Anti-Hunger Day

On February 25, staff and supporters from food banks across Iowa came together for Anti-Hunger Day on the Hill. Kim Guardado and the other food bank leaders met with Lt. Governor Adam Gregg. We spent time talking with legislators about anti-hunger work and the ways that their policy decisions affect hungry Iowans. Many legislators don’t know that food-insecurity impacts Iowans in all 99 counties, not just in urban areas. We got to share stories with them of the impact food bank work has on their constituents. Just like our legislators, you are part of the solution through your support of the HACAP Food Reservoir. You can increase your impact by setting up a recurring monthly gift at hacap.org.

By setting up a recurring gift, you can support hunger relief efforts each month with no extra effort. Whether you can give $5 or $50 a month you can help people like those in our stories to get enough food.

An older gentleman showed up at our pantry last week and volunteered to help unload the truck and stock the shelves. One of our volunteers welcomed him, thanked him for his help, and

continued on page 3
Coralville Community Food Pantry

Ten years ago there was no food pantry in Coralville. While there were pantries in Iowa City, transportation to those pantries was challenging for many people. In response to this need, an ecumenical group came together to start a pantry. It was out of this group that what is now the Coralville Community Food Pantry was born. Today, the Coralville Community Food Pantry addresses hunger in their community with a food assistance program, quarterly community meals, a seed library, school break food bags, and are preparing to launch a monthly hot meal program.

When you enter the old post office building that houses the pantry, it almost feels like you’re walking into a corner grocery store—and that is intentional. “When you go to the grocery store you are in charge of picking the foods that make sense for you and your family and we want that to be the same experience here,” says executive director, John Boller. The pantry operates on a choice model, so clients get to shop directly from the shelves of what is available and take what they need and will use rather than receiving a pre-selected box or bag of food. From the very beginning, they wanted to treat their clients with dignity by allowing them to choose the food that works for their families.

Although they have used a choice model since they opened 10 years ago, it was just a year ago that the pantry decided to take away limits on the food offered to clients. They were initially nervous that the change would dramatically increase the amount of food they distributed but found that people still take the amount of food they need and are respectful about looking out for one another so that everyone has a chance to get the food they need. They also found it made the pantry operate more efficiently, reduces food waste and allows volunteers to spend more time interacting with clients and less time worrying about counting. It is thanks to their partnership with HACAP Food Reservoir that they felt equipped to make that change. They were confident that they would be able to source enough high-quality food to meet clients’ needs even with no restrictions.

Thank you, Coralville Community Food Pantry, for being a partner in the fight against hunger in Johnson County!

Thanks to Table to Table our food rescue partner for their work in supplying food to Johnson County!

Collins Aerospace Packs Hygiene Kits For Distribution

Earlier this year, employees at Collins Aerospace packed 3,100 hygiene kits to distribute through our partner agencies. Each kit includes shampoo, conditioner, a bar of soap, toothbrush & toothpaste, deodorant, and a razor. Access to personal care items is challenging for many of the clients we serve, and we don’t receive donations of these items very often so they fly out the door as soon as they come in.

Packing hygiene kits is a great way to build teamwork while giving back to your community! Groups from 10-100 can work together to build kits that get distributed to people who need them. We ask that groups cover the $5 per kit cost but you can pack them at your site or at the HACAP Food Reservoir.

If your school, organization, church, or company is interested in hosting a hygiene kit packing event please reach out to us at foodreservoir@hacap.org.
Thank You to Our Many Volunteers and Donors

We cannot do our work without the support of the communities we serve. Thanks to our many volunteers and donors including Collins Aerospace, Transamerica, Kirkwood Community College, and College Community School District for packing BackPacks and bagging produce!
Volunteer Spotlight: Gary Kristiansen

After retiring from Rockwell Collins after 34 years, Gary Kristiansen wanted to do something meaningful with his free time. In 2009, Rockwell's retirement organization connected him with HACAP's Food Reservoir where he began volunteering. During that time, he helped pick orders for our partner agencies until a back injury prevented him from doing so. In December of 2018, Gary was ready to come back and has been a reliable and dedicated weekly volunteer since then. Over his time volunteering at HACAP's Food Reservoir, he's done a variety of different projects for us. These include sorting produce, bakery and dry goods, and packing BackPacks, to name a few.

Gary not only volunteers at HACAP, he has been volunteering at St. Mark's for the last 10 years, too! When he's not busy donating his time and energy, Gary loves spending time outdoors when the weather is nice. He enjoys fishing, working around the house and even target shooting when he gets the chance.

When asked why he likes volunteering at the Food Reservoir, Gary says that he enjoys working with the staff and volunteers at HACAP, and that everyone treats him well while he's there. He likes working with his hands, and handling the food that will soon be making a positive impact on someone's life. The work he does at HACAP makes a huge difference in our community, and we couldn't do what we do without the help of our amazing volunteers like Gary!

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Our volunteer needs are always changing. Please visit our website to view our current opportunities and to sign up at hacap.org/how-to-help/volunteer.

If you are unable to volunteer, consider making a financial contribution. $1 provides 5 meals to hungry people throughout east central Iowa. Donations can be made by visiting our website at hacap.org/how-to-help/how-donate.

Thank You to Drive Out Hunger Supporters

Thanks to the Alliant Energy Foundation and all the Drive Out Hunger Golf Classic supporters for their generous $80,000 donation! The Alliant Energy Foundation’s Drive Out Hunger Golf Classic raises money for seven food banks serving Wisconsin and Iowa.