



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT de PAUL OF BROWN COUNTY

P.O. Box 577, 2901 Long Lake Road, Nashville, Indiana 47448 812-988-8821



Back to School Report 2021-Extending Our Reach During A Pandemic!

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Brown County has served families in need in Brown County continuously since April, 1988 — 33 years of continuous service.

Currently located at 2901 Long Lake Road, the distribution center provides a client choice food pantry and warehouse which also offers furniture, clothing, appliances, household goods, to and personal care items. Between 12 and 15% of the Brown County population have contact with SVDP each year. During this fiscal year (October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021), our operations included both serving our neighbors in need at the our Warehouse/Pantry at 2901 Long Lake Road as well as partnering with COAD, Northern Brown County Food Alliance, TRIAD and others to host pop-up distributions. In total, 3545 households (duplicate count) were served 244,518 pounds of food. In addition, there were special distributions of household cleaning supplies, personal care items, and God's Grace distributed more than 600 coats during one or more pop-ups.

The Back to School program began operation in 2004. It was initially started with a request from the Brown County Community Foundation to facilitate the intentions of the Truemper Family who created an endowment designated for shoes and clothing for children. Since 2004, the program has continuously grown through fundraising, grant writing, and personal donations. For 2021 a voucher valued at \$60.00 which could be redeemed at Walmart in Columbus, IN was provided to the parents, grandparents, foster parents and/or guardians for each school-age child. **This year 576 vouchers were redeemed for a total program cost of \$33796. Speedway gas cards and ear buds were also provided which increased the programs total impact on Brown County school-age children to \$35,251.**

Fundraising efforts began in January and continued throughout the year. In early summer, mailing lists were compiled and 2500 post cards detailing the Back to School distribution program were prepared for distribution. Eligibility was determined by the family with the invitation being extended to any family who said they needed help with back to school expenses. Ultimately, when the final report was compiled we found that the majority of the families who participated were those who had been active at the SVDP food pantry or were participants in the emergency/pop-up food distributions.

Post cards were mailed to addresses on file, distributed at the pantry and at food pop-ups, provided to numerous community partners and churches, distributed at the Brown County Fair and also at God's Grace, On the Road Again event in July. Vouchers were available to be picked up on July 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, 31 and August 2, 27, and 9. Families had until August 10 at 9:00 p.m. to make their selections and redeem the voucher at the Walmart Customer Service Desk.

Given the cost of transportation, families were also offered a \$5.00 Speedway gas card. Some families declined but 200 families did gratefully accept the offer.

The yield rate (ratio of vouchers picked up to vouchers redeemed) was the highest in the program history with only 19 vouchers not being used. In some cases, families with a number of students in the same household did not use all the vouchers they picked up. A few families determined they had other resources and did not use the voucher.

2021 Overview

| # | Description | Value/Cost |
|---------------|---|------------------|
| 595 vouchers | Were picked up by families for their students | |
| 576 vouchers | Were redeemed for a total cost | \$33796 |
| 670 pairs of | Shoes, boots and/or sandals were selected | \$8814 |
| 266 students | Purchased one or more packages of socks | \$2777 |
| 247 students | Purchased one or more kinds of underwear | \$4395 |
| 139 students | Purchased a backpack | \$2702 |
| 82 students | Purchased a set of ear buds or head phones | \$ 638 |
| 28 students | Purchased a water bottle or lunch box | \$279 |
| 26 students | Purchased a calculator | \$326 |
| 10 students | Purchased a usb drive, computer mouse, compass or protractor, label maker, hole punch, or sketch book | \$117 |
| 572 students | Selected school supplies such as paper, pencils, crayons, markers, notebooks, binders etc. | \$13748 |
| 200 families | Gratefully accepted a \$5.00 Speedway Gas Card (funding provided by a private donor) | \$1000 |
| 300 | Earbuds were provided by a private donor | \$1455 |
| | TOTAL PROGRAM SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY | \$35, 251 |
| # of Cards | 2500 Invitation post cards were distributed to the community by mail and by dozens of volunteers | |
| Yield Rate | 96.8% of vouchers picked up were redeemed | |
| Average Value | Average voucher was redeemed for \$58.57 | |
| 237 | Different households picked up vouchers | |
| 19 vouchers | Were picked up but not used, however, only 6 households did not use any vouchers | |
| 231 | Different households redeemed one or more vouchers | |

