ISSAQUAH Food & Clothing Bank

Summer 2020

Recipe for Hope

Now, more than ever, the compassion of others is what will bring our community through these times stronger and healthier! Please join us Tuesday, September 29th for an online experience that will encourage and inspire you.

Register on our website to attend our 8:00 a.m. breakfast or 12:00 noon lunch fundraising event and receive a special treat from our sponsors!

Recipe for HOPE compassion in action

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Executive Report

by Cori Walters, Executive Director

In the months and years to come, Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank, along with our nonprofit partners, are expecting a profound increase in need. The federal government and State of Washington have created some stability programs at the onset of the Coronavirus crisis, but as government support fades (eviction moratorium, stimulus checks, CARES Act, etc.), essential services like food banks, meal programs, and eviction prevention services will need to step up and fill an ever-widening gap. As we analyze what's next, we are focused on unemployment rates, school schedules, childcare options, parents unable to go back to work, and a struggling economy.

If the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank's COVID-19 emergency food delivery program is any indication of what's to come, we are concerned and preparing for the worst. With this brand new program, we jumped from an added 34 deliveries in March to 314 special deliveries in June, and anticipate growth of 50-70 more households accessing delivery services by the end of August. Children will be impacted by the lack of easy-access to free or reduced lunches, while parents are going to have to make tough choices about full-time employment or childcare.

The Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank is addressing these issues with increased youth feeding programs, increased service hours, and increased case management support in order to help our community make it through these trying times. We appreciate all the support received and your donations have been vital to making all of this happen!

A Time to Receive: Rachel's Story

Hello! We are a family of four. My husband is a high school math teacher. I am a part-time nurse, educator, and a mom. We have two children: Esther (8) and Daniel (5). We also have a sweet rescue dog named Stella.

I worked as a nurse for public health for 18 years. They closed the clinic where I was working due to budget cuts. At that time, we were adopting our youngest child. When Daniel was born, both of our children had a lot of needs and it was important for me to be home with them. I also taught nursing part-time at the college level. Both of our children were adopted and it was a huge financial strain to adopt. Our family also had medical bills that set us behind financially.

My husband is originally from Haiti and when he came to the United States his college degrees did not transfer, so he had to start all over. He had to repeat his bachelors and then get his teaching certificate and other degrees so that he could teach in the United States. It took many years of him working a minimum wage job and paying college tuition for him to finish. He is now a newer public school math teacher and, even with my part-time income, we do not currently make enough for our family to make a living in this area. Due to all of these circumstances combined, including the high cost of living, we found ourselves on a limited income and we were barely able to make ends meet each month. **We could either pay our bills or buy food, but we could not do both.** I searched extensively for a food bank. Each time I looked I was in the wrong service area or they only provided a small amount of food once a month. It was not enough to meet our needs. Then one day, I came across information about the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank . From the first time I went there I was so impressed with the dedicated staff and volunteers. They were kind, well-organized, thoughtful, and provided a shopping experience that made us feel valued and respected. Some of our family members have food allergies and the amazing selection was able to meet much of our food needs, including allergy-sensitive food needs every week. We were also able to get much of our dog food there.

We were also able to almost completely clothe our children through the clothing bank and the partnership they have with Eastside Baby Corner. My children absolutely love going to "shop" at the food and clothing bank. People make them feel special and greet them when they come. They always get to pick out a special snack. They also enjoy choosing books to take home each week. Due to the book donations from families and the library, we were able to stock up on amazing books for our kids to have in our home. These have been an invaluable resource during the time we have had to do school at home due to COVID-19.

I also pick up food and clothes weekly for another family who is going through hard times. They have 11 family members living in the household and both of the adults in the house lost their jobs. The food for the family members and the pets that I bring to them each week is literally life-sustaining. The children are so excited when I bring the fruit, vegetables, meat, bread, snacks and other items home for them.

Both our families have also greatly benefited from the school program (Tools 4

Rachel's story continued...

School) that provides backpacks and school supplies. Without it we would not have been able to afford all of the needed supplies.

The Holiday Gift Barn is another amazing program too. It was such a blessing to be able to go around Pickering Barn and "shop" for specific gifts that I knew my children would love. I was able to pick out a bike for my five-year-old son and he was so excited. I also selected games as stocking stuffers that we have played throughout the year.

Our family has benefited tremendously through the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank. It has enabled us to work in much needed fields as educators in math and nursing to prepare the next generations. It has also allowed us each to not have to work multiple jobs so that we can meet our children's needs. It has enabled us to make ends-meet when otherwise, they would have not. Life can be hard and overwhelming at times. Thank you so much for giving and making the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank a place of excellence that provides much needed food and supplies for families in need. This is only a season for us. It will not always be this difficult. The staff and volunteers at the food bank have brought much needed hope and kindness to our lives. As our children grow older we would like to volunteer as a family to support the food bank.

We have been helped so much by this organization. It has allowed us to realize how important it is to support the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank and other organizations like it that provide much needed resources to families in need. Thank you for your generosity. It is making a huge impact in our lives and in our community!

