

# THE VOICE



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Faithfully Serving Since 1952

A quarterly newsletter of the Des Moines Area Religious Council and *MovetheFood*

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***Take the first step in faith.  
You don't have to see the whole  
staircase, just take the first step.***

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

## DMARC Takes Big Step in Faith

For the first time in its history, the Des Moines Area Religious Council has a permanent home.

On Monday, January 20, 2014, DMARC opened its new offices and Food Pantry Network warehouse at 1435 Mulberry Street in Des Moines, Iowa.

Purchased in July 2013, the renovated 9,000 square foot building has been designed specifically for DMARC. The property is situated in the Western Gateway development area, with easy access from Interstate 235 and Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway.

Motivated by a building lease due to expire in January 2014, and by space limits in the former warehouse, DMARC took a first step in faith in late 2010 to find a more suitable facility.

Through cost savings resulting from the move, DMARC will soon be positioned to provide more services and more food for more people in more places, while also allowing all DMARC programs and staff to be housed under one roof.

And, what began as a dilemma more than three years ago has become a series of exciting and new opportunities made possible by the faith, commitment, and generosity of a growing circle of DMARC friends and volunteers.

## The Path to 1435 Mulberry Street

*By Kristine Frakes, Development Director*

Beginning in late 2010, and over the course of the next thirty (30) months, a site search committee of the Des Moines Area Religious Council visited dozens of commercial warehouses, office buildings, and other facilities. The goal was to relocate to an affordable space that would be suitable for existing programs and allow DMARC to grow in service to the community.

*Continued on Page 4*



Photo: Kim Coulter/DMARC

# 1435 Mulberry Capital Campaign

## DMARC Will Help More People

The DMARC 1435 Mulberry Initiative is a non-traditional, fast-track \$1.3 million capital campaign. The project will support the property purchase and renovation of 1435 Mulberry Street, as well as equipment and furnishings and food inventory to stock the warehouse.

**The 1435 Mulberry Campaign will help DMARC provide more services and food for more people in more places.**

Goals are to strengthen and stabilize the emergency food system, enhance and equalize access to nutritional food, and improve community health in Greater Des Moines/Polk County, Iowa. In addition to housing DMARC offices, the new facility will provide for up to four times the food storage and distribution capacity as DMARC's former warehouse. Ultimately, the project will stabilize the emergency food system and DMARC Food Pantry Network to respond to the sustained high level of need for food assistance in central Iowa.

Efficiencies from streamlined operations will result in over \$250,000 annual savings that will be directed to:

- a) provide assistance for 1,500 more families each year who need help in meeting their food needs;
- b) expand distribution from a 4-day supply of food per participant once per month to a 5-day supply;
- c) increase the number of pantry sites from 13 sites to 16 sites; and
- d) expand consumer access to 300 hours per week, providing 15,000 hours annually for families to access pantries across the Food Pantry Network.

*Continued on Page 3*



“The new facility and the accompanying capital campaign represent an exciting new stage for DMARC. We are here because of the vision of DMARC founders, and the culmination of years of dedication and the hard work of many supporters and friends, the faith community, volunteers and staff. Our work, however, is far from complete. This work will not be finished until no family in the Des Moines area needs worry about where their next meal is coming from. Food is not simply a means for survival, but it

is the basis for love, kindness, and increased understanding of the human condition across all faiths. We invite the full circle of DMARC friends, both new and old, to celebrate this milestone and continue with us in the journey to help our neighbors in need.”

— Ross L. Daniels, campaign co-chair

“In conversations with DMARC member congregations and faith leaders, we have been very encouraged by the expressions of support for the 1435 Mulberry Street project and campaign. As we look to the future, DMARC will continue to rely on the significant commitment and active participation of our supporting congregations in working together to meet basic needs for families in Polk County.”

— Sarai Rice, executive director



“The increased efficiencies (space, consolidation, improved environment) resulting from this relocation will mean more than \$250,000 savings each year. These savings will enable us to serve more families in our community who are hungry at a time when the demand is increasing. It has been inspiring to visit with community leaders and to witness for-profit, non-profit and government resources coming together in support of the project and campaign.”

