

2021 Annual Report



The Sharing Center

SHARE | SERVE | ADVOCATE

Connecting Our Community



From the Executive Director



Sharon Pomaville
Executive Director



Dear Friends,

As the calendar changes and we head into another season, meeting the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors remains the central focus of the Sharing Center's mission. In 2021, we continued to collaboratively press forward through our connections within the ecosystem of Kenosha County to efficiently serve our clients. Within these pages, we aim to inspire you with the stories, photos, data, and references to the work we have done and continue to commit ourselves .

I also want to recognize the impact that *you* have on the work we are doing. None of the meals we serve, the food we distribute, or the resources we put into the hands of Center families would be possible without your generosity. Whether you have given your time, energy, or resources, you have helped us continue to propel our efforts into serving this community. If we have learned anything from the past two years, it is that we are stronger together. As we reflect on the great things our community is doing, we are grateful for the connections we have made with local citizens, families, businesses, schools, and the many, many others that make western Kenosha County such a wonderful community to be a part of.

I am proud to present our 2021 Annual Report and encourage you to dive in and enjoy the information it holds and the stories told. If you like, contact me with thoughts and ideas for how we can continue to grow our impact in the local community. Thank you again for being a part of the answer to the challenges we are fighting for in our mission to share, serve and advocate for our neighbors in western Kenosha County.

Wishing you strength and love, always.



Sharon Pomaville

2021 In Review



www.thesharingcenter.net

A long-time goal came to fruition with the re-launch of our website. Improving ease of access for families, and donors alike allows visitors to access resources, order groceries online, search for local employment opportunities, view archived newsletters, and see our latest news and events. Visitors can learn about donation opportunities and center needs, while those looking to give back can register to volunteer. Spanish-speaking visitors will also find our new design much easier as our website is also fully in Spanish.

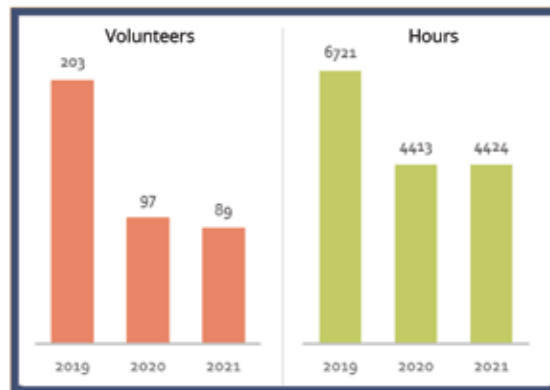
Breaking Down the Numbers

The Center would be unable to meet the need of the local community without the commitment of our dedicated volunteers and a combination of resources. With these resources, The Sharing Center served over 3100 individuals, improved our facilities and services, and marked another successful year as Western Kenosha County's Community Resource Center.

Focusing on our core values of:

- Dignity**
- Compassion**
- Empowerment**
- Advocacy**
- Stewardship**

The Sharing Center served
3100 individuals



In 2021, The Sharing Center set forth goals to enhance our services, expand access for residents, strengthen our community connections, and improve the experience for users. Reflecting on the past year's accomplishments, we are thankful for the support to meet our vision and mission to *serve Western Kenosha County residents by sharing resources and advocating for self-sufficiency.*

2021 Holiday Highlights



Myths vs. Facts

MYTH:
FOOD PANTRIES ONLY PROVIDE FOOD

FALSE

FACT: THE SHARING CENTER IS A COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER.

- Employment Assistance
- Domestic Violence Services
- Housing and Homelessness
- Household & Clothing
- Food Pantry
- Senior Services
- Children's services
- Veteran's Services
- And so much more!

Call us today! (262) 298-5535

MYTH:
"SOMEONE NEEDS IT MORE THAN I DO"

FALSE

FACT: THE SHARING CENTER HAS RESOURCES FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

Call us today! (262) 298-5535

MYTH:
EVERYONE WILL KNOW I'M USING A FOOD PANTRY

FALSE

FACT: THE SHARING CENTER HAS DISCRETE DELIVERY AND PICK-UP OPTIONS.

