

# NEWSLINES<sup>OF</sup> Hope

www.cross-lines.org

Summer 2020

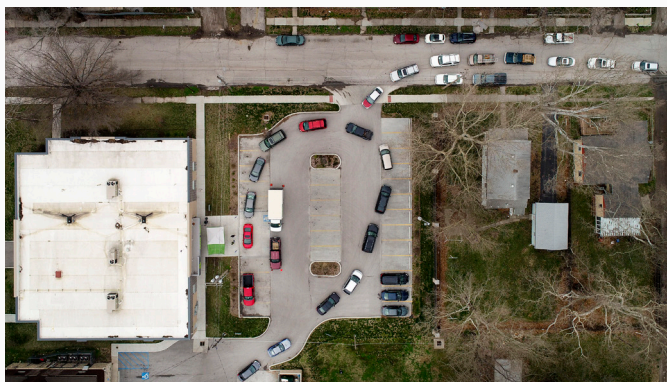
## Keeping Hope Alive During A Crisis

*“Hope – Hope in the face of difficulty. Hope in the face of uncertainty...In the end, that is God’s greatest gift to us...A belief in things not seen. A belief that there are better days ahead.”*

It’s easy to become overwhelmed and feel hopeless right now. Every day, we are bombarded with bad news. The pandemic. The economy. Unemployment. Hunger. Evictions.

While the needs are greater right now than ever before in our history, **Cross-Lines is bringing hope to thousands of the most vulnerable people in our community. And the reason we are able to do that is because of supporters like YOU!**

Much has changed at Cross-Lines in the months since



**Cars line up at the Cross-Lines drive-up Food Pantry in March. 736 people were served in one day.**

the pandemic began in March and since our last newsletter went out to you. Wyandotte County has been hit particularly hard and continues to be a hot spot for COVID-19 cases in the Kansas City metro area.

Throughout this time, with your support, Cross-Lines has kept our doors open. Other agencies temporarily closed, putting even more pressure on Cross-Lines to meet the needs in the community.

Early on, we saw growing numbers of local people affected by the pandemic and related unemployment. We knew that a tremendous wave of need was coming. We quickly reached out to you, our loyal supporters, to help in

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## Gala Goes Virtual: Tune In On September 19th

Cross-Lines Community Outreach is excited to announce that we will be hosting our first-ever virtual Gala fundraiser, Hope at Home, this September!

Although we would love to host our annual fundraiser in person, we feel that it is the best decision for the safety of our attendees, volunteers, and staff to take our event online. This year, guests will have the opportunity to bid on silent and live auction items, watch our live-streamed program, and donate



to our community in need – all from the comfort of your home.

Understandably, a “virtual Gala” is intimidating, but the event promises supporters the same opportunity to support Cross-Lines without all the trouble of dressing up, finding a place to

park, or buying a ticket.

To help navigate the new event, organizers are debuting a “Geek Squad,” comprised of members of Cross-Lines’ Young Professionals Board. This group will be available during the event via phone and email to help supporters who are wary of mobile bidding, live-streaming, and everything in between.

Our hope is that everyone in the Cross-Lines community will realize that just because the Gala is virtual, does not

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### COVID-19 TIMELINE

See how Cross-Lines has responded to the pandemic

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Find out about volunteer opportunities and safety precautions

### MEET NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Meet new members of the Cross-Lines Team who started in March

# Keeping Hope Alive During A Crisis

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March. Our major donors pitched in \$50,000 to serve as a match challenge. Generous individuals gave \$125,000 in donations in the first month of the pandemic. THANK YOU!

It's been a truly challenging time for Cross-Lines. Our staff of 14 has pitched in and pivoted whenever necessary to help where they were most needed, regardless of job titles. Without many of our 1,800 volunteers able to come serve, it has been an overwhelming task.

In the early days of the pandemic, we focused most on our hunger relief services. The surge in need in our Food Pantry has been remarkable. **From March 15 to mid-July, our Food Pantry distributed more than 189,000 pounds of food.** On March 25 alone, the Food Pantry served 736 people in one day. Cars lined up in the drive-through pantry we created overnight. The pantry continues to serve more than twice the number of people we did last year. **Since the beginning of 2020, we have served almost 14,000 people. In ALL of 2019, we served 11,000 people.**

Though we aren't able to have our Community Kitchen dining room open, we have continued to provide sack meals every day. On July 1, we began serving takeaway hot meals at lunch with the help of volunteers. With the ingenuity of our staff who created a plexiglass drive-through/walk-up window, we are keeping everyone as safe as possible.