— Robert D. Shaw, campaign co-chair

*continued from page 2*

With a total project goal of \$1.3 million, current campaign commitments total over \$671,000. Thank you, early donors!

Learn more about DMARC's journey to 1435 Mulberry Street by reading the companion articles starting on page 1. To learn how you and your congregation or group might participate in this historic project and help DMARC reach the campaign goal, visit [www.dmreligious.org/campaign](http://www.dmreligious.org/campaign), where you can also view renovation photos from start to finish.



We are grateful for the generosity of donors who have already committed \$671,000.

To learn more about the capital campaign or make an online donation, at: [www.dmreligious.org/campaign](http://www.dmreligious.org/campaign), or contact Kristine Frakes: 515-277-6969 or [kfrakes@dmreligious.org](mailto:kfrakes@dmreligious.org).

#### **Campaign Leadership Team**

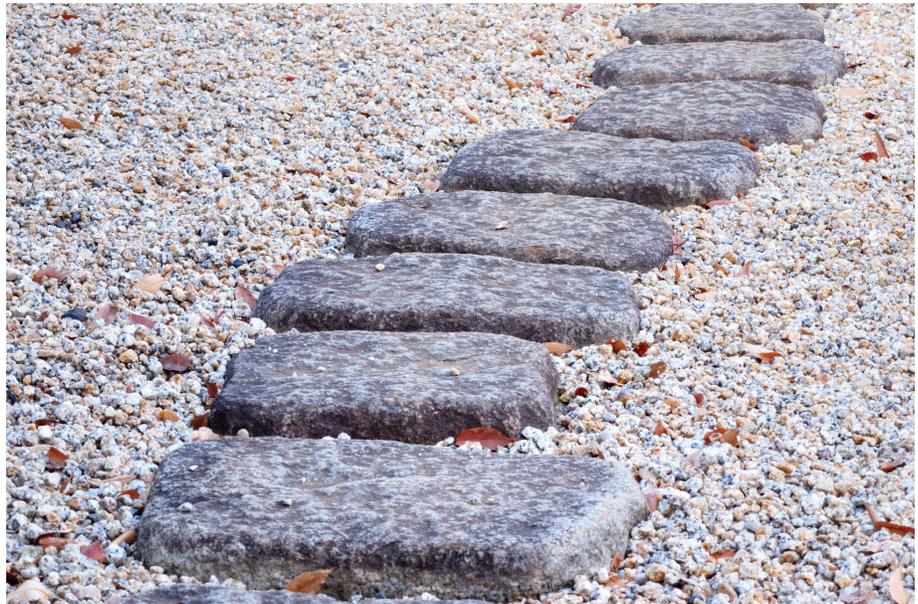
**Co-Chairs:** Robert D. Shaw, MD, Rebecca D. Shaw, MD, Ross L. Daniels and Amy Ward

**Committee:** Tom Fischer, Sarai Rice, Susie Paloma, Leanne M. Valentine, Doug Ventling and John Walin

**Campaign liaison:** Kristine Frakes

## The Path to 1435 Mulberry Street

*continued from page 1*



It soon became apparent that the committee was tasked with a daunting challenge. The spaces available for lease generally were unsuited to DMARC's needs. And, in addition to ongoing lease costs, virtually all would require substantial remodeling at one-time costs to DMARC ranging upward from \$75,000.

As summer turned to fall in 2012, DMARC was notified of two substantial bequest gifts – one from the estate of Raymond O. Strid and the other from the estate of Eleanor Harris. In each instance, family members and/or DMARC leaders had been given discretion to direct the bequest to the highest and greatest need at the time of the gift. The forethought and vision of these donors, and the support from their families, would become instrumental in paving DMARC's path to Mulberry Street.

In early 2013, with just one year left on the existing lease, the site search was renewed in earnest. By spring, a vacant building had been identified that had the potential to meet DMARC program and service needs for years to come. But, it was being offered for sale – not for lease.

Could DMARC afford to purchase the property? What were the risks? What were the opportunities?

After substantial research and cost-benefit analysis, it became evident that buying and renovating the property would be more cost efficient in the long-term than leasing. In April, the DMARC board of directors voted unanimously to authorize the purchase of what was to become DMARC's new home.

