



THE VOICE

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A NEW KIND OF FOOD PANTRY

BY JENNA CORNICK, MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING INTERN

A mom peruses the pantry, carefully selecting food items from the shelves and handing them to her children, who proceed to pass the fruits, veggies, cans and boxes to a volunteer at the “checkout” cart.

The food pantry at West Des Moines Human Services, home to the Food Pantry 2.0 pilot program, now looks quite different from your average pantry.

What began as a \$30,000 award-winning idea has transformed into an experience which provides practical solutions to issues generally faced by food pantries,

including language barriers and the challenge of providing fresh food for clients.

“The issues we are seeing are solvable if funds and efforts are diverted to the right streams,” said Daniel Beck, DMARC Food Pantry Network Assistant Director.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

WORKING TOGETHER TO MEET OUR CHALLENGES AHEAD

BY JODY MEAD, PRESIDENT

This past year, the DMARC Food Pantry Network served more individuals in Greater Des Moines than any other time in its 40+ year history.

Despite the fact that Iowa has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country, many families in our community still struggle to live paycheck to paycheck.

Nearly 75% of the people we serve live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which itself still relies on calculations from the 1960's. Families are not truly self-sufficient until they reach 225% of the Federal Poverty Level (just 4% of families we serve are above 200%).

And we know that other families in Greater Des Moines are just one medical emergency, car problem or lost job away from needing to use a DMARC food pantry.

The simple fact is families still face many challenges when it comes to having enough money to put food on their table.

We can expect even more challenges in 2018. As the Farm Bill debate looms, we are concerned about the impact cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) would have on our Food Pantry Network and those we serve. We know from experience that when SNAP dollars are reduced, we see more families turning to our services to make ends meet.

Last winter we, along with other anti-hunger organizations in Iowa, gathered to create a more effective voice for anti-hunger advocacy in our state. This meeting led to the formation of the Iowa Hunger Coalition, an association of organizations and individuals committed to ending hunger in Iowa. You can learn more about the coalition and become a member yourself at www.iowahungercoalition.org.



Additionally, DMARC has formed an advocacy committee to educate and inform our elected officials about our work, the issue of local hunger, and how constituents in their district utilize the DMARC Food Pantry Network.

In the coming year, your contributions and your voice will be more important than ever.

We know we can't do this without your support. We rely on congregations, businesses, individuals and groups to respond and come together to meet basic human needs here in Greater Des Moines. Through food drives, monetary donations, giving gardens, volunteering and advocacy, you are already helping us in our mission to make sure that no one ever goes hungry in our community.

Jody Mead, President



BRIDGING COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

BY REV. SARAH TRONE GARRIOTT,
COORDINATOR OF INTERFAITH ENGAGEMENT

As the Coordinator of Interfaith Engagement for DMARC, it's my job to let you know:

Diversity is not good.

Yes, that's right, I just wrote that. Diversity is not good.

It's not bad either.

Diversity just is.

It is a reality of the world we live in. The United States has changed significantly from 1976, when roughly eight in ten (81%) Americans identified as white and identified with a Christian denomination, and a majority (55%) were white Protestants. Today, only 43% of Americans identify as white and Christian, and only 30% as white and Protestant (Public Religion Research Institute, 2013).

At last count, the greater Des Moines area has eight mosques, eight Buddhist temples, five Orthodox Christian churches, four Jewish worshipping communities, two Sikh gurudwaras, one Hindu temple, and one Hindu community meeting in homes. Add to that number hundreds of distinct Christian congregations, as well as numerous other communities of belief.

Diversity is just a fact. And it is clearly a fact for our Des Moines metro area. What is good or bad, negative or positive, results from our response to it. Clearly, if our response is fear the results won't be good.

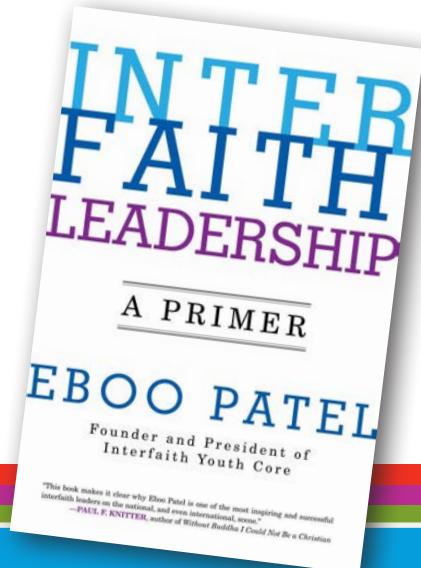
However, even if our response is not to respond, not to engage, to avoid addressing the matter, we may still find ourselves sliding toward prejudice, tension, and conflict. For something positive to emerge we must be intentional. We must actively work toward building bridges between diverse communities. So, when it comes to bridging diverse communities of faith, where do we begin?

Start by digging a little deeper into your own faith. There is an assumption that those with strong faith will have more negative views of those who believe differently, while those with weak faith will be more open.

However, in his book *Interfaith Leadership: a Primer*, Eboo Patel argues that it is not only possible to have a strong faith and an openness to build positive interfaith relationships, but that one is necessary for the other. Patel encourages those doing interfaith work to develop a theology or ethic of interfaith.

