



Self-Service Food Pantry Increases Shoppers Served by Half

Urban Ministries of Wake County Celebrates Anniversary of Self-Service Nutrition Program

April 10, 2018, RALEIGH, N.C.—Urban Ministries of Wake County is celebrating one year of serving food-insecure families in its self-service food pantry. Last April, the agency converted its food pantry to model a grocery store, allowing for more dignity in service and less food waste. The agency had previously been giving out pre-bagged food.

Since the change, Urban Ministries has seen a 50% increase in the number of shoppers served, now providing food to more than 30,000 people. Additionally, out of the 544,744 pounds of food distributed in 2017, 32% of it was fresh produce.

Urban Ministries' Crisis: Hunger and Nutrition program, which houses the food pantry, brings in a variety of foods for families to choose from. Fresh produce, frozen meats, and pantry staples stock the aisles. The program also helps educate clients, volunteers, and donors on the benefits of making healthier food choices.

"You see kids' eyes light up when they see how many different kinds of cereal they can choose from" says Food Pantry Coordinator, Sammy Hobgood, "It can be easy to take for granted something we all normally eat, like breakfast, to realize that people in need also like to choose what they want to eat."

The pantry is supplied by the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina, Interfaith Food Shuttle, and the generosity of local businesses, congregations, and organizations. Two volunteer-managed gardens supplement thousands of pounds of fresh produce annually.

Food and financial donations help to keep Urban Ministries' pantry operating, as well as support from volunteers. Food pantry stockers and food recovery volunteers are currently needed. Please see urbanmin.org/volunteer for more info.

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About Urban Ministries of Wake County: For 37 years, Urban Ministries has worked to meet the basic needs – food, shelter, and healthcare – of Wake County's most vulnerable residents. Urban Ministries serves 30,000 individuals each year, including 10,000 children. More than 90 cents of every dollar contributed goes directly to client services.

www.urbanmin.org