

OPERATION HELP

Helping Families In Difficult Times

Fall 2022 Newsletter

901 4th Street • Suite 214 • Hudson, WI 54016
Resource Center • (715) 386-1300



Operation HELP provides residents of St. Croix County with financial assistance, a place for personal support, and connections to community resources to alleviate short-term economic crises.



Follow Us



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Annual *Christmas* for Kids Sign-up Now Open



Operation HELP's 40th annual Christmas for Kids is underway. The program brings together sponsors, businesses, churches, and dozens of volunteers to help make Christmas merry for families in the Hudson School District who might otherwise go without. Last year, generous sponsors provided gifts for 509 children in

more than 188 families.

Deadline for family registration is Nov. 18. Complete information for families and sponsors is available at www.operationhelpstcroix.org.

Busy Year for New Program Activity

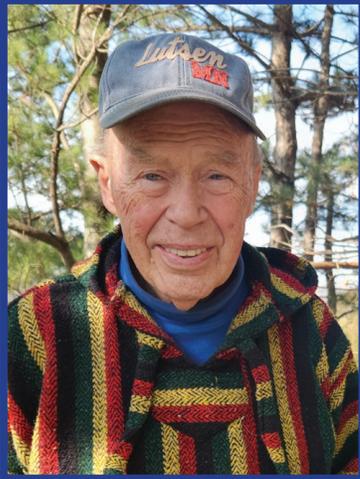
In January 2022, Operation HELP resumed offering temporary emergency housing assistance. The program covers up to 3 nights stay in local motels for people facing health or safety risks due to lack of shelter. The program was started with input from the St. Croix Valley Foundation, United Way 2-2-1, and St. Patrick Church. Initial funding has been provided by St. Pat's and the William H. Phipps Foundation. . . . In July, SEEK Careers and Staffing began piloting "pop-up job fairs" the first week of each month for clients visiting Operation HELP's Resource Center. The collaboration aims to address both the income needs of clients and the worker shortage experienced by many local employers. . . . In a return to pre-COVID programming, budgeting classes will again be offered. Classes will be facilitated by financial education staff from Royal Credit Union and promoted to clients who are experiencing ongoing personal finance challenges.

Client Comment / Testimonial

"Operation HELP was there when I needed it the most, there was someone to help. It was hard to call and ask for help, but now I am caught up on my utility bill and can stay on track. It is difficult to get caught up when you don't make very much money to begin with."

--Comment from an Operation HELP client

Creative Gift Planning Makes Major Impact



Paul L. Anderson is a familiar face around town. His roots in the community date back to 1891 when his grandfather then father made the Hudson area home. Paul’s Scandinavian forebears helped establish local

churches, were active in public service, and made many other community contributions. Although Paul himself pursued a social work degree and worked in corrections for 30 years, he’s better known around town as a landlord. Over the years, he’s acquired and maintained a number of rental properties. Today at age 82, renting and maintaining his properties is often a 6 or 7 day per week job for him and his “crew.” It

was through this housing work that Paul developed an appreciation for the work of Operation HELP. “A lot of my tenants have been in need over the years and many received assistance from Operation HELP,” he said. So last year when Paul decided to trim down the number of properties he owns, he decided to donate a townhouse unit to Operation HELP. “It seemed to be a natural connection.” Paul’s legal and tax advisors helped time the gift transfer for year-end and in January 2022 Operation HELP took ownership. The property was sold and proceeds from the gift became one of the first major donations toward the “Under One Roof” capital campaign. Paul’s desire to continue his family’s legacy of generosity—which has led to the creation of a park, land for youth athletics, and support for local churches—is now helping establish a new home for services St. Croix County neighbors facing financial hardships.



In July, Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church helped kick off the “Under One Roof” capital campaign with a major donation to help create a permanent new home for Operation HELP and Hudson Area Backpack and Food Programs. Thanks also to the following organizations who made significant financial contributions to operations and the building project in recent months: Beth Immanuel Sabbath Christian Fellowship, Bethel Lutheran Church, Compeer Financial, FNC Bank, Hudson Community Foundation, Miller Brothers Auto Repair, Inc., Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sourcing Solutions, Inc., TurnKey Corrections & Three Square Market, United Way St. Croix Valley, WESTconsin Credit Union, and William H. Phipps Foundation.



12-Month Service Snap Shot

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| Households receiving financial assistance: | 443 |
| Individual visits to the Resource Center: | 1,511 |
| Number of St. Croix County communities served: | 17 |
| Unduplicated number of people benefiting from service: | 2,003 |
| Percentage of households earning less that \$1,900/month: | 74% |
| Total rent, utility and car repair assistance provided: | \$231,888 |

November 2022

Dear Friend:

Each day, Operation HELP hears from St. Croix County neighbors who are struggling with personal financial hardships—

“Our household income was cut in half because I had to take unpaid maternity leave. Money has been tight and we are short on rent this month. We’re able to pay \$700 but not all of it . . .”

“I started a new job and do not get a full paycheck until the 15th. I have a shut off notice for the 11th. I have no money to stop that until the 15th . . .”

“I need help getting new tires for my van so I can make it to work safely in the winter. I’m a single mom can’t afford tires with Christmas coming and all the other expenses . . .”

Since the beginning of the year, we’ve received more than 700 applications from individuals and families seeking emergency financial assistance. For hundreds of others, a visit to Operation HELP’s Resource Center for gas or food vouchers, toiletries, socks and underwear, or diapers have helped bridge the need for basic necessities during difficult times.

Thanks to the support of a generous community, no eligible applicant for financial assistance is turned away and the Resource Center is stocked each month to respond to client needs. But it’s not always easy. Although impact of COVID has decreased, it continues to affect work and family schedules. The recent spikes in fuel, food, and housing costs continue to put financial pressure on households that were “just getting by” even before inflation and supply chain problems.

Operation HELP would not be able to provide this assistance without your help. Thanks to contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations, clubs and organizations, no eligible client has been turned away due to lack of funds. If you’re a current or past supporter, thank you. We hope you’ll renew your commitment to this important work at this time. If you haven’t been involved before, we invite you to join us today by sending a donation.

Sincerely,



Bjorn Nesvold, Chair
Operation HELP
Board of Directors

