

FALL 2013

Gleaners Harvest

Feeding hungry people and nourishing our communities

Gleaners 3-year plan to advance our mission

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Food moves people

through crisis to stability
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Veterans boost health

through Fresh Food Share
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**FOOD
MOVES PEOPLE
THROUGH
CRISIS
TO
STABILITY**



Amira Ghaly's friend was in a bad place. Recently laid off, the single mom's world revolved around trying to get food on the table, placing her in a cycle of worry where finding her children's next meal was all she could think about.

Ghaly urged her to use the St. Joseph Family Support program in Troy, but she resisted.

"Others need this more than me."

"I'm not the kind of person who needs charity."

And finally, "What will everyone think of me?"

Ghaly, one of several volunteers in the program run out of the St. Mark Coptic Church, assured her that a little help is nothing to be embarrassed about. What's more, the ability to temporarily nourish her family through rough times is precisely the program's point.

What happened next was a textbook scenario, as using the pantry literally moved her friend from desperation to hope, Ghaly says. The program's

allocation of healthy cereals, grains, canned goods and meat from Gleaners enabled Ghaly's friend to feed her family and save her limited money to put gas in her car. This allowed her to find a job and stabilize her finances.

She later donated her car to the family support program in gratitude for the help and to pay it forward for others, Ghaly says.

"There are so many stories like this," Ghaly says. "The other day, someone who used the pantry while he was unemployed gave us a \$500 donation now that he has a job again. Most people just need a little help for a little while and that's why we're here."



Leland helps his mom, Holly, select food at a pantry.

Nourishing Hope



Issam Tawfik keeps a steady stock of Gleaners food at St. Joseph Family Support in Troy.

The program, which began three years ago, is supported entirely through membership donations of \$10 a month. Gleaners helped grow the fledgling program substantially, says Issam Tawfik, a neurologist who runs the food pantry as a volunteer. What began with servicing tri-county families affected by the financial downturn has since spiked with unemployment and layoffs, Tawfik says. From 84 families served each month, the program now assists 132.

“We get 100 percent of our food from Gleaners right now,” Tawfik says. “Gleaners lets us feed more families, more often.”

Moving from a stable place to an insecure one can happen quickly, and to anyone, says Tawfik, who went through a tough time of his own when his family bought a new home and couldn't sell their old one.

“It really changes your daily outlook. When you can't pay your bills, you worry about providing the basics.

We were surviving on the bare minimum.”

Several others who were picking up food this month at the St. James Family Support pantry had similar stories to tell.

“It helps me a lot,” said one woman, who picks up food for her husband and family. Both she and her husband are out of work, and using the food pantry frees up income to buy school clothes for her children, she said.

Another came in with a friendly one-year old who used several sets of volunteers' welcoming arms and the pantry's table legs for walking practice.

“This program helps us a lot right now,” she said. “We need it.”

Across town in Wayne County, Timothy Williams relies on a Gleaners school mobile pantry to support his two, 12-year old twin sons. He too felt the sting

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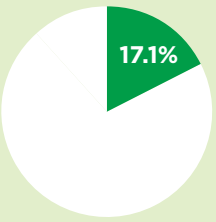
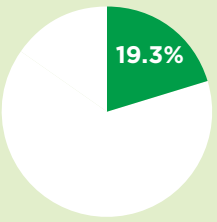

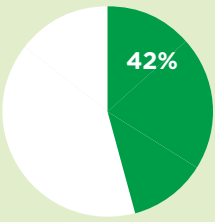
of the recession and decided to enroll in college to study geothermal technology.

“You really can’t survive on a *job* now; you’re not gonna make it. You have to have a career in this day in age,” Williams said of his decision to go back to school.

Williams also volunteers at the pantry where he sees many families in situations similar to his own.

“At least 100 families come through the pantry each month,” Williams says. “There are a lot of people who are not eligible to sign up for food stamps, but they do need help. Jobs aren’t what they used to be and ends don’t quite meet. Gleaners food really helps out. Everyone could benefit from a little help at some point in time.”

Hunger in southeast Michigan

County	Overall food insecurity* rate	Child food insecurity rate	Estimated number of food insecure individuals	Food insecure individuals not eligible for federal nutrition programs**
Livingston County	9.8%	15.3%	17,850	56%
Macomb County	14%	18.7%	117,110	43%
Monroe County	11.7%	18.7%	17,810	41%
Oakland County	13.6%	16.2%	163,710	51%
Wayne County	22%	21.8%	405,610	20%
TOTALS			 722,090	

*Food insecurity means a limited or uncertain availability of food for a household.

**Above threshold of 200% poverty

Source: Map the Meal Gap Report, 2011 data, Feeding America Released 2013