



A Pillar in Ypsilanti: Three Generations Helped by SOS

Since 1970, SOS has helped many families across years and generations.

Recently, Sara came to SOS for help with her utility bill. She shared that several years ago, her mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's disease, had wandered away from her home in Ypsilanti. But when she saw the glowing lights of SOS's well-known Blue Octagon House, she knew she found a safe place. She had been helped there at the food pantry before. The employees at SOS made sure Sara's mother got home to her worried daughter.

As Sara recounted the story and explained what SOS means to her family, tears welled up in her eyes. She also shared how SOS had recently helped her own daughter obtain stable housing. She thanked the Resource Specialist for helping her and her daughter, just like how her mother was helped those many years ago.

Another woman came to SOS with her son to donate toys. The young mother had lived in SOS housing, but was now on stable ground. She explained, "SOS helped me get on my feet. Now it's my turn to give back what I can. I want to show my son how important it is to give back."

"When she saw the glowing lights of SOS's well-known Blue Octagon House, she knew she found a safe place."



Spotlight: 2018 Volunteer of the Year

Deb Diehr has dedicated over 500 hours of service since December 2017.

Deb learned about SOS through Michigan Ability Partners, who suggested she volunteer during her job search. She chose SOS because "I like [the] mission. Being here has been a constant reminder of the goodness that others show each other."

We honor her for the warmth and attention she gave clients and visitors as a front desk volunteer.



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From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

This January, the SOS Resource Center saw a sharp increase in requests for help because of the government shut down. Calls started coming in from affected government workers right here in Washtenaw County. Food pantry appointments filled up four times faster than usual. For those already living paycheck to paycheck, the effects of missed pay were devastating.

In one case, an employee at the Milan correctional facility called asking how to use the pantry, demoralized because she had never had to ask for help before. She needed food and diapers for her child. She hadn't been paid since before Christmas, another stress added to her already high stress job.

Another call came from a TSA agent, who lives in Ypsilanti and commutes to work at the Detroit Metro Airport. Every day had become an impossible balancing act: Do I fill up my gas tank? Which bills do I pay first? Can I afford to buy food for my family?

Thanks to the support of people like you, SOS's food pantry has been able to step up services to help people affected by the government shut down.

SOS's pantry relies on local volunteers, donations of money and food, and our friends at Food Gatherers to help more people during uncertain times when the need increases.

Thank you for making Washtenaw County a community where people can count on help when they fall on hard times.

Best regards,

Rhonda Weathers
Executive Director

9th Annual Road to Home A Record-Breaking Year



Each fall, 200 of SOS's supporters gather for a night aimed at preventing and ending homelessness in our community. This year's event, held on October 4, 2018 at Zingerman's Greyline, was the most successful to date, with sponsors and local community members raising an amazing \$105,970!

Event chairs, Emily Moore-Marshall and Tim Marshall welcomed guests and shared SOS's impact, while guests perused auction items, including beautifully handcrafted bowls made by local artists and potters.

We cannot thank local businesses and community members enough for their support of this event. Together, we can set families on a path to stable housing— on the road to home.



The Road to Home Sponsors

Bountiful Cereal Bowl

Debbie & Mike Tirico | Bank of Ann Arbor helps | Ambassador Ronald & Eileen Weiser

Brimming Salad Bowl

Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Care Network of Michigan | Emily Moore-Marshall & Tim Marshall | IBEW 252 | Martin Family Foundation

Reinhart Charles Reinhart Company Realtors | Mary & Bill Kinley | OLD NATIONAL BANK | TOYOTA

Beautifully Filled Bowl

A2Y Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti REGIONAL CHAMBER | Ann Arbor State Bank The Personal Bank | AMERICAN ROADS | Anita Cios & Dr. Dennis Crowley | Domino's

DETROIT WINDUP TUNNEL | J. KELLER | Joan Binkow | Evangelista & Associates

Dick & Norma Sarns | Tim & Robin Damschroder | Gail & Paul Steih | TOEBE

SESI | Victor Strecher & Jeri Rosenberg | THS AUDIO | Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital's Women's Health Program at Michigan Medicine | Zingerman's

Balanced Meal Bowl

ANN ARBOR DOING LIFE DIFFERENT | Ypsilanti REAL | John & Kathryn Charpie | PHOENIX CONTRACTORS, INC.

DEXTER BUILDERS | Dykema | SIDETRACK | Retirement Income Solutions

- Arbor Beverage Company
- Cultivate Coffee & Taphouse
- Underground Printing

SOS Helps Three Generations

Read how SOS helped three family members facing distinct struggles.

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www.soscs.org

Upcoming Activities

Volunteers Needed

Become a SOS volunteer today! Are you passionate about fighting hunger and homelessness? We are looking for individuals to help sort and stock shelves in the food pantry, or greet visitors and respond to callers at our administrative office. If you are interested, email volunteer@soscs.org.

Upcoming Items of the Month

February: Peanut Butter
March: Cooking oils (olive oil, canola oil)
April: Household cleaning products

Host a drive to collect items families most need. For more information of needed items, check out our wish list at www.soscs.org.

Pinwheels for Prevention

April is Child Abuse Prevention month. We are calling on businesses and organizations to host "pinwheel gardens" to raise awareness. The pinwheel, with its whimsy and innocence, reminds us that all children deserve a childhood that is safe and fun. To get involved, contact Carley Kleinhans at carleyk@soscs.org

