

STEP UP

STEP

ST. LOUIS PARK EMERGENCY PROGRAM

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STEP accepts donations

M, W, Th 8 AM-4 PM; Tu 12 PM-8 PM; F 8 AM-12 PM

Thank You!

STEP appreciates the consistent support that we receive from this wonderful community. We would like to thank everyone who helps in ways big and small and want to highlight a few of our recent donors.

Thank you to: **Otto Bremer Trust** for their grant; **Park Nicollet Foundation**-transportation grant; **Parkshore Senior Living** for the fundraiser at their annual pancake breakfast; **Temple Israel** for the FoodShare fundraiser; **Westwood Lutheran Church** for use of facility & May food drive. Thanks to **Holy Family Catholic Church** for their year-round food collection; **Syngenta** for a grant, **RBC Foundation-USA** for a grant. Thanks also to **Sicora, Inc.** for volunteering the entire staff for a work day at STEP and constructing and donating produce carts and the labor to install a new sink. Thank you **Open Your Heart to the Hungry and Homeless** for a grant allowing us to purchase a new freezer for the food shelf.

Also, thanks to all the individuals who keep us going!

FIND STEP ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Get updates on needs, events & volunteering! Search for STEPslp.



DONATE ONLINE

Support STEP through a one-time or monthly donation at STEPslp.org.

Save the Date!

"Last Day of Summer" event hosted by St. Louis Park's Aquatic Park to support STEP is **Sunday, August 27** from **3-7pm**. Bring a non-perishable food item or cash donation and pool entrance is \$1. Season pass holders who bring a donation will receive a coupon for one free small fountain beverage of choice. *Please come out for a fun day and to support STEP!*

STEP in Steel Toe Event

5:00-7:00pm, **Thursday, September 28** at Steel Toe Brewing. Stay tuned for ticket details at stepslp.org. Last year the event sold out.

Empowering Lives & Restoring Hope.

STEP UP

A Newsletter for Volunteers, Donors and Friends of the St. Louis Park Emergency Program

Summer 2017

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Food Rescue

Allison Bittner, Food Shelf and Volunteer Manager

STEP has recently embarked on a new food rescue program that partners with two local grocery stores in St. Louis Park.

Food rescue allows food that can no longer be sold or used by the grocery store to be collected by STEP and distributed to our clients. Often, this food is close to expiration date, has less-than-perfect



Food Rescue continued on page 3

Emergency Housing Assistance

Derek Burrows Reise, Executive Director

If you could help save your neighbor from homelessness, would you do it?



According to the U.S. Census, 36.8% of St. Louis Park renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing. Due to a lack of affordable options, many low-income families **spend well above half their income on housing**. When so much income goes to housing, it is easy to imagine how difficult it is to build savings to weather a job loss, health problem, or another crisis. Something as common as a car repair can endanger a family's ability to make rent that month.

If a family loses their housing, the ensuing cycle is hard to recover from. Fewer landlords will rent to families with eviction-

related court records. People with low credit scores and housing records often pay more for poorer housing.

STEP proactively prevents homelessness. St. Louis Park families facing a momentary financial crisis can apply for help. We evaluate each situation and provide those in greatest need with a one-time emergency assistance grant. **The program keeps families housed.**

We can prevent or stop the cycle of insecure housing. To help a St. Louis Park family stay housed and secure, donate to STEP's *Housing Assistance Program*, and together we will help our neighbors in need. A donation of any amount via check or online will make a difference.

A contribution to STEP's Housing Assistance Program will assist a St. Louis Park family in danger of losing their housing. STEP's goal is to raise at least \$15,000 to maintain our current level of emergency assistance. Contribute with the enclosed envelope or at stepslp.org.

Empowering Lives & Restoring Hope.

STEP UP

Being a Responsible Part of the Community

Derek Burrows Reise, Executive Director

STEP's driving purpose is to identify, address, and respond to the critical and emergency needs of residents in St. Louis Park. Every day, staff and volunteers make that vision a reality. Over the course of 42 years, the dedication of staff, volunteers, and board members has built STEP into a key St. Louis Park institution.

We continue to stay focused on our mission, but we must be mindful of our wider responsibilities. STEP has taken recent actions to fulfill our social responsibility in ways that support our mission.

Food waste is an enormous societal problem. Food that could go to those in need goes to landfills. STEP now "rescues" still good food that would otherwise be thrown out by local grocery stores. For spoiled food, STEP uses an organic recycler to ensure food waste becomes compost, not trash. We save hundreds of thousands of pounds of food from going to landfills.

