



MY PATH TO DMARC

BY MATT UNGER, CEO

I feel so very fortunate. Life has had a way of throwing incredible opportunities in front of me. Sometimes they have been exciting, sometimes challenging, sometimes they have been a lot of fun, and almost all of them have a way in which they were personally rewarding.

In taking the helm as CEO at DMARC, I believe I found an opportunity that blends all of these things. It's been exciting in these early days to

learn about the things I did not know about DMARC. I thought you might like to learn a little more about me.

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REFLECTING ON OUR SHARED PROGRESS

BY REV. SARAI SCHNUCKER RICE

When I came to DMARC 11 years ago, we were in a much different place—a smaller staff, a smaller warehouse, a smaller budget, and, although we didn't know it at the time, an economy ripe for recession. Since those first days, we've accomplished so much together:

- We switched our food supply to healthy food so that the people who need us have the kind of food they need to make them productive workers, learners, and family members.
- We expanded from zero vehicles to three pick-up trucks, three Mobile Food Pantry trailers, two “big” trucks, and a van.
- We increased the size of our facilities from 1,500 ft² of warehouse space to 9,000 ft².
- We kept up with the demand for food, even as it continued to increase beyond the recession.
- We added a full-time coordinator of interfaith engagement to support our interfaith work.
- We took our first steps into legislative advocacy with local, state, and federal officials.
- We built a sophisticated data analytics system that allows us to help the community visualize how hunger works in Greater Des Moines.

As I leave, four aspects of our work together seem particularly important to DMARC's future:

DMARC must continue its commitment to healthy food, and especially to fresh fruits and vegetables. We would all be healthier if we ate more fruits and



vegetables, and DMARC has taken the lead, not just locally, but nationally, in championing the idea that food pantries should be about nutrition and health, not just full stomachs. This is not an either-or choice—there's plenty of healthy food out there if we're committed to the idea that we will function better if we're able to eat better.

DMARC must continue its commitment to data. Our ability to visualize the data of hunger for people, in addition to telling the human stories, provides an unmatched opportunity to change the minds of community leaders.

We must expand our commitment to ending poverty as a whole. One of the things the data has told us is that people can't afford to eat if all their available cash is going to the high costs of housing, healthcare, and childcare.

We must renew our commitment to peaceful coexistence across lines not just of faith but of party, race, and gender. DMARC has always been about the work of bringing people together. This is important—now more than ever.

We have accomplished so much together over the last decade as congregations united to meet the needs of Greater Des Moines. You will all continue to be in my prayers!

Rev. Sarai Schnucker Rice

DMARC Executive Director, 2008-2019

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I've called Des Moines home for over 20 years now. After being lured here by a great opportunity to attend Drake University and, as a political science student, the chance to participate in the Iowa caucuses, I was bitten by the bug of electoral politics. From 1999 to 2007 I had the incredible experience of working on multiple statewide campaigns, including two governor's races and two presidential caucus campaigns. I was driven by the opportunity to make change and to serve a greater purpose than myself.

With the inauguration of Chet Culver and Patty Judge in 2006, another incredible opportunity was set before me to serve as Chief of Staff to Lt. Governor Patty Judge. In four years in this role we were able to make so many great strides forward for the state around children's wellness, preschool access, and historic investments in renewable energy, to name a few.



Those four years also included the historic disasters of 2008 that destroyed many of our towns and drenched our state's second largest city with flooding unlike Cedar Rapids had ever seen. My experiences working with first responders, government professionals, the Iowa National Guard, and our state's entire Emergency Management staff and system represent some of the proudest moments of my career. Not the usual "pat yourself on the back" pride, but pride in witnessing a group of folks whom had been called to service band together to respond with resiliency to these disasters.

After serving the state for four years, I spent a short stint as a partner in a consulting firm. I loved getting to build our case to support projects where we had some level of expertise and could genuinely make a difference. But in consulting, I only felt halfway in. I did not have the same sense of service, nor was there the same notion of us all being in this together. I needed to be all in, so I left my firm.

