

April 4, 2013

AASHE STARS
213 1/3 Limestone
Lexington, KY 40507

Greetings,

United Way of Story County (UWSC) embraced hunger as one of our four community impact areas shortly following the 2005 community needs assessment. Despite our efforts to address the problem we know that the number of people in our county who go to bed hungry at night is much higher than most of our general population recognizes.

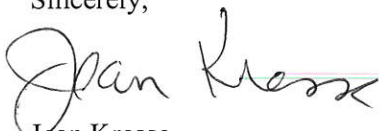
In the 2011 Edition of The Cost of Living In Iowa report from The Iowa Policy Project, a single parent with one child living in Ames, Iowa would need to earn an hourly wage of \$19.75 to “survive” rather than “thrive.” This includes allowances for rent, utilities; food prepared at home, child care, health care, transportation, clothing and other household necessities. We know that many of Iowa State University (ISU) students fall into this category.

The past several years have seen record breaking student enrollment at ISU. Many of these students are barely able to keep up with the cost of tuition and housing. Food dollars are stretched. Several years ago a committee of ISU students identified this problem and worked to do something to address the needs. They discovered that many students were visiting one of the 7 food banks in Ames. With a population of well over 50,000 these food pantries were unable to keep up with demands placed upon them. Students worked with many partners on campus and the community to research how to open and operate a food pantry. The SHOP was created by students for students and is operated by students.

United Way of Story County created a Food Pantry Collaboration in 2007 with the purpose to educate staff and volunteers, coordinate efforts and share best practices. There are now 16 food pantries in Story County, 8 in Ames. Iowa State University Extension and other groups have presented educational information at each meeting. Topics include Plant A Row for the Hungry; Spend Smart, Eat Smart; Angel Food Ministries; and SHARE. Discussions include a wide variety of topics such as ideas for holiday food distribution, food storage and use of the Food Bank of Iowa. UWSC also conducts an annual food drive. Donations collected are shared among the pantries including The SHOP.

These collaborations throughout Story County and in Ames, especially with ISU, are what make our community stronger and a better place for everyone to live. UWSC is very supportive of ISU’s STARS application to be credited for their innovation efforts related to their student food bank, The Shop.

Sincerely,



Jean Kresse
President and CEO

OUR VISION.
TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF
LIFE IN OUR COMMUNITY
FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES.

OUR MISSION.
UNITED WAY OF STORY COUNTY
IS A STRATEGIC LEADER IN BUILDING
COUNTYWIDE PARTNERSHIPS
TO IDENTIFY NEEDS AND TO DEVELOP,
SUPPORT AND EVALUATE EFFECTIVE
HUMAN SERVICES FOR OUR
DIVERSE COMMUNITY.



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