Call us today! (262) 298-5535

One of our focuses this year was to challenge the stigmas associated with accessing public programs and services. With the goal of advocating for diversity, equity, and inclusion, the Sharing Center focused on reaching all stakeholders in the local community through social media platforms to fight some of the common myths and stigmas around public assistance.

The Myths vs. Facts campaign highlighted common misconceptions associated with organizations and countered these with the facts. Our commitment to serving residents of Western Kenosha County is not limited to sharing services and supplies, but advocating for those who rely on access to our organization.

Back to School

Connecting with families through the local school districts has been challenging due to the impacts of COVID. This year, the Sharing Center sent representatives to area schools during their annual open house night in August. The purpose was two-fold, as Executive Director Sharon Pomaville explained, "For some families, we were able to provide information and resources for back-to-school supplies. For others, we were able to explain what the Sharing Center does for the community which turned into in-kind donations and the spread of information about our organization."

Kori Kopp, a Wheatland Center School Counselor and Homeless Liason, has worked hand in hand with the Sharing Center over the past several years. Kopp says that the Sharing Center is her "go-to" when families require support for a variety of reasons. Her hope is to continue working with the Center and community leaders to support the local community and eliminate the stigma around asking for help.



UW Extension Partnerships

UW Extension is a division of the University of Wisconsin- Madison. The goal of UW Extension is to connect, support, and strengthen the citizens of Wisconsin through various programs and initiatives. In 2021, the Sharing Center partnered with UW Extension in a number of new ways to serve the citizens of Western Kenosha County.



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



MONEY
TALK

Financial Coaching

Becoming financially literate is the first step toward long-term financial well-being. Twice per month, a UW Extension representative visits the Sharing Center to assist community members with financial literacy. Clients can bring in personal financial documents and ask questions about how to create a better budget, save money, make their dollars go further, and set financial goals. Clients have the option of setting up recurring one-on-one meetings or dropping in for a one-time check-in with the UW Extension representative.



Spice It Up

The Sharing Center's services do not end once a client has obtained food. FoodWise is a UW Extension program providing weekly recipes to families based on the food currently stocked and available at the Sharing Center. Healthy and nutritious meal ideas are offered utilizing pantry food items through quick and easy to read recipes that are available in both English and Spanish.

Another program through FoodWise is the Spice it Up! Program. Oftentimes, clients using food pantry services can obtain food, but many pantries lack other essentials such as spices. This year, the Sharing Center and FoodWise put together a program called "Spice It Up!". The goal of the program is to provide families with a new spice each month of the year along with recipes that use the spice. By the end of the year, families will have 12 new spices along with multiple recipes. Recipes and spices are tailored with seasonal flavors and in-season products in mind.

Gathering the Community

Local Gatherings



This year Center staff and volunteers welcomed the return of opportunities to engage with our community. We participated in a variety of parades and community events:

- Twin Lakes 4th of July parade
- Wilmot Homecoming parade
- Paddock Lake Christmas parade
- Salem Lakes Christmas parade
- Paddock Lake Festival Foods Pumpkin Fest

National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week

By order of the Kenosha County Executive, November 13-21 2021 was declared National Hunger and Homelessness week. A number of schools, communities and cities took part in nationwide efforts to bring greater awareness and support for those facing hunger and homelessness. The Sharing Center served as one of the many Homeless Awareness Prevention partners who co-sponsored, hosted events, collected donations and "Shed a Light" on the prevalence of homelessness and hunger within our community.



Sharing Center Director Sharon Pomaville participated as a guest speaker during the Courageous Conversation on Hunger and Homelessness to address the impact of hunger and homelessness in Western Kenosha County and the barriers and disparities experienced by those affected.



A Focus On Diversity & Inclusion

Sharing Center staff completed and participated in a variety of training sessions focused on diversity and inclusion initiatives. The Sharing Center recognizes the need to continually educate staff and volunteers in order to promote inclusivity.

