

## ICA's Employment Services: The Final Piece of Providing Long-Term Stability

Our last newsletter highlighted ICA's homelessness prevention work. This season, we focus on **employment support, another way ICA is rounding out our programs** to meet our neighbors' needs.

ICA Employment Consultant Kerri Fischer has led this work over the last several years and speaks to the natural fit of this focus for ICA. "Lack of employment and 'underemployment' are the biggest reason people use the food shelf," she shares, so it makes sense to link these programs—and tie in ICA's food program along the way. **As Kerri puts it, "All three pieces work well together."**

As families encounter new challenges and emergencies during the pandemic, Kerri and the ICA team are stepping up to address each person's unique needs. Whether they are unemployed, "underemployed," or looking to make a career change, our employment program offers **resume building, job-search tools, online application assistance, interview practice, and more.**

**"My mantra is to meet clients where they're at," says Kerri.** "Some clients need brief encouragement and support, while others may need help several times



over a period of years. There's no limit to the number of times they can meet with me."

With some employers offering higher pay and better working conditions, Kerri sees **"a huge opportunity for people to improve their work situation."** For clients like Anna, ICA's flexible and timely support has been huge. Anna and her husband lost their jobs due to COVID. Shortly afterward, Anna's family received rental assistance and an emergency bag of nutritious food, while also receiving employment support.

With help from ICA Employment Services, Anna refreshed her resume, received job alerts and applied for positions. **Soon, Anna was offered an administrative position at a large, local healthcare company.**

Your support helps us continue building our employment program and maintain the needs of our neighbors like Anna.

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### ICA'S IMPACT: May - July 2021

**Distributed 248,945 pounds of food, equivalent to 146,438 meals**



**Met with 23 job seekers a total of 62 times**

**Served an estimated 1,031 households (2,765 individuals) across all services**





## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dan Narr

When I last wrote to you, I shared my excitement about how ICA's **strategic planning process** was helping us continue to redefine access as we aim to reach more people in new ways.



### Long-term Stability

Recognizing the power of fitting these pieces together, we are also pushing ourselves to reach people with the highest barriers to access. In September, we are proud to be **launching a food market at Gatewood Elementary**, where several barriers—from transportation to language — make it challenging for students and families to access nutritious food and services.

The market at Gatewood will give students consistent and convenient healthy food options. This not only eases food insecurity, but also helps kids focus on school. The partnership will also help families build relationships with ICA staff that could lead to housing or employment support.

This pilot project will be a model that leads to community connections with other new partners like Gatewood. The broader our circle of partners, the more individuals and families we can reach.

Of course, the ICA circle of partners includes you. Thank you so much for rising to **meet our \$130,000 match challenge celebrating 50 years of ICA**. With many of our neighbors still facing an uncertain future, your continued support will help keep our community strong.



## PROVIDING FRESH PRODUCE

ICA is proud to offer locally grown fruits and veggies at our choice-model food shelf. Throughout the year, roughly a dozen **community gardens** have contributed to this effort by growing and donating delicious and nutritious produce. One of our longest-serving partners, pictured above, is The Church of St. Therese of Deephaven. This year alone, their garden has provided 998 pounds of fresh produce (and going...) for ICA clients.

Meanwhile, ICA's **produce markets** will continue offering fresh fruits and veggies through October—free to anyone who attends! More information on these markets can be found at [icafoodshelf.org/produce-market](http://icafoodshelf.org/produce-market).

## SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS

As we look towards the upcoming school year, ICA will continue to work with 17 schools in the Minnetonka and Hopkins School Districts to provide **weekend food and snacks to students** in need.

Each **weekend bag** contains enough nonperishable food items to provide breakfast and lunch for one child for the weekend. We also include an ICA flyer that invites their entire family to visit our fully stocked choice-model food shelf.

Our **snack bins**, available for all schools to keep on site, are stocked with healthy grab-and-go options. These snacks help keep kids fueled throughout the school day, and in some cases, even replace a missing meal.

We currently need items including granola bars, fruit cups, applesauce pouches, pretzels, crackers and fruit snacks. Or, to support ICA school programs, please donate online at [icafoodshelf.org/donate](http://icafoodshelf.org/donate).