Distribution of vouchers redeemed by school for the past 6 years:

| School Attending | Number of Children/Youth Served | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| Helmsburg Elementary | 30 | 31 | 27 | 27 | 21 | 85 |
| Sprunica Elementary | 46 | 57 | 41 | 42 | 51 | 99 |
| Van Buren Elementary | 37 | 45 | 38 | 34 | 45 | 77 |
| Brown County Middle School | New for 2021 | | | | | 135 |
| Brown County Intermediate | 36 | 48 | 59 | 61 | 62 | |
| Brown County Junior High | 41 | 36 | 38 | 42 | 61 | |
| Brown County High School | 64 | 76 | 84 | 77 | 91 | 110 |
| Home School | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 10 |
| Indian Creek Schools | 7 | 12 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 22 |
| Head Start, Lori's Tons of Fun | New for 2020 | | | | 7 | 7 |
| Other Schools Outside County | 5 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 31 |
| TOTAL | 270 | 308 | 303 | 300 | 357 | 576 |

28 years of engaging with Brown County families preparing for a new school year!

| Year | Number Served |
|--------------|----------------------|
| 2004 | 49 children |
| 2005 | 87 children |
| 2006 | 97 children |
| 2007 | 112 children |
| 2008 | 184 children |
| 2009 | 187 children |
| 2010 | 183 children |
| 2011 | 183 children |
| 2012 | 224 children |
| 2013 | 228 children |
| 2014 | 289 children |
| 2015 | 294 children |
| 2016 | 270 children |
| 2017 | 308 children |
| 2018 | 303 children |
| 2019 | 300 children |
| 2020 | 357 children |
| 2021 | 576 children |
| Total | 4231 children |

2021 Back to School Participants by School and Grade Level

| School | Grade | # | School | Grade | # |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Brown County HS | 9 | 31 | Brown County Middle | 6 | 51 |
| | 10 | 30 | | 7 | 36 |
| | 11 | 22 | | 8 | 48 |
| | 12 | 27 | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Helmsburg Elem | Pre-K | 12 | Sprunica Elem | Pre-K | 12 |
| | K | 16 | | K | 17 |
| | 1 | 16 | | 1 | 15 |
| | 2 | 6 | | 2 | 15 |
| | 3 | 9 | | 3 | 8 |
| | 4 | 17 | | 4 | 16 |
| | 5 | 9 | | 5 | 16 |
| | | | | | |
| Van Buren Elem | Pre-K | 7 | Indian Creek Elem | | 8 |
| | K | 9 | Indian Creek Inter | | 4 |
| | 1 | 10 | Indiana Creek Middle | | 6 |
| | 2 | 14 | Indiana Creek HS | | 4 |
| | 3 | 13 | | | |
| | 4 | 12 | | | |
| | 5 | 12 | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Home School | Pre-K | 1 | Franklin Community | | 1 |
| | 1 | 2 | Greenwood Christian | | 2 |
| | 2 | 1 | Columbus Sign Academy | | 1 |
| | 3 | 1 | Columbus North HS | | 2 |
| | 4 | 1 | Northwood Elem | | 3 |
| | 5 | 1 | Eastern Green Elem | | 1 |
| | 6 | 1 | Tabernacle Christian | | 4 |
| | 7 | 1 | Lillian Schmitt Elem | | 2 |
| | 8 | 1 | Taylorville Elem | | 2 |
| | | | ABC School Columbus | | 2 |
| Head Start | Pre-K | 6 | Parkside Elem Columbus | | 2 |
| Lori's Tons of Fun | Pre-K | 1 | Hookbridge Autism Ctr | | 2 |
| | | | Cortland Elementary | | 1 |
| Northside Middle | | 2 | Indpls School for Deaf | | 1 |
| Seymour Middle | | 2 | Columbus Christian | | 1 |