The person of faith must find within their own belief system—scriptures, history, tradition, and lived experience—elements that affirm interfaith relationships. Then the person of faith can be confident that interfaith efforts are not in opposition to their faith, or ancillary to it, but work that “expresses a central value of it.”

Explore your own faith more deeply. Pay closer attention. I guarantee that you will begin to notice a calling to interfaith that you might have missed before. And do yourself a favor—pick up a copy of Patel’s book, it will be a helpful guide along the way.



SHARING OUR GIFTS



Emily and Nick Webb

Emily Webb, a board member for DMARC, has been an active supporter—giving of her time, talent and personally supporting DMARC as a young professional. She and her new husband Nick can often be seen helping at DMARC events.

“To us, being a part of the Des Moines community means being connected to each other in numerous and disparate ways,” said Emily. “Supporting DMARC is one of the best ways we can help bring our community together and make both an immediate and lasting difference in the lives of our neighbors and fellow members of our incredible city and community!”

Mark and Mary Whitfield

Mark and Mary Whitfield began their involvement with DMARC over eight years ago through the Meals from the Market program, collecting food donated by participating vendors after the Des Moines Downtown Farmers’ Market closes.

“Seeing DMARC has allowed us to have a different conversation with the vendors,” said Mary, “and allowed us to tell them exactly what DMARC does with their food contributions.”

Mark and Mary are able to designate their volunteer hours to DMARC through their employer as part of the Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Cares Program, which turns volunteer time and efforts into financial support for DMARC.



Bob and Liz Coffman

NORTHWEST DES MOINES KIWANIS

“We support DMARC because it provides a focal point for all agencies and churches addressing community nutrition and health concerns.

In one way or another, we’ve volunteered for just about everything, from sorting food to Sack Saturdays and Red Barrel collections.

We believe it important to have something to do and feel like we’re helping out in our community.”



GIVE FUNDS

Your dollar goes further when you donate cash to DMARC thanks to our ability to purchase in bulk.



GIVE FOOD

We still rely on food drives and in-kind donations! Visit our website to learn more about our most needed items.



VOLUNTEER

Your time is valuable to us! We always need volunteers to sort and date-check donated food in our warehouse.

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Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

Food Pantry 2.0 is a point-based system developed by a certified nutritionist. Points are allotted to families each month based on household size.

The point-based system tackles many problems, one being the fact that in most circumstances, high caloric, unhealthy options are the more cost efficient options.

"The new system that we're using with the points has been a huge success with the customers," said Jim Macon, a volunteer who has served at West Des Moines Human Services for the last 4 years. "Now they can choose to eat healthier foods because the healthier foods are less costly point-wise than the not-so-healthy foods."

Allowing More Pantry Visits Every Month

The point system additionally allows families greater freedom in visits. Rather than only permitting one visit per month, the new system makes it possible for the pantry to serve a client multiple times per month, so long as they still have points remaining.

"It's easier to keep track. They have the points and it's nice that I don't have to do it all at one time. I could [visit] a couple times if I needed to or grab something here and there," said Michelle McCuddin, visiting the food pantry to feed eight children and two grandbabies.

"It's probably only 10 to 15 percent [of visitors] that spend all their points in their first visit. That's been the most smashing success of this. People are able to break it up if it's a transportation issue, you know, they're not carrying 80 to 90 pounds of food onto a bus or something like that," said Beck.

Visitors to the food pantry at West Des Moines Human Services get there a variety of ways. Some ride bikes, some walk, and some even use a wheelchair to get there.

"Even those families with a vehicle are still breaking up their points. If you live on a third floor apartment, that's a lot of groceries to carry up if you've got 200 points for the month," said Stephanie Corbett, the food pantry coordinator at West Des Moines Human Services.

Overcoming Language Barriers

Another improvement of Food Pantry 2.0 has been translating intake questions and other commonly used phrases into 14 different languages.



"Quite often," said Macon, "[clients] will bring another member of their family, and in many cases, it's the young son or young daughter that can speak English, because they're going to school here now, and the parents do not speak it very well."

Safwan Abdullah spent a year translating for the U.S. Army, so his English is fairly strong. He had a successful career as a university professor in a beautiful part of Iraq. Yet, his home was destroyed and possessions stolen as the political system gave way to violence closer to home.

"Since we first [visited the food pantry] last year, we found good people. Good things from the staff from the administration. So, [words are] not enough to tell them thank you. I hope I [can] do more and more things to give them for their help, their assistance. I don't know how to thank them," said Abdullah.

Abdullah's wife accompanied him to the food pantry. She does not speak much English, but was sure to say "thank you" to the volunteers as they walked out.

EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

DMARC'S MISSION:

Working Together to Meet Basic Human Needs.

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Executive Director

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DON CRAWFORD, JR.

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FRANCES COLSTON (Advisory)

Black Friday. Cyber Monday.

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

November 28, 2017

Keep an eye out for our special #GivingTuesday online campaign on November 28! #GivingTuesday is a global day of online giving that follows the Thanksgiving weekend every year. Last year, we raised \$2,700 on #GivingTuesday.