Following additional conversations with the families of Mr. Strid and Mrs. Harris, their generous bequest gifts were directed to support the 1435 Mulberry Street project. These gifts, and a first-time donation from a generous anonymous donor, provided the seed funds for the property purchase in July 2013.

### Site Search Team (2010-2013)

Brendan Comito, Kristine Frakes, Susie Paloma, Sarai Rice, Kevin Techau, Leanne M. Valentine and Rebecca Whitlow

# Employee Spotlight

## New Warehouse Assistant

Photo: Kim Coulter/DMARC



**Drew Robertson** joined DMARC in November as new warehouse associate. His responsibilities are assisting volunteers in the warehouse and pulling orders for the food pantry partners. Drew grew up in Ankeny, IA, and graduated from Ankeny High School. He is currently attending Des Moines Area Community College studying business administration and accounting. In Drew's free time he enjoys traveling, concerts, exploring Des Moines and spending time with family and friends.

## Two Special Giving Options

*March 1 – April 30, 2014 • How You Can Help . . .*

### DMARC & Feinstein Foundation

*Team Up to Knock Out Hunger!*

From March 1, until April 30, consider designating a DMARC food pantry gift or pledge as a match for the Feinstein Foundation annual hunger challenge. Your support is needed and greatly appreciated! Our goal this year is to reach \$100,000 in donations. Questions? Contact Kristine Frakes: 515-277-6969 or [kfrakes@dmreligious.org](mailto:kfrakes@dmreligious.org).

The \$1 Million Feinstein Grant is distributed to all eligible organizations proportionally, based on cash and food pledges and donations received as a part of the Feinstein Challenge.

### Douglas M. Woods \$10,000 Challenge Hunger Gift

*to Benefit the DMARC Food Pantry Network*

This is the second year that local philanthropist Douglas M. Woods has committed to provide 50 cents for every dollar donated to the DMARC Food Pantry Network during March and April 2014, up to the first \$20,000 in donations. This challenge gift comes during a season when donations to the food pantry are historically low. Yet, the need for food assistance by families who struggle to make ends meet continues year-round.

During March and April, donations to the DMARC Food Pantry Network that are noted as "Challenge Hunger" gifts will be matched 50 cents for every dollar, up to a total of \$20,000 given.

As part of the Challenge, your \$10 becomes \$15, \$50 equals \$75, and so on. During the Challenge, a \$10 gift will help DMARC provide a week's worth of meals for a family.

Donate online at: [www.dmreligious.org/donate](http://www.dmreligious.org/donate), or mail your "Challenge Hunger" donation to the DMARC office. Phone donations are also welcome at 515-277-6969. Thank you for your support!

#### DMARC's Mission:

*Religious Communities Working Together  
to Meet Basic Human Needs.*

#### Staff

Rev. Sarai Schnucker Rice,  
Executive Director  
Daniel Beck  
Jen Boyle  
Kim Coulter  
Joe Dolack  
Kristine Frakes, CFRE  
Linda Gobberdiel, RD, LD  
Pam Larson  
Aubrey Martinez, MPA  
Drew Robertson  
John E. Robinson  
Linda Vander Hart  
Rebecca Whitlow

#### Board of Directors 2013-2014

Leanne M. Valentine – President  
Chuck Kuba – President-Elect  
Linda Harvey – Recording Secretary  
Robert W. Nye – Treasurer  
Susie Paloma – Past President

Connie Coy-Walker (advisory)  
Tom Fischer  
Suzi Henkel (advisory)  
Rabbi David Kaufman  
Franklin Owens  
Dennis Roupe  
Robert D. Shaw, M.D.  
Doug Ventling  
John Whalin

The Des Moines Area Religious Council responds to basic human needs in Greater Des Moines and Polk County Iowa. DMARC does not require participation in religious services as a condition to receive assistance, and does not engage in religious proselytizing or counseling. DMARC practices non-discrimination in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations. All services and programs are provided to consumers without discrimination in regard to family size or structure, religious or cultural beliefs, race, gender, age, or disability.

