

# 2024 June Newsletter

We've got backpacks on the brain!



We're already preparing for the back to school picnic.

During this event, Extended Hands Pantry distributes over 300 filled backpacks, ensuring students living in very low income households have the necessary supplies for the school year. These backpacks follow the MMSD school supply classroom lists, ensuring that each child is fully prepared.



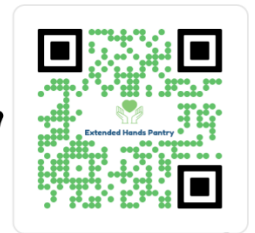
As a single mother of two working as a stylist, Kim struggles to budget since her income can fluctuate from month to month. Kim said, regarding paying for supplies along with other essentials, "I'm trying to make sure that I keep up with the bills and all of the household needs. My daughter is in school, and I have a two-year-old who needs diapers. So, that's been a struggle for me." As a hairdresser, her

income is dependent on her clients' ability to spend on haircuts, adding to her financial stress.

It shouldn't be a privilege to have the school supplies needed, and that's why Extended Hands Pantry is here to help. Our annual giveaway provides school supplies, books, and food to those who need it the most. These resources help kids succeed in the classroom, increasing their chances of breaking the cycle of poverty.

To keep this vital program running, we need your help. Donations of items, funds, and your time are all crucial. Volunteers are needed to help at the BTS party on Saturday, August 24 to help with children's games, crafts, supervising a bounce house, and serving a picnic lunch. Together, we can ensure every child starts the school year with the tools they need to succeed.

You can donate using the QR code here!



SCAN ME



## Why Ana Uses the Pantry

Ana is a struggling mother of three young children, but she often comes into the pantry with more than her own. Ana works long hours as a babysitter for her sister's children, while also taking on the primary responsibility for cooking for both families.

This arrangement allows them all to have a hot meal together, despite their lack of resources and living separately.

Often, Ana must place one baby underneath the cart, secure in a car seat, while another sits in the upper designated baby seat. Volunteers assist as she manages to fill her cart, calm the children, and plan meals for the upcoming week.



Ana's voice is often a whisper, hesitant to speak up in a world that has not always been kind to her. Our goal is to provide her with a sense of security and empathy. During one visit to our pantry, Ana revealed that she relies on staple foods such as rice and beans to feed the two families she cooks for throughout the week until she can return for more assistance. These basic ingredients are critical for her ability to keep the children fed and healthy.

Your support of Extended Hands Pantry directly impacts families like

Ana's. With your generous donations, we can provide essential resources that enable families to care for their loved ones and share meals together. Every contribution helps build a stronger, more resilient community.



### Attic Angels Stop By

Attic Angels, a dedicated group of nearly 500 volunteers, provide approximately 35,000 hours of service and grant hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to benefit children and seniors throughout Dane County.



While their signature fundraising events engage the entire community in the Attic Angels mission, it is the Angels themselves who make it all happen.

Recently, a contingent of Attic Angels have been lending a helping hand during our pantry sessions by assisting shoppers with loading groceries into their cars, preparing carts for the next guests, and guiding shoppers through the pantry layout.

Their support exemplifies the power of community partnerships in keeping our pantry strong.

We encourage you and your groups to visit, donate, and get involved. Together, we can continue making a positive impact in our community.



### Extended Hands Pantry on MadisonMom.com

We are thrilled to share that Extended Hands Pantry was recently featured on the family-friendly website MadisonMom.com under the heading "Volunteer Opportunities for Your Family at Extended Hands Pantry This Summer." We are incredibly grateful for their effort in highlighting how we feed families and how those who are more fortunate can lend a hand to those in need.

What did they say about us? MadisonMom.com shared a powerful message: "Did you know that about 1 out of every 7 children in Wisconsin lives in a household experiencing food insecurity? That's around 182,000 kids – enough to fill Lambeau Field more than twice! These staggering numbers hit close to home right here in Madison, and that's where Extended Hands Pantry steps in. Every month, they provide essential items like food, clothing, and toiletries to approximately 2,100 families in need, including immigrant and refugee families."

We are thankful for this recognition and the opportunity to spread the word about our mission.



### 25 Years and Going Strong

For 25 years, Andy and Jenny, our dedicated directors at Extended Hands Pantry, have been a beacon of hope for the residents of Northport Apartments and Packer Townhouses, both Section 8 housing units.



Their heartfelt mission has always been to uplift families in the most meaningful ways. By providing snacks in the afterschool program, they ensure that children can focus on their homework without worrying about dinner not being adequate. Over the past quarter of a century, Andy and Jenny have lovingly served community dinners, distributed holiday presents, and hosted women's groups to help newcomers feel at home and navigate their new community.

Extended Hands Pantry, EIN 83-4321269, is a Non-Profit 501(c)(3) organization and your contribution is tax deductible.

Their unwavering commitment has touched countless lives.



## Letter from the Directors

We are very appreciative for all the support, encouragement, and love you've shown to us over the years. It's hard to believe that this will be our 25th annual Back-to-School party at the Northport Apts. and Packer Townhouses! Our partnerships with these two low-income communities have been a time of tremendous blessings for us. We have learned so much through our relationships with the residents and staff.

We can't stress enough the importance of education for children living in very low-income housing. By simply providing a child with all the necessary supplies they need for school, you can make a huge impact towards their future.

We can also guarantee a super fun time for volunteers at the annual Back-to-School party on Saturday, August 24. Contact us for more details!

Our new indoor space for the food pantry is working out better than expected. We've been operating inside for just over a year now. The growth the pantry has experienced over the past year is quite significant. A year ago, we were serving about 220 families each week. Today we are serving 500 families a week!



It's been a challenge to keep up with the growth. If you've considered helping with food or monetary donations, or are interested in volunteering, we need you! Please keep us in your prayers as we remain committed to providing food to everyone who comes for assistance.

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me,'" Matthew 25:40.

Blessings,

Andy & Jenny Czerkas