



we can

thrive

ISSAQAH
Food & Clothing Bank

2017 Impact Report

who we *serve*

Dear Partners,

On behalf of the staff, board and most importantly, the people we serve, thank you for your interest in and support for the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank! 2017 was an encouraging year for increased capacity to meet the growing need, yet challenging given the continued gap for those accessing our services.

In looking forward, we are particularly excited about what lies ahead in 2018:

- Expanding our youth feeding programs** with the long-term goal of serving all children in our community that are food insecure
- Increasing our outreach and building new partnerships** with the intent to serve our clients better through community collaboration
- Piloting a mobile food bank program** utilizing a refrigerated box truck so that we can more easily touch pocket communities who struggle with getting their basic needs met
- Continuing to improve our shopping space** to enhance the overall shopping flow for our clients and provide the most dignified experience possible
- Improving our volunteer work space** to maximize functionality and safety

While the local economy is booming, it's important to understand that not everyone is participating equally due to income disparity. Unfortunately, for those who are not benefiting from the growing fruits of our economy, times are only getting harder. Basic needs including housing, transportation, food and clothing are increasingly difficult to afford. That's where you continue to make a clear difference in the lives of those we serve. So as you review our impact report, please accept our sincere appreciation and know you have played a substantial role in making all this happen.

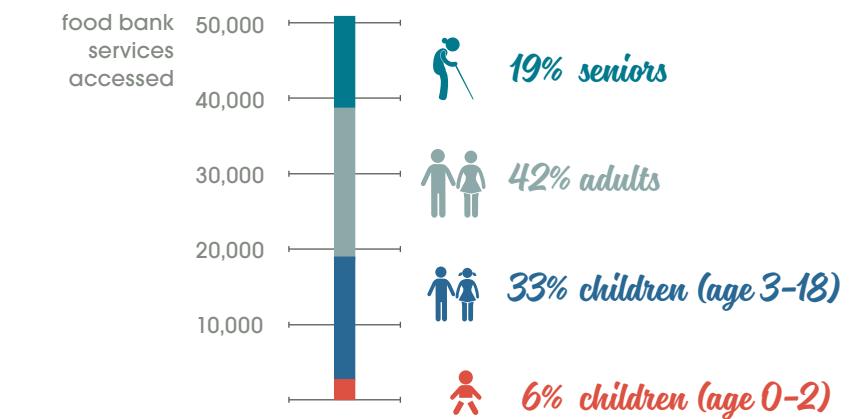
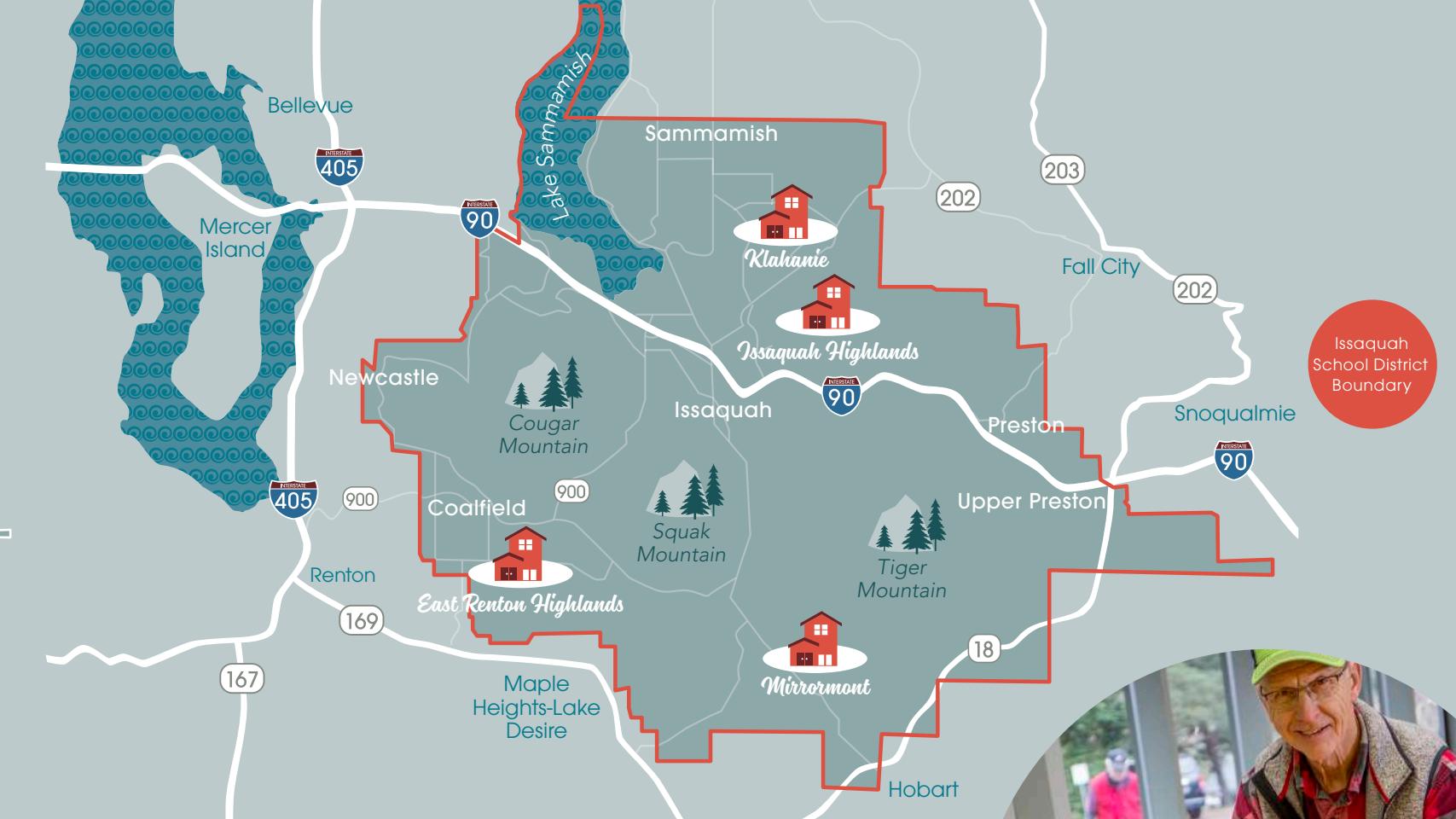
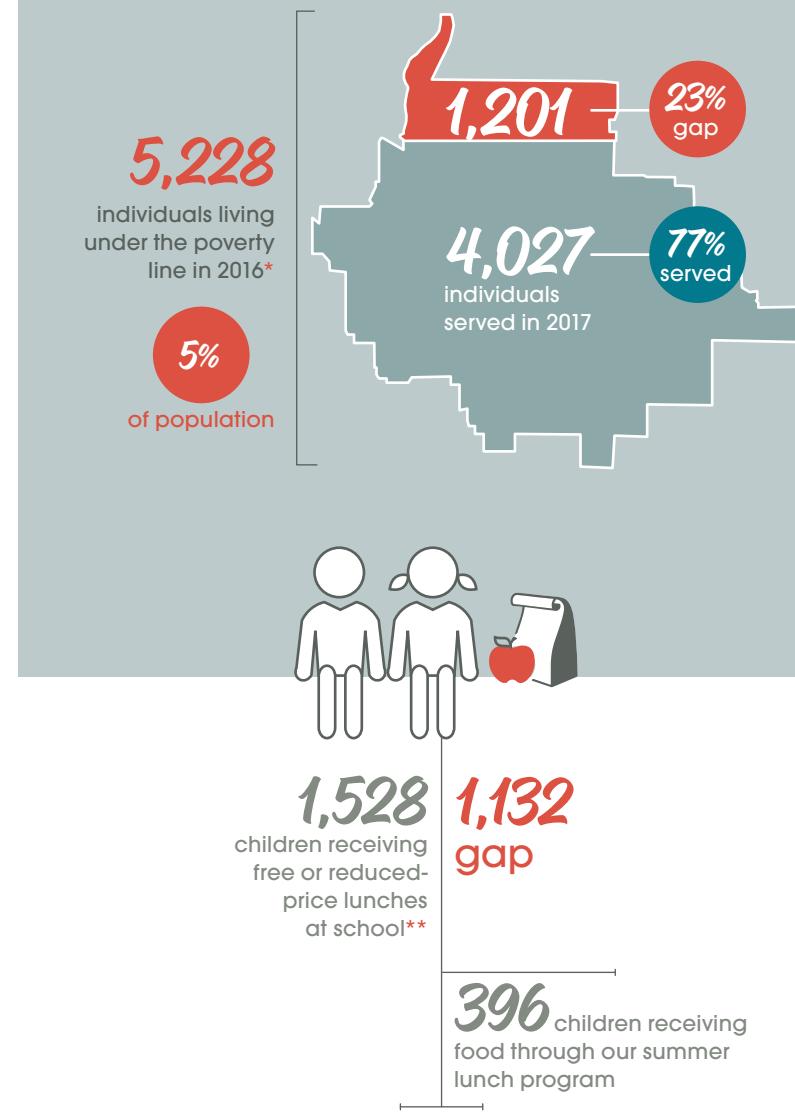
Thank you for your partnership!



