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the portland food project

Green Bag News • January 2024

Start 2024 Off Right



Happy New Year!

Thank you for everything you've done in 2023 to help fight hunger. We've been able to continue increasing food donations to our pantries and this past year has shown us people stepping up to help deliver on our mission in more ways.

We'd like to recognize some donors who made special contributions this year.

Thank you to...

- Mary Pat Califano and Mary Seitz for donating a table and chairs for us to use at events.
- Katrina (who you'll read about below) for getting your kids involved.
- Driveway Finance Corporation, Tigard for the food drive.
- Keybank, Woodstock for the food drive.
- Matador restaurant for the food drive.
- OHSU for the food drive.
- Portland Public Schools Bus Drivers for the food drive.
- All the donors who had their holiday party guests bring foods to donate.
- And finally, to the PSU students from the Black Student Union and Las Mujeres group who ran their own food drive and collected 150 lbs of food (about 125 meals) for Lift Up.





Want to coordinate your own food drive? Just [let us know](#), we're happy to provide you with bags.

What we've accomplished together!

December 2023

Food Donated: 22,307 lbs.
which makes: 18,589 meals¹

2023 Total

Food Donated: 112,346 lbs.
which makes: 93,622 meals¹

¹ The Oregon Food Bank calculates that 1.2 lbs. of food = 1 meal.

Meet Our Pantry Partner: Neighborhood House

Neighborhood House

Portland Food Project interviews Jim Cooper, Food Pantry Program Manager, Neighborhood House

What is Neighborhood House and who do you serve?

Neighborhood House is a community organization that provides a number of different wrap around services for the community. From addressing food insecurity to early childhood education, before/after school programs, a parenting hub, a senior drop-in center, and housing. Neighborhood House serves the greater community statewide, while our food pantry is focused on the communities in Southwest Portland.



How did Neighborhood House start?

Neighborhood House was founded by the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), a visionary group committed to changing lives and the community where they lived. Their efforts sought to bring community members together to address the social disintegration, poverty, and other problems associated with the large waves of immigration taking place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The early programs focused on vocational training aimed at enhancing new immigrants' ability to find employment, develop marketable skills, learn English, and gain citizenship. Neighborhood House has been providing food services since 1982.

How much food do you distribute?

Our food pantry, now called the “Free Food Market,” is open three days each week. The last few months have been very busy. We’re seeing usage increase by 30% since the same time last year. We’re currently serving 2,900 individuals, 1,000 households. In November, we distributed 62,000 lbs of food. We receive over 10,000 lbs of food per week from the Oregon Food Bank and have over 100 volunteers who help us keep things running smoothly.



How has Portland Food Project (PFP) impacted that food distribution?

We appreciate the donations from PFP. The food donations often include things we run out of or have trouble getting, like soups, stews, canned meats, tomato products, and cereal. With the October PFP food distribution we received about 1,044 lbs of food to help us meet the increasing demand.

It’s great working with organizations like PFP. We know them and people get excited.

What would you like PFP donors to know about your Free Food Market?

Our food service is multimodal in distribution, we have the market, a household delivery service, and a bulk delivery service. The bulk service is in partnership with the Portland Children’s Levy, letting us deliver to larger sites like apartment complexes. We had been planning to start a delivery service, but the pandemic required us to accelerate that schedule to ensure we could continue providing food while we had to close the market. Our volunteers stepped up and continued that delivery service for two years, until we could reopen the market.



What are your greatest needs/challenges?

Space is a challenge for us right now. Our current space is too small and we’re working to relocate the market to a much larger space on Barbur Blvd. We’re currently running a capital campaign to raise \$7 million to help us get the new site up and running in late 2024.

Food supply is always a challenge and there are many staples we’re not able to get, like rice, canned tomatoes, and cereal. For example, we’re currently only able to give people 2 cans of tomatoes, regardless of how many people are in the family. We used to be able to give more. We’d love it if donors continued focusing on things like soups, stews, rice, tomato products (canned tomatoes, diced tomatoes, sauce, and paste), and cereal.

Donor Profile: Katrina Taylor

In 2023, Katrina came across Portland Food Project in a neighborhood group and saw an opportunity to get involved and incorporate it into the work she does with the children at her daycare. Working with children with special needs, she constantly finds ways to educate them at a level they understand. Educating them about food is important and kids understand food. She focuses on not wasting food and bringing healthy foods. Any time there is leftover food in the house, they feed it to the rescue animals.



To extend their learning about food, Katrina decided to get the kids involved with PFP. She keeps a cabinet by the door where kids can place the food they bring to donate. On the Friday before pickup, the kids help get the food from the cabinet and load the green bags. The kids love being involved and helping make sure others have food. They even have their favorites, like mac and cheese (or vegetables they don't like). Katrina herself loves donating beans and veggies. She's excited to continue working with her kids in 2024 to help feed neighbors.

Share Your Skills and Experience

Portland Food Project is a 100% volunteer-run organization. [Contact us to volunteer](#) today!

We are currently recruiting neighborhood coordinators, steering committee members, and additional help with communications, social media, writing or photography/video. We would love to put your talents and enthusiasm to use!

Mark Your Calendar!

Collection dates for 2024 are:

- February 10th
- April 13th
- June 8th
- August 10th
- October 12th
- December 14th



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