- Taking a Faithful Stance for Equity by Wisdom Wisconsin
- "Ground Water Training" & "Beyond This Moment" by the Racial Equity Institute
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace Certificate from the University of South Florida
- Trauma + Resilience Training by the Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care (BOSCOG)
- Gateway's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Workshop
- Smart Justice Townhall: Shattering Stigmas and Keys to Successful Re-entry by the ACLU of WI
- BOSCOG Housing Navigator 101
- Promoting Racial Equity in Policy, The Racial Equity and Hunger National Learning Network
- Wisconsin Counties Association Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion series
- BOSCOG Kenosha Coalition Presentation on Homelessness
- More Good Trouble: How to Advocate for Change by Marquette University Fellows
- Aurora Virtual Community Conversation: COVID-19 Vaccine in Racine and Kenosha
- No Kid Hungry & WalMart 2021 Rural Child Hunger Summit
- Healthy Impact of COVID-19 on Communities of Color by Center for Ethnic Studies Annual Conference
- 21-Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge by FSNE

Community Connections

Western Kenosha County Partnership Breakfast

The Sharing Center has recognized strength in numbers. We know collaborative efforts are crucial to effectively serving and supporting our community. On October 21st, over 40 organizations/partners gathered at the center for the Western Kenosha County Partnership Breakfast. Topics included: expanded services to meet the needs of our community, implementing stronger referral processes, strengthening partnerships amongst organizations, opening the lines for better communication, working together to support one another to accomplish goals, and how to collaborate for the purpose of making sure each individual receives the help and services they need no matter which door they walk through.



Forest County Potawatomi
FOUNDATION

In support of our continued efforts to improve our services, during the month of December, the Sharing Center was chosen by Potawatomi to receive a grant worth \$14,450 to be used for new pantry shelving units.



More Than A Car Dealership

At Zeigler Subaru of Kenosha, providing great cars may be their biggest goal, but it's far from their only one. At every turn, Subaru of Kenosha looks to make a difference in our community by elevating local charities and nonprofits.

Nationally, Subaru hosts the Share the Love Event. Through this event, people who purchase vehicles select a charity for which Subaru will contribute a \$250 donation. The national charities buyers can choose from include ASPCA, Make-A-Wish, National Parks, and Meals-on-Wheels. Additionally, Subaru dealerships offer charities that are local. For Zeigler Subaru of Kenosha that has been the Sharing Center, where they contributed over \$34,000. As Zeigler Subaru encourages customers to select the Sharing Center for their charity of choice.

Why? They feel the impact is greatest when contributing the money to local organizations. "The national money donations rarely make it back in large scales in the local community," explains Mike Bihun, General Manager at Zeigler Subaru.

Some employees of Zeigler Subaru know the impact to which Mike is referring. In the 1990s Laurie Myra, the current BDC Director at Subaru, relied on the Sharing Center to provide clothing and other resources as her family recovered from a house fire. Laurie still lives near the Center and appreciates the role it plays in helping the more rural citizens of Kenosha.

Unsurprisingly, The Sharing Center isn't the only beneficiary of Subaru's generosity. Whether it's rewarding scholarships to students or matching donations for a select time at Kenosha Arts Center, Subaru is always finding ways to make our community better. For Subaru, it's about "[Making] someone's life different." In doing this they have created a helping culture and made their business so much more than a car dealership.



\$34,887



Staff Spotlight

In their own words...

Christy Villalobos and Stephanie Witkiewicz help manage day-to-day operations within the center. They have helped to increase the capacity and efficiency of the center in many ways. They were interviewed to learn more about their responsibilities and what they enjoy most about the community.

Christy Villalobos



As a long-time resident of Kenosha County, I am excited and humbled to be a part of an organization that provides so many resources to families. Some of my responsibilities include assisting clients needing various social services, ensuring the front office runs smoothly, working with the Pantry Manager for food distribution, being responsible for intake and reception, registering new families, and determining eligibility for services.