Cori Walters
Executive Director



Tom Ehlers
Board Chair



choosing *optimism*

Christina Martin has an infectious positivity. Despite the challenges life has thrown at her, Christina, along with her three kids—Christian, 13, Sophia, 11, and Joshua, 6—looks at each day with optimism and self-assurance.

Having grown up in poverty, Christina has found the cycle extremely difficult to break. When she had the opportunity to move into affordable housing in Issaquah eleven years ago, she jumped at the chance as a step toward ending that cycle. She loved that Front Street looked the same as she remembered it as a child. “I like the people here. I like the small town vibe (Issaquah) gives off,” Christina said. But, living in Issaquah has its challenges too—and the number one challenge is “transportation.” Christina added, “Getting around town is somewhat difficult.” Christina doesn’t own a car, so if a needed service isn’t on a bus line, getting there can be nearly impossible. Christina’s daughter has an ongoing medical condition which requires many doctor appointments. Hopelink’s medical transportation program, which serves all of King County, has been key to getting them to medical appointments not on a bus route.

As a single mom of three, Christina envisions a different future for her children. While it can be a struggle for her to make ends meet each month, she has appreciated being able to

I thank them all,



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access food bank services since her 13-year-old was a toddler. Christina just started a new job in December 2017, and shared how difficult it can be to get dinner on the table for three kids as a working mom. She said that the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank helps her to create quality meals, down to the little details, like extra cheese for Taco Tuesday. “Now I have food at the end of the day when my kids ask ‘what’s for dinner.’” Christina said she loves being able to make dinner for her kids at home instead of relying on cheaper, less healthy options like fast food.

Because of her new work schedule and her restrictions with bus transportation, Christina now participates in the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank *Groceries to Go* program, which delivers groceries to families who aren’t able to shop in person at the food bank. Christina said *Groceries to Go* has “helped me 10 times over”. With a tight schedule and a lot of responsibility between home and work, *Groceries to Go* allows Christina the time and energy to focus on what’s important to her

and her family. She especially loves the milk, fruit, and vegetables that are delivered. Six-year-old Joshua loves the small size milks his mom can pack in his lunch. “He gets so excited when he sees them,” Christina said.

Christina also participates in the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank’s special programs. Her favorite is the *Holiday Gift Barn* because “it allows me to give my kids a Christmas—a little something special that I may not be able to provide.” Christian, Sophia, and Joshua don’t know about the *Holiday Gift Barn* (shh!), so their favorite program is *Lunch for the Break*, with all the fun food and snacks that come in each box. Christina said Sophia, 11, loves getting a big jar of crunchy peanut butter and hiding it from her brothers so she can eat it all.

