Kaydee came to MCUM in December of 2015. When her boyfriend and her roommate both lost their jobs, the apartment complex was preparing to evict them: they'd fallen behind on two months of rent. Along with their children, they faced homelessness.

“My boyfriend wasn’t keen on the idea (of coming to MCUM for help) because he wanted to support us,” Kaydee said. Despite her boyfriend's new landscaping job and her roommate's job at Circle K, the bills were piling up, and eviction loomed closer and closer as they were running out of time to pay back the apartment complex. Despite their reservations, they came to MCUM. When she walked through the door, Kaydee said she was feeling down.

“I thought low of myself - because we should be able to handle it,” Kaydee said.

But they couldn't. And when they sat down with Cliff, MCUM's Emergency Services Coordinator, Kaydee said he helped them realize it was okay to not have it all together all the time.

“Cliff said that life happens - you can’t control it all the time.”

Kaydee, her boyfriend, and their roommate worked hard to cover as much of the debt owed to the apartment as they could, and MCUM took care of the rest. With help from MCUM, Kaydee said the family was able to keep their home and has since gotten back on their feet.

“If it weren't for MCUM, we would have lost our place,” she said. Not only would the loss have affected Kaydee, her boyfriend and their roommate, but Kaydee's two young children would have faced homelessness as well. Cliff knew the family's financial need extended beyond rent, so they left MCUM with food from the food pantry as well.

“They gave us 4 or 5 bags of groceries,” said Kaydee. “We certainly weren’t expecting that!”

Three months later, Kaydee says her family and her roommate are doing well, and all have found steady jobs that keep the rent paid. When asked to reflect on her experience at MCUM, Kaydee told us:

“I’m glad we came. I’d encourage other people to come, too. People shouldn’t feel down about themselves if they need help.”
Current Needs

Food Pantry*
Canned Fruit
Helper Meals
Tuna
1 lb. bags of rice
Baking Mix
Cereal

Cleaning Closet*
All-purpose spray cleaner
Shampoo
Conditioner
Socks for men and women
Vinegar
Baking Soda

Childcare
Command strips (60), small
Containers, any size
AA & AAA Batteries
Construction paper
Liquid glue
Glue sticks
Crayola markers
Bingo dobbers, any color

Office
Refrigerator
8.5 x 11 Copy paper
Pens, blue or black ink

* Will be proportionately matched this month!

Cub Scouts Take the Odds out of Hunger

Led by Chris Kilander of Cook Inc, a group of more than 40 young scouts from different troops has teamed up to participate in our MCUM Hunger Games competition. This year’s group is hopeful they can beat last year’s record of just over 1,500 pounds of food and $100 for MCUM.

Last month, the scouts hosted MCUM at their Hunger Games Kickoff. During an evening of pizza and strategy development, the youngsters learned just what their donations were going to support. This year, they’re in it to win it. In fact, every night this week, the scouts have been stationed at Walmart collecting non-perishable items.

How do you think they will do?!

We’ll find out soon – part of Troop #123’s tradition has always been bringing their food to MCUM and taking place in sorting it and putting it into grocery sacks for the clients MCUM’s emergency food pantry serves.

Each year, the troop membership changes slightly as boys age up and new ones come in, so on-site volunteering is a great way to connect the dots and do good.

Do you have a MCUM Hunger Games story you’d like to share with us? Email Katie at kbroadfoot@mcum.org.

‘The MCUM Hunger Games’ Are ON

With just one month to go, we’re calling on all of our Tributes to raise $40,000 and add 8,000 pounds of food and household products to our emergency food pantry. Your donation to this campaign will be proportionately-matched!

There are special incentives for groups wishing to compete for the title of MCUM Hunger Games Champions, but individuals are also encouraged to participate by giving in support of our community! Here are some easy ways to give:

• Text “gift” to 812-219-9919
• Visit: www.mcum.org/donate
• Call our office at 812-339-3429 to pay over the phone.
• Bring your donations to MCUM (827 West 14th Court, Bloomington IN, 47404). Please refer to the back page for our hours.