This led to the opportunity to join the Food Bank of Iowa, where I was charged with overhauling their procedures and programming to increase the amount of food being distributed to and through Food Bank partners. I assembled a team and we got to work! When it was all said and done, we had increased annual distribution from under nine million to over 13 million pounds. We stood up three additional programs to help fill gaps where there either were no pantries or the pantry could not keep up with the community's needs. All this culminated in a record monthly distribution of 1.5 million pounds in November 2018, just before I left the Food Bank in January.

I'm proud of what we accomplished together at the Food Bank, and now as I take the lead at DMARC, I'm excited about how the team here and I will shape our future. I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to lead an organization aimed at meeting human needs. In many ways, it feels like the road of my career was always meant to make its way here.

There is a tremendous opportunity before us to continue providing for those in need, but also to advance conversations around targeting the root causes leaving so many in our community behind. We have a lot of work before us, but with your help and support, the team at DMARC is ready to meet the mission and to take that work forward.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Matt Unger'.

Matt Unger
Chief Executive Officer

DMARC SUMMER INTERNS GAIN SKILLS AND GIVE BACK

BY SHOSHANA SALOWITZ, COMMUNITY OUTREACH & VOLUNTEER MANAGER

Over the past few years, DMARC has enjoyed the privilege of hosting high school interns to assist our warehouse team with daily operations while developing life and job skills.

This summer we welcomed students from the Animal Sciences and Horticulture program at Des Moines Public Schools' Central Campus and the Summer Youth Experience Program (SYEP) through the Evelyn K. Davis Center, two programs focused on matching youth with workforce training that helps meet their educational and professional goals.

Despite having no prior knowledge of DMARC's programs, our three summer interns jumped into the dynamic warehouse routine with enthusiasm, open minds, and a spirit of fun (in one instance stacking empty produce bins in a 10-foot tall pyramid as a joke on their supervisor, John).

Daily responsibilities were often physically strenuous—loading and unloading delivery trucks, cleaning storage areas, stacking pallets, preparing partner food pantry orders, and more—but they didn't shy away from the challenge.

Janely and Emily, both Central Campus students, were drawn to DMARC's mission of meeting basic needs, and felt that their internship allowed them to give back by connecting people with resources.

"Being at DMARC, I know that I've been helping the people in my community who are in need of food," said Emily. "I've been on the Mobile [Food Pantry] and just seeing the people being so grateful because of what we do lets me know that I'm doing something good."

Working in an ever-changing environment and taking charge of a large inventory project also provided valuable opportunities for Janely to face some of her personal challenges head-on.

"This internship has helped me grow more by being more independent and being a problem solver," said Janely. "Those are qualities that I have struggled with and this internship has helped me develop those qualities more." She plans to apply her newfound skills in Science Bound during the upcoming school year.

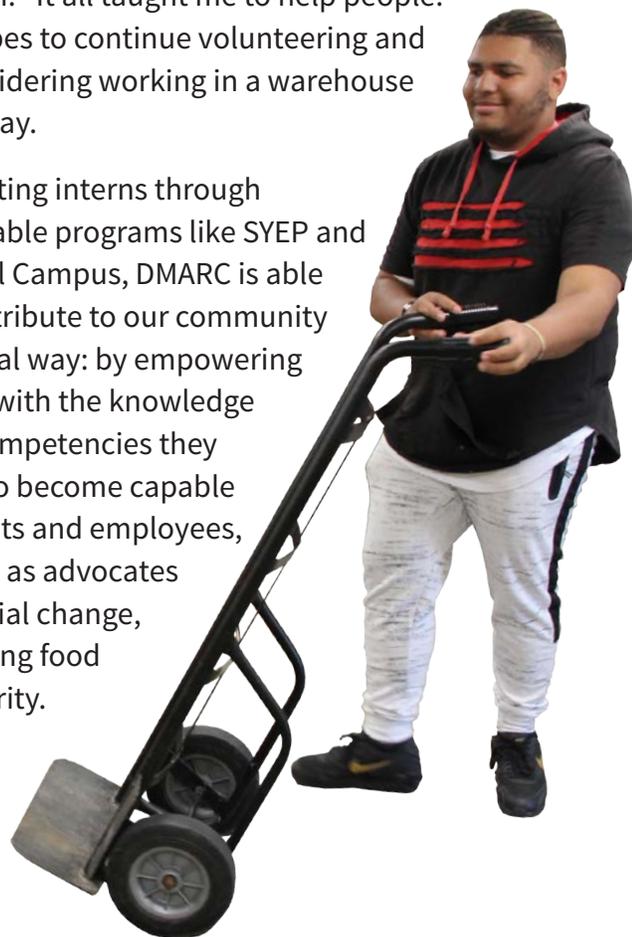
Jamiah joined SYEP after a few of his friends went through the training.

