



# THE VOICE

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE DES MOINES AREA RELIGIOUS COUNCIL • VOL. 18 • NO. 2 • MAY/JUN/JUL 2018

## FOCUSING ON FRESH

BY LUKE ELZINGA,  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER



This March, we celebrated 10 years of Rev. Sarai Schnucker Rice's leadership. To commemorate this milestone, DMARC's new "Fresh Fund" was established to support the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The Fresh Fund was created because, simply put, healthy food is expensive food. We know that people using our food pantries can't always afford to buy fresh and healthy food for their families at the grocery store.

"Healthy food is expensive in the store," said pantry visitor Ismeda. "It saves my family money if I get apples here and don't have to buy them."

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## HEALTHY FOOD FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

BY JOHN WHALIN, PRESIDENT

Last year I had the opportunity to visit all of the food pantries in DMARC's Network. I sat outside most of them before I went in, just to watch the people going in and out. That experience reminded me of a quote from former General Mills Executive David Nasby:

"Tonight, thousands of your neighbors will go to bed hungry. It may be your child's schoolmate who is undernourished and has difficulty learning on an empty stomach. Or it could be a co-worker, a working mother whose low-wage job doesn't make ends meet. Perhaps it's an elderly neighbor who must make a decision whether to delay filling a prescription or buying groceries. The faces of hunger are as broad as the faces of America."

I saw those faces in our neighbors going into our pantries, but because of your support, what I saw coming out were people with healthy food to eat, and my hope is a better life because of it. I believe that when we provide healthy food to our neighbors that may otherwise go without, we are also building a stronger, safer, and healthier community for everyone.

Looking ahead, the growth in demand we are experiencing to meet people's most basic food needs is sobering, but it also allows us the chance to grow as a community.



To quote James Beard, "food is our common ground." We all need it. From an interfaith perspective, bringing people together to fight food insecurity gives us the opportunity to use that common ground to create a greater spirit of empathy and collaboration in what is otherwise too often a divided and troubled world.

We can build a greater sense of community that we all benefit from through the spirit of empathy, giving, and collaboration demanded of us to ensure that none of our neighbors go hungry. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as part of that effort.

John Whalin  
*President*



## THE WALL OF SHAME

BY REV. SARAH TRONE GARRIOTT,  
COORDINATOR OF INTERFAITH ENGAGEMENT

Whenever visitors come to DMARC, I like to give them a tour of our warehouse. Seeing the place in which we work really helps one understand the work we do, and how to help. And the first place I begin is with the “wall of shame.”

It's just a few non-perishable food items on the shelf in Food Pantry Network Director Rebecca Whitlow's office. A can of cream of broccoli soup that expired in 1996. The half-empty celery salt from 1979. The jar of peanut butter that looks fine, until you open it and see there are a few spoonfuls missing. There are also a few other items I can't really mention here, but am willing to show you if you come to DMARC for a visit and are over the age of 18.

These are just a few examples of the thousands of items we receive every year that have to be taken out of our donation stream and discarded. It's just part of what makes checking and sorting donated items so time-consuming and labor-intensive. I'm thinking about these wall of shame items more and more lately, because we have a very big food drive coming up in a few weeks.

The National Association of Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® collection on May 12 brings in about three months-worth of donated items in one weekend—around 100,000 food items.

**Learn more and sign up to volunteer at:**  
[dmarcunited.org/2018/03/stamp-out-hunger/](http://dmarcunited.org/2018/03/stamp-out-hunger/)

Last year, 10-15% of those items went right in the dumpster. That was a lot of stuff that postal carriers had to haul around, truck drivers had to transport from post offices all over town, and volunteers had to sort, just to be tossed.

Help us get the word out about the need for healthy food donations to your friends, your neighbors, your co-workers, and the people in your faith community. Reach for the whole grain, low-salt, low-sugar, and low-fat items.

And if you would like to donate, but just can't make it to the grocery store, cash is always welcome. In fact, DMARC can purchase 2-6 times more food with your dollar than you can. Spread the word that cash donations go much further in meeting the need.

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Many visitors to the food pantry express surprise and excitement at the fresh produce available.

"All the produce on my grocery list was here, plus the pears," said pantry visitor Michelle. "Those are something new to try that I wouldn't have [tried] if I had to buy them at the grocery store."

Last fiscal year, DMARC distributed over 500,000 pounds of fresh produce throughout our Food Pantry Network. Those fresh fruits and vegetables come from a variety of sources.

In the summer months, we receive donated produce from community, faith, and corporate giving gardens, as well as from donors with abundant harvests from their backyard gardens.

**Get tips for donating your fresh produce:**  
[dmarcunited.org/donate/food/fresh/](http://dmarcunited.org/donate/food/fresh/)

Also in the summer, the Meals from the Market program operates at the Des Moines Downtown Farmers' Market, encouraging vendors to donate unsold goods to the program, which benefits the DMARC Food Pantry Network (*see page 6*).

Another source of our produce is food rescue, which brings food straight from the grocery store to food pantry shelves in a matter of hours.



Fresh produce on display at the West Des Moines Human Services food pantry.



