

berkshire foodproject

Berkshire Food Project
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The Berkshire Food Project seeks to alleviate hunger, food insecurity, and social isolation by serving healthy and dignified noontime meals every weekday, by providing education in making good nutritional choices and by helping people access available food resources.

The Volunteers' Update February 2018

Volunteer Log

Anybody who has been in to volunteer during January has found a new routine at the BFP – the volunteer log. We know we have the most amazing, dedicated volunteers that make it possible for us to serve lunch every day, but we've never tracked just how much time our volunteers are giving. And now, we can tell you – it's a LOT! In January, with holidays, snow days and more, our volunteers have still logged in nearly 700 hours! Not only is this an indication of how valuable our volunteers are, but it also will give the BFP more data to provide to



our funders (and potential funders) as an indication of the community support we have. Thank you all for helping



us to track this!

Another New Face



Through Elder Services of Berkshire County, the BFP is now participating in the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The program provides nonprofit organizations with part time staff, paid for by an Elder Services grant at no cost to the nonprofit. On January 29, we welcomed Barbara Worthington to the BFP staff. She'll be here for one year, working on outreach and events. Right now she'll spend much of her time working on the Empty Bowl event coming up on May 4, but she's also going to be working to bring more opportunities into the dining room too.

If you didn't get to watch the short video in kitchen during January please access it here:

<https://www.berkshirefoodproject.org/resources>

Winter Weather

The BFP follows the North Adams Schools decisions for calling snow days. You can therefore find out if the BFP is closed due to a winter storm anywhere that you can find school closings – television, radio, internet, telephone – whichever is your preference. If schools are closed due to winter storm, the BFP is closed. If the North Adams Schools announce a weather delay, with school starting an hour or two late, the BFP is OPEN. That said, we don't ever want a volunteer to endanger themselves by venturing out when the roads they need to travel on are not safe. Our volunteers come from three states! There may be times when your local schools have closed but North Adams has not – or the schools may not close but the roads near you are not in good shape. We want you to stay safe and not venture out if it doesn't seem like a good idea. Just let us know you are opting to stay off the road so we aren't worried about you!

Call the BFP at 413-664-7378.

PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED!

Do you see room for improvement? Do you see something not working? Let us know! With your insight and our collective brain power, we can make things better than ever! We are working on bringing more organizations and services into the dining room too, so please let us know what you'd like to see there. And certainly let us know when we make a terrific meal as well as when you don't think the meal was awesome.

2017 Review

In 2017, you helped us serve 20,979 meals! In addition to local produce, local donations and food we purchased through both local stores and restaurant supply companies, we used nearly 40,000 pounds of food accessed through the Food Bank of Western MA. You stuck with us through the major change that comes when a longtime executive director retires and then through a hectic holiday season that included power outages, weather issues and chaos. THANK YOU!

In case you wonder about how we spend our money, or where our money comes from, here's some of the numbers from 2017:

About \$58,000 in donations was received, along with nearly \$40,000 in grant funds. There was also a capital campaign to specifically fund the purchase of appliances during the year, which was raised just over \$7,500. With some other miscellaneous income, our total income for the year was just over \$107,000.

The biggest expense during 2017 was salaries and wages, along with the taxes and other expenses involved with payroll; that amount was just over \$90,000, including about \$76,000 in wages/salaries. We spent about \$13,500 on food and just over \$7,000 on occupancy expenses (utilities, phone, internet, insurance). Kitchen and office supplies cost about \$3,500. There were a few other small expenses such as postage stamps, amounting to less than \$1,000.

You can do the math and see that last year we had to dip into our reserve funds to finish the year. This sometimes happens in the years when we don't have an Empty Bowl event. It's not our plan to have it happen, though, and we would prefer to build our reserve fund rather than deplete it! We appreciate all you do to help with that – the excellent energy conservation ideas and efficiency in the kitchen really do make a difference! And again, any time you see an opportunity for us to improve operations and potentially save money, please let us know!

THANK YOU!

Kim