Summary of Funds for 2021 Back to School Program

| Description of Funding Source | Amount |
|--|-----------------------|
| Church of the Lakes, Nineveh, IN | 1400.00 |
| Jackson Township Trustee, Brown County, IN | 500.00 |
| South Central Indiana REMC Community Fund, Martinsville, IN | 3500.00 |
| Brown County Community Foundation & Truemper Fund | 4456.12 |
| Brown County Lion's Club, Nashville, IN | 1000.00 |
| South Central District of SVDP | 2000.00 |
| St. Vincent de Paul Funds, St. Agnes Church & Individual Donations | 19940.01 |
| Private donor donated 300 earbuds (valued at \$4.88 each) | 1455.00 |
| Private donor donated 200-\$5.00 Speedway Gas Cards | 1000.00 |
| Total Program Expenditures | \$35, 251.13** |
| | |

**At the time of this report some funding sources are still pending.

Back to School 2021 –Extending our Reach to those in Need

In the summer of 2021, St. Vincent de Paul of Brown County celebrated 17 years of administering a Back-to-School program. We always recall at this time, the courageous effort of Linda Beckman and Barb Tuley when they answered a call from the Brown County Community Foundation to implement a program made possible by a gift from the Charles Truemper Fund. The intent of the donor was to provide shoes, socks, and other clothing to Brown County school children in need. In that first year, there were only enough funds to provide \$20 vouchers for 49 children for one-half of the alphabet. It broke Barb and Linda's heart once they realized the enormity of the need. From that realization grew an ever evolving commitment which this year realized 576 students receiving \$60 vouchers.

John Aumage and Shirley Boardman coordinate the program, with John handling the contact with Walmart, purchasing gift cards used for distribution, and keeping a detailed spreadsheet which tracks families as they pick up and redeem their voucher. This meticulous recordkeeping helps identify outstanding vouchers and allows us to make reminder calls etc. It also means many trips to Walmart to keep up with the accounting and ensuring that all is going as planned with Walmart. Concurrently, John maintains a data environment that has family profiles, ages of children, and contact information. Kim Robinson, creates and maintains, the community pop-up directory of families and family profiles. Shirley handles fundraising, promotion of the program, special needs of families, and reporting.

A few reflections:

- Although the Brown County Schools were in a leadership transition, we were aided by the administrative staff in obtaining the school supply lists and were able to have them

available at the St. Agnes Church booth at the fair, at SVDP, and shared them with Mary Kilgore and Sandy Higgins for the On the Road Again/God's Grace event.

- Having ordered 2500 postcards, we were a little worried as to what the demand might be. We distributed the post cards widely at the food pop-ups, to churches, at the Brown County Fair, at On the Road Again, and mailed more than 500 to families who were in our data bases. The Northern Brown County Food Alliance, with Donna Niednagel at the helm, provided weekly guidance and input to the outreach effort.
- We opted to be generous, low barrier, and let families determine if they were in need. We saw no evidence of families "taking advantage" of the program. We took a page from the traditions of Mother's Cupboard and God's Grace and found that the majority of families we served were either participants in the SVDP food pantry or the pop-up distributions.
- The pandemic took a toll on some of our traditional funding sources. Some organizations who have funded the program in previous years have still not made an allocation. Others determined that the pandemic had exhausted their resources. Organizations who were forced to suspend fundraisers regrettably declined support for 2021. As a result, outreach to private donors was intensified with dozens of individuals providing funds, ranging from \$5.00 to a \$1000.
- This is a high touch program. Insuring families are tuned into the timeline, keeping up with the arrangements at Walmart and resolving a myriad of questions all result in many different forms of communication. And, of course, keeping dozens of donors and supporters informed is key to the continuity of the program. We are grateful!

Program report prepared by John Aumage, Treasurer and Back to School Coordinator, and Shirley Boardman, Secretary & Development Coordinator. Questions may be directed to Shirley Boardman at sboardma@indiana.edu or 812-322-8605.

Artwork cheerfully provided by Ransom Cole whose parents had all that was needed for his return to school but wanted to share some artwork for this year's report.

