

PLENTY

Summer 2019

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

food gatherers
fighting hunger where we live

Food Rescue Pioneers

Every day, almost half of the healthy food that Food Gatherers distributes is “rescued” from local food businesses!

This food waste – edible food that is thrown away - is the biggest component of our landfills and as it rots it emits methane, a powerful greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Leaving edible food to rot while 1 in 7 of our neighbors struggles with access to healthy food is not acceptable and Food Gatherers is proud to help change the equation.

Six days a week you can see our seven trucks out on the roads of Washtenaw County! They leave our warehouse filled with food deliveries to our 170 community partners and programs, and they return with edible food collected from local businesses who can't sell it. At our warehouse, Food Gatherers' volunteers inspect and sort the rescued food to ensure it is safe and healthy, and then it is delivered to partner food pantries, grocery distributions, and meal programs, sometimes all on the same day.



Pork stir fry created almost entirely from rescued food and served in the Food Gatherers Community Kitchen in the Delonis Center.

“It is Busch’s pleasure to donate to the Food Gatherers Food Rescue Program. We donate wholesome products that we are not able to sell to our guests.”

— Doug Busch, Busch’s Fresh Food Market
Community Development Director

This cycle is a win for everyone. Businesses save on waste disposal and get a hefty tax credit, Food Gatherers assumes food safety and delivery costs so our partner programs have safe food at no- or low-cost, and our hungry neighbors have access to nutritious food. Additionally, Food Gatherers is committed to responsibly disposing of any rescued food that cannot be distributed by composting and recycling as much as we can.

Food Gatherers was a pioneer in food rescue! The first in Michigan and the sixth in the nation, and for more than 30 years, we have worked tirelessly to refine the processes for rescuing healthy food and assuring it gets to the people who need it most. Every year, we distribute almost 3 million pounds of rescued food and our food safety processes have been shared and adopted by our Feeding America partners nationwide. Staff and volunteers in our Community Kitchen located in the Delonis Center excel at creatively using rescued food to create delicious and nutritious meals 364 days a year.

When you partner with Food Gatherers as a volunteer or a donor or both, you are part of a powerful food rescue program that feeds our neighbors, protects our environment, and serves as a national model for best food rescue practices.



**ZERO
HUNGER
ZERO
WASTE**

The Kroger Company, one of Food Gatherers’ local partners in the fight against hunger, has partnered nationally with Feeding America to promote their Zero Hunger | Zero Waste social impact plan. As a company, Kroger has committed to “end hunger in our communities and reduce waste in our company by 2025.”

Kroger’s commitment to Zero Hunger | Zero Waste locally has resulted in a significant rise in both food and financial donations to Food Gatherers from the company. We applaud this initiative and are grateful for their generosity.

To learn more visit www.thekrogerco.com/sustainability/zero-hunger-zero-waste/

The State of Our Plate:

Gathering Momentum in the Fight against Hunger

On April 24th Food Gatherers hosted 250 community stakeholders, activists, agency partners, elected officials, and media at a facilitated discussion of the intersections between hunger, health, and policy. The State of Our Plate was designed to highlight the network of local hunger relief providers, examine the persistence of hunger in our community, and connect allies to improve the current response to food



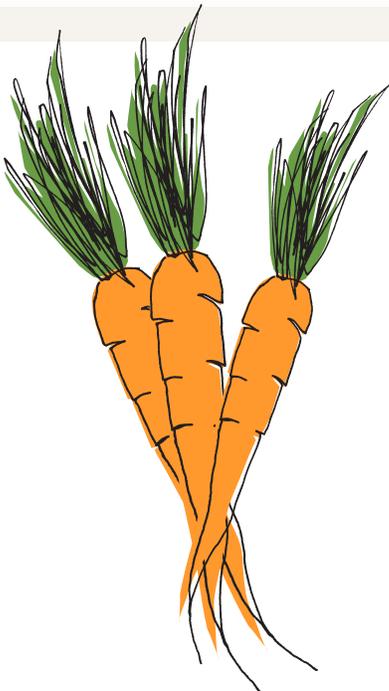
Panelists *Alfreda Rooks, Robert Gordon, and Debbie Dingell*, with moderator *Markell Miller*.

insecurity. Eating a luncheon created from the foods typically available at pantries, guests were addressed by several speakers detailing recent accomplishments in the fight against hunger and the challenges ahead.

Speakers included Dr. Phil Knight, Executive Director of the Food Bank Council of Michigan, Eileen Spring, President/CEO of Food Gatherers, and Kali Fox, a representative from Senator Debbie Stabenow's staff. We also hosted a panel discussion including Congresswoman Debbie Dingell, Director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Robert Gordon, Director of Community Health Services at Michigan Medicine Alfreda Rooks, and facilitator Markell Miller, Director of Community Food Programs at Food Gatherers. The afternoon concluded with smaller group discussions of key food insecurity issues and a shared call to action.



Marquan Jackson, Family Empowerment Program Director, leads a discussion on 'How Racial Inequity Impacts Food Security'.



We're in the Hall of Fame!

Food Gatherers has been inducted into Feeding America's 2018 Advocacy Hall of Fame and we couldn't be prouder! Annually, Feeding America recognizes food banks that show an outstanding effort to engage elected officials, and in 2018, Food Gatherers met or exceeded all of their requirements. By communicating with members of congress and their staff; inviting grassroots supporters to act; educating and mobilizing local partner organizations; and much more, Food Gatherers played an important role in ensuring that our elected officials prioritized policy that fights hunger. We are excited about the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, which protected SNAP (also known as food stamps) and expanded TEFAP funding for food banks.