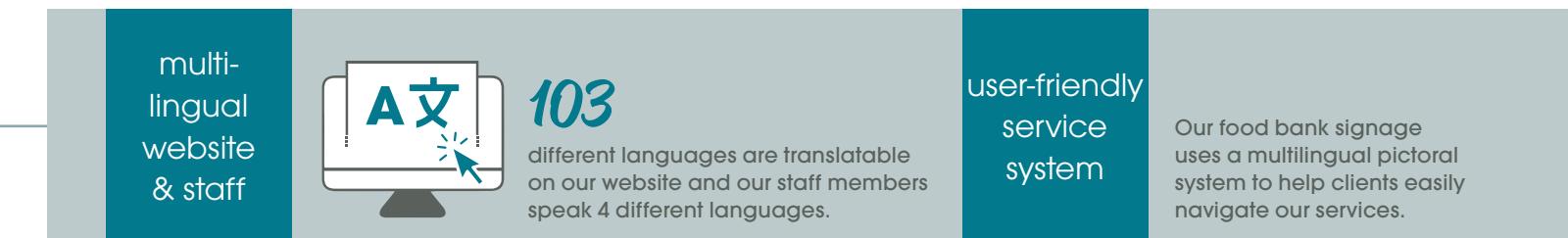
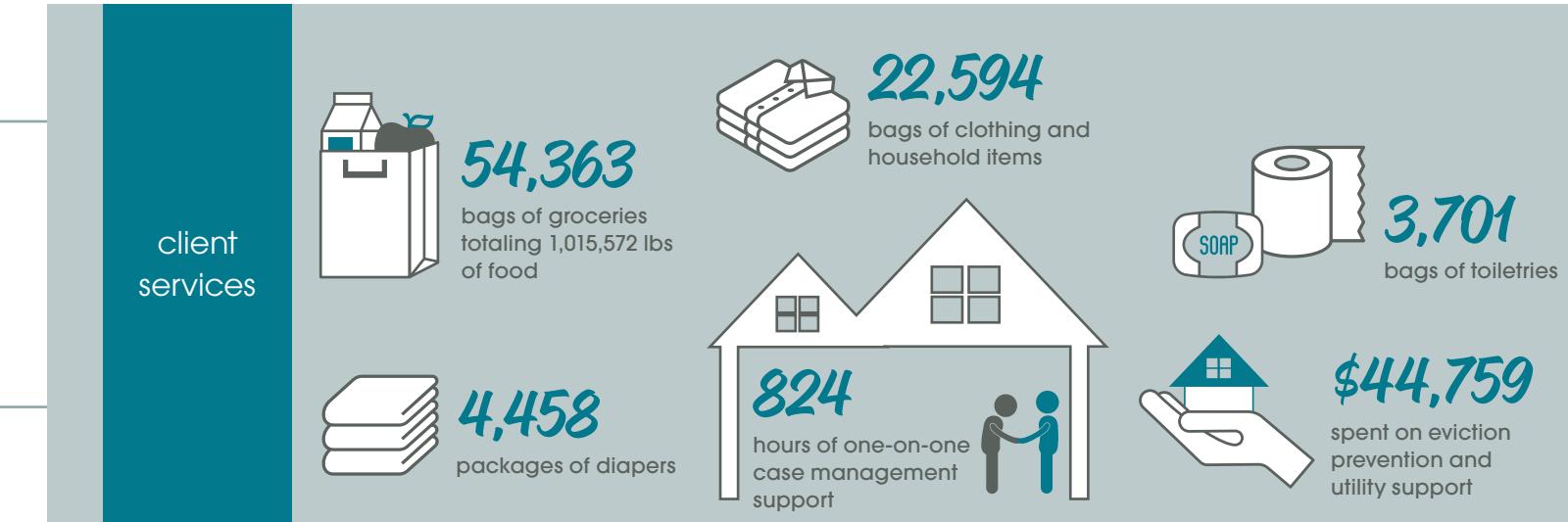
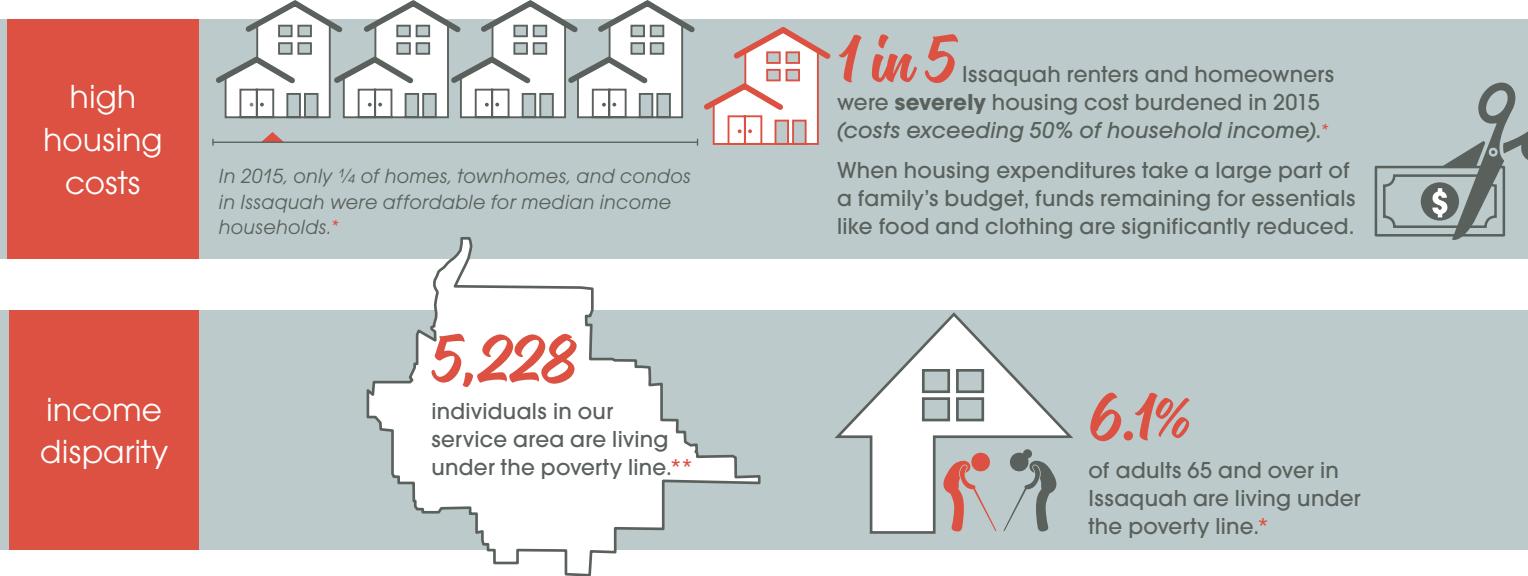
Christina wanted to end by saying this about the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank community: “Everyone is amazing and helpful and kind. I thank them all, every one of them, for all of their hard work. Not just for me, but for our whole community.”