Board member Matt Strawn, Leslie Garman, Sarai Rice, and Past President Jody Mead at the 10th Anniversary celebration for Rev. Sarai Schnucker Rice and launch of the Fresh Fund.

Despite these important efforts, DMARC still must purchase about half of the fresh fruits and vegetables we distribute.

With our focus on providing healthy food, and the continued increase in need at our food pantries, we know our expenses for fresh produce will continue to rise.

But you can help! By donating to DMARC's new Fresh Fund, you are supporting the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables and the health of the people served by our Food Pantry Network.

"All the vegetables we eat—potatoes, onions, carrots, celery, peppers—we can get them here," said Ismeda, "I have fatty liver [disease] and need to eat lots of fresh produce, so this helps my health. It's a blessing."

Your gift can make a difference in the lives of people right here in Greater Des Moines.

**Give to the Fresh Fund today:**  
[dmarcunited.org/donate/donate-online/](http://dmarcunited.org/donate/donate-online/)

# A LEGACY OF HEALTH

BY LESLIE L. GARMAN, CFRE,  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & OUTREACH

As DMARC's Director of Development, I've closely watched the double-digit increases to our Food Pantry Network, knowing one thing: increased need translates into the need for increased funds.

We can and should be doing everything possible to meet this need by raising additional funds—through special appeals, events, and other drives, but long-term I know one thing—the BEST STRATEGY to meeting this ever-increasing need is to create a revenue stream that provides for the long-term sustainability of DMARC. And that's a planned giving program.

So tell me: *If you could leave a legacy to DMARC, one that provided fresh fruits and vegetables to children and families in need—food that supported their health and well-being—would you do it?*

Not long ago, I spoke with a new DMARC Legacy Donor who did exactly that. Recently retired, "Ann" had worked with her financial planner to update her estate plan. Having never married, and with other family members well taken care of, Ann wanted to leave a legacy, one that provided health to children—that's when she thought of DMARC.

During her career as an inner-city school nurse, Ann saw first-hand the effects of poor nutrition on children. With no grocery store nearby, she watched students come to school with food purchased at the local convenience store. Unfortunately, that food was often high in calories and low in nutrition.

***These young students were filling their stomachs, but not nourishing their bodies.***

## PLANNED GIVING

Ann had heard that DMARC had a commitment to health and children and families in need. That commitment is what inspired her to leave her legacy to DMARC.

So again I ask you: *If you could leave a legacy, one that supported the health of children and families in our community, would you do it?*



You can! It's actually one of the easiest things you can do. It can be as simple as updating your will or changing your life insurance beneficiary form, leaving DMARC a percentage of your estate.

What legacy do you want to leave? We'd be honored to help you.

To learn more about how you can support DMARC and how you too can leave a *Legacy of Health*, please contact me at [LGarman@dmarcunited.org](mailto:LGarman@dmarcunited.org) or (515) 277-6969.

## EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DMARC'S MISSION:

Working Together to Meet Basic Human Needs.

### STAFF:

**REV. SARAI SCHNUCKER RICE,**  
Executive Director

**LESLIE L. GARMAN, CFRE,**  
Director of Development & Outreach

**REBECCA WHITLOW,**  
Food Pantry Network Director

**DANIEL BECK**  
**DON CRAWFORD, JR.**  
**JOE DOLACK**  
**LUKE ELZINGA**  
**REV. SARAH TRONE GARRIOTT**  
**JOHN MCPHEE**  
**PATRICK MINOR**  
**DREW ROBERTSON**  
**SHOSHANA SALOWITZ**  
**LINDA VANDER HART**

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018-2019:

**JOHN WHALIN,**  
President

**RABBI DAVID KAUFMAN,**  
Secretary

**THOMAS CROSS,**  
Treasurer

**JODY MEAD,**  
Past President

**THOMAS AHART**  
**DALE BENTLAGE**  
**TOM CHAPMAN**  
**JULIE McMILLIN**  
**CHRIST NAUMANN**  
**MATT STRAWN**  
**CATHERINE SWOBODA**  
**EMILY WEBB**  
**DOUG VENTLING**  
**DIANE ALTON** (Advisory)  
**RON BEANE** (Advisory)

## DMARC AT IOWA CUBS SUNDAY HOME GAMES



At every Iowa Cubs Sunday home game this summer, DMARC will be accepting three food items as a donation in exchange for one general admission ticket. Fans can also pay \$5 to upgrade to a Grand Stand seat.

Find a full list of the Iowa Cubs Sunday Home Games on our community calendar, located online at [dmarcunited.org/events](http://dmarcunited.org/events).

We are still in need of volunteers to assist gathering donations at Iowa Cubs Sunday home games. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Shoshana Salowitz, [ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org](mailto:ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org) or (515) 277-6969 x18.

## INTERFAITH YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP

The Des Moines Area Religious Council and The Comparison Project at Drake University are proud to co-host the second annual Interfaith Youth Leadership Camp from July 26-29, 2018.

20 high school students representing a diverse array of religious traditions and communities will spend four days and three nights at Drake University, learning about each other's religious beliefs and practices. Participants will create and share a digital story that expresses a personally meaningful faith experience, practice, or belief, visit different religious communities in the greater Des Moines area, and discuss the principles and practices of interfaith leadership.