# DMARC Website Tips and Tricks

## New public calendar submission options

The new website offers community organizations and congregations an opportunity to submit events for posting.

- Events are color coded for ease of recognition.
  - DMARC events are blue
  - Food drives and warehouse events are in red
  - Community events are green
  - Annual events are gold
- To submit an event, scroll to the bottom of the calendar page and click 'Submit an Event'
- Complete all text fields for the event (i.e., title, date, location, time, and contact email).
- You can even upload a graphic image if you'd like.
- When posting, please keep event details short or summarize and include a contact name and phone number in case our editors have questions.

The screenshot shows the DMARC website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like HOME, ABOUT US, NEWS, SERVICES, CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, EVENTS, CONTACT US, and MOVETHEFOOD.ORG. Below that is the DMARC logo and the text "Des Moines Area Religious Council" with the tagline "Religious communities working together to meet basic human needs." There are buttons for DONATE, VOLUNTEER NOW, LEARN MORE, and FOOD PANTRY NETWORK.

The main content area features a "Calendar" section with a monthly view for May 2013. The calendar cells are color-coded: blue for DMARC events, red for food drives/warehouse events, green for community events, and gold for annual events. To the right of the calendar is a "SIGN UP FOR E-NEWSLETTER" form with fields for First Name, Last Name, and email address, and a GO button. Below the form is a "UPCOMING EVENTS" section listing events for October, such as "Meals from the Market" and "Fall Festival".

At the bottom of the calendar page, there are "HOURS" sections for Warehouse hours and Office hours, and a "View Our Affiliate Page" link for "move THE food .ORG".

## Hold the Date!

### DMARC's Delegate Assembly is March 18th

The bi-annual Spring 2014 Delegate Assembly is March 18, at 7:00 p.m. Location will be DMARC's Food Pantry Warehouse at 1435 Mulberry Street, Des Moines. To RSVP, contact DMARC Office Manager Linda Vander Hart, 515-277-6969 or lvanderhart@dmreligious.org. Thank you.

## DMARC Offices and *MovetheFood* Warehouse new location and hours:

1435 Mulberry Street, Des Moines, IA 50309  
(located on the southwest side of downtown Des Moines)

**Office hours:** Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

**Warehouse hours:** Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

**Offices and warehouse are closed:** Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

# Food Pantry Network

## Kiwanis Say Goodbye to Original Warehouse *and Hello to the New*

In December 1982, the Food Pantry became a full-scale department of the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC). The first president of the Food Pantry was Duke Holst, a well know Kiwanian from the Northwest Kiwanis Club. Many more area Kiwanians, along with concerned church and synagogue members, joined in the effort to keep the pantry operating efficiently during its rapid, early growth.

In 1986, it became evident that distributing food from temporary locations was not a satisfactory means of operation. Holst, Will Dubes, Merle Campbell and other Kiwanis leaders convinced the club members in Division 11 of the urgent need for a permanent space. The Des Moines area clubs came through by raising \$30,000 and building the first warehouse, now located behind the DMARC offices at 3816 36th St., Des Moines, IA, just north of Douglas Avenue.

The Red Barrel Program was adopted by the Food Pantry in April



of 1990 as a means of giving Des Moines residents a way of donating food in local grocery stores while they shop. Kiwanis members from 12 area clubs were there helping pick up those most-needed food item donations and delivering them to the warehouse.

Currently, the 29 Red Barrels located in local food stores throughout the



metro bring in an average of 10,000 food items per month. Northwest Kiwanis member Bob Coffman, who was at the recent celebration for the new warehouse, said about the program, "The results of the Red Barrels speak for themselves." Speaking about the total number of food items collected at local grocery stores, he continued, "and the hard work of the old guys and gals won't be forgotten."