My passion is helping people to be their best. I also love working with children. At the Sharing Center, I have the opportunity to assist others in receiving the help they need in various areas of their life. I enjoy working with the public. I feel like working here is not a job but a reward.

"Helping in a small way today can create a big change in someone's life tomorrow."

I love seeing the joy on someone's face when I have helped them fill a need or solve a problem. I enjoy working with all of the staff and volunteers. At the end of the day, I feel accomplished and satisfied knowing I did my part in helping Western Kenosha County be the best it can be!

I help organize and coordinate the distribution of food to our families, coordinate volunteers, work with families and individuals to find affordable housing options, and participate in community outreach, marketing, and fundraising.

I am passionate about every aspect of the Sharing Center and I am thankful to be a part of it. I enjoy working directly with families to help them solve problems. Seeing smiles on people's faces brings me a lot of joy!

Stephanie Witkiewicz



"I am thankful for the volunteers who help me serve others."

in
loving memory
of
Sandy Langel



Locally Sourced; Food for All



Ensuring students continued to receive healthy meals has been of high importance throughout the summer months. The Sharing Center in conjunction with the Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee, partnered with Gourmet Gorilla to provide weekly meal delivery services to students.

Gorilla-To-Go boxes included easy to prepare menus paired with fresh ingredients such as: whole grains, proteins, fruit, vegetables and dairy. Each box contained enough supplies for 7 lunches and breakfasts per child.

The success of this program went above and beyond anticipation with 86,000 meals delivered to 1,500 families between June 10th and August 26th. As the first program of its kind, The Sharing Center was honored to be a part of such a successful outcome and thankful to be able to provide nutritious food options for children throughout the summer.

NOW SERVING MEALS-TO-GO



In 2021, The Sharing Center served 284,000 lbs. of food.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**



Community Garden Success

From Ground to Client in Hours; Certified Fresh & Organic

I can say one of the most exciting things about the garden is that we were able to serve families the freshest possible vegetables. We would pick them out of the garden and less than 2 hours later they were being distributed to homes. **You can't get any fresher than that!**

- Stephanie Witkiewicz, Pantry Manager



Get Connected

How can I help?

Volunteer:

Daytime volunteer shifts available Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Check our website for annual fundraisers, drives, and seasonal programs!



Financial Contributions:

Your monetary contributions make a difference and are tax-deductible. Many companies offer donation match programs. Recurring donations through your financial institution or PayPal make donating easy.



Planned Giving:

Designating the Center as a beneficiary is a lasting investment in your community.



Host a fundraiser or drive:

Collect food, paper goods, personal hygiene items, school supplies, etc.; create a fundraising event (Penny Wars, Fun Runs, Birthday Donations).



AmazonSmile:

Every time you shop on Amazon, 0.5% of your purchases can be designated for "Sharing Center Inc.".

Go to smile.amazon.com.



Board Member:

Apply to become a board member of the Sharing Center. See our website for more information.



Corporate Partnership:

Support our work through corporate giving, volunteer projects, in-kind donations, events, and food drives.



Our goals in 2022 are to:

Offer more bilingual services



Work with local companies to provide more employment opportunities for individuals



Add an additional part-time staff member to meet our growing needs



If you or someone you know possesses the skills, abilities, knowledge, or resources to help us achieve these goals, reach out and volunteer!



Scan me with your smart phone for more info!

Our Team



Sharon Pomaville
Executive Director
Salem



Larry Ellis
President
Trevor



Jenni Hansen
Vice President
Salem



Rick Honaker
Treasurer
Trevor



Chris Holmstrom
Secretary
Paddock Lake



Dragutin "Danny" Djordjevic
Board Member
Racine



Maria Dillman
Board Member
Lake Geneva



Scott Schupbach
Board Member
Lyons Township



Julie Peterkort
Board Member
Kenosha



Sheree Hagen
Board Member
Silver Lake



Tom Neave
Board Member
Paddock Lake





Thank you to the countless interns, volunteers, and community members who helped make 2021 a year full of accomplishments for our community.