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but for our whole
community.”



causes of food *insecurity*

addressing needs through *creative programming*



one willing heart can be a catalyst for many

After seven years and \$280,000 raised for the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank, you'd expect that Heather Matthews would be full of well-earned pride for everything she's built with our annual Turkey Trot event. Humility, however, is one of her greatest traits, along with determination, perseverance and a very compassionate and willing heart! Having been raised with a mother who was often volunteering for and giving to the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank, she always felt a connection and continued in her mother's example.

In 2010, Heather (who was 7 months pregnant at the time) held the first annual Issaquah Turkey Trot with mostly family and friends from her community. Despite a blizzard that Thanksgiving morning, 325 of her 350 registrants came out to support the food bank and make Heather's dream a reality!

With \$4,000 raised from the first event and everyone happy to be there even in the harshest weather, Heather knew there was something special there.

Subsequent years brought more challenges, but each always ended with great success! Routes had to be revamped each year to accommodate construction, citizen concerns needed to be alleviated with new routes, and there was always red tape to

work through. Captain Stan Conrad, former Commander of the Issaquah Police, was always willing to troubleshoot with Heather, and Cori Walters, Executive Director at the food bank, maintained a "how can we make this work" attitude which was always an encouragement to keep forging ahead. Now, after having worked diligently to build a successful route down Front Street (a long-time dream of Cori's), Heather's fears about tackling that giant

I felt deep in my heart for the people who have to line up in the rain to get food, and I wanted to do my part to help them."

Heather Matthews

have been assuaged. "When I saw the food bank crowded and everyone running down Front Street, I thanked Cori for pushing me."

Heather's husband, Tom, has been a great support, taking on the role of event announcer which fits his outgoing personality perfectly. He's become such a fan of the event that he and his fellow "turkey bowlers" pushed their annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Bowl to a later time to accommodate the Turkey Trot. The Matthews' entire extended family commits to participating with the Turkey Trot each year, including helping with their four boys so that Heather and Tom can focus on their tasks the day of the event. Their youngest two boys, now



I wanted
to do my
part



celebrating our 2017 corporate partners



children and poverty outcomes and solutions

2017 financials



1,528 of K-12 students in the Issaquah School District are receiving free or reduced-price lunch. That's 7.53% of all students.*



117 students in the Issaquah School District experienced homelessness during the 2016 academic year.**



Low-income high school students are 17% less likely to enroll in post-secondary education than their non-low income peers.**

*Issaquah School District Feb. 2018 **2017 Issaquah Community Needs Assessment



Tools 4 School—Over 900 backpacks of school supplies were distributed in 2017.

Program Partners:

- Issaquah Schools Foundation
- Eastridge Church



Lunch for the Break—1,269 boxes of breakfast, lunch, and snacks distributed over the week-long breaks from school.

Program Partners:

- Our Savior Lutheran Church
- Issaquah School District PTSA Council

Summer Lunch—2,819 bags of breakfast, lunch, and snacks distributed in summer of 2017—a 62% increase from 2016.

