



Summer 2022

Our mission is to create a healthy and stable community for all.

From Your Garden to Our Neighbors

With rising temperatures and longer days, many of us are excited to get outside and start planting the garden. Unfortunately, a significant number of our neighbors don't have the means to grow their own vegetables and may not be able to afford rising produce costs.

At ICA, we keep the food shelf stocked with healthy, culturally relevant items throughout the year. However, rising costs are significantly impacting our purchasing power for a number of produce products.

If you are gardening this summer, please consider planting a little extra for an ICA donation. Your produce will be made available at our central food shelf location, various community food distributions, and for mobile deliveries.



Last summer, Minnetonka High student Quinci Wheeler built a raised garden bed and donated all produce to ICA Food Shelf.

Bridging the Summer Gap



For many of our neighbors, summer months are the most difficult to navigate. Kids leaving the classroom and starting summer vacation mean they no longer will receive breakfast or lunch at school for a number of weeks. For a family living paycheck to paycheck, they may not have the resources to fill that gap. Through your support, we are here to supplement with special summer programming.

The ICA Kids Summer Market provides community members with extra food for every school-aged child in their family. This special section includes kid-friendly, easy to prepare foods such as mac and cheese, peanut butter, crackers, granola bars, and other healthy snacks.

The ICA Summer Produce Markets start in May running through the beginning of the school year. Families are able to stop by and choose from a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. No appointment necessary and open to all.

Expanded Hours! As the demand for our food services continues to rise, we are expanding our operations to include Saturday hours. These convenient hours will help working families avoid long wait time for services.

To support these hours and host a food drive, contact Maggie Cool at (952) 279-0292 or maggie@icafoodshelf.org

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ICA'S IMPACT: January - March 2022

Distributed 275,836 pounds of food,
equivalent to **220,862 meals**



Met with **33 job seekers**
a total of **177 times**

Served an estimated 1,140 households (3,180 neighbors)
across all services





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dan Narr

Here at ICA, we're witnessing firsthand the impact of rising inflation on both our community and organization.

Many families, *perhaps just like yours*, are feeling the squeeze of higher prices at the gas pump and grocery store. As a result, new families in our community are seeking our services and returning for additional assistance.

This past April alone, nearly 60 new families visited our location on K-Tel Drive for food services. Of those new families, about a quarter self-identified as members of the Hispanic/Latino community.

As more of our neighbors come to ICA seeking the essentials, it's also becoming much more expensive for us to keep healthy, culturally relevant food available.

For example, the purchasing price of cucumbers, bell peppers, oranges, and apples has nearly doubled. In extreme cases, some specific produce items, like limes, are costing us *more than triple the typical price!*

In an effort to meet neighbors where they live and work, we're also being introduced to new families through our connections with the local school systems. **This past month, more than a dozen new families were serviced at our recently opened ICA Market located within Alice Smith Elementary in Hopkins.**

As we navigate an uptick in demand for our services, continued community expansion, and rising purchasing costs; your support of ICA Food Shelf is needed more than ever. Gifts to our organization, both large and small, are helping keep local kids fed this summer, parents employed, and families in their homes. **Thank you so much for allowing us to continue offering our vital services.**



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and ICA Food Shelf is looking to offer as much assistance as possible in this area.

Right now, ICA offers free mental health sessions every week in collaboration with Relate Counseling Center. Those sessions are available every Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

According to Relate staff, there are four easy ways to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month and set yourself on a better path to long-term wellness.

- **Talk it out:** This can simply mean having a conversation with a friend or family member about how you have been feeling.
- **Take time for self-care:** A number of different options are available based on interests, such as going for a walk, practicing yoga, or setting aside some quiet time for reflection.
- **Practice positive self talk:** According to the experts at Relate, self-affirmation can go a long way in enhancing your mental health.
- **Make an appointment with a therapist:** With ICA and Relate, it's easy to connect with a mental health professional.

Free counseling appointments for anyone in our community can be scheduled in person with Relate staff at ICA or by calling (952) 932-7277 and asking to schedule an ICA appointment.

DONOR PROFILE

At ICA, we're very fortunate to have a diverse group of supporters that come from all different walks of life. It's especially enlightening for us when we have the opportunity to learn more about their respective backgrounds. Our development team recently connected with a longtime financial supporter* with the goal of learning more about why this individual first started contributing to ICA.