## DONOR PROFILE

### Carole and Marty Kaplan

As members of Oak Ridge Country Club for 25 years, and longtime ICA supporters, Carole and Marty Kaplan were excited to see our signature event, The Great Taste, move to a location near and dear to their hearts. "Oak Ridge brings people together from all over the Twin Cities," says Carole, former club president.

For the Kaplans, it's less about the space itself, and more about the community of people that make up Oak Ridge Country Club. **"It's more than just a country club. It's a family. It really is a family,"** says Carole.

And as a caring community, a group of members came together financially to help make the move to Oak Ridge a reality.

However, with the growing concern of the COVID-19 Delta variant, **ICA will host the 2021 The Great Taste event virtually to keep all of our neighbors safe.** With hope that the event will take place in-person at Oak Ridge Country Club in 2022, Carole and Marty cannot wait until we are all together again.

"We originally got involved with ICA through Oak Ridge. Wendy Robinson, the Director of Business



"Food, housing, and education are all basics of human life. Those areas are important to donate to, especially during COVID-19. Charities can do a lot for the communities they serve,"

-Marty Kaplan



Administration and Finance, was first involved with ICA's Empty Bowls event," Carole explains. "Soon after, Oak Ridge became more invested in ICA, offering staff volunteer opportunities at events and even donating soup for the event."

"Last year when COVID hit, Oak Ridge staff donated a month of their tips to ICA," adds Marty.

With the pandemic changing the way we live, ICA continues to grow and change with the needs of our neighbors. **"Food, housing, and education are all basics of human life. Those areas are important to donate to, especially during COVID-19.** Charities can do a lot for the communities they serve," says Marty.

Although we are unable to be in-person this year, Carole and Marty are excited for the big event. "It's important to keep ICA's name out there. People have worked so hard over the last year, we have to [bring awareness to ICA's work]!" Marty explains.

**We hope to "see" you online Thursday, October 14th!** For more information about The Great Taste, visit [www.icataste.org](http://www.icataste.org).



## THE great TASTE

**Thursday, October 14, 2021**

The Great Taste is an evening dedicated to celebrating the impact ICA Food Shelf has in our community and on the lives of our neighbors in need. **Our annual fundraiser will be held online this year.**

Learn more at [icataste.org](http://icataste.org)

# FALL 2021 AT ICA FOOD SHELF



**EVENTS** For the most up-to-date information, please visit our website: [icafoodshelf.org/event-calendar](http://icafoodshelf.org/event-calendar)



**Turkey Coupon Sales at Cub**  
Friday & Saturday,  
November 5-6 & 12-13

Volunteers will be at Minnetonka Cub Foods (Hwy 7 & 101) handing out turkey certificates, which allow shoppers to donate \$15 to provide one family with a turkey and other food this holiday season.



**Give to the Max Day**  
Thursday, November 18  
Give to the Max Day is a unique, online 24-hour outpouring of generosity for causes that make our communities stronger.

## Turkey Giveaway

Saturday, November 20

Just prior to Thanksgiving, ICA provides turkeys, sides and other holiday food items to families in need. The program is open to anyone in ICA's service area to ensure that everyone can enjoy their holidays with loved ones!

## "From the Heart" Holiday Variety Show at Excelsior Elementary

Saturday, November 20 | 4:00 p.m.

Kick off the holidays with a variety show, while supporting ICA Food Shelf. Monetary funds, nonperishable foods, gift cards and household supplies are being collected. You don't want to miss this fun evening!



**ICA Day at Maynards**  
Monday, November 29  
Spend the day enjoying a meal at Maynards! 100% of the proceeds benefit ICA Food Shelf.  
Reservations begin 11/1.



## Closing Day at Tommy's Tonka Trolley

Fall 2021

Join Tommy's Tonka Trolley for a free scoop of ice cream on their last day of the season. Freewill donations accepted for ICA. Watch your emails for the exact date!



## Ongoing

**Online Bazaar:** Browse a variety of items, from furniture, home goods and more. Proceeds benefit ICA Food Shelf. [www.icafoodshelf.org/online-bazaar](http://www.icafoodshelf.org/online-bazaar)

**ICA FOOD SHELF** 952.938.0729 · [icafoodshelf.org](http://icafoodshelf.org)

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ICA is a 501(c)3 organization. Tax ID # 41-0979010 Your donation is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Serving residents of Hopkins, Minnetonka, Excelsior, Shorewood, Deephaven, Greenwood, & Woodland since 1971.