



Friedens Community Ministries
P.O. Box 05411
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53205-0411

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter, please send to the above address or email director@friedenspantry.org.

www.friedenspantry.org



How can you help?

We have a variety of volunteer opportunities for you and your family like by pre-bagging food, unloading deliveries, and rescuing produce from local grocery stores. Consider hosting a food and supply drive (ask us what is needed) and follow us on Facebook (@friedenspantry) to receive updates. Email us at volunteer@friedenspantry.org to sign up.

Donate.

Consider helping us with our "purchasing power" by making a donation through our website or mailing a check. www.FriedensPantry.org/donate

Pantry Locations:

(HQ and Mailing)

Coggs Center
1220 W. Vliet St.
Milwaukee, WI 53205

Zion Rock
10230 W. Fond Du Lac Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53224

Hope House
209 W. Orchard St.
Milwaukee, WI 53204

Despensa de la Paz
1615 S. 22nd St.
Milwaukee, WI 53204



NOURISHING NEWS

Spring/Summer 2020

From the Director's Desk:

In May, I celebrated one year in the Executive Director role at Friedens Community Ministries. As I reflect over the past year, I'm reminded of the things that drew me to Friedens as a volunteer 6 years ago and the things I learned, and continue to learn, through my Friedens family.

1. We got this!

In the face of adversity – a leak in the ceiling, a flat tire on our food recovery truck, a giant delivery of frozen blueberries, social distancing guidelines – the first reaction is never panic, but an audible 'We got this!'. As a team we face the challenges and the unknown with curiosity, positivity, and resilience.

2. We all have something to give and receive.

At Friedens we build on what we have, and what we have we share. This culture of abundance permeates all that we do. Though some may experience limited financial resources, they bring kindness and willing hands. Others may have enough food to eat at home, but walk away transformed by their experience. All are received as members of the same family - whose support cultivates strong community food centers across Milwaukee.

3. It's more than food.

At our pantries there is often little distinction between those who come for food, those who come for friendship, and those who come to offer service – nourishment comes in many forms and all are nourished here. Thank you for nourishing my spirit as I work alongside you to help nourish our neighbors. I'm honored to continue to support this network in my role as Executive Director.

Now, more than ever, we must transform the ways in which we nourish the community, and I am committed to challenging the deep roots of food inequities with your help. I look forward to developing innovative and socially just strategies to continue our mission with each of you.

Thank you for making my first year as Executive Director a great one. Please reach out at director@friedenspantry.org if you would like to ask me a question, share a story about your involvement in the organization, or contribute to the future of Friedens.

Sincerely,
Sophia Torrijos



Sophia Torrijos
Executive Director



Mansa Yusef
Operations Manager



Cheryl Ousely
Site Manager



Josh Kather
Volunteer Manager



Sydney Sowinski
Volunteer Manager

A Community Food Center for All

For some time, Friedens' Despensa de la Paz Food Pantry operations have required a larger, more functional space to meet the community's needs. For a decade, this pantry has operated once a week, serving 150-200 households every Saturday in only a small kitchenette, meeting room, and corridor. Yet, with the high food insecurity rates experienced within the Muskego Way neighborhood, we see an ever-increasing need for our services. In response we began a capital expansion project to transform our Despensa de la Paz operations into a community food center, expanding our physical space to support a variety of wrap-around services beyond food provision, such as well-being education, healthy cooking, and community nights.

We actively engaged over 200 of our Despensa neighbors in a surveying effort that informed the planning for our next phase of growth. Our plan to transition into a community food center includes space for a full-service kitchen and large community space, which will be utilized for **hands-on food preparation, nutrition education, and food waste learning**, supported by community partners. Our future plans for a vibrant community garden space will root neighbors in the food system, providing an excellent opportunity to support environmental and sustainability education. We envision Despensa as a health hub - a place for neighbors to access not only food but additional health supporting programming and resources.

The community food center model is built around a mission of dignified community building through partnerships, programs, and advocacy with **the goal of increasing access to healthy food, food resource management, and healthy cooking skill-building while fostering community connections and a sense of belonging.** Implementing this model mobilizes community members to create positive social change that helps the community to thrive. We invite all our stakeholders into this process - valuing the time, talent, and treasure of all who have helped us get so far.

Renderings created by different architects. Contact Sophia with thoughts at director@friedenspantry.org.



Total Raised: \$95,000

Partnership Highlight: Food Recovery With the Urban Ecology Center

Rescuing produce, dairy, and other foods is an important way Friedens meets the nutritional needs of our clients. During the pandemic, the Urban Ecology Center (UEC) has actively mobilized resources to help save food from being wasted and keep our shelves stocked with great food from ALDI and Costco.



"THE UEC STRIVES TO MAKE NATURE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL, IN THE SAME SENSE THAT RECOVERING FOOD IS MAKING FOOD MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT. SOMETIMES IT JUST TAKE A LITTLE HELP. ALSO, BEING MORE SUSTAINABLE IS AN ADDED BONUS!"
-Brynne, on how UEC's mission aligns with food recovery and cutting down on food waste.

Watch us on YouTube: "COVID Diaries: behind the scenes at Friedens Food Pantries"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hm2Lmuol8Ug>

Volunteer Highlight: Meri

Meet one of our most irreplaceable and committed volunteers, Meri! Meri began volunteering seven years ago and has not wavered in her commitment to Friedens. She is a natural leader among volunteers, always there to show new comers the way.

"When community members hurt, she hurts. When community members feel joy, she feels joy," reflects Max, Despensa de la Paz's Site Manager. Meri believes that **"Volunteering here is humbling"** and she has passed her altruism on to her granddaughter, Zariah, who often spends time at the pantry as well. **"Our pantry is a place that brings people together, and it is not just food, it's not just clothing, it's the whole atmosphere, it's family."**

"WHAT WE CAN CONTROL IS HOW WE VALUE ONE ANOTHER, AND CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER'S CONCERNS. WE CAN CONTROL OUR ATTITUDE AND OUR BEHAVIOR. SO MUCH BEYOND THAT IS BEYOND OUR CONTROL RIGHT NOW. TODAY, WE CAN LOVE ONE ANOTHER, AND PUT THE NEEDS OF OTHERS BEFORE OUR OWN. **THIS IS OUR COMMUNITY. THIS IS OUR WAY.**"



If you would like to nominate an outstanding volunteer, contact us at volunteer@friedenspantry.org.

COVID Update: Our Pantries Remain Open!

In response to the current health crisis, we've made adjustments to our operations to keep everyone safe:

- All food and supply distribution is **curbside**.
- Volunteers and staff have been provided with **PPE** and disinfect surfaces frequently.
- We've opened a **diaper bank** distribution site and provide infant formula at all sites.
- With the support of the Medical College of Wisconsin, United Way, and UnitedHealthcare Friedens is including **masks** and **hand sanitizer** in our distribution communities.
- Food demonstrations and preparation will be moved to **virtual** format in the fall.

We continue to serve our community, especially when they need us most. For updates about changes to our operations, make sure to follow us on Facebook (@friedenspantry).

200%

Increase in calls to Impact 2-1-1 for food resources since the start of the pandemic.

19,000+

Individuals served by Friedens so far in 2020.