Program Partners:

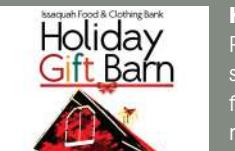
- Eastridge Church



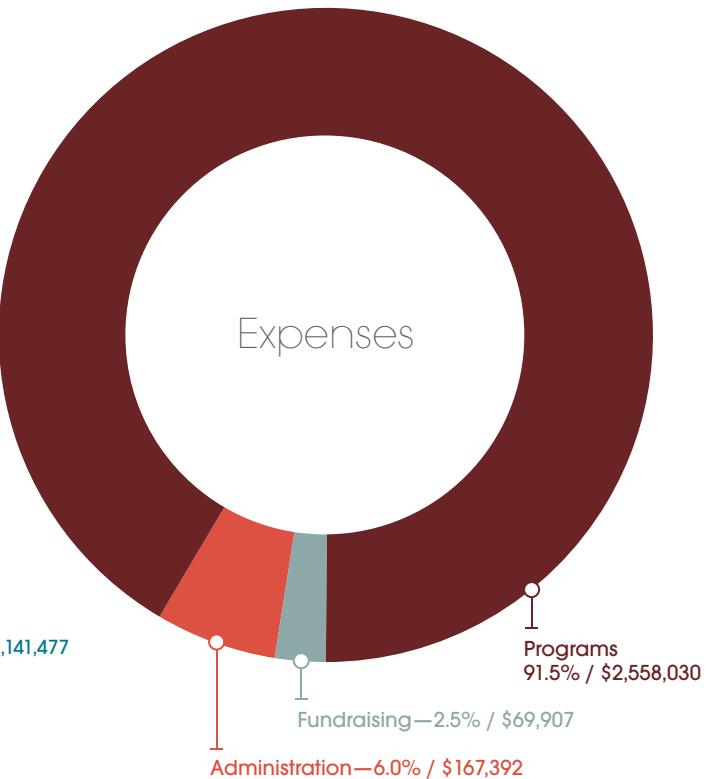
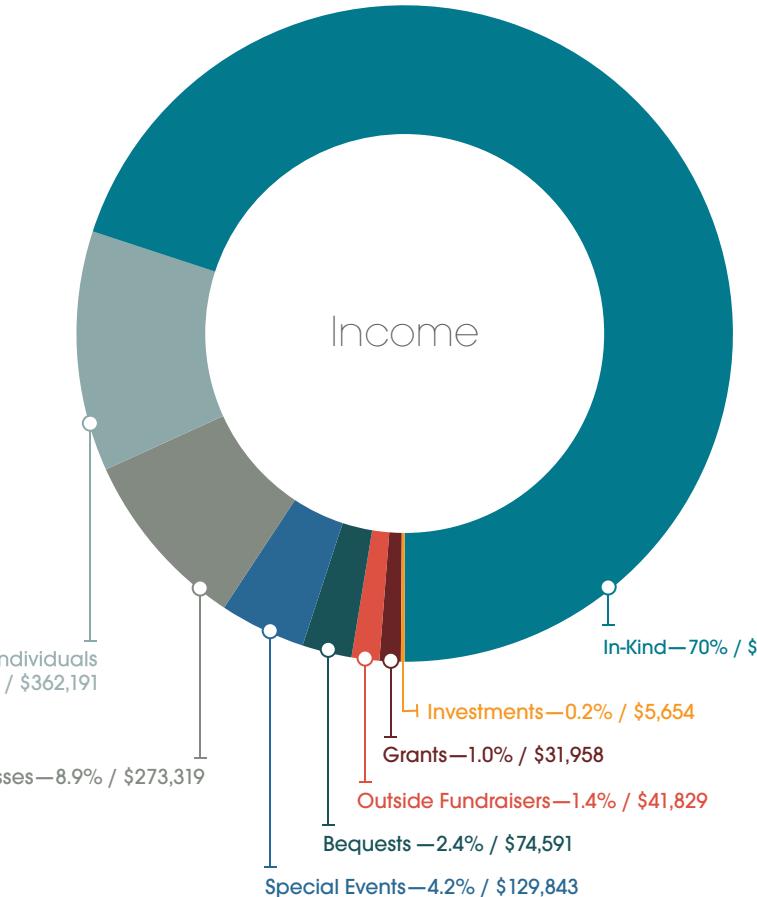
Issaquah Power Packs—A weekend emergency feeding program that distributed 700 power packs in the first four months of the 2017-2018 school year.

Program Partners:

- Issaquah School District PTAs/PTSAs
- School counselors and nurses
- Carson & Noel, PLLC



Holiday Gift Barn—Each December, the Pickering Barn is transformed into a mini shopping mall, allowing parents to shop for their kids for the holiday. 1,450 children received gifts through this program in 2017.



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envision a hunger-free community

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Food & Clothing Bank

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