

CROS MINISTRIES

CROS Currents

Spring 2019

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



Dear Friends,

While attending a holiday party at a friend's home, the host introduced me to some of the other guests who were present. A young woman in the group, looked at me and said, "Oh...I know CROS Ministries. You have been a support system for my family." She then went on to share

that after her father was laid off from his job a few years ago, a friend told him about our pantry. Her family was able to get a bag food and fresh produce from the pantry for several months, until her father was back on his feet again. As we parted, she hugged me and with tears in her eyes said, "Thank you to CROS for providing my family with food when we needed it the most. You have no idea what that meant to us."

The most rewarding aspect of what I do is meeting people who share with me that when they were going through a tough time, they received a bag of food from one of our pantries or a hot meal from our Caring Kitchen program or are young adults who attended one of our summer camps and are now in college. I am grateful for your prayers and valued gifts of time and financial resources to CROS Ministries, that enable us to continue offering hope to our brothers, sisters, and neighbors.

Together we are making a difference in our community.

With Gratitude,



Ruth Mageria
Executive Director

2018 CROS Ministries' Impact Report Programs to Eliminate Hunger

- 71,444 individuals, 35% of whom were children received food from seven food pantries.
- 41,645 meals served through The Caring Kitchen program.
- 15,360 weekend bagged lunches served at Cason UMC.
- 527,356 pounds of fresh produce recovered by CROS Gleaning from local farms which was distributed to local food programs by our distribution partners (2017-2018 gleaning season).



Programs to Support Children

- 163 children attended our summer camp program focused on school readiness.
- 42 children attended our two-week Christmas camp program.
- 336 chronically hungry elementary students received weekend bags of food through our Nutrition in a Knapsack program.
- 9,690 snacks were provided to children from two afterschool programs in Delray Beach.

Programs Encouraging Self-Sufficiency

29 individuals received help to apply online for government benefits including SNAP (food stamps), Medicaid, and temporary cash assistance.

CROS MINISTRIES

CROS Community Food Pantries

We recently launched our newest food pantry, a mobile pantry, serving different locations in Central/Western Palm Beach County. It is open during non-traditional hours, (early evenings and weekends) to ensure greater access for people needing food assistance. The pantry is also a “choice” pantry, meaning a client can choose what foods they would like to go into their bags instead of receiving a pre-made bag filled with food staples. This gives the pantry client a sense of dignity and control and limits waste since clients tend not to take food they do not use.



Current Locations:

2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month

Hours: 4 pm-6 pm

St Luke's United Methodist Church

165 Ohio Road

Lake Worth, FL 33467

3rd Thursday of the Month

Hours: 9:30 am-11:30 am

Legacy Church

400 Jackson Avenue

Greenacres, FL 33463

Saturdays

Hours: 8:30 am-10:00 am

Church in the Palms

3812 Jog Road

Greenacres, FL 33467

CROS Camp

One of the unique aspects about CROS Camp is that we see families over an extended period of time. This allows us to be a part of their journey and growth while they are facing and rising above any limitations that life may bring. We also get to see through the eyes of their children as they mature into teenagers and young adults. One of the biggest joys that I have as CROS Ministries Camp Director is to see the impact that CROS Camp makes in the lives of our campers and their families.

Nikole and Johnny Bailey have been part of the CROS Camp family for over ten years. In 2008, their oldest son, Carlos, began attending camp. In 2013, Carlos became a CIT, (Counselor in Training), a leadership program offered to high school students. In that same year, Jayda and Nia, Carlos' younger sisters, began attending CROS Camp. Finally, in 2018, the Bailey's youngest daughter, Amia, joined her siblings at camp. Fast forward from 2008 to today, Nikole and Johnny's three daughters will attend our program this summer and Carlos will be part of the CROS Camp staff.

