

# NEWSLINES <sup>OF</sup> Hope

www.cross-lines.org

Spring 2022

## Rising Food Prices Impact Hunger

As grocery costs soar, many people are struggling more than ever before to put food on their tables.

Serving the long lines of people in need, along with the growing costs of providing food to vulnerable people in the community, is putting a strain on the budget at Cross-Lines.

The Community Market is an innovative approach to providing struggling families in Wyandotte County with healthy, fresh groceries to help fight hunger in our community, where more than 21% of residents are food insecure.

For children, the food insecurity rate has ballooned from 23% to more than 32% during the pandemic, which means nearly one in every three children in Wyandotte County is at risk for hunger.

Before Cross-Lines created and opened the Community Market in July 2021, we ran a traditional food pantry, where



**Shoppers recently wait in line to shop in the Cross-Lines Community Market. The Market continues to see increased need in the community as food prices rise and hunger has grown.**

people received a box of food. The Market served more than 26,000 people in 2021, nearly quadrupling the number served just five years ago, as shown on the chart below.

Across the country, more than 38 million people live in food insecure households. According to a recent article in the NY Times, American food prices have

risen sharply, putting a burden on the poorest households who spend more of their overall budget on food. As prices on groceries have steadily risen, more households who were once able to get by have found they no longer have the extra money to keep food on the table. Increasingly, those who are living paycheck to paycheck are having to turn to community resources like Cross-Lines for help.

“The families we serve were already struggling,” said Susila Jones, Executive Director of Cross-Lines. “As prices increased, these families can’t keep up. They don’t

--Continued on page 2



### COMMUNITY HOUSING

Read about Cross-Lines work on affordable housing

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Find out about volunteer opportunities available today

### GALA FOR HOPE

Mark your calendar for a fabulous evening on Sat, Sept. 24, 2022

# Rising Food Prices Impact Hunger

--Continued from page 1

have any extra wiggle room in their budget.”

In November, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s food-at-home index, which includes grocery store or supermarket food purchases, rose 6.4% over the previous year. According to the index, the prices of meat, poultry, fish, and eggs increased 12.8%, “driven up by strong domestic and international demand, labor shortages, supply chain disruptions, and high feed and other input costs.”

According to some economists, food prices are estimated to rise 5% in the first half of 2022.

The Community Market primarily serves people who are living at 150% of the federal poverty level and below.

Shoppers can come once a

month and use points based on their household size. The points allow shoppers to get enough food for approximately 10 meals. For example, a household of 1-2 has 30 points and can get one full plastic bag of fresh produce as well as other items including meat, eggs, butter and canned goods.

The Community Market is a deliberate shift away from a traditional food pantry to a more inclusive program where shoppers are empowered to choose the items they need most.

“We want to help ensure that people don’t have to decide between buying food and paying rent,” Jones said.

Food cost increases have

impacted Cross-Lines as well. The price of purchasing food for the Community Market has steadily increased, along with community need for the service, which continues to grow month after month.

“Cross-Lines is grateful for our donors who continue to want to support their neighbors in need,” Jones said. “We couldn’t meet the growing hunger needs of our community without that amazing support.”

If you would like to help fight hunger in our community, please consider making a donation to Cross-Lines online today at [www.cross-lines.org](http://www.cross-lines.org) or mail your donation in the enclosed return envelope.

Thank you for your support!

## *Cross-Lines Plays Leading Role in Affordable Housing*

Beginning in January 2022, Cross-Lines Community Outreach became the lead agency for the CHIP: Safe and Affordable Housing Action Team.

CHIP stands for Community Health Improvement Plan.

The Safe and Affordable Action Team is one of four of the broader strategies and priorities in addressing adverse health outcomes for Wyandotte County residents.

Other action teams and leads include: Violence Prevention, led by MOCSA, Health care access, led by Vibrant Health, and Jobs & education, led by Wyandotte County Economic Development Corporation. All of this work is overseen and in collaboration with our local health department.

As an action team lead, Cross-Lines will oversee, manage, and

implement strategies as defined by our collaborative group of partners representing other local non-profits, developers, community-based organizations, UG departments, etc.

