



Helping Families In Difficult Times

Fall 2020 Newsletter

901 4th Street, Suite 214
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(715) 386-1300
www.operationhelpstcroix.org



Partial Funding By United Way
We are a 501(c)(3) Non Profit Organization

Operation HELP Steps Up Support During COVID-19

In March, as the number of unemployed residents exploded, Operation HELP responded by modifying our emergency assistance guidelines to be more flexible, meeting the needs of those affected by the layoffs, shutdowns and furloughs. We also modified our Resource Center operations allowing us to remain open for clients who needed gas, laundry or food vouchers or diapers for their infant. We served a record numbers of families in the first nine months of 2020 – emergency financial assistance for 425 families, more than all of last year.

While it is very difficult to predict the need in the next few months it does seem clear that unemployment will continue to be much higher than last year resulting in many more families needing assistance. At the time of this newsletter unemployment in St. Croix County was nearly double the number for 2019. Operation HELP expects emergency assistance will continue to remain high for the remainder of 2020. At this rate, rent, utility and car repair payouts will be approximately \$50,000 more than currently budgeted amounts for 2020. In addition, we expect the economic impact of COVID-19 will continue to affect local residents well into next year.

We could not provide assistance to so many families without the generosity of the communities we serve so thank you for the gifts you have provided and we look forward to your continued generosity which allows us to make a difference to so many families.



Operation HELP Resource Center remains open for clients during COVID-19

Operation HELP has remained open during COVID-19 providing clients with things like vouchers for gas or laundry; a voucher for the monthly Food Harvest distribution or diapers. Our hours are Monday – Friday from 10:00am until 1:00 pm and Thursday evenings from 5:00 pm until 6:30 pm.



Christmas Campaign For Kids

For more than 30 years, this program has been bringing together sponsors, businesses, churches, and dozens of volunteers to help make every Christmas a merry one for children in the Hudson School District who might otherwise go without. Operation HELP coordinates the campaign linking families in need with generous sponsors who provide gifts and other items for the families. In addition to Christmas gifts requested by the recipients, each family receives a gift bag of toiletries, toilet paper, Kleenex, laundry soap and other household necessities. Last year this project provided gifts for 466 children in 173 families.

Want to Help?

Recipient families and sponsors may sign up to participate in the program online by visiting OperationHelpstcroix.org from October 18 through November 18, 2020.

Thank You For Your Support

Thanks to Scott Soderberg and all the folks at First National Community Bank and Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago for the surprise grant in September to help with us meet increased demand for assistance caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. Special thanks also to the following businesses and organizations who made major donations to Operation HELP since March.



**3M Foundation • Cardinal Health • Croix Gear & Manufacturing • Xcel Energy
General Motors Corporate Giving • Green Bay Packers Foundation
Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce • Rotary Club of Hudson
Hudson Daybreak Rotary • Hudson Physicians • Hudson Snowtrails Unlimited
St. Croix Valley Foundation • Sourcing Solutions/River Ridge Home**

Please Update Your Records

Operation HELP has discontinued use of our PO Box as a secondary address. Please update your records to reflect our current address at:

901 4th Street, Suite 214, Hudson, MN 54016.

HIBA Diaper Drive and Ladies Day Out donation

This fall, the Hudson Independent Business Association chose Operation HELP as beneficiary of diaper drives and proceeds of swag bag sales during their annual Ladies Day Out promotion. We're fortunate to have such a generous and engaged business community in Hudson. Thank you!



Local Economic Impact of COVID-19

"My fiancé and I are expecting a baby and today the brakes gave out on our minivan. The repair place quoted us \$700-\$1,200 to fix it, but we might be able to get it done elsewhere. We don't have that sort of money right now because rent's coming up and we lost a lot of work and money during the COVID shutdown. I myself just went back to work last week. I have no clue what to do, but we really need the car back working in order to pay bills. If you can help at all or know any places that could, it would be amazing. Thank you."

Since the beginning of the year, Operation HELP has received more than 700 applications like the one above requesting rent, utility or car repair assistance. Although the need is surpassing what anyone could have imagined a year ago, so has the generosity of the community. It's only through the financial support of individuals, businesses, organizations and faith communities that Operation HELP can continue to be here for people in a time of crisis to give them the extra support they might need to get back on their feet.

2020 Operation HELP Financial Assistance Household Served thru 9/30/2020