Mark Your Calendars!

Recipe for Hope 2020

Two Online—Virtual Events
Tuesday, September 29, 2020
8:00 a.m. Breakfast
12:00 p.m. Lunch

REGISTER TODAY at www.bit.ly/recipe-for-hope-2020 and receive a special treat from our sponsors!

Recipe for HOPE compassion in action

Holiday Closures

Labor Day
Monday, September 7th
CLOSED

Thanksgiving Day
Thursday, November 26th
CLOSED

Day After Thanksgiving
Friday, November 27th
CLOSED

Turkey Trot

9:00 a.m. Thursday, November 26th to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, November 29th, 2020

Pick 1 (or more!) of 7 routes available. Get your t-shirts, win prizes, and help FEED THE NEED!

www.issaquahturkeytrot.org

FEED THE NEED
5K NOV 2020
Turkey Trot
TROTTING FOR ISSAQUAH FOOD BANK

Champion Spotlight: Mike Salgado

by Lisa Haynes

Mike's avid interest in volunteering was apparent from his very first shift at the food bank, which was scheduled during what ended up being a snow storm closure in February 2019. He braved the snow only to find a mostly empty building. *"I'm known to not always read the details and didn't realize the food bank followed the same snow schedule as the Issaquah School District. (...) I guess I was just eager to volunteer,"* he said on remembering the instance. Prior to volunteering for the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank, he was organizing annual charity events benefitting the Family Assistance Fund through the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and was also the Concessions Chair for his daughter's swim team. He missed being part of a group that impacted the lives of people in need, so he searched the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank website looking for ways that he could help. When asked what made him decide to start volunteering, Mike said, *"I thought that volunteering for the food bank would fill that void, and it has."*

Mike's dedication shows through in everything that he does...and he does a lot! Prior to COVID-19, Mike was a shopper for our Groceries to Go program, has helped set up and serve at the Mobile Food Bank, and has also picked up food donations from local grocery stores. His current role as a volunteer is driving the box truck every week to Seattle's Food Lifeline to collect food for distribution. His dedication is not only shown through his volunteer work but also in his interest and involvement in the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank partnerships and back-end operations: *"I have really enjoyed seeing the connections between the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank and Food Lifeline and how they work together."* Sometimes, he makes two (and occasionally three!) trips on the same morning. However, Mike doesn't mind as he is accompanied by the beautiful Seattle skyline and enjoys the opportunity to meet and get to know other volunteer drivers from different food banks across King County.

Mike with his wife and daughters

Having the perspective of a regular volunteer prior to the pandemic, Mike says that he is *"amazed (at) what the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank staff has done to adjust and adapt its operations to serve our clients while keeping volunteers and staff safe."* Since the start of the pandemic, he says that he can see the increased community need by the volume of food being distributed every week and says that *"it has been really gratifying to see the amount of community support in response to this increased need."* When asked about the most challenging part of volunteering during the pandemic, he says, *"some of the jobs that I really enjoyed, such as helping out at the Mobile Food Bank, were*

Champion Spotlight continued...

no longer feasible. I had to find new roles, although I have not been able to have the same client contact."

Mike enjoys volunteering so much that he has recently recruited a personal friend to join the volunteer team! His vision for the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank is that we will *"continue to reach out and feed and assist as many people in our community as possible."* In closing, Mike expressed that *"it means a lot to me to be able to do my small part to help assist the food bank in providing food to those who need it in our community."*

When he's not volunteering, Mike enjoys hanging out with family and friends, traveling, eating out, wine and beer tasting, playing golf, and watching Tik Tok videos!

Mike, a HUGE thank you from your food bank family for your time, compassion, and humor!

Summer Lunch Fundraising Success

by Claire Lee

Although we missed holding our annual Lake Sammamish Fireworks Show and coming together to celebrate, the absence of the event did not diminish the feeling of strength, support, and generosity from our community.

The Lake Sammamish Fireworks Show fundraiser supports our Summer Lunch Program, helping to provide breakfast, lunch, and snack foods to food-insecure, school-age children all summer long. To help kick-start the fundraiser, our amazing partners, event hosts, and sponsors, John Kritsonis & Karl Lindor of Windermere Real Estate offered an extremely generous $20,000 match for donations of $100 or more, making this year's fundraiser the most successful one to date!

Thank you to everyone who contributed and a HUGE thank you to John & Karl! With your help, we were able to raise *$43,877 towards feeding kids in our community this summer!*

Thank you!

KRITSONIS**LINDOR**

Windermere
REAL ESTATE

Hitting Hard Times

by Rebecca Rice

The CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act became a reality on March 27, 2020. For many Americans, this meant that their regular unemployment payments (which average $330 per week) were boosted by an extra $600 each week. This meant, especially for people who are low income and without savings, that rent got paid, groceries were purchased, and life could generally go on as usual (socially-distanced, of course). The CARES Act also provided the economic stimulus payments for everyone, regardless of employment status, and the Payroll Protection Program has helped many small businesses and non-profits stay afloat and pay their employees throughout the duration of the pandemic.

