

DMARC FOOD ASSISTANCE BY THE NUMBERS

FY2015

- 17,700 families assisted
- 41,135 individuals assisted
- 5,500 families helped each month
- 14,000 individuals helped each month
- 6,000 sq ft warehouse
- 2.5 million meals provided

FY2013

- 13,000 families assisted
- 34,000 individuals assisted
- 3,800 families helped each month
- 10,640 individuals helped each month
- 1,500 sq ft warehouse
- 1.6 million meals provided



HOW FAR WE HAVE COME

DMARC has made some incredible strides since launching the 1435 Mulberry Capital Campaign in 2013, thanks to your generous support!

You helped us purchase a new, permanent building at 1435 Mulberry Street, renovate it, and stock its shelves. The additional warehouse space and resources have led to annual savings of over \$240,000.

With your help, we are now serving over 4,000 more families, 7,000 more individuals, and 900,000 more meals in FY2015 than we did in FY2013.

This June and July, more individuals and families visited the DMARC pantries than any other summer in the last forty years.

Despite all this progress, there is still much left to do.

As we renew our commitment to address basic needs across our city, thousands of hungry neighbors are counting on your support and help.

Thank you for your efforts, volunteer service and gifts to DMARC that make this work possible!

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TAKE ACTION ON HUNGER

BY TOM FISCHER, PRESIDENT

What a year. In FY2015, the DMARC Food Pantry Network assisted 17,700 families and 41,135 individuals, providing a total of 2.5 million meals. We are now serving thousands of people who previously lacked access to food assistance. This expansion does not come without a cost, however.

The opening of Polk County River Place Food Pantry in March led to a 20% increase in families using the DMARC Food Pantry Network. Many of the new visitors to the Polk County River Place Food Pantry are older adults. About 1 in 4 of every visitors there is over the age of 62. The new food pantry is located directly on a DART bus route, and is open from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, making it one of the most accessible partner pantries in the DMARC Food Pantry Network.

Serving more people in more areas has always been a goal of DMARC and our 1435 Mulberry Capital Campaign. We knew that expanding our services geographically would increase the amount of people we provide food to, but we did not expect the rise to be so dramatic.

This large demand in food distribution led to us reducing our monthly food provided to a 3-day supply in August 2015. Continuing to provide a 4-day supply of food once per month was no longer fiscally sustainable due to the amount of people we currently serve.

Our Child Care Assistance program provided vital support for the families we had been able to serve over its many years. However, because of the community's ever-increasing need for food, DMARC simply must focus our efforts on hunger issues over the next few years.

DMARC's delivery partner over the last few years has been the United Way. If you would be interested in directing future donations to the United Way's Women's Leadership Connection childcare subsidy efforts, they would be happy to include your gift in support of childcare scholarships.

People are still struggling. Although the economy has marginally improved, many of our neighbors are still worrying about how they will put food on their table.

Thankfully, we have you. The community of Greater Des Moines has always stepped up when called to action. And now, we are asking you to focus your attention on ending hunger in Polk County.

Under the leadership of Supervisor John Mauro, the Polk County Board of Supervisors has established the Partnership for a Hunger-Free Polk County. Through this partnership, DMARC hopes to collectively address the issue of hunger in our community. DMARC has plans for further pantry expansions in under-served areas, such as the southside of Des Moines and Clive.

We cannot win this fight alone. It will take all of us working together, and that includes you. Volunteer at the DMARC Food Pantry Network warehouse or a partner pantry. Advocate about local hunger issues. Plant a garden next year and donate your extra produce. Donate food, diapers, personal supplies or- better yet- money, which enables us to purchase food at a much lower price than the average consumer.

With your help, we can envision a community where everyone has enough to eat.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Fischer'.

Tom Fischer
President, Des Moines Area Religious Council



EXPLORING OUR RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2016
12:30 - 5:30 PM
OLMSTEAD CENTER, DRAKE UNIVERSITY

iowainterfaithexchange.org

EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE IOWA INTERFAITH EXCHANGE

BY LUKE ELZINGA, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Expand your religious horizons at our new half-day conference! This coming January, participate in a unique opportunity to make diverse new connections, sample new traditions and practices, and learn more about Iowa's compelling religious history.

The Iowa Interfaith Exchange is a gathering of people from all faiths and belief systems, coming together to find our commonalities and share our differences. The theme of this inaugural event is *Exploring Our Religious Landscape*.

We will be joined by Peter Manseau, author of *One Nation, Under Gods*, which examines the history of the United States from the perspective of religious minorities. American culture has been significantly influenced by non-Christian religions, and Manseau will explore historical figures that helped shape the course of our nation's spiritual life.

Moving from a national to a state and local focus, we will have the following breakout sessions available during the Iowa Interfaith Exchange. Join us to learn more about:

- The history of the Mother Mosque of Cedar Rapids
- The religions of refugee communities in Greater Des Moines
- The historic Mormon journey through Iowa
- Zen Buddhism and the Ryumonji Zen Monastery in northeast Iowa
- The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans in Cedar Rapids
- Traditions of the Orthodox community in Des Moines

Learn more and register online at iowainterfaithexchange.org!



