

It's Time for the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign! And Our Neighbors in Need Are Counting on You

The state-wide Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign began over 20 years ago to help restock food shelves during their leanest months. It has since grown to become Minnesota's largest food and fund drive, ensuring that shelves remain full for another season.

ICA relies on the food and funds collected during March to get us through our next few months of operations. All food collected this month will help feed hungry families in our neighborhoods—including kids, working adults, disabled neighbors, and seniors. **Sponsored by Minnesota FoodShare, all food and funds collected during the month will be proportionally matched, which means your donations go even further.** The more we raise, the more your gift will multiply!



How Can You Get Involved?

- **Donate.** Contribute financially to ICA. Remember that all funds donated this month will be proportionally matched, so your gift will go even further. And thanks to our buying power, we can buy more food for the same dollar.
- **Host a Food Drive.** Food drives are a great way to raise awareness of the need in our community! Collect food; donate it to ICA. View our Food Drive Toolkit filled with ideas, resources, and posters at icafoodshelf.org/toolkit.
- **Attend Empty Bowls** on Tuesday, March 10. This family-friendly community event offers up delicious soup and handmade bowls. Join us as we celebrate our local schools, artists, and restaurants, all while raising funds to help those in need. All are invited! More info on the back cover or at hopkinsemptymbowls.org.
- **Shop.** **Lakewinds** Minnetonka, **Driskill's** Downtown Market, and **Tonkadale** Greenhouse are all offering roundups this month for ICA. We're also hosting an online silent auction March 1-8. Visit icafoodshelf.org/silent-auction to bid.
- **Involve Others!** Do your neighbors, coworkers, congregants, classmates, friends, and family know about the need in our community? Help us spread the word that it's easy to get involved and help. Let's ensure all our neighbors have enough healthy food to eat.



March has traditionally been a great month for ICA, thanks to the involvement of amazing neighbors like you. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of so many!

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ICA's Impact: October - December 2019

Families Served
1,414

Volunteer Hours Worked
12,081

Pounds of Food Distributed
361,134

that's equivalent to
300,945
meals!

ICA is Here to Stop Immediate Crisis

On a daily basis, we see many of our neighbors come to ICA for a variety of reasons: to pick up healthy, nutritious food to feed their families, to get connected to other resources such as energy assistance, or to receive help finding employment. While we provide a variety of services and resources to address a variety of needs, providing nutritious food to our neighbors in need is core to what we do. We see the scared look in someone's eyes as they try to address this immediate crisis.



Through your support, we promise to always have food on hand in times of need. While our full service, choice-model food shelf requires an appointment, we always have emergency bags for people without appointments. We also encourage individuals to stop by frequently to select items from our Community Area. This area is stocked with bread, veggies, and other perishable items. No appointment is needed which ensures that our neighbors in need always have access to fresh foods.

We know that our food program is essential to our community, and that without us, many individuals would not have enough to eat. **Before coming to ICA, a whopping 84% of clients skipped meals or ate less than they wanted to.** They didn't skip meals because they were too busy, forgot to eat, or were trying to lose weight. They skipped meals because their cupboards were bare. They skipped meals because they were giving their kids more food so they took less. Or, they skipped meals so they could pay other bills instead of purchasing groceries. In other words -- they were going hungry.



Our community is fortunate in so many ways – we have great schools, lovely neighborhoods, and a community of caring individuals. Together, we can ensure that all in our community have enough to eat.

As you read more about the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign, please consider participating and getting others involved. Your gifts, your service, and your caring truly do make a difference. Thank you for all the ways you help our neighbors.



Executive Director

The Impact of ICA Programs in our Local Schools

Last Spring, we surveyed the teachers, counselors, and social workers who administer our Weekend Bag and Snack Bin programs at Minnetonka and Hopkins schools. Here are some of their responses.



"The students have shared that these weekend bags provide assurance and peace of mind that they will have access to food no matter what."

-- Tanglen Elementary Social Worker



"Many of our students express gratitude for these snacks every week since they do not have much access to food at home."

-- Eisenhower Elementary Staff Member



"We have a few children who regularly come to school without breakfast. Our district does not supply breakfast, so I rely on the ICA snacks to help fill those needs."

-- Clear Springs Elementary Social Worker

ICA's School Programs Are Growing!