On May 11, our Housing Stabilization program began to help provide clients with services and emergency assistance with rent and utilities. On June 1, BPU began disconnecting utilities – including water – despite the ongoing nature of the pandemic. Eviction dockets started up again in the Wyandotte County courts in June. While many vulnerable individuals and families are still unemployed and struggling to find work, their bills are piling up more than ever before. Many people are now facing eviction and homelessness without intervention. Our Housing Stabilization team is working tirelessly to help. **We have served twice as many people and provided three times the amount of emergency assistance as we normally do since May.**

In an effort to meet those growing needs, Cross-Lines has formed more collaborations and new partnerships with

other agencies than ever before. In April, we began to work with the Wyandotte County Health Department to deliver food and toiletry boxes to the homes of local citizens in need who either were medically vulnerable, had tested positive for COVID-19 or were presumed positive and were quarantined in their homes.

Cross-Lines is part of a multi-agency collaboration focused on preventing and diverting at-risk families from the homeless system. Cross-Lines was identified as a leading agency in Wyandotte County and has been included in the decision making process for the KC Partnership for Economic Relief. This partnership includes several metro area emergency assistance providers, social service agencies, and the Greater Kansas City Coalition to End Homelessness.

We are working hard to meet the needs of the community. We have applied for multiple grants from both private foundations and government sources. **We appreciate your support and we are making the most of your investment in our work.**

When the pandemic forced us to close our Thrift Store in March, we were shifted staff from the store to other areas of our agency where they were desperately needed to help serve the community. As we work to meet the greatest needs in the community, we decided to keep the Thrift Store closed through the end of the year and evaluate its future at that time.

The pandemic has hit Cross-Lines hard. We had to cancel key fundraisers including our Spring Dig Plant sale and our new summer event, Rock the Dotte. Recently, we had to make the difficult decision to change our annual Gala, our biggest fundraiser, to a virtual event. The virtual gala, Hope at Home, will be a critical source of income to support our work and we are hopeful you can help us make it a success.

The capacity of our current staff is strained. We still really need your support. Yes, the challenges can feel overwhelming at times. But we know we can do it with you, our caring supporters by our side. Our clients are depending on us. The need is greater than we have ever seen in our history. Working together with your support, Cross-Lines will remain a beacon of hope through this difficult time.

## THREE WAYS YOU CAN HELP TODAY:

**PLEASE DONATE TO SUPPORT OUR ONGOING WORK.** Consider becoming a monthly donor. You can donate either by using our website at [www.cross-lines.org](http://www.cross-lines.org) or filling out and returning the enclosed envelope.

**PLEASE SUPPORT OUR VIRTUAL GALA, HOPE AT HOME,** by signing up and tuning in to our live stream on Saturday, September 19. Read more about the event here in your newsletter or on our website.

**PLEASE VOLUNTEER,** if you feel safe and are able. We are taking many safety precautions to protect our volunteers, clients and staff. Sign up to volunteer on our website.

# CROSS-LINES' COVID-19 RESPONSE

**MARCH 16**

## Pandemic hits

- Community Kitchen closes dining room, begins handing out sack meals.
- Thrift Store closes.
- Food Pantry begins handing out pre-packed boxes of food.
- Main office closes and case management is done via phone whenever possible.

**MARCH 17-21**

## Food demand grows

Cross-Lines featured on the front page of Kansas City Star. Staff from the Thrift Store and other areas of the agency begin helping in the Food Pantry to meet growing demand.

Wyandotte County issues a Stay-At-Home Order

**MARCH 25-26**

## Need for food skyrockets

Food Pantry shifts to a drive-through model and serves 738 people in one day.

Cross-Lines launches Care for KC! Campaign to raise money to support our essential programs. From mid-March to mid-April, individual donors give over \$125,000.

**APRIL 1**

## Fundraisers cancelled

Due to the pandemic, Cross-Lines cancels the Spring Dig Plant Sale and Rock the Dotte, our 2020 summer fundraiser.

**APRIL**

## Cross-Lines adapts & partners

Cross-Lines partners with the Wyandotte County Health Department to deliver food and toiletries to the homes of medically vulnerable and COVID positive families.

Cross-Lines becomes part of the KC Partnership for Economic Relief, a group of emergency assistance agencies.

**MAY 1**

## Masks provided

Knit-Rite, a longtime leading Cross-Lines supporter, donates 1,000 masks for Cross-Lines to distribute to staff, volunteers, and clients as needed during the pandemic.

**MAY 11**

## A housing crisis

Cross-Lines begins accepting rent and utility assistance applications via a new online system. From May to June, Cross-Lines serves twice as many clients with three times the normal average amount of rent and utility assistance.

**JUNE**

## Hot breakfasts begin

Cross-Lines starts serving hot breakfasts to-go and continues handing out sack lunches.