"From what I heard about it," he said, "it sounded like a fantastic learning experience that I wanted to be a part of."

He soon found himself enjoying the pick up and delivery routes alongside David and Craig, two of DMARC's drivers, and credits the warehouse team with making his internship worthwhile.

"DMARC taught me so much, [and so did] the people bringing carts full of food to donate," said Jamiah. "It all taught me to help people." He hopes to continue volunteering and is considering working in a warehouse someday.

By hosting interns through invaluable programs like SYEP and Central Campus, DMARC is able to contribute to our community in a vital way: by empowering youth with the knowledge and competencies they need to become capable students and employees, as well as advocates for social change, including food insecurity.



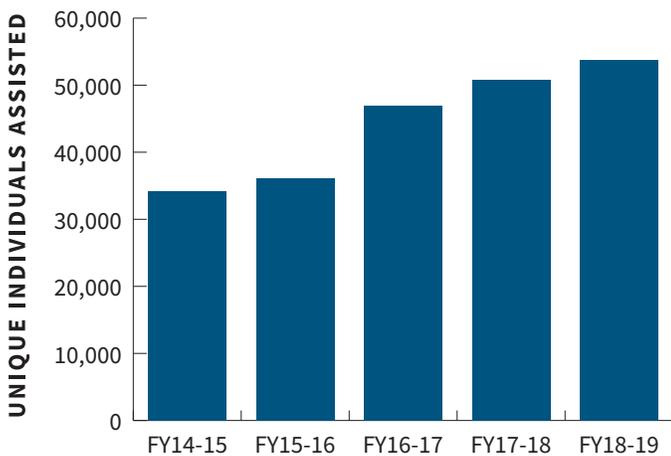
DMARC: DOING MORE

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

This past year DMARC did more than ever before to meet the growing need in our community. We did this by:

ASSISTING MORE PEOPLE

In the past twelve months, we assisted 53,782 unique individuals through our Food Pantry Network, an increase of 6.1% from last year and an increase of 57.6% over the past five years.



INCREASING MOBILE FOOD PANTRY ACCESS

In fiscal year 2018-2019, we launched two additional Mobile Food Pantries, one of which operates as a “Refuel Station,” providing healthy snacks to five Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Iowa (BGCCI) club sites in partnership with BGCCI, the Partnership for a Hunger-Free Polk County, Greg and Suzie Burt, and Fred and Charlotte Hubbell.

With the launch of two new Mobile Food Pantries, we added staff members to help us. We also visited more Mobile Food Pantry host sites than ever before to meet the need.



PROVIDING MORE PRODUCE

This past year, we distributed 2,497,306 produce items. 709,819 pounds of produce were donated to us, including 55,544 pounds from gardens.

How did we do it? We did it thanks to people like you! You helped us meet the increasing need by donating funds to grow. To innovate. To find new ways to meet the need in our community.

But we are not done! This past July, DMARC experienced *yet another* substantial increase in usage of our Food Pantry Network.

As we look toward the future, we know that more programming, more healthy food, and additional resources will be needed to meet this need.

Please contact me to learn more about how you can make a difference at (515) 277-6969 or lgarman@dmarcunited.org.