Thank you to every grassroots supporter who was involved!

Your support keeps healthy meals on your neighbor's table. Make a gift to keep their plates full:
www.foodgatherers.org/donate.

Summer food, Summer fun

We think of summer as a carefree time for kids who are out of school, but for many families in our community it is a challenge to replace the free and reduced-price meals their children receive in school. To help fill the meal gap Food Gatherers coordinates with dozens of community partners to host “Meet Up and Eat Up,” the national Summer Food Service Program serving free meals to kids at sites located near families with low incomes. This year Food Gatherers will provide meals and snacks to 1,500 Washtenaw County children on weekdays at 32 sites. In addition to serving food, many sites also provide activities and games for the children.

Each year Food Gatherers receives partial reimbursement from the Michigan Department of Education for the meals served, but that funding does not cover the program expenses or other services to fully address summer hunger. **This year a generous Drive4Five gift from Toyota has fully funded those expenses!** #ToyotaFeedsWashtenaw

MEET UP and EAT UP | Healthy food to fuel your summer.

“The Summer Food Service Program meets a huge need in our community, and it takes a lot of work and resources. We couldn’t do it without our community partners or Toyota’s contribution. We’re grateful to Toyota for providing those resources.”

— Markell Miller, Food Gatherers
Director of Community Food Programs

Thanks to Toyota, in addition to the kids’ meals, we will provide fresh produce and grocery distributions for families throughout the summer, and weekend meals for kids to take home!

New this summer, Food Gatherers is piloting a mobile summer food program funded with a United Way of Washtenaw County Opportunity Grant. Our summer food van will bring meals directly to kids in isolated communities, who otherwise would not have access to a meal site.

Still Grillin’ after all these years!

The 30th annual Grillin’ for Food Gatherers was a success, raising more than 700,000 meals for our hungry neighbors! Despite the rain, we had a great turnout of both Grillin’ regulars and newcomers, and everybody was treated to delicious food donated by local businesses, sweet desserts from Zingerman’s Bakehouse and Creamery, and live tunes.



Delta Air Lines employees volunteered together at Grillin’ to fight hunger where they live.



Eva Rosenwald, Ann Arbor Mayor Christopher Taylor, and Food Gatherers Sebastian Wreford enjoy the Food Gatherers Carrot Dog.

New this year, guests sampled the Food Gatherers Carrot Dog, a vegan-friendly sausage alternative. And, thanks to generous donors in the community, Grillin’ had a successful silent auction, including items like a private dinner for eight from Al Dente Pasta and a custom pickle bike from Zingerman’s. Of course, Grillin’ is only possible because of the hundreds of volunteers who work rain or shine to fight hunger where we live. Thank you!



BACK DOOR FOOD PANTRY

PROVIDING HUNGER RELIEF WITH DIGNITY SINCE 2007

A collaboration of St Clare's Episcopal Church Temple Beth Emeth and Muslim Social Services

Food Gatherers is proud to partner with The Back Door Pantry and to share this note we received from them.

"We would like to share a little about what we witness each week and what it means. As a mature organization, we have an enduring reputation as a warm and welcoming pantry. We know our patrons' names and personal stories..."

- *There is a man who is a refugee from an African country with a large family to feed. In his home country he was a successful businessman, but he lost everything during violent uprisings many years ago.*
- *There is a man who is on parole with an ankle monitor who is trying to put his life back together.*
- *There is a new patron who recently became homeless and told us how she'd been trying to pawn all her jewelry but couldn't get very much.*
- *We have several patrons who are refugees from Eastern European countries. One tells us her prayers have special power and blesses us. Another says "God bless America" because, she explained, Americans help each other.*
- *There is a new patron who came to us with 15 cents in his pocket and challenges related to his own health and caregiving for a disabled family member. He was trying to get training for a new job but was struggling with a cumbersome bus route to get there.*
- *There are many refugees from China whose survival struggles are deeply imprinted from living through extreme scarcity in their younger years.*
- *There is a father struggling to feed his young family while he's working toward his Ph.D.*
- *There is a man with a very busy career in the medical field who routinely takes time out to get food for a neighbor family.*

Recently a new group of people came, registered, waited a while for their turn and then gave their tickets back. Amazingly, they said they thought about it and realized they had \$40 and a social security check coming so they were going to forego food "so it could go to people who really need it."

You might assume the most common emotion exhibited by all these people is sadness, fear, frustration, or self-pity. But it's not. It's gratitude. Our patrons are exhausted by unimaginable hardships yet so often they are bolstered by gratitude that there are people who care about them. The value of our partnership with Food Gatherers is so much more than a financial one—and together we are helping people with so much more than food. Thank you!"

What will your legacy be?

There are three good reasons you should have an estate plan:

1. Your family
2. Yourself
3. Fighting hunger where you live

Food Gatherers is grateful that many of our volunteers and donors have chosen to fight hunger by leaving a gift to us in their will or by making a gift to our endowment at the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation. Interested in learning more? Visit our website (www.foodgatherers.org) or contact Helen Starman (helen.starman@foodgatherers.org or 734.761.2796).

Upcoming Events

Mow Down Hunger

September 10 - October 8

During the 10th annual Mow Down Hunger campaign, Weingartz will match new or monthly donations to Food Gatherers!

Hunger Action Month

September 2019

Stay tuned for ways to get involved during Hunger Action month this September by following Food Gatherers on social media.

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Washtenaw Coordinated Funders



coordinatedfunders.org

