

The Newsletter of Monroe County United Ministries

Working Together

February 2020

Understanding the Childcare Crisis: Affordability, Quality, and Scarcity

Families with young children choose between spending a significant portion of their income on childcare, finding a cheaper and potentially lower-quality option, or leaving the workforce to care for their children. Lower-income families are often further forced to sacrifice other needs and opportunities to make things work. Compass is the only licensed, high-quality center in Monroe County to provide its own sliding fee scale in addition to federal and state assistance programs. We believe that a high-quality, safe early learning environment should be accessible to all local families.

High-quality, licensed childcare is more expensive than in-state college tuition.

The average income in Monroe County is \$39,880 however the self-sufficiency standard is \$58,535 per person. Many families are forced to choose between competing needs - housing, food, clothing, transportation, healthcare, and, ultimately, childcare, which costs an average of \$1,648 per child per month. Further, as many as 1 in 4 local families live below the poverty level of \$25,750 per year - the cost of childcare often outweighs one working adult's wages.

There are only enough spots for 30% of Monroe County children in licensed childcare centers.

Early childhood education can have important effects on later social, emotional, and academic success. A lack of affordable, quality care options can be detrimental to the development of the child, create a barrier to parents' employment, & present challenges to local employers.

What does this tell us?

Our program is providing a critical safety net to Monroe County families. More families than ever are enrolled on MCUM's own fee scale rather than the government programs. These are families who are forced to choose between competing basic needs, like food, housing, transportation, and childcare. This tells us that we must continue to provide our unmatched childcare, and we must be able to offer our sliding fee scale in order to be accessible to families who have no other affordable, high-quality childcare options.

Our 2020 Goal

We strive to stabilize the Compass fee scale and continue to pursue the highest-level of quality in caring for children.

If you want to learn more about Compass and our goals for 2020, please contact Executive Director Katie Broadfoot – kbroadfoot@mcum.org or 812-339-3429 ext. 11.



Current Needs

Food Pantry

- Mac & Cheese
- Pasta Sauce
- Jiffy Mix
- Peanut Butter
- Ramen
- Cereal
- Canned Meat

Cleaning Closet

- Lotion
- Dish soap
- All-purpose cleaners
- Paper Towels
- Razors
- Facial Tissues
- Shampoo
- Conditioner

Your Path Program

- \$10 Speedway Gas Cards
- \$5 Speedway Gas Cards

Child Care

- Paper doilies
- Pants (3T-5T)
- Animal or scenery calendars (out dated)
- Yarn
- Sponges
- Cotton balls
- Ribbon
- Velcro
- Tissue paper
- Glue
- Stickers

In April the Self-Sufficiency Center will be hosting a laundry making workshop for its clients. If you have old Tide Pod containers or similar sized containers (with lids), please drop them off at MCUM!

End-of-Year Recap: \$133,600

We ended 2019 with a very successful End-of-Year Campaign, exceeding our internal goal and raising \$133,600 to help start off 2020 on a strong foot. We want to thank all individuals, faith community groups, service clubs, businesses, and other organizations that helped make this campaign a success. We continue to be overwhelmed by your generosity and willingness to give back to our community through supporting our programs. As you see below, your contribution had a huge impact in 2019 and will continue to do so as we begin 2020 feeling energized to take on the new year. We cannot thank you enough, MCUM supporters!

In 2019, your contributions helped support:



97,596

meals provided to families in need



6,834

cleaning & hygiene items given out



1,596

Opportunity House vouchers given out for clothes, shoes, jackets, and small housewares



1,079

NEW families served



252

Monroe Country children cared for in our Compass Early Learning Center



210

One-time rent payments to restore stability to families & prevent homelessness

MCUM Hunger Games

Coming in March



Join the fight against hunger.

Visit mcum.org/hungergames

One Volunteer, Double the Impact

Rachel Pak is one of our food pantry volunteers. We know the impact she has made by helping our clients shop for food, bringing in and logging new donations, and sorting and organizing food donations. However, we did not anticipate the impact we would have on her personal life.

“Back in June of 2019, I started volunteering at MCUM while seeking a full-time opportunity in the environmental/sustainability field. In May, I graduated from Indiana University with my Master of Public Affairs at the O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs concentrating in environmental sustainability courses. Being from Bloomington, I thought spending my time in my community while job searching was a great way to give back to my hometown. Not only did MCUM give me a great and memorable volunteer experience, but also MCUM shaped my career search.

Specifically volunteering at MCUM helped me narrow down my interest within sustainability. Helping MCUM clients in the food pantry made me constantly think about the food we as individuals and community groups donate for our local low-income and minority families. The food we consume is to not only keep us full, but also to keep us nourished and healthy. Also, we live in a country where food security and food waste are big issues. Then it all made sense—why not look for a job that tacks food sustainability, food security, and food waste?

As I head off for my first job in the Corporate Social Responsibility team at Sysco Corporation, I’m so excited that I’ll be working for a company that recognizes and tackles these food issues in the US. For those staying in Bloomington after graduation while job searching, I highly recommend volunteering at a place like MCUM to not only have some time off from job searching, but also to give back to the Bloomington community. MCUM provided invaluable experience, and I am forever grateful that MCUM welcomed me with open arms!”

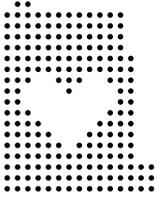


Thank you to Rachel, and so many like her, who are dedicated to giving back to our community by volunteering with us!

Food Pantry Involvement Lunch

Want to learn about ways you and your organization can get more involved in MCUM’s Food Pantry? Join us on February 19th, from noon to 1pm. You’ll hear from volunteers and congregation leaders as they discuss their partnership with MCUM and how they go about coordinating their own food drives. Lunch will be provided! For more information contact Mary Jean Holwager at mjholwager@mcum.org or (812) 339-3429 x 18





Monroe County United Ministries

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Save a tree!

Sign up to receive our new eNewsletter.
Email mjholwager@mcum.org to make the switch!

Hours of Operation:

Self Sufficiency Center

Monday & Tuesday:

Appointment only: 8:00-12:00

Food pantry only: 12:00-6:00

Walk-ins: 12:00-4:30

Thursday & Friday:

Appointment only: 8:00-12:00

Food pantry only: 12:00-5:00

Walk-ins: 12:00-4:30

Wednesday: CLOSED

Compass Early Learning Center

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

Leadership Staff:

Executive Director: Katie Broadfoot
Development Associate: Mary Jean Holwager
Self-Sufficiency Director: Sherene Ing
Compass Business Manager: Kayla Delaplaine
Compass-Downtown Director: Stacy Jones
Compass-North Director: Brittney Denton
Office Manager: Shannon Hampton

A Message from the Opportunity House...

Valentine's Day Sale! 50% off Storewide!

Get Valentine's gifts for everyone you love at the Opp House!

The entire store will be 50% off on February 14th. They still have plenty of warm clothes, Valentine's Day gifts & cards, and great books too!

Start Your Spring Cleaning Early!

Want to get a head start on your spring cleaning? We all know Spring will be here before we know it. We can help take your gently used items and give them a new life.

Start a donation box while you clean, then consider bringing your gently used wares to the Opp House! We accept donations 6 days per week, and our proceeds are passed along to MCUM to help fund their programs!

The Opportunity House is a volunteer-run resale shop that raises funds to support MCUM's programs. We are open 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Contact us by calling (812) 336-2443, e-mailing ophouse68@gmail.com, or following us on Facebook!



Please recycle this newsletter or share it with a friend.