Nikole loves knowing that her children are in a safe environment while she is working during the day. "I'm grateful for the positive influence CROS Camp has been to my children by teaching them leadership skills, how to get along with others, working as a team, and at the same time instilling in them Christian values." Nikole and Johnny also appreciate the backpacks filled with food during the summer which helps them stretch their monthly grocery budget. As a Camp director, it has been a joy to be part of the Bailey family's journey through our camp program and watching their children grow. Check out these four children, they can really light up the room! - Emily Zarzycki, Camp Director



CROS MINISTRIES

Thank You

Food Pantries

John and his wife are currently homeless, living in a motel. He is a construction worker by trade, but has epilepsy. John takes medication, but had a seizure while at a job site and now the company he works for will not allow him to return to work because of safety concerns. Every week, he tries to get back to work and has applied for numerous jobs, but nothing has come through yet. His wife works part time, but her limited salary barely covers the motel and gas for their car, and nothing is left over for food. Living in a motel with no ability to cook, they are grateful to receive a special bag of food every week. Thanks to our community partner, Feeding South Florida, John also received help applying for SNAP (Food Stamps) benefits.

Caring Kitchen

Cassie was referred to our homebound meal delivery service after being in a serious car accident that left her with a head injury, broken hip, leg, and arm. Now unable to work and homebound, Cassie is grateful for the Caring Kitchen and the volunteers who ensure she has food to eat while she recovers.

Nutrition in a Knapsack

As a teacher at Jupiter Elementary, I worry that some of my students do not get enough food to eat. Thank you for thinking of my students and caring not only about their nutrition, but also about their academics and their emotional needs.

Gleaning

As a field supervisor for CROS Ministries' Gleaning Program and a woman of faith, I love how CROS can bring groups from different faith backgrounds together for a common cause. On one recent Sunday, we had members of the Muslim Community of Palm Beach County, Temple Israel and Temple Judea, Christ followers, and possibly people with no religious faith at all. We all came together united in service to meet the most basic need of human beings, the need to eat.

SAVE THESE DATES!



Wednesday, April 24, 2019

6:00pm—8:30pm

Old School Square Fieldhouse

51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach

\$40 in advance, \$50 at the door

For more information, visit our website, www.crosministries.org



Great Give Palm Beach and Martin Counties - 4/24/2019.

The same day as Raise Your Glass to End Hunger!

The Great Give is a 24-hour online giving event led by United Way of Palm Beach County and United Way of Martin County designed to raise as much money as possible for local nonprofits in a single day. It is a community-wide event that celebrates the spirit of giving and the collective effort it takes to strengthen local nonprofits and better serve residents in need.

The Caring Kitchen

On Friday, February 1, we celebrated Guillermo Carrasco, The Caring Kitchen's Facilities Manager for his twelve years of service to CROS Ministries. We are happy for Guillermo who is starting a new chapter of travel, visiting grandchildren, and maybe, coming back to volunteer at the Caring Kitchen. It was a great gathering full of hugs, music, speeches, and laughter. We were also treated to a special performance from The Milagro Center's teen band.



Guillermo and his lovely wife, Jocelyn

Happy New Chapter Guillermo!

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CROS Gleaning

No two weeks of gleaning are ever the same. Each event comes with its own challenges, some with high points and some with low points, but rarely do they just blur into the same old thing. Every now and then there are gleaning events like the one on February 4, 2019, which was a very special day, and one I will remember for a very long time.

On Monday, February 4, we hosted a class of senior high school students from Park Vista Community High School. They took to the pepper field in a familiar pattern that we see time and time again with other student groups. Some students take to picking right away and fill bucket after bucket. Others start with enthusiasm, but as the morning rolls on, we see them begin to huddle in groups talking more and picking less. Others decide that picking peppers is not for them and just carry the bucket around for a while.



What was different about this group from other high school groups on this particular Monday was that these students are facing the challenge of autism. Thanks to CROS and our gleaning program, these students were able to perform a volunteer service, recovering 3,789 pounds of peppers that would otherwise have gone to waste.

My favorite moment that day came late in the morning when one of our more enthusiastic pickers looked at the bucket he was filling and seeing it filled to the very top, simply looked around and said, "Help." I walked over to him and asked if he needed me to carry his bucket for him. He said, "Yes, please," and after taking a couple off the top to carry in my left hand so I could reach the handle, I began to take the bucket to a bin. On the way, a classmate came over and offered his bucket for the peppers in my hand. Helping people is contagious. After dumping his bucket into the bin, I handed the bucket back to the student, and he headed back into the field to pick more peppers for people in need.

- Keith Cutshall, Director of Gleaning



Please Remember
CROS Ministries in your
Will and Estate Planning

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 with The Caring Kitchen
- Make a donation
- Become a Monthly Donor
- Remember CROS in Your Will
- Attend Raise Your Glass to End Hunger in April