PETER MANSEAU

Peter Manseau is the author of the memoir *Vows*, the novel *Songs for the Butcher's Daughter*, the travelogue *Rag and Bone*, and the new retelling of American history *One Nation, Under Gods*.

He received his doctorate in religion from Georgetown University, and is currently curating an exhibit on America's diverse religious past for the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

DMARC'S MISSION:

Religious Communities Working Together to Meet Basic Human Needs.

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VOICES OF HUNGER

Names and images have been changed to protect identities.



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Being on a fixed income, there's never enough money at the end of the month, so I try to save what I can.

At the food pantry, I can get fresh fruits and vegetables, which is a big deal to me. When you're on a fixed budget, it's like Christmas when you get fresh stuff.

I live alone and cook for myself. I feel better when there's food in the cupboard. It's a sense of security.

LEE

I used to receive \$37 a month through SNAP. Then I moved and forgot to change my address in time, so I lost my benefits. That's why I'm at the pantry today.

It may not seem like a lot of money, but it makes a big difference to my budget. Once I'm done here [at River Place Food Pantry], I'm heading to the DHS Office to see if I can get back on SNAP.

BEVERLY



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I had never had to visit a food pantry before until this summer. I've never needed help before, I was always the one giving back.

The choices at the food pantry are a happy surprise. It provides relief and respect to a lot of people.

It's good to see the kindness. I enjoy living in a place where my neighbors are so helpful.

DAVID



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VOICES OF HUNGER

Over 54,000 people in Greater Des Moines struggle with hunger every year. These are a few of their stories.

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We usually can manage to stretch the meat out for two of us. The supplemental items they give us here [at St. Mary Family Center] like the bread and potatoes, that puts it all together and we can have a good meal.

LENORE



Since we have four kids, sometimes we struggle a little bit. We eat all the time, but not as healthy as we should.

Sometimes we are restricted on things we are able to buy, but we get a lot of help from the pantry, and that releases us from that kind of struggle.

RAMÓN

We'll sometimes get bags of potatoes [from the food pantry], so I dice up tomatoes and make a lot of potato salad with them. I make all kinds of salad.

I make lots of salads with the lettuce, cabbage and the other vegetables they give us.

I do the best with what I have. I make it happen.

TABITHA

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Helen Lorraine Cook (1915-2014)

DMARC Food Pantry Network Benefactor

You have not lived until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.

- Anonymous

AN OPEN LETTER OF GRATITUDE TO HELEN COOK

Dearest Helen,

November, 2015

The expression "Thank you!" seems far too small for your generosity, foresight, selflessness, and boundless compassion that was demonstrated by the \$75,000 gift you directed to the DMARC Food Pantry through your final estate.

As I reflect on how your gift will touch the lives of thousands of Iowans, I wonder:

In 2003, when you first named the food pantry as a beneficiary, did you have some intuition that hunger would continue to worsen in Polk County? Or, did you know that nearly forty percent of all DMARC food pantry visitors are children?

Was it your strong faith combined with the experience of coming of age during the Great Depression that framed your empathy and concern for other families struggling to put food on their tables?

Could you have imagined that your gift will allow DMARC to buy the equivalent of 125,000 meals that will assist nearly 14,000 Polk County residents requesting help through one of our twelve partnering pantries?

Your gift to DMARC that has arrived at such a critical time seems symbolic of your enjoyment of working in your yard and tending your flower gardens.

I want to assure you that through your kindness, humility and concern for others, you have planted far-reaching seeds of hope and help. We are humbled and honored that you have entrusted DMARC to nurture and harvest this legacy gift to improve the lives of thousands of our neighbors in need. With the help of countless partners, supporters and volunteers, we won't let you down.

With warmest regards,
Kristine Frakes

1 in 5 children in Polk County is hungry.

dmarcunited.org/donate



Last year, 23,000 Polk County kids struggled with hunger.

With your help, DMARC provided 900,000+ meals for 15,000 of these children.

HUNGER:

- robs our children of their innocence
- contributes to diabetes, high blood pressure, and other preventable diseases
- leads to fatigue and missed school days
- results in lost work days and reduced productivity
- **diminishes the overall quality of life and well-being in our community**

We understand there are many charitable causes worthy of your support. Thank you for your consideration of a year-end or recurring donation to the DMARC Food Pantry Network. Your cash gifts will help families in Des Moines that urgently need assistance to meet their basic food needs.

• \$22



three-day supply of food for a family of four

• \$75



one tank of gas in the *MovetheFood* truck

• \$120



nutritious food for 200 meals

• \$500



1,000 pounds of fresh produce

• \$5,000



warehouse heat and electricity



UNITED TO MEET THE NEED

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Happy Holidays!



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**From all of us at the Des Moines Area Religious Council,
may you have a blessed holiday season and happy New Year!**

THE VOICE



UNITED TO MEET THE NEED