ICA offers two programs to our local schools: Snack Bins and Weekend Bags. Snack Bins consist of about 200 healthy snacks that teachers, social workers, and counselors can provide to kids experiencing food insecurity. Sometimes these snacks serve as breakfast, other times they are used mid-morning or after school. These snacks feed hungry kids during the school day, so that they are ready to learn and grow.

Our Weekend Bags consist of an assortment of non-perishable food; enough to feed one child over the weekend. School staff supply these bags to kids when they know they don't have enough food at home. The bags are designed to be easy to slip into a backpack and food that a child can prepare themselves.

These programs fill a vital need for the kids who use them. We partner with all schools in the Minnetonka and Hopkins districts. Staff are able to come in as often as they need to restock their supply.



Over the last two years, we have been working to adapt these programs to make them more useful and user-friendly for busy school staff. We've audited our numbers, changed the snacks to better reflect what schools need, and adjusted the items included to make them healthier. We've also been doing outreach to ensure that all schools know about and use these programs.

Due to an increasing need and demand for these programs, we are in need of additional support. We've collected a list of our most-needed items so that we can restock the bins and pack more bags to help our students finish the year strong. Please consider organizing a "snack food drive" or "kid's food drive" at your workplace or congregation. Monetary donations are also important as we can use our buying power to get great prices on the foods we most need.

To learn more about the cost of these programs and what it would look like to sponsor a weekend, a month, or year, please contact Patti Sinykin at patti@icafoodshelf.org.

Current Needs for ICA School Programs*

- Jelly or jam
- Granola bars
- Individually packaged healthy snacks (baked chips, pretzels, crackers, goldfish, etc.)
- Fruit cups
- Applesauce cups/pouches
- Graham crackers
- Fruit snacks/roll ups
- Oatmeal packets
- Canned soup (chicken noodle, tomato, etc.)
- Canned fruit (in its own juice)

*All items should be nut-free



Resources

Our **Food Drive Toolkit** is available at icafoodshelf.org/march-campaign.

Or check out our **Current Needs** at icafoodshelf.org/current-needs.

Scholarships Available

Each spring, ICA awards two \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors -- one to a Hopkins student and one to a Minnetonka student. This scholarship is funded by an ICA donor and is given to students who have volunteered with or supported ICA.

We are currently accepting applications from 2020 graduating seniors. For more information, please visit icafoodshelf.org/scholarship.

Recent Grants

ICA recently received grants from the following organizations:

- Allianz Life Insurance Company of North America
- Excelsior Morning Rotary
- Kopp Family Foundation
- Open Your Heart to the Hungry and Homeless

Thank you for your support!

Spring 2020 Events Calendar



March Campaign

March 1 - April 12

Help us raise \$150,000 and collect 150,000 pounds of food this March during the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign! Help us provide food to our neighbors in need by sponsoring your own food and/or fund drive. Learn more and view our Food Drive Toolkit at icafoodshelf.org/march-campaign.



March Online Silent Auction

Sunday, March 1 - Sunday, March 8

Bid on a variety of great items. All proceeds benefit ICA Food Shelf and go towards our March Campaign goal. View the auction at icafoodshelf.org/silent-auction.



March Round Ups

March 1 - 31

When you shop at **Driskill's** Downtown Market, **Lakewinds** Minnetonka, and **Tonkadale** Greenhouse this March, be sure to round up your purchase for ICA!



Empty Bowls

Tuesday, March 10 | 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

22nd annual fundraiser for ICA and ResourceWest, featuring student-made bowls, soup from local restaurants, fine art, live music, and amazing community. Freewill donations accepted. Opportunities still exist for sponsors, volunteers, and fine art donations. Learn more at hopkinsemptymbowls.org.



Letter Carriers' Food Drive

Saturday, May 9

Donate food at your mailbox! Learn more and sign up to volunteer at icafoodshelf.org/postal.

Save the Date!

Join ICA for these wonderful events as we raise funds to support our Kids' Summer Market and Choice-Model Food Shelf. Sponsorship opportunities available.

Contact Patti Sinykin to learn more:
patti@icafoodshelf.org or 952.279.0290.



Annual Report Now Available

Our 2019 Annual Report is now available to view and download at icafoodshelf.org/financial. To receive a copy by mail, please contact Community Relations Director Jill Holter at jill@icafoodshelf.org or 952.279.0280.

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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.