

# BRANCHING OUT

GREATER MILWAUKEE   
FOUNDATION

## Basic Needs Fund

Funding needs range from \$55 to house, feed, and provide other support services for one homeless veteran to \$250 to provide a family of five with food for three months. All donations to the Basic Needs Fund will be split evenly between the 21 participating Match Day organizations.



Since 2008, the Basic Needs Fund has supported 17 agencies that provide shelter services, allowing them to meet basic operating expenses and provide overflow shelter

### BASIC NEEDS FUND INCREASES CAPACITY FOR LOCAL SAFETY NET SERVICE PROVIDERS

According to economists, the Great Recession officially ended a few years ago.

But don't tell that to the thousands of individuals and families who continue to struggle to make ends meet. Don't mention that to the food pantries and emergency shelters in greater Milwaukee who are trying to serve these individuals. These safety net service providers continue to see a record number of people turning to them for help.

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Basic Needs Fund continues to provide support to them to help meet the growing demand for their services. To date, it has made grants of more than \$2.3 million to more than 20 agencies. It will once again

support them through Match Day, a 24-hour online giving event on March 14. In its second year, the event seeks to raise money and awareness for 21 participating agencies. All money given to the Basic Needs Fund that day will be distributed evenly among the 21 nonprofits.

The Basic Needs Fund originally was created in 2008 to address an urgent community need born out of the economic downturn. At that time, the two major food distribution agencies—Hunger Task Force and Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin—reported 25 percent increases in demand for food. Area shelters cited between 10 and 20 percent increases in clients. The agencies expected the worst was yet to come. The Foundation's Board set aside \$300,000 to address the demand area nonprofits were experiencing. Contributions by other funders, including the Faye McBeath Foundation, Ceres Foundation and many Foundation donor advised funds, further bolstered the fund's capacity.

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More families are turning to area food pantries as a safety net.

Milwaukee's only daytime shelter, opened its doors at night during a bitter cold snap thanks to support from the fund. Community Advocates used grant money to provide

Its first round of grants allocated \$110,000 to area food pantries and \$207,000 to a variety of area shelters. Places like the Cathedral Center and Guest House of Milwaukee opened overflow shelters for people during the winter. Repairers of the Breach,

emergency assistance in the form of rent, utilities and security deposits, so people could avoid shelter stays and remain in their homes. Other shelters used the money for necessary operating expenses.

At the time the fund was created, Foundation leaders anticipated the fund might need to exist for at least 12 months, but they set no specific timetable. More than four years later, the needs remain and so does the fund. In 2012, Waukesha's Hope Center saw an ever increasing demand for its programs, between 18 and 47 percent. Other shelters have seen longer lengths of stay among its residents, resulting in fewer people they are able to serve but a greater intensity of services they need to provide. Increasing numbers of individuals and families in Ozaukee and Washington counties are using food pantries, and for longer periods of time. Hunger Task Force predicts shortages in key food staples. Build support for basic needs – and the agencies that address them – by making a gift to the Basic Needs Fund. ■

## Advocates of Ozaukee

Funding needs range from \$150 to provide five counseling sessions with a therapist to \$600 to cover the cost of utilities at the shelter for a month.

### AGENCY WORKS TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, LEAD VICTIMS TO NEW BEGINNINGS

Seven.

That is the average number of times it takes for a victim of domestic abuse or sexual assault to leave her abusive relationship. For good.

Advocates of Ozaukee, the only domestic and sexual violence shelter in Ozaukee County, is there to provide them with the encouragement, guidance and sometimes, even necessary financial means, to help them make that important move. For some women, roughly \$200, or a security deposit, is all that stands in the way of leaving an abusive past behind and setting course toward a safe, secure future.

The agency got its start in 1980 from a group of women who recognized the issue of domestic violence existed in Ozaukee County but the solutions and support did not. They set up a volunteer-run crisis hotline as well as a network of homes where women in need of a safe space could stay if needed.



A small staff of five full-time and six part-time employee's provide the agency's large variety of services for Ozaukee county.

Eight years later, the agency opened a domestic abuse shelter in a donated old farmhouse. Set on six acres of land, that spot since has become home to multiple other programs including sexual assault services, legal advocacy, children's counseling and support groups.

