

Quarterly Newsletter | Spring 2021

FAST FACT!

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions had come face-to-face with loss of income and the inability to provide themselves and their families with food and basic needs. Even with the start of the new year, the hunger crisis continues to mount with 26 million adults in the United States reporting that they did not have enough to eat leaving many to rely on food banks.



Here in Washington, 1 in 9 people currently struggle with hunger.

[Source](#)

[Source](#)





Directors Note: Resilience During a Pandemic

By Cori Walters

Getting through 2020 safely was no small task. The Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank board and staff team would like to send a huge “thank you” to everyone who has helped create resiliency during unprecedented times. The success of our operations in 2020 was by virtue of client flexibility and patience as well as high levels of support from our donors and volunteers. We have felt our community’s arms around us and heard your supportive cheers. The greatest 2020 outcome for the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank was the flexibility, ability to adapt to changing circumstances, and keeping resources accessible to anyone in need. None of this would have been possible without the dedication of staff, volunteers, and our generous community.

When comparing 2019 to 2020 we experienced a 12% increase in the number of households served and a...[READ MORE](#)

Grateful During Difficult Times

We have so many amazing clients that come to the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank. It is extremely gratifying when we receive kind notes and heartwarming messages about the help they receive from our community! Robin has been a long-time client and shopper who would like to share her words of gratitude to the supporters and volunteers of the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank:

"Without the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank I wouldn't have been able to survive the last few years. Even during these difficult days of the virus the food bank has been a godsend. The staff and volunteers are so helpful and kind



always asking if there is anything else that I need. I'm very grateful to everyone at the food bank for making my life much easier. THANK YOU!!!!!"

- Robin (pictured to the left)

It's Our 50th Anniversary!



SINCE **ISSAQUAH** **1971**
Food & Clothing Bank

1971 marked the grass roots beginning of a community movement to provide help, hope, and kindness through food and basic needs. The community should be extremely PROUD of this effort that we've all accomplished TOGETHER!

We're celebrating "**50 years of community compassion**" thanks to the amazing community effort that has made the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank the vital resource it is today. The overwhelming compassion of volunteers, donors, partners, staff, and board members have maintained the "neighbors-helping-neighbors" grassroots initiative while growing our

programs and resources to now serve over 5,000 people across East King County.

We'd love to share your story of how you've been a part of these last 50 years and what this means to you, whether you've benefitted from our services or helped provide them. [Click here](#) to learn more about sharing your thoughts and stories!

Thank you for helping to keep our community strong and healthy for fifty years through your support of the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank!

2020 Hero Award

By Lisa Haynes

ISSAQUAH
Food & Clothing Bank

Proud Recipient of the
2020 Hero Award

41st ANNUAL
**COMMUNITY
AWARDS**

HERO he-ro noun

1. a person who in the face of danger combats adversity through feats of ingenuity, courage, and strength.

In January, the City of Issaquah awarded the volunteers and staff of the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank the "[2020 Hero Award](#)". This was in recognition of the "*few who rose to the top in a remarkable and often courageous manner during the unprecedented, life-altering events of 2020.*"

Our neighbors needed help, many for the first time. Your enthusiasm, dedication, and generous hearts meant that, together, we were able to meet their needs. We are immensely grateful for your commitment and hard work; inside, outside, rain, shine, windstorm, smoke, or snow! YOU have made it possible for us to remain open and serve our community during this challenging time.

We couldn't do it without you!

Lunch for the Break - Spring 2021

By Erin Longchari

Lunch for the Break returned for Spring Break!

Thanks to the generosity and partnership of the [Issaquah Schools Foundation](#), we were able to provide grocery gift cards to all families with children in our food bank service area on Friday, April 2nd.



Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank
LUNCH FOR THE BREAK

In addition to gift cards, we also distributed bags of fresh fruit, veggies, cheese, and bread for each family with the support of your contributions. We are thrilled to be able to continue this special program for students in our community! [Click here](#) if you'd like to help with future Lunch for the Break distributions!



Nate with his wife, Kris.

Champion Spotlight: Nate Ahn

By Claire Lee

The COVID-19 pandemic brought upon many changes to the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank, some revealing themselves to be silver linings amongst the hardships. One of the amazing things to come out of the pandemic include the many new volunteers that chose to give their time and leave the safety of their homes to make sure that people in our community are fed and clothed.

Nate Ahn had been a volunteer at his church for a while before coming to the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank. He knew that he wanted to volunteer since...[READ MORE](#)

The FEED Act: An Executive Order

By Rebecca Rice

The COVID-19 pandemic has stripped away any pretense in our

community that most people, especially people of color, are fine. The pandemic has revealed that many families are always right on the edge of not being able to pay rent, medical bills, or afford food.



Nationally, 45 million people, or 14% of people are food insecure, meaning they don't always know where their next meal is coming from (Food Insecurity and Poverty in the US – Feeding America). That number in King County is projected at 11.8% for 2020 ([Source](#)). Nearly a quarter of the people experiencing food insecurity...[READ MORE](#)

Business Engagement Fun!