Back to School Supply Drive



It's already time to think about back to school!

STEP preparations are in full swing to round up volunteers and collect supplies to serve and help prepare over **450 St. Louis Park children** with the school supplies they need for the upcoming school year.

There is still more to be done. If you would like to make a donation of school supplies, please check out our wish lists online at **Amazon School Supply Wish List** and **Target School Supply Wish List** via our website. Items purchased online will be sent directly to STEP. Donations can also be dropped off at STEP (6812 W. Lake St. in St. Louis Park) and are appreciated by August 13.

For more information on donating or volunteering, please give us a call at 952.925.4899. Thank You!

Being true to the "Emergency" in the St. Louis Park Emergency Program. STEP installed an AED and staff were trained in CPR. Cardiac arrest is a common occurrence, and each moment matters in saving a life. STEP is now better prepared as part of the SLP Fire Department initiative for a community that is better equipped to respond to cardiac arrest.

The City of St. Louis Park has adopted an Energy Action Plan with a community goal for 100% clean energy and net zero greenhouse gas emission. STEP will begin to do our part towards this ambitious goal by installing solar panels on our roof later this year. With this action, STEP will be part of a solution for a greener planet and community. Over 25 years, STEP will save thousands of dollars in electricity charges that we can put toward serving our mission.

We are part of an interconnected world. STEP remains committed to fulfilling the promise of our mission and being responsible to our community.

STEP's Most Needed School Supplies

- 3 inch sturdy binders
- 2-pocket folders w/o prongs (PURPLE)
- College ruled spiral notebooks (PURPLE)
- Wide ruled spiral notebooks (BLUE, YELLOW, PURPLE)
- Composition notebooks (WIDE) **NOT BLACK**
- Sketchbooks—Canson, Strathmore: 9x12, spiral, no lines
- Dry Erase Markers—Thick
- Elmers large glue sticks
- Crayola 8 count WASHABLE Markers: Thick, Classic Colors
- Pencil boxes
- Small pointed scissors **NOT ROUNDED**
- Large pointed scissors
- Backpacks for Middle & High school students

Backpacks are needed in July. Other

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Volunteer Spotlight: Barb & George Ensure STEP is Prepared for Emergency

Derek Burrows Reise, Executive Director

The St. Louis Park Fire Department recently rolled out their partnership with the PulsePoint smartphone app as a means to better respond to lives in danger. PulsePoint is designed to assist emergency responses in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest.

In the case of an emergency call when CPR is required, the St. Louis Park Fire Department can activate the system to alert nearby citizens trained in CPR to respond as soon as possible.

Using this as an opportunity to be part of a prepared network, STEP recently installed an AED (automatic external defibrillator) in our building. We were able to do so thanks to a donation from STEP food rescue volunteers, Barb and George Hagemann. Their donation also covered CPR/AED training for four STEP staff members.

Thanks to Barb's and George's leadership and generosity, STEP is now part of the emergency network to save lives.

Barb and George are both trained in CPR and have signed up to be PulsePoint responders in St. Louis Park.

The need for AEDs and CPR training is personal to Barb Hagemann. She witnessed a person at a grocery store experience cardiac arrest. The store was not prepared with an AED. She utilized CPR but understood that with AEDs and trained community members, we can save more lives.



Food Rescue (continued from page 1)



Produce carts donated by Sicora Inc.

packaging, or the store simply has too much of a particular product. STEP is now collecting food from grocery stores five days a week thanks to a team of very dedicated volunteers, a new Food Rescue Coordinator staff position, and the grocery stores that are invested in their local community.

Our Food Rescue volunteers collect food at the local grocery store and bring it to STEP to be sorted, organized and stocked in our food shelf by rescue, warehouse and food shelf volunteers. This program allows STEP to increase the healthfulness, freshness and variety of food we are able to offer our clients. We pride ourselves on being able to offer items beyond shelf stable pantry items. STEP believes everyone should have consistent access to a variety of fresh produce, meat and dairy items. We devote a large amount of staff and volunteer time to this effort. By offering more items, including fresh produce, clients can better create well-rounded meal options for themselves and their families.

We recently received a generous donation from St. Louis Park-based Sicora Inc., of two beautiful produce carts that allow us to more quickly and effectively display our produce selection in the food shelf. Sicora, Inc. also donated the installation of a sink in our warehouse to assist food rescue operations. It is heartwarming to be able to provide items such as yogurt, avocados and fresh nectarines on a daily basis.