As it turns out, this gentleman began supporting ICA Food Shelf shortly after his mother received services from us in the late 2000's. As he describes it, she has long-suffered with alcohol dependency and as a result, lost her previous job. **"Unfortunately, like too many people, she was already living check to check and then lost her job without a safety net,"** he explains.

It was at that time she turned to ICA for food services, rent assistance, and utility assistance. **As this ICA supporter puts it, "Thankfully, there was someone to catch her when she needed it most."** He's happy to report that since this time, she has found consistent work, established a savings account, and received assistance for her dependency problems.



**Names and other identifying details in this story have been omitted in order to respect privacy.*

Simply put, he's not sure where she would be today without the support of ICA. With persisting inflation, we're here to help with food insecurity and so *much more*. A gift to ICA helps us find your neighbor an ideal new job. It also helps us keep a community member in their home when they fall on hard times.

For more information on how to join the ICA team of supporters, please visit icafoodshelf.org/donate.

I am overwhelmed and humbly grateful to receive such outstanding and truly lovely donated items. Thank you to all of the people who are a part of ICA. -- ICA Food Shelf Client

Welcoming our New Neighbors

Earlier this year, in partnership with the Alight "Welcome Home Project," ICA started distributing meals to Afghan families currently being settled in and around our communities. As part of the project, around 250 Afghan families are arriving at their new homes in Minnesota. The meals, which are purchased by Alight, include specific Halal groceries to ensure food is culturally relevant to our new neighbors.

Given the short time frame in which this need arose, ICA sent out an urgent email to volunteers to fill delivery slots for the very next day. *The response was overwhelming!* **Not only were we able to fill all the needs for that first day, but we also had an enthusiastic volunteer base to make deliveries going forward.**

"Immediately, we received calls from the volunteer community about how wonderful and important this work is for our community at-large," explains ICA Executive Director Dan Narr.

When there's an opportunity to help our neighbors, time and time again, ICA volunteers and supporters answer the call and go above and beyond. **We can't thank you enough!**



Image: Alight Welcome Home Project

"DEDICATED TO EMPOWERING FAMILIES"

WELCOME, CHARMAINE!

ICA Food Shelf is excited to welcome **Charmaine Bell** to our devoted staff. Charmaine joined ICA in January 2022 as our newest **Community Outreach Liaison**. This position was created to further ICA's vision of a community where everyone has the resources to thrive.

She comes to ICA with **over a decade of experience in the education field** serving as both an educator and family liaison within different nonprofit organizations, Minneapolis Public Schools, and Hopkins Public Schools.

Charmaine specializes in building connections with families, breaking down false perceptions and ideas around assistance programs, and addressing other barriers facing family units.

"I am dedicated to empowering families and the community," explains Bell. "And I feel ICA is the best way to do just that."



Interested in joining the ICA team? We're hiring! Visit icafoodshelf.org/careers for information about career opportunities.

EVENTS: For the most up-to-date event information, visit our website: icafoodshelf.org/event-calendar

Summer

Sizzle
For ICA Food Shelf

ICA's Summer Sizzle

Thursday, June 16

ICA Food Shelf | 11588 K-Tel Drive Minnetonka, MN 55343

Join us as we transform the ICA Food Shelf into a fun, festive atmosphere and give a behind the scenes peek at how we serve thousands of families! This event features tasty bites from local restaurants, beer and wine samples, a silent auction, and an inspirational program. Tickets can be purchased at: www.icafoodshelf.org/sizzle



Community Chili Cook-Off

Saturday, September 24

Faith Church | 12007 Excelsior Boulevard Minnetonka, MN 55343

Come taste a number of different chilis and cast a ballot for your favorite. Please bring a monetary or food donation for ICA. This event is happening in partnership with Hopkins and Minnetonka police, fire, and recreation departments.

THE
great
TASTE

The Great Taste

Thursday, October 13

Oak Ridge Country Club | 700 Oak Ridge Road Hopkins, MN 55305

Our signature event! Join us at Oak Ridge Country Club as we celebrate the impact we make in our community everyday. Funds raised go toward ICA's goal of stopping immediate crisis and creating long-term stability for our neighbors.

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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.