Three decades later, many in the area still don't know the

agency exists. Unfortunately, because of the need for shelter and other services though, it does. In 2012, Advocates served 107 people in its shelter for a total of 3,068 nights. It received 552 crisis calls and provided nonshelter services to 320 people.

The bulk of its clients are from ages 25 to 49, but it has recently seen an increase in the need for counseling for children. Staff attribute that rise partly to increased awareness of the issue in the community. A little more than a decade ago, the agency launched an outreach program in which a staff member visits area elementary, middle and high schools. Discussions start in grade school about bullying and progress to cover healthy relationships, sexual

assault and sexual harassment.

Though there is still more to be done to combat the problem, staff believe more people are aware of domestic violence. Frequently they receive phone calls through the hotline from women who are more aware of the signs of abuse and ask the agency for help and advice. One recent caller, a 21-year-old woman, recalled hearing a presentation by the agency while she was at Grafton High School and remembered that if she encountered certain signs of abuse, she should call for help. She did, sought shelter from the agency, later found a job and was able to leave the abuser and start a new relationship. ■

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## Family Promise of Washington County

Funding needs range from \$100 to keep a family together under one roof to \$2,400 to provide a week's worth of meals and shelter for four families.

### INTERFAITH NETWORK OF CHURCHES PROVIDE HELP TO HOMELESS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington County is one of those areas where it is hard to believe homelessness exists. Outside of the agencies that help the area homeless, not many people may know the full extent of the problem.

But within 10 days of opening in September 2010, Family Promise of Washington County, an agency that provides shelter and services for the homeless, was at full capacity. It has remained that way ever since. That fact is hard to ignore as is the fact that on a nightly basis, homeless families are sleeping in churches scattered throughout the county – from Slinger to Hartford to Kewaskum to West Bend and in between.

Thanks to the agency, which relies on an interfaith network of churches for support, the issue of homelessness is being addressed and the awareness level of the problem has been raised. Family Promise is one of 182 affiliates in 41 states – and one of six in Wisconsin – that serve the homeless. The model by which it operates is similar across the country – namely, it takes a village to tackle a problem as big as homelessness. A network of 30 area congregations – and hundreds of volunteers – takes turns serving as nighttime hosts to the homeless families that turn to the agency for help. Each week, a different church provides food, shelter and other services to families from 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. During



In 2012, the agency served 38 children, 25 of whom were under age 5.

the day, a shelter in West Bend is open for homeless families to look for employment, housing or access other community resources and services that will enable them to live on their own again. Transportation is provided to take families back and forth each day.

Just like in other counties, families are struggling to make ends meet. Many times, they don't. In 2012, Family Promise provided 28 families with more than 3,500 nights of shelter, a 46 percent increase over 2011. The average length of stay is 42 days before they are able to move into permanent housing.

Though the agency opened just over two years ago, staff point to one big success – only one family that has stayed in shelter has returned. ■

## BRANCHING OUT


### WHAT'S INSIDE

BASIC NEEDS FUND

ADVOCATES OF OZAUKEE

FAMILY PROMISE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

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### MATCH DAY PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Advocates of Ozaukee  
Basic Needs Fund  
Center for Veterans Issues  
Community Advocates  
Daystar  
Family Promise of Washington County  
Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin  
Food Pantry of Waukesha County  
Friends of Abused Families  
Guest House of Milwaukee  
Hebron House of Hospitality  
Hope Center  
Hope House of Milwaukee  
Hunger Task Force  
Milwaukee Rescue Mission  
Pathfinders Milwaukee  
Repairers of the Breach  
Salvation Army of Greater Milwaukee  
Sojourner Family Peace Center  
The Cathedral Center  
The Women's Center  
Walker's Point Youth and Family Center

## MATCHDAY™

Give. Match. Grow.

### MATCH DAY | MARCH 14

Last March, through the inaugural Match Day event, the greater Milwaukee community brought home a win for basic needs by raising \$1.8 million for 19 food and shelter agencies. This year we hope to build upon that success! We've added two new agencies, featured in this issue, and have extended the event to 24 hours. Show your support March 14 via [www.matchdaymke.org](http://www.matchdaymke.org) and make it a historic day of giving!

[www.MatchDayMKE.org](http://www.MatchDayMKE.org)

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