*Kiwanis volunteers for the Red Barrel Program attended a closing celebration on Saturday, January 11, 2014, at the original food pantry warehouse. Then they rode a bus to the new Mulberry location and toured the warehouse and offices.*

**A big "Thank You!" to all the Des Moines area Kiwanis groups for their continued support of the Red Barrel Program:**

West Des Moines Kiwanis  
Kiwanis Club of Johnston  
Kiwanis Miracle League  
Kiwanis Club of Des Moines  
(downtown)  
Ankeny Kiwanis  
Northwest Kiwanis Club  
Golden K Kiwanis  
Urbandale Kiwanis

Photos: Kim Coulter/DMARC

Photo: Kim Coulter/DMARC

# Eat Greater Des Moines

By Aubrey Martinez, Eat Greater Des Moines Director



United Way  
of Central Iowa

Eat Greater Des Moines originated out of the need to have an organization focusing on local and regional food system work in central Iowa, specifically Polk and the surrounding counties. Previously, food system-related work was accomplished on a disconnected (mostly volunteer) basis by individuals working other positions throughout the community. DMARC and the United Way saw the benefit of a program devoted to building connections that support a stronger local food system and they committed to funding 1.5 positions for a two-year period.

Since starting in April, 2013, the staff of Eat Greater Des Moines set up and met with many individuals and organizations in all sectors of the food system: production, transformation, distribution, access and consumption, and waste. The purpose of the meetings was to learn about the challenges and opportunities they face bringing healthy, locally produced food to Iowans. These conversations centered on what is going well, where individuals and groups want to be in the next few years, and whether there are any gaps or barriers that prevent them from reaching their goals.

Through our work, we want to build and highlight more aspects of the food system that are going right. For example, our role is to highlight those producers who have “figured out” how to grow an edible product and a sustainable business; leaders who bring together volunteers of all ages and abilities to have a garden that produces for their school and/or community; and non-profits who have worked out systems with restaurants, catering companies and stores to divert food to those needing a meal versus “feeding” the landfill. The initial goal for Eat Greater Des Moines is to identify, develop and connect

resources to support a a more efficient and sustainable food system.

Outside of meeting with over 200 different groups and individuals, some on a regular basis, we are already connecting groups doing amazing work to build upon their individual successes and expand their impact. Accomplishments to date include:

- Collaborating with DMACC to offer two food safety trainings for producers.
  - Organizing a teacher in-service training highlighting multiple organization’s free resources giving elementary teachers lessons that incorporate gardens and healthy food into curriculum.
  - Working with the Iowa Food Cooperative to offer Chef+Producer Speed Dating. The event was a chance for producers and chefs to meet and build relationships and also discuss the opportunity to buy and sell local products at a wholesale level. Work continues by collaborating on a grant application
- Working with the local Isaac Walton League to bring together school, community and faith-based garden leaders to discuss building a stronger network of support that allows them to work together. By meeting with all groups, our goal is to identify ways Eat Greater Des Moines supports the work they are doing (wholesale purchasing of seeds, organizing volunteers, creating opportunities to learn and share best practices, etc.) to allow those leading gardens to focus on the hard part – growing.
  - Received a Capacity Building grant from the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines to undertake a strategic planning process.
  - Collaborating with Polk, Dallas, and Marion counties to collect Food Assessment data for the 3-county region.

to potentially support wholesale product aggregation.



Photo: Kim Coulter/DMARC

*It was standing room only for a diverse group of organizations and agencies at the Healthy-Food Stakeholders January 8th meeting. Hosted by Eat Greater Des Moines, the meeting started the Central Iowa Shelter and Services at 1420 Mulberry Street, and ended with a tour of the new DMARC food pantry warehouse and offices across the street at 1435 Mulberry.*

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 "Like" us on Facebook: Des Moines Area Religious Council  
"Like" our food work on Facebook: *Move the Food*

 Follow us on Twitter: @dmreligious  
Follow our food work on Twitter: @MoveTheFoodDSM

# MLK Jr. Day of Service

*The January 20th opening of the new DMARC campus coincided with the annual commemoration honoring the life of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. In observance of this national day of service, nearly forty volunteers turned out to help DMARC receive, sort, count, and stock thousands of in-kind items gathered through community food drives and food pantry Sunday collections. We are grateful, and cannot think of a more fitting housewarming gift for DMARC. Volunteers from Grace Lutheran Church and the Public Allies Iowa AmeriCorps, Jim Cullan, Gary Thull, Jess Feeley, Mel Frueh, and Greg & Ron with Two Old Men Carpentry.*



Photos: Kim Coulter/DMARC