About an hour from the Kansas City metro and a half-hour from Topeka is Lyndon, Kan., the home of Help House, one of Harvesters’ rural agency partners. Help House is a nonprofit Christian organization founded in 2003 to provide emergency assistance for the basic needs of individuals and families in Osage County.

Pam Bilyeu, RN, is the Director of Help House, and she and her more than 70 volunteers help their clients not only with food assistance, but with clothing, furniture and seasonal needs such as fans in the summer, coats in the winter, and holiday gifts.

“It’s a mission – we try to help people and encourage them,” says Bilyeu. “It’s more than just giving out food.”

Bilyeu said the greatest challenge of rural residents is transportation. “We see two to three families come together or a family will pick up food for another family,” she said. In addition, Bilyeu said there are only three grocery stores in the county – in Osage City, Carbondale and Overbook. In Lyndon, there is a Dollar General that was recently remodeled to include fresh produce that many local residents use.

This past year, Help House participated in Harvesters’ Healthy Pantry Partnership program. “The nutrition team did a great job with us teaching good ways to set up the pantry and what to do with different food items,” Bilyeu said. In addition, all the volunteers receive annual training as well as Civil Rights training. They also participate in the webinars offered by Harvesters.
From the desk of Dustin Hardison

Agency Partners,
Each day, I become more and more humbled by the work you, our agencies, perform every day. Before taking on my latest role as director of agency partnerships and capacity for Harvesters, I spent many years working for multiservice agencies that offered wrap around services to individuals and families like case management, housing, direct financial assistance and food.

The one service that has always been near and dear to my heart is food. Born the son of a farmer in south central Kansas, my family wasn’t well off, yet we always had food. I remember having beef for almost every meal and never knowing anything different. When I was older, I began to realize that even though food is one of the most basic needs, it wasn’t as accessible to all as I once thought.

I firmly believe that food is an asset and the foundation for all other basic needs.

Food is expensive, food is necessary for our health, and food gives the human body energy to function mentally and physically. We say that hunger has no boundaries and that it does not discriminate on age, sex or background. For these reasons it is even more important to serve those in need.

The need today might be children from low income families in our schools, or seniors on a fixed income affected by high heating bills during this bitter cold winter. Tomorrow, it might be a natural disaster that creates financial hardships for a community. Harvesters cannot assist communities and its citizens without the help of you, our more than 760 partner agencies.

The Community Impact Department at Harvesters is here to help each and every one of you achieve your goal and our goal of feeding hungry people today and working to end hunger tomorrow.

I look forward to working with all of you in 2019 to make our network the strongest yet and feed even more families and seniors

Sincerely,

Dustin Hardison
Director of Agency Partnerships and Capacity
Kids Cafe
Start thinking about summer meals

It may be winter, but Harvesters’ Kids Cafe team is already talking about summer meals. Are you interested in serving meals to youth and children during the summer? Here are a few dates to keep in mind:

• March 15 – Kids Cafe team sends information about applying to be a summer site
• April 15 – Applications are due for sites wishing to begin meal service
• May 20-31 – Mandatory training with specific dates and times to be determined
• June 3 – Anticipated first day of summer meal service

If your agency is interested in participating in the Kids Cafe program this summer, please contact Kids Cafe at kidscafe@harvesters.org to ensure you are on the email list.

TEFAP Product Update
Trade mitigation purchases to continue

Harvesters continues to receive product from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through recent trade mitigation purchases for distribution through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Thank you for helping us to distribute this highly desirable product.

We anticipate we will continue to receive this product beyond March, in three more six-month phases. At this time, product will include fresh milk, more fresh produce such as apples, grapes, oranges and grapefruit, and frozen meat, in addition to other nourishing grains, lean proteins and frozen and canned items.

Please continue to accept the quantities allocated to you for distribution to the families, children and seniors who are relying on this healthy food. If you have any questions about TEFAP and this additional product, please contact Lisa Chappell at 816.929.3223 or lchappell@harvesters.org.

Harvesters’ SNAP Outreach Team
We can help your clients

The goal of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP - formally known as the food stamp program) is to help end hunger and improve the nutrition and health of America’s low-income households.

Many people don’t know they may be eligible to receive SNAP benefits. Our team can assist with completing and filing applications.

Please call SNAP Outreach Manager, Marisa Marchitelli - Hepper at 816.929.3280 or email her at mhepper@harvesters.org to learn about how we can partner, and how you can stay up to date on SNAP changes and legislation.
Nutrition Resources for Clients

Extension offices have tips

If your clients are asking for more information about their health, cooking tips, or gardening information, the Kansas State Research and Extension and University of Missouri Extension have programs in most counties focused on these topics.

Extension agents can come to your site to teach about nutrition and some Extension agents also will offer samples or recipe demonstrations at your agency. This can help you showcase how to prepare an item that your pantry offers. Not only can it help you move those products off your shelves, it will help your clients use this product in a healthful manner.

For more information on what Extension offers, visit: K-State Research and Extension [www.he.k-state.edu/efnep/](http://www.he.k-state.edu/efnep/) or [www.he.k-state.edu/fnp/](http://www.he.k-state.edu/fnp/)

University of Missouri Extension [www.extension.missouri.edu/hes/nutritionhealth/efnep.htm](http://www.extension.missouri.edu/hes/nutritionhealth/efnep.htm) or [www.extension2.missouri.edu/find-your-interest/Youth-and-family/Nutrition-and-health-education](http://www.extension2.missouri.edu/find-your-interest/Youth-and-family/Nutrition-and-health-education)