

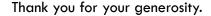
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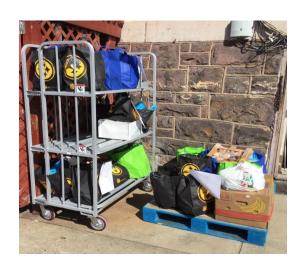
Northside Food Pantry Advisors ensure sustainable health and food security for our neighbors by donating time, money, and goods.

# 2020 Mid-year Report

# **COVID Update**

We are in our third quarter of COVID impacted operations at the Northside Food Pantry. We have seen both unprecedented usage of the Pantry and an outpouring of generosity and support from our friends and supporters. Volunteer opportunities are very limited, and since we are not accepting donations of goods, most of this support has been offered financially. We are well-positioned moving into the latter half of 2020 and 2021, as we anticipate economic conditions will likely worsen and usage will continue to increase.





# **COVID** Usage

If you compare March 2019 vs. March 2020, our Pantry served 50% more new families: there were 27 new households in March 2019 compared to 59 in March 2020. This pattern continued into April, May, and June. New families are requiring use of the Pantry at a record pace.

We are also seeing dramatic increases in the number of children under the age of 5 whose parents use the Pantry. We have served double the number of young children in 2020 than we did in 2019. School aged children and teens remain consistent as we are serving an average of nearly 100 children aged 6-12 per month and 75 teens aged 13-17 per month.

## **COVID Procedures**

Pandemic preparedness started in February, and by April, in-person shopping had ceased, and the Pantry pivoted to a curbside program. Clients call the Pantry on shopping days and are routed to at-home volunteers who help place orders. In-person fulfillment volunteers allow orders to be processed in under an hour.

We are committed to maintaining choice at our Pantry, and without volunteers both in-person and at-home, it would not be possible. To our knowledge, we remain the lone pantry in western Pennsylvania still providing choice to shoppers. This choice provides dignity to our clients.

We are also grateful to the companies who supported us with the donation of reusable shopping bags. Thank you to DICK's Sporting Goods, Highmark Health, the Pittsburgh Penguins, the Pittsburgh Steelers, and Walmart who donated bags to support our efforts to get healthy food out of our doors and into the hands of our food insecure Northside families.

## **Expanded COVID Programs**

The larger community that supports food programs throughout our region deserves a thank you for work they do to support our efforts. We are receiving an abundance of dairy products and pre-boxed goods. Without the commitment of strangers who support our region's food insecure families, our efforts would not be as comprehensive. Donations to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, like the credit from the Jack Buncher Foundation, will lighten Northside Food Pantry Advisors financial burden through the end of the year.

### **COVID Produce**

As our long-time supporters know, a signature effort of the Northside Food Pantry Advisors is unlimited and consistent access to fresh produce for Pantry shoppers. In 2019 alone, we distributed 200 tons of produce. We will easily exceed this amount in 2020.

While we have always been responsible for the purchase of popular items (like bananas), COVID has disrupted our access to a great deal of free, donated produce. To ensure unlimited access to popular fruits and vegetables, we are required to buy produce directly from Consumer's Produce in the Strip District. This offers clients the same quality available to those who can afford to buy produce from typical grocery stores. We are spending \$750 or more a week to offer things like peppers, carrots, bananas, mushrooms, and celery.







## **Database**

In the middle of COVID preparations, we began the process of pivoting to a new database to track clients. Northsider Corey Grone donated hours of his time establishing our new database and setting up new equipment to allow for a more streamlined process for clients and volunteers. Without Corey's help, we would not have been able to pivot in the middle of a pandemic. Thank you, Corey!

## Recurring Donors

Our recurring donors are the backbone of our Northside Food Pantry community. The ability to rely on a donation month-after-month allows us to budget for the months and year ahead, and given the uncertainty surrounding a global health crisis, these folks are appreciated now more than ever. We have seen a growth in our recurring donors and now count on the support of 52 recurring donors who give \$2,300 per month. If you would like to sign up to be a recurring donor, please visit our website or send us an email.

#### Thank You to our Donors

Since January 2020, more than 600 donations have been made to the Northside Food Pantry Advisors. Our work would be impossible without the efforts of all of you. Thank you.

Institutional donors:

Allegheny Lodge 339 BPO Elks

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Highmark Health

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### **About**

The Northside Food Pantry Advisors serve as a "friend of" organization for the Northside Food Pantry. NFPA is responsible for the purchase of food. We have our fiscal sponsorship from the United Methodist Church Union (EIN 25-0965431). Our efforts are entirely volunteer. The following individuals are current members of the Northside Food Pantry Advisors Executive Committee: Moira Regan Edminston, Linda Ehrlich, Kimberly Giles, Rachael Heisler, Collyn O'Donnell, Cheri Pogue, Darlene Durrwachter Rushing, and Jana Thompson.