

National Volunteer Week - by Linda Velez, Volunteer Engagement

National Volunteer Appreciation Week is an opportunity to shine a light on all our CES volunteers who are addressing food insecurity in our neighborhoods. Meeting our neighbors where they are.

When thanking volunteers for the time they provided after a shift, I often hear "oh it was nothing. I am happy to help how I can." The author Leo Buscaglia says it best:

"Too often we underestimate the power of touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."

Annually at CES, it takes close to 4,000 volunteers, to deliver 75,000 meals to seniors, provide 15,000 pounds of pet food, and provide food assistance to over 40,000 individuals.

These acts independently of themselves may seem simple to a volunteer; however, in its whole, to our neighbors, it has great impact. For that, we say THANK YOU.



Molly Hauver is a Food Shelf volunteer who noticed during a recent volunteer shift that CES was in need of hygiene items for our neighbors. She took action into her own hands and did a neighborhood drive. Amazing work, Molly!

POINTS OF LIGHT

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

APRIL 19-25



Volunteer Zack transporting carefully packed bags of groceries for clients



Volunteer Pearl restocking our Food Shelf freezer

CES Mission

Rooted in God's loving grace, Community Emergency Service transforms lives by serving neighbors, sharing resources and becoming community

~

a place where people come hungry and leave hopeful.

April / May 2021

1900 11th Ave S Phone: 612.870.1125
 Minneapolis, MN 55404 Fax: 612.870.1485
 www.cesmn.org ces@cesmn.org

Community Emergency Service

The Spotlight Newsletter

Beyond Bread to the Bread of Life... Beyond Ourselves to Jesus Christ

Giving Back to the Community

Imagine with me CES in the early 2000's. "Doc" as they called her, came into the basement of CES with a group of excited youth bearing wonderful prepared food. It was prior to the remodel of the building, which some may remember. Food was stored in the sanctuary pews, offices surrounded an open space in the basement with the middle open for clients to congregate.

This open space was also available for women with the Simpson Shelter to come around 5 pm to have a place to sleep for the night. That is where Doc and the youth from the confirmation class came in. Bethlehem Lutheran's youth would periodically bring food for the women, serving and interacting with them. It was a warm and caring time.

These were fond memories for Mary Tinkham, nicknamed "Doc," who has volunteered at CES for several decades, not only for the shelter, but also helping with Bethlehem Lutheran as they came to do food sorting.

Fast forward to 2021. Mary, or Doc, is back volunteering

at CES. Although Mary took a break from volunteering for a few years, once she retired in 2019 and then observed the unrest and devastation in Minneapolis in 2020, she saw that it created a food desert and wanted to help.

Feeling called to help neighbors, especially with meeting basic food needs, she began looking for a way to get involved. Being familiar with CES and knowing that "food is essential," Mary came back to CES. She gravitated to packing food for both the Food Shelf and Home Delivery programs two to three times per week.

This allowed Mary to use her project management skills and give to those in the community that she was concerned about. She loves how intentional the programs are in serving the clients.

The Food Shelf has bags of different cuisines, i.e., West and East African, Hispanic, Asian and regular American to name a few.

With her Home Delivery role, people order over the



A Home Delivery client receives her chosen groceries (pre-Covid photo)

phone. Some ask for a lot and some ask for very little. Some say their preference is for items such as mushrooms or crushed tomatoes or French style green beans. "I go on a search for those products, which the staff leadership encourages. Those who are sparse in their asking, I give an extra can of fruit when they order

only one. It is wonderful to give in this way."

"I love how well the programs embrace the needs of the clients. Not only are we meeting the basic needs of people, but we are here to honor the wishes of the individuals. Thank you for serving the community so well."



Director's Discourse

Good day friends,

April begins a new fiscal year for CES. As we talk about what the future may have in store for us, I inevitably find myself reflecting on what the last year brought to our door and how different that was from what we expected.

The pandemic changed everything for us professionally, and to a degree, personally. Much transpired to alter our goals and challenge our abilities. All our programs changed out of necessity, adjusting to the requirements of keeping staff, volunteers, and neighbors safe. The pandemic caused us to rethink the how and why of the processes we followed. Some of that rethinking resulted in creating a new vision for ways to serve and, in some cases, brought about permanent change. Only time will tell us what the new norm will be.

Personally, I contracted Covid-19 in November. After recovery from that, I exhibited a number of other health issues, which resulted in open-heart surgery. I have fully recovered and I now see that what Paul says

in Romans 8:28 is true: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." If we are willing, He will use all of these things that have transpired over the last year to make us stronger, more flexible and adaptable, and increase our faith in trusting Him for our provision.

At this juncture, I humbly say thank you. Thank you to all of our financial supporters who sustained us through one of the most difficult years this organization has endured. Thank you to all of those who volunteered to enable the continuation of our services. Thank you to our many partner congregations, institutions, and corporations, who provided resources of all kinds to help us fulfill our mission and calling. Thank you to staff who worked so tirelessly to make this a place where "people come hungry and leave hopeful." Lastly, as we enter into our 50th year of service, I want to thank the Board of Directors for providing both a short and long term vision to create a sustainable organization for another 50 years as we serve our community.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26

Thank you friends,

Mike Lloyd
Executive Director

Who is CES? - by Chris Nelson, Development

Years ago, leaders and staff asked the question: "Who are we?" "CES of course!?"

That works as high school cheer or in a family reunion—*Go Nelsons!* Really though, what makes Community Emergency Service... *us?* What guides how we act, treat our neighbors, and make our decisions?

That was the question they wrestled with: "Who are we?"

We won't bore you with the process or try to impress you with the amount of hours that were spent taking input and boiling it down. We do want to share with you the result and how it shaped us.

Our mission statement is solid and has a good tagline: "Rooted in God's loving grace, Community Emergency Service transforms lives by serving neighbors, sharing resources and becoming community—a place where people come hungry and

leave hopeful." To help you understand who we serve and our values, we need to set the stage. This is a focusing statement before we go into our values. "We operate in a neighborhood that is culturally, ethnically and religiously diverse. We strive to serve all our neighbors in need, as Christ would have us do, without distinction or test. We invite support from volunteers and donors and are open to collaboration with other agencies regardless of religious affiliation."

Our values are nice and short and really do describe the people we think we are and try to be:

We are a Community.

We respect the dignity of each person.

We are servants.

We are stewards.

We are good neighbors.

CES was started from Augustana Lutheran Church almost 50 years ago as an outpouring of love for the community, because of the love they received from Jesus. Situated in a neighborhood that is 70.7% people of color, 37.3% residents are foreign-born and 29.7% speak English less than "very well", CES serves many who might be called the stranger or alien. 31.8% are children and 42.3% are between the ages of 18-44.

The secret that many do not know is that just as our neighbors come to us in need, we need them too. That need to be helpful and care for others is what leads many of us to serve. And that service leads us to be part of something bigger than ourselves, which is who we are: a community serving together, for one another.



Volunteers visiting our neighbors at a senior care center for the Home Delivery program (pre-Covid photo)



Chilly days can't stop our Meals on Wheels volunteers from bringing hot meals to those in need



Bethlehem Lutheran Church recently hosted a food and supply drive to help provide for our community