Wyandotte County issues public health order requiring anyone visiting the Cross-Lines campus to wear a mask.

**JULY**

## Gala goes 'virtual'

Cross-Lines begins serving hot lunches to-go via a drive-up, walk-up window on July 1.

Cross-Lines announces the annual Gala will become a virtual event, Hope at Home, on September 19, 2020.





**Volunteers, staff, clients, and anyone visiting our campus need to wear a mask as required by a recent government order. Cross-Lines is able to provide volunteers with masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer. The Community Kitchen dining room is closed to the public.**

# Volunteers Needed

Due to the ongoing pandemic and the increase in demand for our services, Cross-Lines has a growing need for volunteers in all areas of the agency.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Christina Hofer via email at [christina@cross-lines.org](mailto:christina@cross-lines.org) or by calling 913-281-3388, ext. 233.

If you have any questions about volunteering or concerns about safety at this time, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Currently, we have a volunteer sign-up option available on our website at [www.cross-lines.org](http://www.cross-lines.org). You can choose the times and dates that are best for you from the available options on our website.

Two key areas where volunteers are especially needed include:

**Community Kitchen (lunch)** – We need 2-4 volunteers on select weekdays to help prepare and serve hot lunch from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. For the safety of

our volunteers, staff, and clients, hot lunch is served daily via a to-go window and the doors to the Community Kitchen will remain locked.

**Senior Commodities** – For this volunteer opportunity, volunteers work assembly line style to pack boxes of shelf-stable food for our elderly clients. Boxes are packed weekday

mornings from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. in our Food Pantry and we can typically use up to eight volunteers at a time.

We also have opportunities in other areas including our Community Garden.



**For health and safety, meals in the Community Kitchen are served through a slot in a plexiglass barrier window, shown above.**

## Meet New Cross-Lines Team Members

We have two new additions to the Cross-Lines team!

**Rob Santel**, Director of Client Services, leads our direct services staff to provide assistance to those living in poverty in Kansas City, KS and experiencing hunger, homelessness, and housing insecurity.



**Rob Santel**

Rob is no stranger to the Cross-Lines community, having previously used his interpersonal skills as Homeless Services Case Manager to expand Cross-Lines' ability to serve the homeless community.

**Anderson Rasmussen** is our part-time Administration Coordinator, and provides the essential behind-the-scenes office support that keeps Cross-Lines running!



**Anderson Rasmussen**

Born and raised in Kansas City, Anderson is an activist who is passionate about how we can change the world and help one another.

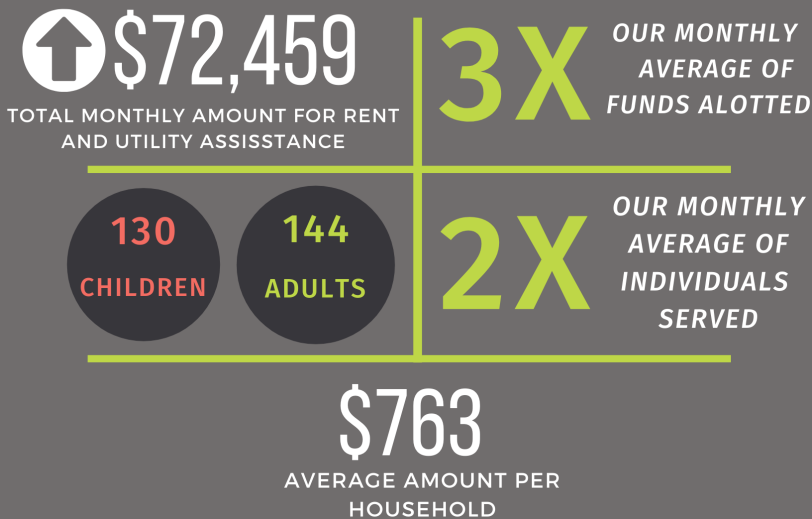
Both of these employees started at Cross-Lines during the week in March that the coronavirus pandemic hit our Kansas City community.

With positive spirits, they helped out wherever was needed as Cross-Lines restructured our services and navigated extreme uncertainty.

We are so lucky to have both Rob and Anderson on the Cross-Lines team, and we feel confident that our clients, volunteers, staff, and community of supporters will love them as much as we do!