HUNGRY TURKEY HALF MARATHON & 5K



dsmhungryturkeyrun.com

The Des Moines Hungry Turkey Half Marathon &

5k will be held on Saturday, November 25.

The run begins at 8:45 a.m. near the Simon Estes Amphitheater in Des Moines' East Village.

DMARC is the charity beneficiary of the run, and you can support us by registering for the run using the coupon code 'DMARC,' or by volunteering! Sign up to volunteer at signup.com/go/fdtVLxt/.

YOUNG & HUNGRY TRIVIA FUNDRAISER

Join us for the kickoff fundraiser for "Young & Hungry," a new DMARC initiative to engage the next generation of supporters. We'll be hosting a 90's trivia night on Tuesday, November 14, from 5:30-7:30pm at Peace Tree Brewing Co. in Des Moines' East Village. Learn more and donate at dmarcunited.org/youngandhungry/.



SET UP A PLANNED GIFT TO DMARC TODAY

Planned gifts can come in many different forms, but they share a common trait: they are all contemplated by an individual during their lifetime to take effect at or after their passing.

There are many types of planned gifts, some of which can actually provide revenue for the donor during their lifetime. But the most common example is a simple bequest in a will, trust or within an estate plan.

As DMARC looks toward its future and the needs of the community it serves, your help is essential. DMARC is happy to work with you to help you leave a legacy that has real meaning and benefit the clients that DMARC serves for years to come.



We believe...

www.dmarcunited.org/planned-giving/

RED BARREL NEWS

BY JOHN ROBINSON, RED BARREL COORDINATOR

Welcome to the new Red Barrel News – now a quarterly feature of The Voice! We will be shifting our focus to align with the fiscal year which began on July 1st. All numbers related to the Red Barrel program will now be reported in quarters, beginning with quarter one of fiscal year 2018. Monthly digital snapshots will still be available online through the DMARC website at dmarcunited.org/redbarrel/ for volunteers and store managers who would like to keep apprised of how each Red Barrel location is performing from month to month.

We're also excited to announce that the Red Barrel will be getting a make-over. After 27 years of serving as drop-points for shoppers to donate food through area grocery stores, the barrels have seen their fair share of wear and tear. But they've also become an iconic brand element associated with food donation. Even though some of the public may not know about DMARC, they know about the Red Barrel

and they see it where they shop. So, DMARC is working to help preserve that association and expand its reach.



Right now, we need

your help. You can make a difference by being part of the effort to help rebrand and relaunch the Red Barrel program. Whether you are interested in helping select design elements, solicit partners to help fund it, organize an event to help launch it, or implement ideas to help market it, we've got a spot for you.

Be part of this exciting process—I would love to hear from you! Contact me via email at jrobinson@dmarcunited.org or call (515) 277-6969 ext. 18.

TOP FIVE STORES FOR RED BARREL FOOD ITEMS - FY18/Q1

Rank	Store	Address	Food Items	Store Director	Volunteer Collector
1	Hy-Vee	550 S. 51st Street, West Des Moines	1,866	Mark Luke	Harlan Thomas
2	Hy-Vee	7101 University Ave., Windsor Heights	1,794	Jeff Osborn	Chris Burch
3	Hy-Vee	8601 Douglas Ave., Urbandale	1,426	Scott James	Urbandale Kiwanis
4	Hy-Vee	410 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny	1,394	Joel Flug	Link Associates
5	Hy-Vee	5759 Merle Hay Rd., Johnston	1,194	Ray Doughan	Johnston Kiwanis

TOP FIVE STORES FOR HUNGER SACKS SOLD - FY18/Q1

Rank	Store	Address	Hunger Sacks	Store Director	Volunteer Collector
1	Hy-Vee	550 S. 51st Street, West Des Moines	234	Mark Luke	Harlan Thomas
2	Hy-Vee	4707 Fleur Drive, Des Moines	126	Ryan Roberts	Link Associates
3	Brick St. Market	114 Brick Street SE, Bondurant	106	Reenie Hogan	Connie Richards
4	Hy-Vee	410 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny	105	Joel Flug	Link Associates
5	Fareway	8450 Meredith Drive, Urbandale	79	Dave Eisentrager	Urbandale Kiwanis

TOP FIVE STORES FOR RESCUED FOOD - FY18/Q1

Rank	Store	Address	Food Items	Meat/Produce (lbs.)
1	Walmart Supercenter	2150 E 1st Street, Grimes	7,460	13,361.8
2	Hy-Vee Fulfillment Center	3303 86th Street, Urbandale	5,699	0.0
3	Gateway Market	2002 Woodland Ave., Des Moines	5,460	0.0
4	Whole Foods	4100 University Ave., West Des Moines	2,147	3,253.3
5	Aldi Supermarket	5512 SE 14th Street, Des Moines	3,615	102.8



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Des Moines Area Religious Council



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THE
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FY16-17 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE



Inside our annual report, you'll find stories of hunger in our community, program innovations from the past year, Food Pantry Network usage and demographic data, and financials for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

www.dmarcunited.org/annual-report/