

If other federal food assistance programs, such as the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, are reduced, the demand for food assistance at KLF will increase. KLF has been experiencing the highest service numbers in organizational history leading into 2025, so a sharp increase in food insecurity would require increased food donations and an increase in financial support to meet the need.

Our organization is deeply impacted by decisions made at a federal level, especially regarding USDA and program allocations in the Farm Bill. **Despite the recent cuts, we deeply value our partnership with USDA and farmers throughout the country.** We are dedicated to doing whatever it takes to continue to provide nutritionally balanced food to those experiencing food insecurity.

Thank you for your support of this work.

TRIBUTES

Generous donations made to KLF in someone's **HONOR** or **MEMORY**. Donations made 2/1/2025 to 3/31/2025.

IN HONOR

All Those Who Do the Good Work
Mark Utrecht

Kathleen Barnes
Therese Bolz
Lucinda Boven

Sue Beute
Ron, Carolyn, & Claire Kozlowsicz

Renee Brady
Joseph Chess

Lincoln Buttery
Stacey MacDonald

Jim & Jean Bylsma
Anonymous

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James Jaksa
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Bob Keller
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Peggy Kingsley & Steven Glista
Martin & Sandra Glista

My Buddy Maria
Isaac Turner

Rob McFarlan
Sara McFarlan

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Kristin & Lee Dyer

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David & Beth Cook

The Wonderful Women of the Current Events Club
Joel & Florence Orosz

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Chiquita Elmore-Barbee

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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.



SATURDAY
MAY 10

DONATION TIPS

- Check your mailbox for a bright yellow bag! Put your donation in this bag and set it by your mailbox. Your letter carrier will pick it up on May 10th.
- Donations should be sealed, labeled, and unopened. Glass items can sometimes break when mixed in with all the other donations.
- We can utilize donations a year past the "best-by" date.
- Donations will be collected rain or shine. An extra plastic bag can help protect food donations from rainy weather.

OUR WISH LIST

- Special diet items including gluten-free, sugar-free, and low-sodium
- Shelf-stable or non-dairy milk
- Protein shakes and bars
- Microwaveable meals
- Snacks
- Canned soups and meats
- Cooking oil
- Boxed meal kits



Thank you for participating in this nationwide food drive!
WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

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

SPRING 2025

STAFF/BUSINESS OFFICE

269.488.2617

Tim Bachman, Senior Warehouse Assistant
Jillian Bryant, Volunteer Coordinator
Mike Cattell, Program & Delivery Assistant
Greta Faworski, Associate Director
Leonardo Fernandez, Lead Pantry Coordinator
Matt Galletti, Program Assistant
Tiffanie Head, Program & Delivery Assistant
Kristen Heggie, Admin & Training Coordinator
Ben Hietala, Warehouse Assistant
Holly Hulfish, Office Manager
Ibrahim Yahya Ibrahim Ismail, Bilingual Program Assistant
Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director
Larry Kelly, Program & Delivery Assistant
Katie Kozlowski, Bilingual Program Assistant

EXT.

217 Brian Koenigsnecht, Senior Warehouse Manager
227 Mark Lane, Warehouse Operations Manager
209 Alisha Lewis, Program Logistics Coordinator
219 Reese Light, Warehouse Assistant
208 Erin Lowe, Dev. & Communications Coordinator
222 Nate Mattson, Financial Controller
221 Mickey McMahon, Program Assistant
210 Matthew Miller, Program Operations Manager
221 Seth Miller, Program & Delivery Assistant, Float
217 Katharine Padilla, Program Assistant
224 Suzi Secondi, Inventory Manager
221 Shymeria Stone, Program Assistant
213 Josiah Taylor, Warehouse Assistant
219 Myah Van Til, Program Navigation Coordinator
221 Nadina Williams-Barrett, Senior Program Manager

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