

CROS Ministries serves the hungry in Palm Beach and Martin Counties through community collaborations.



Dear Friends,

A few months ago, I was at one of our local utility offices. On this particular day, I had worn my CROS staff shirt. The lady working at the desk looked up at me, and with a smile on her face and tears in her eyes, whispered, "Thank You for the work that you do."

I was without a job for a few months last year, and I received assistance from one of your food pantries. What a blessing it was to have food for my three children." Needless to say, by the time I finished making my payment, I too was in tears. As I left, I was grateful that CROS had been there for Suzy and her family during their time of need. I was also happy to see that she was back on her feet again.

This newsletter highlights the impact we made in the lives of individuals, children, and families in 2016. As we look at the number of people who were assisted, it is important to remember that each statistic represents the story of someone just like Suzy, whose life was touched with care and hope.

Thank you so much for your continued partnership and support. Together, we are making a difference in our community.

With Gratitude and Hope,

Ruth Mageria
Executive Director



CROS Ministries Impact 2016

We provided assistance through these Ministries

Ministry to Eliminate Hunger

- Community Food Pantries distributed food to 58,917 individuals, 35% of whom were children.
- The Caring Kitchen served 85,260 meals.
- Cason UMC distributed 15,360 brown bag weekend lunches.
- CROS Gleaning harvested 411,140 pounds of fresh produce which was distributed to 100 local food programs by the Palm Beach County Food Bank (2015-2016 gleaning season).



Ministry to Support Children and Families

- 198 children participated in our summer camp program focused on school readiness.
- 45 children participated in a pilot two-week Christmas camp program.
- Nutrition in a Knapsack provided weekend bags of food to 275 students (2015-2016 school year).
- CROS After School Snack program provided 24,180 afterschool snacks in Delray Beach and West Palm Beach.

Ministry Encouraging Self-Sufficiency

- The Caring Kitchen provided 16,354 referrals and services for basic needs.
- CROS volunteers helped 79 people apply online for government benefits including SNAP (food stamps), Medicaid, and temporary cash assistance.

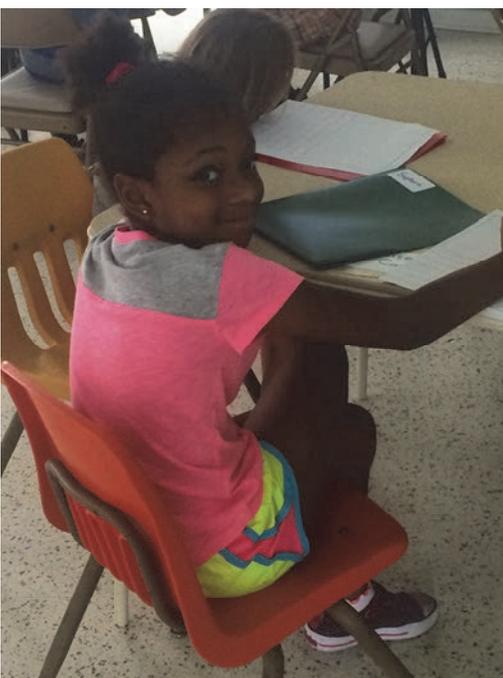
All services are offered without regard to race, religion, national origin, marital status, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

CROS MINISTRIES

CROS CAMP

Summer Camp 2017 is almost here!

This summer's camp theme is **"Around the World."** Our campers will be going on an adventure every week studying the continents. They will learn about different cultures through art projects, music, games, and food.



We are very excited about our School Readiness component, combatting the summer learning loss. We have two great teachers who will work with our campers on math and reading skills. To measure progress, they give campers pre-and post-tests to evaluate their progress from the beginning of the summer to the end of the summer. Last year, more than 80% of our campers improved their reading and math skills over the course of the camp session. This summer's curriculum will

also include creating STEM projects and field trips to South Florida's educational venues. We are so grateful to Sunlight Community Church in Lake Worth and First Presbyterian Church in Boynton Beach for their unwavering support of our camp program. Whether it is home-cooked meals for our interns, hosting parent night, or gathering supplies, both churches make all of us feel welcome and blessed!



Please remember CROS Ministries in your Will and Estate Planning

Thank You's to CROS

Food Pantries

John is homeless. He comes to a CROS food pantry to get his supplies. He is thankful for the food. He says his visits to the pantry enable him to be independent and to survive.

CROS Camp

Kadeem is grateful to be part of the CROS Camp team. "The campers seem to really like and look up to me for some reason. I don't know why, but knowing this helps me want to be a better person just for their sake. I hope that when they look forward into their lives that I'm the type of person they aspire to be like. This alone is worth more to me than how much money I could make working another job during the summer."

