

Neighbors Helping Neighbors ENews Brief

27 January 2024

All of our programs were open once again! And our college students are back! Hot Meals served 112 meals. Woodstock Pantry served groceries to 348 people.

OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

I want to recognize our Receiving and Packing Teams. On Friday, the OFB delivery truck didn't arrive until 8:15, 1½ hours late. While they waited, the team did a phenomenal job reorganizing the food between the basement, sanctuary and Outreach Room. As most of them go to work after their shift, they had to leave just as the delivery arrived.

Our Packing Team arrived to see the OFB truck unloading, and the pews filled with boxes. They stepped up to help the remaining members of the Receiving Team to move the 5,00lbs. of food. And then they did double-time to get the bags packed while ensuring that all three stations, i.e., dry goods, produce and ready-to-eat, had the support necessary to complete their work.

It was an amazing feat of people who came together as a community to solve a problem. And they did it graciously, with a sense of humor and while watching out for each other. This, my friends, is a hallmark indicator of a resilient community! Congratulations and thank you to all who stepped up and stepped in!!!

2024 GOALS

Now that we are officially in our new year, we'll start working on our 2024 goals. We'll start with Orientation!

Orientation

All volunteers are required to do our basic orientation annually. This includes watching the Civil Rights and Food Safety Videos and reading the FIFO document for your shift. Your Team Lead will support you to complete the training. Here is what to expect.

Civil Rights The Civil Rights Video introduces foundational values regarding the people we serve. In addition to serving food and basic supplies, we are building community. And we are learning to be a Trauma-Informed Food Site. The foundation for both are values around human dignity. We all need to live these values in our work.

In the past, only volunteers who work directly with our neighbors took the training.

This year, all volunteers will take the training. Whatever work you do, whether it's packing grocery bags or preparing hygiene supplies or cooking a meal, it must be done in a way that honors and respects our neighbors.

Food Safety Most will watch the video. A few will update their Food Handler Card.

FIFO FIFO stands for 'First In, First Out'. This is a practice of serving our oldest food first to ensure we serve the highest quality food to our neighbors. Volunteers in each shift have different responsibilities regarding FIFO. You will read the FIFO document for your shift. The FIFO document also details the tasks completed to run a shift.

When you complete your orientation, you need to document it. Note that we have new logs for 2024.

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Woodstock Pantry Volunteers – please complete your orientation prior to your next shift [Woodstock Pantry Volunteer Orientation Log 2024](#)

Hot Meals Volunteers - Please check with your Team Lead [Hot Meals Volunteer Orientation Log 2024](#)

Mentoring – We want all volunteers to be successful and to feel a part of our incredible community. So, please look for new volunteers, introduce yourself, show them how the shift is run, be available to answer questions and make sure they are introduced to everyone!

HUNGER IN OUR COMMUNITY

[Oregon Food Bank](#) shared information on hunger that is crucial to our understanding of our work. I pulled two for you to consider. Then, I share information from research at the pantry conducted by our very own Zoe Drajem.

Hunger Fact #1

Prior to the pandemic, 1 in 11 Oregonians were food insecure, not knowing where our next meal might come from. Today, 1 in 5 people face hunger in rural, urban and suburban communities throughout the state - a dramatic increase driven by the ongoing economic fallout of COVID-19 and the rising cost of food and housing.

Hunger Fact #4

Food insecurity disproportionately affects specific communities in Oregon, regardless of geography. **Historic inequities and systemic exclusions** mean that Black, Indigenous and Communities of Color, immigrants and refugees, single moms and caregivers, and trans and gender-diverse communities are two to three times more likely to face hunger and poverty. By addressing these disparities, we can ensure everyone in our state has access to the essential resources we need to thrive.

Woodstock Pantry Research on Neighbor Demographics

Zoe Drajem conducted research to learn about the demographics of our neighbors, [Woodstock Pantry Neighbor Demographic Report](#). Zoe writes, 'Part of being a social service organization is ensuring that everyone knows about and has equal access to the resources you provide.' Her findings show that people from the communities identified by OFB (above) are overrepresented at the pantry.

She concludes, 'As vulnerable populations are more likely to experience hardship, it is a good thing for them to be overrepresented at the pantry...We note that although we serve a higher percentage of Black/African Americans than are represented in our Service Area, there is a higher percentage of Black/African Americans in Portland. So, we plan to design outreach strategies to let folks know about our services.'

As we enter the new year, we'll be designing and implementing those strategies. If you have any ideas, or have a connection, please let me know!

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OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (not required)

2024 Anti-Hunger Agenda: Ending Hunger Power Night [Register](#)

Learn about Oregon Food Bank's Policy Leadership Council's Policy Priorities for the 2024 Legislative Session.

VOLUNTEER SIGN-UPS

Woodstock Pantry - Volunteers sign up each week for the shifts they want to work.

NOTE: We have a new signup sheet. January's no longer works.

[WP SIGN UP SHEET FEBRUARY](#)

Hot Meals uses Saturday Teams. Team Leads organize volunteers for their Saturday.

Clothing Closet and **Hygiene & Harm Reduction** are individually organized.

THE WOODSTOCK PANTRY FUNDRAISER & FRIENDRAISER

You'll see the equipment at the build site, preparing the ground to pour the foundation for our pantry.

We are still shy of our financial goal to raise the pantry. Please help us close the gap!
You can:

1. contribute on our [gofundme.com](https://www.gofundme.com) page, or with this QR code
2. and share this request with your colleagues, friends and family as well as community organizations and businesses (add to your social media, send emails, make calls).



THANK YOU ALL FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO!

Celebrate...

It Takes a Community, And We Are It!