Is your company or organization looking for ways to support our efforts while also gaining some exposure in the community? We have two amazing annual events that offer fun sponsorship opportunities this year and each will have special features in honor of our 50th anniversary celebration!



Be sure to check out our [Event Sponsorships page](#) or contact [Bonnie](#) for more details.

Power Packs Plus

By Erin Longchari

Power Packs Plus is back in schools!

With the help and support of the Issaquah School District, Power Packs Plus boxes are now available in 15 elementary and high schools. Families can pick up our breakfast, lunch, and snack boxes on school materials distribution days, when they are already at school picking up homework and other school supplies. We also always have Power Packs available here at the food bank, so it's convenient for any family needing a little extra food support for their children. Since most students are still online learning at home all week, our Power Packs Plus boxes include at least a week's worth of kid-friendly foods like cereal, hearty soup, fruit, granola bars, and pasta.



Our Power Packs Plus boxes cost us about \$15 per box and we are now giving out more than 1000 boxes per month! If you would like to help ensure kids in our community are well-fueled and ready to learn each week, please consider [making a gift](#) today.

Community Loaves - We're Breader Together



We're excited to share a new partnership with community-based program, Community Loaves!

"Community Loaves is a grassroots bread brigade, baking and delivering homemade Honey Oat Sandwich Loaves in support of our overstretched food pantries. As a community we are passionate about bread baking and united in a mission to provide delicious, nutritious freshly baked bread to our local food pantries." - Katherine Kehrli, Bread

Baker and Community Loaves Founder.

Community Loaves was founded in April 2020 with the understanding that millions of people are newly faced with food insecurity and that food banks across the nation are working hard to keep up with the increasing numbers of people struggling to make ends meet as a result of the pandemic. This effort not only helps people working at and resourcing from food banks by providing fresh, delicious, nutritious, high-quality bread, but has also created a way to connect community members with a passion for baking while supporting local mills and the local grain economy.

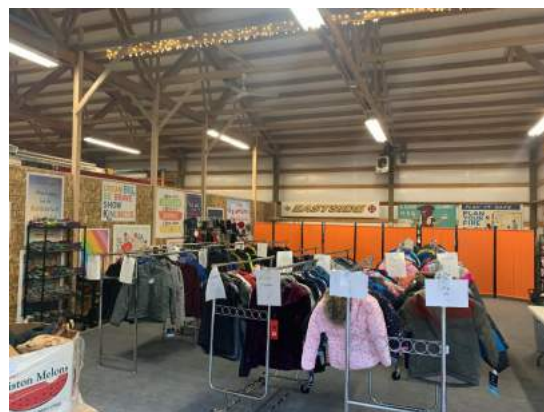
The Issaquah hub of bakers for Community Loaves is led by Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank volunteer, Janice Nesamani, who has been a part of the bread brigade since May 2020. They currently bake about 50-70 loaves of bread every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month using a fixed recipe. **They made their first donation to the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank in early March with a total of 103 loaves of Honey Oat sandwich bread.** A happy recipient shared with us how much she enjoyed the loaves - both because they were delicious and because she has diabetes and they did not send her blood sugar skyrocketing.

Their growing community of bakers are now well-established in the Greater Seattle area and have expanded to launch operations in Portland, Oregon. *"Community Loaves is limited only by the size of the bread brigade, more bakers, more donations."*

Want to be a baker for Community Loaves? Visit [their website](#) for more info!



Programs Manager, Erin and Food Bank Manager, Mike with the first of many Community Loaves donations.



Winter Warmth & Upcoming Clothing Bank Events

In the Fall, the imminent cold and wet seasons were high on our radar, especially with having to close our clothing bank indefinitely due to our emergency operations. Thanks to Eastside Fire & Rescue providing a large and gracious space, we were able to hold our very first Winter Warmth Event in November 2020, followed by additional events during the rest of the winter season! Thanks to our generous donors purchasing brand-new winter gear items and our volunteers who so graciously welcomed and assisted shoppers, the Winter Warmth Events provided winter gear to over

200 of our community members in the months of November and December!

Following the success of the Winter Warmth Events, we have started a continuation of the event for seasonal clothing in lieu of the traditional clothing bank offerings. Our upcoming clothing bank event will feature Spring clothing, shoes, and accessories for shoppers. Visit [our website](#) for more information, including a list of acceptable items and how you can provide new or gently-used Spring clothing for these events!

How can I help?



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Support the Food Bank using Amazon Smile!

Do you shop on Amazon? If so, you can help support the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank using [Amazon Smile](#)! Select the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank as your non-profit of choice, and a portion of all of your purchases will automatically be donated. Thank you!

[Shop on Amazon Smile!](#)



— WELCOME TO —
**THE FOOD
PROJECT!**

Issaquah Sammamish Food Project

Are you looking for ways to donate food items or get more involved during the pandemic?

Join dozens of neighbors in their efforts to collect and donate food through the Issaquah Sammamish Food Project! Visit [their website](#) to learn more.

[Join as a Food Donor or
Neighborhood Coordinator](#)

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