The strategies that our team will be focus on include: supporting the development of a shared equity housing model such as a Community Land Trust, exploration and potential implementation of a landlord risk mitigation fund, facilitating community housing-related education sessions with residents and community members, and working towards the adoption & implementation of a county-wide response plan to address homelessness.

The action team is also charged with hosting an annual housing summit, which has historically

addressed the most emerging needs such as cold weather sheltering options and the lack of development of safe and affordable housing in the county.

Rachel Russell, Director of Community Engagement, will serve as the primary contact for this work at Cross-Lines.

The action team meetings are currently held on the third Wednesday of each month from 2-3:30 p.m. via Zoom. This team meeting and the sub-committee meetings are open to the public.

For more information, visit <https://dashboards.mysidewalk.com/wyco-chip-dashboard/safe-affordable-housing-our-ultimate-vision> or contact Rachel at [rachel@cross-lines.org](mailto:rachel@cross-lines.org) or 913-281-3388.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

# Paul Holt



Q: How long have you volunteered at Cross-Lines?

A: **About 7 years**

Q: Where can we usually find you on campus?

A: **In the Market or Parking Lot**

Q: What do you love most about Volunteering for Cross-Lines?

A: **Feeling blessed and giving back to my community**

Q: What else do you like to do in your spare time?

A: **Spend time with my family and work on online crossword puzzles.**

## Cross-Lines Needs Volunteers

As Cross-Lines continues to serve growing numbers of people in need, we really need the help of dedicated volunteers.

If you would like to volunteer or know someone who would like to help, here are our most urgent current volunteer needs:

**Community Market** - Our Community Market is busy distributing a wide assortment of food to families in need. Be a key part of this amazing program by helping shoppers check out, stocking shelves or other various tasks needed to keep the market

operating smoothly.

Times: 9 a.m.-noon or 1-3 p.m.

**Community Kitchen** - Help prepare and serve lunches to nearly 200 individuals through our Community Kitchen to-go window.

This is an incredibly fun and rewarding opportunity to serve the community. Groups of 4-6 are needed, but individuals are also welcome.

Times: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday

**Front Desk** - Answer phones, greet and assist clients coming into the administrative office, and assist case management staff with various tasks.

Times: Shifts are 8:30 a.m.- noon and

noon-4 p.m. Monday-Friday

**Senior Commodities** - Work assembly-line style to pack boxes of shelf-stable food for low-income seniors in our community.

Sign up on your own or bring a group of three to six people!

Times: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays

*For more information regarding volunteering or accessing our online volunteer sign up system, contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Roxanne Vega, at [roxanne@cross-lines.org](mailto:roxanne@cross-lines.org) or call 913-281-3388.*

# Gala for... Hope

The Abbott Event Space      September 24th, 2022

Mark your calendars for Cross-Lines' 19th annual Gala for Hope! We look forward to celebrating all the amazing work Cross-Lines does throughout the year and dancing the night away!

Want to help us out this year? Contact [Kelly@cross-lines.org](mailto:Kelly@cross-lines.org) to get involved!

2022 will mark the 19th year for Gala for Hope, our annual signature event benefiting Cross-Lines Community Outreach and our life changing programs that serve those in need in our community.

The event will be held at The Abbott event space in the Kansas City, MO Crossroads Arts District on Saturday, September 24th, 2022.

We look forward to throwing a marvelous and glitzy party for our guests and esteemed honorees!

We hope to have 350 guests attend Gala for Hope. Guests will enjoy a delicious dinner prepared by a respected local caterer, cocktails, an engaging program, and compelling video featuring the incredible work



happening at Cross-Lines.

Our event will include Live and

Silent Auctions led by a skilled and entertaining auctioneer to raise crucial funds for Cross-Lines. Silent auction items will be on hand to view while the silent bids will be conveniently made using your mobile phone.

Following the Program and Auction, guests can dance the night away and enjoy cocktails from the bar while our excellent DJ plays the hits, old and new. Gala for Hope continues to be a dynamic event and raises funds for our incredibly impactful programs.

Are you ready to join us?! Please stay tuned to our website and social media for ticket sales and the latest updates.

For more information about Gala for Hope, please contact Kelly Gough Moran at [kelly@cross-lines.org](mailto:kelly@cross-lines.org).