Supporting and Strengthening Lives

Jewish Family Services named Agency of the Year

Harvesters is pleased to honor Jewish Family Services as this year’s Agency of the Year! The award was presented at the Circle of Hope Awards Luncheon on September 20.

Jewish Family Services began its partnership with Harvesters in 2012 when they opened a food pantry in Overland Park. Five years later, they opened a second pantry in the Brookside area in Kansas City.

Jewish Family Services now serves more than 370 families each month, providing more than 20,000 pounds of food and home products. Thirty percent of the people served by the pantries are children.

The pantries are client-choice and offer both kosher and non-kosher food, along with staples such as grains, dairy, protein, fresh fruits and vegetables.

“Our shelves would be pretty bare if we didn’t have our relationship with Harvesters and other corporate partners in the community,” says Jo Hickey, JFS Pantry Manager.

The pantries also offer clients food for dogs and cats, so pet owners don’t have to skip meals to keep their pets fed. Last year, more than 1,200 pets received food from the pantries.

To see videos of all of this year’s Circle of Hope winners, please visit www.harvesters.org/COH.
Network News
New department name and new director added

To further support and enhance our network mission, Harvesters recently reorganized and rebranded our team that interacts with you, our agency and program partners. The department is now known as Community Impact. This team encompasses our Agency Services, Nutrition Services, Government Programs, BackSnack, Kids Cafe, SNAP Outreach, and new client collaboration initiatives.

The team also expanded to add an additional director to help lead these efforts and support the work of the department. Dustin Hardison joined the team as the new Director of Agency Partnerships and Capacity. He oversees work connected to Agency Services, including training, compliance, capacity-building efforts, and Nutrition Services.

Many of you may know Dustin, as he previously worked for our agency partner, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas. Dustin has overseen several different client service programs in his prior roles and has also served on Harvesters’ Agency Advisory Council.

Under this new structure, Jessica Kejr is now our Director of Programs and Client Collaboration Initiatives. This position oversees BackSnack, School Pantry, USDA programs, Kids Cafe, and SNAP Outreach. Jessica will also be the lead for emerging collaboration work with healthcare partners.

Power Up Your Pantry
Lunch hour trainings for pantries

Power Up Your Pantry is excited to announce the launch of their Lunchbox Learning webinar series for food pantry directors, staff, and volunteers. The series is intended to share information and real-world examples to help food pantries enhance their current operations and better meet the needs of the people they serve—all within the lunch hour! Learn more at www.foodsecurity.missouri.edu/power-up-lunch-box-learning/

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Get agency updates online at: www.harvesters.org/agencies
More Agencies Receive Recognition
Harvesters’ 2018 Circle of Hope Award recipients

In addition to Jewish Family Services who was named Agency of the Year, agencies honored at the 2018 ceremony are:

**A Turning Point – Network Partnership Pantry**
A Turning Point’s food pantry crosses geographical borders and serves anyone in need. Every month they serve more than 1,200 individuals and families from Clay, Platte, Jackson and Wyandotte counties. They consider their clients as guests and work to maintain the dignity and integrity of these individuals. Guests are allowed to make all decisions as to what foods their families will enjoy and volunteers help guests fill grocery bags with food and load the client’s car.

**SAFEHOME, Inc. – Network Partnership Onsite**
SAFEHOME offers comprehensive domestic violence services in the KC metro area. The shelter meets all client needs including access to healthy food. SAFEHOME has two client kitchens and clients have access to food 24 hours every day. The shelter’s kitchen manager understands some individuals who have experienced domestic violence have not felt safe in a kitchen, and in addition to planning and preparing healthy meals, she helps clients learn that cooking and being in a kitchen can be therapeutic. She teaches basic nutrition facts, food sanitation and safety, how to shop on a budget and demonstrates how to prepare easy, delicious, healthy meals.

**Covenant Presbyterian Church – Nutrition Champion**
Covenant Presbyterian has operated a food pantry for the past 17 years serving nearly 300 households each month. Last year, they took their program to another level by applying for and receiving a grant to start a free health clinic in conjunction with their pantry. Covenant Presbyterian understands that hunger impacts health. They participated in Harvesters’ pantry partnership program to learn how their pantry could support the wellness clinic and how they could help their clients make healthier food choices. They have a nurse on staff who coordinates physician visits and tele-dental care.
The Intersection of Health and Hunger

Nursing students provide screenings for homeless

Research shows 62 percent of households that receive food from Harvesters’ network have at least one member with high blood pressure. That same percentage of households also have unpaid medical bills.

For individuals who are chronically homeless, the daily struggle is survival and finding their next meal. Many are constantly sick, and it can be a challenge for them to access the healthcare they need.

Recently, Harvesters agency, Morning Glory Ministries, partnered with students from Research College of Nursing to provide blood pressure checks and vision testing to their homeless guests. Through its Emergency Assistance Program, the agency also provides bus passes to guests for medical appointments and pays to have prescriptions filled. In 2017, MGM helped fill more than 200 prescriptions for the poor, needy, and homeless in downtown Kansas City.

Is your agency doing something to improve the health of your clients? Let us know, and we’ll share the story in a future newsletter or on our website!

Additional Bonus Product Heading to TEFAP Agency Partners

Trade tariffs lead to more food
Recent food purchases by the USDA in response to trade tariffs is resulting in additional food for TEFAP (Emergency Food Assistance Program). This includes apples, fresh milk, frozen meat, and other frozen items.

- This bonus product is currently anticipated to be distributed October 2018 - March 2019.
- Harvesters will allocate it to our TEFAP partners.
- We anticipate most of this product can be delivered with regularly-scheduled TEFAP deliveries.
- If additional deliveries are requested or required, Harvesters will let agencies know.

This is highly-desired product and will be a great supplement to the quality and variety in the TEFAP program. As you can imagine with this large increase in perishable product, food banks and the agency network may feel some strain and may face capacity concerns.

Call Lisa Chappell at 816-929-3223 or email lchappell@harvesters.org with any questions or concerns.

Visit www.harvesters.org/Agencies/USDA-Food-Purchases for more information and specific advice on distributing milk.