THE MCUM HUNGER GAMES
A Closer Look Inside MCUM’s Emergency Food Pantry
by Lyndsay Jones

I’ve been working with MCUM communications for several months now - consequently, I can speak with a small level of authority about the services we offer. But one thing that was still elusive to me was the inner-workings of the food pantry. For one thing, it seemed like I was always writing up a piece on how we need more food donations. And for another, I wondered what volunteers and service learners do when they come in and disappear for hours at a time. So, I decided to go behind the scenes and learn what it was all about - \textit{in hope you might be inspired to come see for yourself!}

Valerie, an 11 year pantry volunteer, helped me understand how little I knew about different regulations and guidelines there are when it comes to distributing food to people in need. As we snaked our way through the pantry, which I’m told is one of the largest in Monroe County, she pointed out details I had never noticed, like how canned goods actually move through the pantry and out into the community.

\textbf{The Life of a Can in MCUM’s Pantry:}
The food on the shelves isn’t just grouped by type and left to wait-
(1) it’s grouped by type (vegetable) within a specific room in MCUM’s food pantry: the sorting room,
(2) then it’s classified within that type (bean),
(3) \textit{then} it’s sorted by year or month or expiration date, depending on the type of food,
(4) finally, once a tray of similar items has filled up, it finds a home within a certain room (the vegetable room), where it stays until the tray in the bagging room has been emptied. It then moves up front to be placed into a grocery sack for clients.

When service-learners or volunteers disappear for hours at a time, they’re doing all of the tedious sorting and label-reading that will pay off when another volunteer packs up a bag of food. \textbf{Their label reading saves hungry families from accidentally getting expired food} - like macaroni & cheese, which can congeal during the cooking process, making it unspreadable and inedible. Those who bag the food make it simple for caseworkers to quickly grab what they need for each client - getting food out faster means more people have a chance to see a caseworker.

I realized why I’m so often writing about what the food pantry needs: there are so many empty shelves. Valerie told me a lot of churches and clubs commit to giving a certain amount of food each year. That amount is usually donated over time, so in a way it’s like food is always coming in. But looking at the space where food should be makes that fact less comforting than it should be. And it’s not just the lack of food making me uncomfortable. It’s imagining being hungry and cracking open a can of food and having to ration it to make it last.

There are a lot of things to be thankful for in the pantry - the food there is, the volunteers that take great care to make sure the sorting and bagging processes are done right, and the staff that make sure food is getting out to the people who need it. What I’ve learned is that \textbf{YOU}, readers, play a major role in making the pantry successful - please participate in the MCUM Hunger Games!
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Sign up to receive our eNewsletter.
Email kbroadfoot@mcum.org to make the switch!

Staff

Executive Director: Erin Predmore
Development Associate: Katie Broadfoot
Emergency Services Coordinator: Cliff Edens
Emergency Services Caseworker: Sandy Clothier
Emergency Services Caseworker: Jenn Webeck
Office Manager: Shannon Hampton
Childcare Director: Traci Mehay
Education Coordinator: Tina Burress

Hours of Operation

Office & Emergency Services
Monday & Thursday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Childcare
Monday - Friday: 7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

*On days of high demand for services, MCUM may stop taking applications earlier than posted hours.

Monroe County United Ministries’ 11th Annual Spring Into Action! Luncheon & Auction

Sunday, May 1

Convention Center

12-2 PM

Doors open at 12 P.M. Buffet lunch at 12:30.

Silent & live auctions will benefit MCUM’s Emergency Services & Affordable Childcare programs. For more information, visit www.mcum.org.

Guests will enjoy a meal and silent and live auctions filled with local excursions, gift certificates, and a trip to Williamsburg, VA over the 4th of July. Most importantly, guests will have an opportunity to learn and engage in MCUM’s programs with an opportunity to receive a $10,000 cumulative match for MCUM!

Rally up your friends to bring non-perishable food and hygiene items to create a unique display at your table. The emcee will determine which table will receive the grand prize - and MCUM will collect all the items at the end of the event for its food pantry.

To purchase your tickets or table, visit www.mcum.org/springluncheon.