That extra $600 per week for people receiving unemployment ended on July 31st, and Congress has to decide if they will replace that $600 and, if so, how much people could expect to receive.

This has had an impact on the families we serve in several ways. First of all, the unknown is extremely stressful—as we have all realized during this time of extreme unknowns. Not knowing if you will receive the money you need to pay your bills, and to have very little control over that decision, adds a huge amount of stress to families who are already struggling.

In a very tangible way, the loss of these funds is impacting people's ability to pay rent, electric bills, medical bills, buy groceries, and even winter coats for their kids. While nobody can be evicted for non-payment of rent at least through October 15, 2020 and Puget Sound Energy is not shutting off any electricity for non-payment, those bills are still accruing.

If a family's rent is $2,000, they could easily end up with a rent bill of $10,000. For a family that was already struggling and living paycheck to paycheck, that will result in an eviction when the eviction moratorium ends.

The Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank is doing as much as possible to fill our community's fridges and pantries with fresh, healthy food, and to connect people to resources that may help bridge the gap between income and bills. However, we know there will be a day when families are facing huge rental bills and eviction as well as huge electric bills and shut-offs.

Our goal is to not let food ever be a choice they have to make. We appreciate all our donors who are being mindful of this need and helping us prepare to meet it for the long-term.

Turkey Trot 2020

To answer your question....YES! Turkey Trot is still happening this year (with some changes, of course). With everyone's health and safety in mind, the Issaquah Turkey Trot will take place over the entire Thanksgiving weekend, starting on Thanksgiving day (Thursday-Sunday), and there will be 7 different routes to choose from to help with social-distancing. As always, t-shirts will be available and Thanksgiving themed costumes are (strongly) encouraged! There will even be a costume contest! We hope you'll come out and trot with us this year! For more information please visit www.issaquahturkeytrot.org.

Keeping Summer Lunch Safe

by Erin Longchari

Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank
SUMMER LUNCH

2020 continues to be the year of adaptation and our Summer Lunch program was no exception. Significant adjustments were made to ensure the health and safety of all families, volunteers, and staff, without sacrificing the variety, self-selection, and the positive experience provided in the past.

Summer Lunch launched it's first drive up, no-contact, pick up service this June. Menu options changed throughout the summer to provide lots of variety - from cereal, bread, deli meat, cheese, yogurt, and chicken tenders, to fresh produce like pineapples, peaches, berries, and nectarines. Families stayed in their cars and chose options from menu boards, while volunteers safely loaded 2-weeks' worth of food into their vehicles.

This summer, *the average number of children served in a given week increased an astounding 73% from last June.* Each child received breakfast, lunch, and snack foods through the Summer Lunch program and we were even able to provide *$25 grocery gift cards to more than 480 children!*

However, the increasing need for food assistance is apparent in our growing numbers. These numbers reflect the accumulating burden faced by families struggling with unemployment, mounting bills, and rising costs associated with educating children at home all day, every day.

We thank you for your generosity and our amazing team of Summer Lunch volunteers. Your support made this program a lifeline for neighboring families and children!

Partner's Scavenger Hunt

Every year, we look forward to showing our appreciation to those who have supported the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank in any capacity. Whether you're a donor, volunteer, or have otherwise partnered with us, we thank you for giving back to the community through our organization.

While we missed being able to hold our annual Partner's Picnic, we didn't want to miss an opportunity to show our gratitude! We enjoyed encouraging some outdoor, socially-distanced fun with opportunities to win fun prizes that support local businesses! Check out some of our "Best Theme" and "Most Creative" winners!

Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank
PARTNER'S
Scavenger Hunt

Thank you to everyone who joined in on the fun!

ISSAQUAH
Food & Clothing Bank

179 1st Avenue SE
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issquahfoodbank.org

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Tools 4 (Home) School!

Tools 4 School
geared for success from day one

Issaquah Schools Foundation +
Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank

Even though school looks very different this year, kids still need to be equipped to succeed with their education at home. IFCB partnered again with the Issaquah Schools Foundation to give kids a strong start with backpacks and core school supplies.

Our no-contact, drive-up Tools 4 School event took place on August 18th at Clark Elementary. Families remained in their cars and kids chose from a wide variety of backpack options on display along the school's front entrance. Friends of the Library's Book Shelf program was on hand to offer a huge selection of fun and educational books to every child. *Backpacks and supply kits were provided to 576 kids in the Issaquah School District!* All remaining backpacks and supplies are distributed back to each school in the district, so that families who missed the event can still pick up a backpack and supplies before school starts in September. Thank you to our partners at the Issaquah Schools Foundation and to everyone who donated to Tools 4 School this year. Your support helps ensure kids are prepared and ready to tackle the new school year - even from home!

Our Mission

The Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank provides basic needs to our community members to promote self-sufficiency.