Each Interfaith Youth Leader will receive a \$500 honorarium for their participation in the camp. Apply by April 30, 2018, at:

**[iowainterfaithexchange.com/youthcamp/](http://iowainterfaithexchange.com/youthcamp/)**

## MEALS FROM THE MARKET

Each Saturday morning during the summer, the Meals from the Market program collects donations from vendors at the Des Moines Downtown Farmers' Market.

DMARC is currently seeking volunteers to collect donations during the Downtown Farmers' Market. If you are interested, please contact Shoshana Salowitz, [ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org](mailto:ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org) or (515) 277-6969 x18.



# HOST YOUR OWN VIRTUAL FOOD DRIVE FOR DMARC

BY SHOSHANA SALOWITZ,  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH & VOLUNTEER MANAGER

The digital revolution has some organizations questioning the efficiency of the traditional food drive. The administrative costs associated with processing food items—from staffing to transportation—can be prohibitive. Additionally, the process of arranging in-person food drives can be inconvenient and time-consuming for facilitators and prospective donors alike as they deal with unwieldy amounts of boxed and canned goods that must be delivered elsewhere.

Enter the virtual food drive!

© Can Stock Photo / deandrobot



[dmarcunited.org/donate/virtual-drive/](http://dmarcunited.org/donate/virtual-drive/)

A virtual food drive is essentially an online shopping experience that translates the “purchase” of food items into monetary donations. **This simple approach to fundraising promises several benefits for DMARC and our constituencies:**

**Targeted donations**—DMARC is able to use the funds from virtual drives for our specific needs. We have identified several food items that tend to be highly in demand among our clients. Virtual drives will enable us to guide donors to those items.

**Easy to share**—When a community partner, group, or individual signs up for a virtual food drive, they are provided with a link to share within their own social networks, allowing them to both promote DMARC’s valuable anti-hunger work and highlight their personal engagement with an issue they care about.

**Convenient**—Participants in a virtual food drive are able to support DMARC’s programs from the comfort of their office, local coffee shop, or living room! No need to make an extra trip to the grocery store, dig through your pantry, or lug heavy canned goods to and fro.

**Conserve organizational resources**—Virtual drives reduce the number of paid employee hours needed to process and pick up donations, thereby allowing us to refocus resources on strengthening and expanding our programming.

**Purchasing power**—DMARC is able to purchase 2-6 times more food than consumers are able to purchase in their neighborhood grocery store. When we translate virtual food drives to dollars, our impact in the community expands.

**Branding visibility**—Corporations, businesses, schools, and faith communities are able to brand their virtual food drive pages, creating a more customized experience for participants.

**Commemorate special events**—Giving to DMARC is a meaningful way to honor birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, and other notable milestones, and creating a special virtual drive page for the occasion is the perfect way to engage friends and family.

Please connect with me at (515) 277-6969 x18 or [ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org](mailto:ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org) if you are interested in learning more about this fun, easy, and effective way to engage with DMARC—there’s nothing virtual about the impact of your support!



UNITED TO MEET THE NEED

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
DES MOINES, IOWA  
Permit No. 2934

**Des Moines Area Religious Council**

1435 Mulberry Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

515.277.6969

[dmarcunited.org](http://dmarcunited.org)

Warehouse: 515.282.2026

Fax: 515.274.8389

Email: [info@dmarcunited.org](mailto:info@dmarcunited.org)



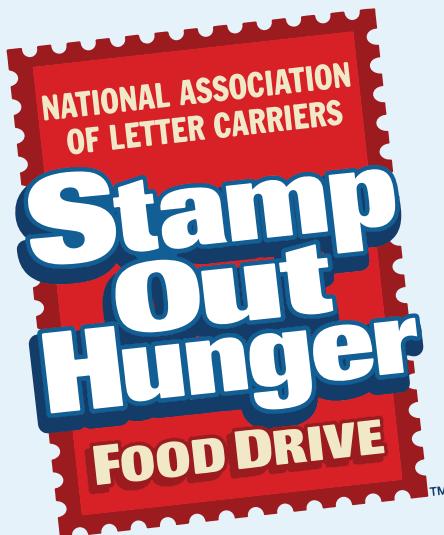
**Des Moines Area Religious Council**



@dmreligious

THE VOICE

## JOIN US FOR A WEEK OF FOOD SORTING!



On Saturday, May 12, the National Association of Letter Carriers will be holding their 26<sup>th</sup> annual Stamp Out Hunger® food drive, and we need YOUR help to sort tens of thousands of donated food items!

We are organizing hundreds of volunteers to help us date-check, seal-check, and sort these food items from Monday, May 14 through Friday, May 18. Additional volunteers are needed to help with clean-up on Saturday, May 19.

Shifts are only two hours long—perfect for individuals AND groups! Questions? Contact our Community Outreach and Volunteer Manager, Shoshana Salowitz, [ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org](mailto:ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org) or (515) 277-6969 x18.

[signup.com/go/cpQSRVE](http://signup.com/go/cpQSRVE)