The pantry feels a lot like family. You feel loved and respected.”
-DARLENE

Darlene is extremely engaged in her three grandchildren’s lives. She encourages healthy eating habits, helps with homework and attends school meetings. She’s also their full-time caregiver.

Darlene has seen much heartache during her 57 years. She’s lost a husband, survived divorce and battled cancer. As a single mother of four, she has a child with mental health issues and another in prison due to drug use. She has full custody of three of her grandchildren, ages 4 to 9 years old.

Darlene receives some help from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), but providing for a family of four on a fixed income can be difficult.

“The end of the month is a little tight. It means no extra things for the kids; no recreational activities.”

Her grandson, Cameron, is a student at the newly-opened I PROMISE School in Akron. In partnership with the LeBron James Family Foundation and Akron Public Schools, the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank operates a food pantry within the Family Resource Center at the school.

Darlene enjoys fresh produce, bread, milk and healthy food options from the pantry. “The pantry feels a lot like family. You feel loved and respected.”

When looking toward the future, Darlene hopes her grandchildren find success in anything they do. “I want them to have the chances that other kids have. I want them to have a dream and go for it.”

READ MORE STORIES OF HOPE ONLINE.
akroncantonfoodbank.org/stories
YOUR FOODBANK IS NOW OFFERING CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES

The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank and Feeding America have teamed up to provide an opportunity to make a meaningful gift to support the work of your Foodbank. If you are 65 years of age and older, have a passion for fighting hunger and would like to receive fixed payments during your lifetime, a charitable gift annuity (CGA) may be something to consider.

A CGA is an agreement through which you make a gift of cash or appreciated property for you, or you and another person, to receive fixed payments for the remainder of your life. A CGA is another way to support your Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank’s mission of feeding people and fighting hunger. To learn more or request a sample gift annuity illustration based on your specific age(s), please call Debra Hagarty at 330.436.3171.

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COMING SOON TO A HOSPITAL NEAR YOU:

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COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH FEEDS PEOPLE AND CREATES COMMUNITY

It’s the last Sunday of the month and Community Bible Church is filled with volunteers and community members, all happy to see one another. Everyone is greeted with a warm smile as they take a seat and enjoy a hot meal together, while volunteers begin gathering food orders from the pantry.

Community Bible Church is located in Rootstown, a rural community in Portage County, where nearly 14 percent of the population struggles with hunger. Although the church has provided food baskets around the holidays for many years, it wasn’t until they partnered with the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, that the program truly began to take form.

In 2008, former church member Holly Flowers created a food pantry after seeing opportunity to expand the church’s outreach services. It was a natural fit, considering her husband Dan Flowers’ role as president and CEO of the Foodbank. Current food pantry coordinators Mitch and Darlene Lambert just celebrated the program’s 10th anniversary in October.

“I hope they feel comfortable to come in. We’re here for anybody in any situation,” said Mitch.

Darlene wanted to create a space that allowed everyone to join the conversation and foster meaningful connections with the community. “This is about spending time with people and letting them know we care. Just as valuable as the food we give out, are the connections they make with one another.”

When asked about the need in Portage County, Mitch described the variety of circumstances that bring people to the pantry. Although they serve a large number of senior citizens living on a fixed income, they welcome a lot of families with children as well, and no two stories are the same.

In addition to providing groceries, the church runs backpack programs at several local schools in the area and offers a hot meal at each pantry distribution.

Thanks to community support and its partnership with the Foodbank, Community Bible Church hopes to distribute more than 50,000 pounds of food in 2018, the equivalent of nearly 42,000 meals.

JOIN THE 28TH ANNUAL HARVEST FOR HUNGER CAMPAIGN

Join the 28th annual Harvest for Hunger Campaign to help provide 5.3 million meals for our community members struggling with hunger. This campaign is a collaboration between four food banks that collectively serve 21 counties in Northeast Ohio. It is one of the largest food and funds drives in the country and is the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank’s largest fundraising effort, helping support food distribution all year long.

JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST

Come to an exciting breakfast to celebrate this year’s Harvest for Hunger Campaign on Tuesday, February 26, 2019. Learn about ways to get involved, meet the campaign co-chairs and hear campaign updates. Let’s rally together and inspire our community to get involved!

CHECK OUT HUNGER

One of the easiest ways to participate in the campaign is to scan a $10, $5 or $1 donation coupon as you Check Out Hunger each time you visit a participating supermarket.

HOST A FOOD AND FUNDS DRIVE

Gather your friends, family and co-workers and join hundreds of local companies, schools and social organizations in hosting a food and funds drive to help individuals in need in our community. For campaign materials and to register your drive, please visit akroncantonfoodbank.org/harvest.

HONORARY CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS

Special thank you to our 2019 Honorary Campaign Co-Chairs, Dr. Brian Harte from Cleveland Clinic Akron General and Robert Roland from Day Ketterer.

MAKE A DONATION $1 = 4 MEALS

Whether donating online or by mailing a check, your donation goes a long way.

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THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN

DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON, THE NEED FOR FOOD FOR FAMILIES STRUGGLING WITH HUNGER SEEMS MAGNIFIED.

Though hunger affects our community all year long, the Foodbank is thankful for the support it received during its annual Holiday Campaign.

Nearly 100 organizations coordinated food and funds drives with their schools, churches, friends and family, and nearly 1,000 elves participated in the Foodbank’s sixth annual Selfless Elf 5k.

During the Long Haul Against Hunger drive by and donate radiothon, the equivalent of 468,000 meals was raised! We’re tremendously grateful for you and your dedication to fighting hunger in our community. THANK YOU!

JOIN THE SUSTAINER CIRCLE AND MAKE A YEAR-ROUND IMPACT

Hunger is not a short-term problem, it doesn’t just go away. Every day, more than 1 in 5 children in the Foodbank’s eight-county service area will experience hunger. The Foodbank depends on reliable, steady support to help feed hungry people, every day of the year.

Please consider joining the Sustainer Circle, a group of dedicated individuals committed to feeding people and fighting hunger in our community year-round. The Sustainer Circle is a monthly giving program that allows supporters to easily help families struggling with hunger.

TO JOIN THE SUSTAINER CIRCLE, CALL 330.572.3102 OR VISIT akroncantonfoodbank.org/monthlygiving

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 22, 2019
CORE Lunch & Learn for Young Professionals

FEBRUARY 23, 2019
Portage Lakes Polar Bear Jump

FEBRUARY 26, 2019
Harvest for Hunger Campaign Kick-off Breakfast

MARCH 10 – APRIL 20, 2019
Harvest for Hunger: Check Out Hunger

MARCH 21, 2019
CORE Volunteer & Networking Opportunity

APRIL 1 – 7, 2019
Harvest for Hunger Campaign Week of Giving

APRIL 9, 2019
Annual Volunteer Celebration

APRIL 16, 2019
CORE Volunteer & Networking Opportunity

FOR EVENT DETAILS, VISIT akroncantonfoodbank.org/events

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