# A HOUSING CRISIS

## AVOIDING EVICTION IN KCK



CROSS-LINES HOUSING STABILIZATION PROGRAM

DATA FROM:  
MAY-JULY 2020

### HONORARIUMS

#### **Claudia Bakely**

Anonymous  
Bobby and Vicki Whitaker  
Brenda Davids  
Climax United Methodist Church  
Dana and Kenneth Roemer  
Debra and Paul Babcock  
Dorothy Hanson  
Keats-Riley United Methodist Church  
Linda and Larry Montgomery  
Marilyn and Lloyd Christmore  
Nancy J. Gammill  
Paula Sauder  
Reading United Methodist Church  
Richard Porter  
St. Marys and Emmett United Methodist Churches  
The United Methodist Church  
Wanda and Lowell Chambers

#### **Jill Reynolds**

Sarah Ingram

#### **Louise Moody**

Tracy Henry

#### **Nancy Moylan**

Charles and Mary Haley

### MEMORIALS

#### **Bob Howard**

Woodyne Mann

#### **Carol Saunders**

Wesley United Methodist Church

#### **Carolyn Ring**

Joan and Gerald Gilson

#### **Gene Dettmer**

Arthur and Wanda Kruse  
Judith Sharp  
Relma and Paula Siirila

#### **Judy Barrett**

Asbury United Methodist Church

#### **Michael Anthony Banks**

Steven and Sylvia Banks

#### **Nita Anderson**

M Scheib

#### **Robert Allan Webber**

Sally Day

#### **Sylvester Byrd**

James & Janene Brown  
Jim and Claudia Hannah  
Lawrence and Ann Hill

#### **Toby Toburen**

Anonymous  
Deborah Firth  
Delores Seaman-Turnquist  
Dian and Brian Steele  
Vera and Patrick Freeman  
Winona Toburen

#### **William and Betty Jane Diedrich**

Paul Diedrich

*\* List includes gifts made between January 29, 2020 and June 30, 2020. Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of this list. We apologize for any errors or omissions.*

SENDING

Hope



FROM OUR

Home

TO THEIRS

## Gala Goes Virtual: Tune in on Sept. 19

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mean it is less important than previous years.

In fact, this year's Gala, Hope at Home, is perhaps the most important Gala in Cross-Lines' history.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, Cross-Lines made the difficult decision to cancel all other 2020 fundraisers and events, leaving the Hope at Home event as our sole fundraiser during an

extremely challenging year.

Cross-Lines is serving twice as many clients through our Hunger Relief and Housing Stabilization programs.

The rising level of need in our community coupled with the uncertainty of the current health crisis means that Hope at Home plays a crucial role in raising essential funds for our neighbors in need.

### GET INVOLVED WITH HOPE AT HOME TODAY!

**VISIT OUR EVENT WEBSITE:** [one.bidpal.net/hopeathome](http://one.bidpal.net/hopeathome). There you will find a link in the top right corner to "Sign In." Once you register, you'll be among the first to hear about important event updates and gain access to our Silent & Live Auction catalog.

**SAVE THE DATE!** Join us Saturday, September 19 at 7PM for our live-streamed program! A link will be sent out via email and will also be available on our website.

**DONATE NOW!** You can donate by visiting our event website or by mailing a check with "Hope at Home" in the memo line.

**TELL YOUR FRIENDS.** We need help getting the word out about this virtual fundraiser and YOU are one of the best people to help us do it!



### Host A 'Watch Circle'

Don't want to watch our Hope at Home virtual gala all alone? **Host a Watch Circle!**

Whether it's your close friends or family, bring together people in your close circle to watch the live stream on Saturday, Sept. 19 at 7 p.m.

You can watch virtually or social distance and watch together from your driveway, deck or patio, it's all up to you. We don't want anyone to do anything that you feel uncomfortable about.

**If you plan to host a Watch Circle, please let us know ASAP** because hosts will receive a **Good Deeds Basket** with some wine, Cross-Lines masks, coozies and other goodies!

Have questions or want to let us know about your Watch Circle? Please contact *Kelley Carpenter, Director of Development & Marketing*, via email [kelley@cross-lines.org](mailto:kelley@cross-lines.org) or call 913-281-3388, ext. 239.

**Worried about how to set up your smart TV or computer to watch?** No problem! Our "Geek Squad" of Cross-Lines Young Professionals Board Members will come help you get it set up to watch!!



**CROSS • LINES**  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH, INC.

#### ADDRESS:

736 Shawnee Avenue Kansas City, KS 66105

#### PHONE:

913-281-3388

#### WEB:

[www.cross-lines.org](http://www.cross-lines.org)

#### BOARD:

*Board Chair:* Cindy Moore *Vice Chair:* Megan Pierre  
*Secretary:* Kam Howard *Treasurer:* Derek White  
*Members:* Kristina Belshe, Jon Gossman, Chris Grenz, Jorge Herrera, Marty Hoffee, Bill Magee, Jason Moss, Lisa Wiens