The Caring Kitchen

Jerry is a frequent visitor to the Caring Kitchen. He currently sleeps in his car working two days a week as a day laborer to make sure his car insurance is current. He has many health issues and needed assistance navigating the Health Care District's application process. The Caring Kitchen staff advocated on his behalf to ensure all of the paperwork was completed and correct for him to obtain health insurance and apply for disability benefits. He is grateful for his Caring Kitchen support system.

Nutrition in a Knapsack

"Thank you for your program. The bags of food given out every Friday really help our neediest students. They look healthier and are even participating more in class." —NIK Teacher

THANK YOU!

Volunteers, Congregations
Sponsors, Foundations
Youth Groups, and Businesses

We could not serve the hungry in Palm Beach and Martin Counties without your steadfast partnerships!

CROS MINISTRIES

In Memoriam

CROS recently lost three very special volunteers.

Lois Weinberg volunteered for CROS for eight years as the Delray Beach Pantry's volunteer coordinator. She never came to the pantry, but knew all of the volunteers well as she was the person they would contact when they were unable to work their regularly scheduled shift and needed someone to fill in for them. She always took the time to chat with them and learn about what was going on in their lives. She was a spunky and energetic woman. All our volunteers loved her. She was so dedicated to her work, and it will be difficult to replace her. She was just so amazing at strong-arming people to fill shifts!



Mary Jane Sickel served as a CROS volunteer for 19 years. She was a board member; a Delray Beach Food Pantry volunteer; and a committee member for our two annual events, Raise Your Glass to End Hunger and the End Hunger Walk. Mary Jane loved being active and prided herself on her physical abilities. She was the kind of person about whom everyone said "I want to be like her when I grow old!"

Carol Haliski began volunteering for the Delray Beach Pantry in 2013 after serving meals at the Caring Kitchen program. Carol volunteered twice a week and was the smiling face who welcomed them as she checked them in. Despite suffering from MS, walking with a cane, and having shaky hands, she had no problem working the computer keyboard. Carol was a kind and loving person and is dearly missed by pantry clients and her fellow volunteers.



Why We Volunteer

"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be satisfied" Matthew 5:6

We volunteer because it is a gratifying service which provides each of us with a personal satisfaction. As children of God, we know that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers and are conscious of the needs of our communities. The gift we give is our time and that is a small price for the blessings we experience each and every day. We, as a group, are happy to be volunteers with CROS and to be a part of a Christian organization that helps in fulfilling the teachings of the scriptures in feeding the hungry.

For the past five years, a small group from Grace Presbyterian Church in Lantana have volunteered with CROS: packing food for distribution to CROS' seven food pantries, gleaning fresh produce, and taking part in the annual End Hunger Walk in October.



CROS MINISTRIES

CROS Gleaning

One of the best things about our gleaning program is our volunteer base. Recently, we have been gleaning with some home-school groups. During one weekday gleaning event, we were blessed to have 14 homeschoolers come out to Indiantown to pick green beans. Upon arrival, they started talking about all the crops they had gleaned and what their favorite vegetable to pick was. One little girl said that green beans were her favorite since this was her first time, and she hadn't picked anything else. It was wonderful to see their faces as they learned firsthand where their food comes from and how much work goes into harvesting. The students loved to see the beans accumulating in the bin. They would climb onto our truck's tail gate to peer over the side and moved the beans around to even out the bin.



When they became distracted by a lady bug or grasshopper and work would stop for a couple of minutes so everyone could see their treasure, their parents would remind them that they were doing this so hungry people would have something to eat. Once reminded, they would quickly go back to their tasks to help people they would never meet. At the end of the day, we collected 367 pounds of green beans for our partner agency, House of Hope in Martin County. We also packed two boxes weighing 37 pounds to take to our Indiantown pantry.

See you in the fields!





JOIN US!

When: Wednesday, April 19, 2017
Time: 6:00pm - 9:00pm
Where: Old School Square, Fieldhouse
Price: \$40.00 in advance
(\$50.00 at door)

CROS Ministries'
*Raise Your Glass to
End Hunger*

Beer and Wine Tasting with Food Pairings, plus a Raffle and Live Auction



Food • Drink • Music • Art • Culture • History
57 North Swinton Ave., Delray Beach

**TO PURCHASE TICKETS ON LINE GO VISIT
FUNDRAISE.CROSMINISTRIES.ORG/RYG2017**

WAYS TO CONNECT WITH CROS!Tear Off and Return in the Enclosed Envelope

- Volunteer
- Pick fresh produce with Gleaning
- Help distribute food at the Food Pantries
- Prepare and Serve food at The Caring Kitchen
- Walk with us at the End Hunger Walk in October
- Make a donation
- Become a Monthly Donor
- Remember CROS in Your Will
- Attend Raise Your Glass to End Hunger in April