With your help, we can work to meet this growing need in our community in the most effective and efficient way possible.

EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

DMARC'S MISSION:

Working Together to Meet
Basic Human Needs.

STAFF:

MATT UNGER,

Chief Executive Officer

LESLIE L. GARMAN, CFRE,

Director of Development & Outreach

REBECCA WHITLOW,

Food Pantry Network Director

DANIEL BECK

MONICA CURL

JOE DOLACK

LUKE ELZINGA

CRAIG ESTES

ANDREW FIRESTINE

JOHN McPHEE

PATRICK MINOR

DAVID MOORE

SHOSHANA SALOWITZ

MICHAEL SIROIS

REV. SARAH TRONE GARRIOTT

LINDA VANDER HART

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STUART OXER

MATT STRAWN

RON BEANE (Advisory)

DMARC FALL DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

The DMARC fall delegate assembly will be held in October. Please keep an eye out for an announcement on the specific time and location.

If you have questions, please contact Rev. Sarah Trone Garriott, (515) 277-6969 x19 or strongarriott@dmarcunited.org.

VOLUNTEER AT 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 10-15 volunteers to collect donations during each Downtown Farmers' Market. If you are interested, please contact Shoshana Salowitz, ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org or (515) 277-6969 x18.



10TH ANNUAL HALLOWEEN ON THE HILL

The 10th Annual Halloween on the Hill will be held in Historic Sherman Hill on October 31, 2019, from 6:30-8:30pm, with residents decorating their historic homes with spooky scenes! The event is free to attend, but visitors are encouraged to drop off non-perishable food items or monetary donations for the DMARC Food Pantry Network at Hoyt Sherman Place at 15th Street and Woodland Avenue in Sherman Hill.

SET UP A PLANNED GIFT TO DMARC TODAY

Planned gifts come in 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, with the most common example being a simple bequest in a will, trust or within an estate plan. Learn more about leaving a legacy for DMARC:



We believe...

www.dmarcunited.org/planned-giving

Note: in all cases it is recommended you consult your tax professionals.



This Hawkeye fan is still smiling!

Although his team at the Stelter Company “lost” the competition, he knows that everyone won when his company team held a competitive drive for DMARC!

RIVALS WITH A CAUSE: HOST A COMPETITIVE DRIVE

Get your congregation, workplace, friend group, or any other group of people together to have fun while raising funds and food for the DMARC Food Pantry Network by hosting a competitive drive!

Whether you’re hosting a traditional food drive, raising funds with a coin drive, or hosting an online virtual drive on DMARC’s website, you can make your fund or food drive more successful (and have a blast while giving back) by adding a little friendly competition!

And what bigger rivalry is there in our state than the football game between the Iowa Hawkeyes and the Iowa State Cyclones?

If you’re already planning to celebrate the game with food and friends at a tailgate, barbeque, or potluck, please consider hosting a competitive fund or food drive to make sure that everyone in our community has access to the healthy food they need to thrive.

Tips for making your drive a success:

- Make it fun by setting up a friendly competition between Hawkeye and Cyclone fans!
- Compete to see who can raise more funds for the DMARC Food Pantry Network—each dollar provides two meals.
- Have a prize for the winning team, or a fun “punishment” for the losing team!

Iowa at Iowa State Saturday, September 14, 2019

Interested in hosting a competitive drive with your workplace, congregation, or group? To learn more, contact Shoshana Salowitz, (515) 277-6969 x18 or ssalowitz@dmarcunited.org.



UNITED TO MEET THE NEED

Des Moines Area Religious Council

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Fax: 515.274.8389
Email: info@dmarcunited.org

Des Moines Area Religious Council
 @DMARCunited

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THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS!

From all of us at DMARC, thank you to all of our incredible volunteers who make so much of what we do possible! In the past year, our volunteers contributed:

71,838
total volunteer hours



210
volunteer hours for
Spring Greens, our
new signature event

900

volunteer hours with
Mobile Food Pantries

