



HelpMe Headlines

AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES

1203 N. 6th St., St. Joseph, MO 64501 www.helpmenow.org

Agency seeks public funds for program growth, expansions

For AFL-CIO Community Services, the main focus of the agency is searching high and low to find the appropriate resource to fit our clients' needs. As an Information and Referral (I&R) service provider, finding resources for clients is our forte. We pride ourselves on knowing where resources can be found and how clients can access them. Those who have volunteered or worked in the service field have experienced first-hand the sense of gratitude one feels when they are able to make a real, positive change in another's life - especially when they need it the most. It's what keeps us coming into the office.

The agency provides a variety of services, many of which are unique to our community and provide assistance not found elsewhere. Our primary program, the Help Me Hotline, is utilized by both social service providers and those needing assistance, making it essential to our community. The Help Me Hotline provides I&R service to all of Northwest Missouri and Northeast Kansas.

Through this service, anyone needing assistance can call to get accurate, up-to-date information on all available area resources for assistance. It saves time and resources for both those needing assistance and coordinating agencies because it eliminates fruitless searches and conserves area agency resources.

See Agency on Pg 2

Soles for Christ preps for 2022

AFL-CIO Community Services is planning the 2022 Soles for Christ shoe distribution. The agency is hopeful this year's distribution will again be held at the St. Joseph Civic Arena, 100 N 4th St., as it provides a more participant-friendly environment by allowing recipients to remain indoors and out of the summer heat.

The event will be returning to its two-day format, with tentative dates for the distribution set for

Tuesday, August 2nd, and Wednesday, August 3rd.

This will be the 20th year for the perpetual program, which offers shoes to children from pre-school to 12th grade

living in Andrew and Buchanan counties in MO, as well as Doniphan County, KS. New this year will be the addition of DeKalb and Clinton counties to the list.

Donors can contribute to this program by giving

See Soles on Pg 2

Donation suggestions

- ▶ NEW tennis shoes, as schools do not allow flip-flop, dress or slip-on styles to be used in gym
- ▶ Shoes needed include toddler 5 - 10, youth 11 - 6 and all adult sizes
- ▶ Monetary donations are used to purchase shoes when we run out of a size and for special needs

UPCOMING events

MAY 21: Spring into Summer Sale – Prepping for warmer months will never be cheaper than the deals you find at Fab-U-Less Finds thrift store. For every \$25 you spend, you'll earn \$5 in Fab Funds for your next visit. 10 am to 2 pm, 1203 N. 6th St.

AUGUST 2 & 3: Soles for Christ distribution – Shoes will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis. Tuesday & Wednesday 9 am – 7 pm, St. Joseph Civic Arena.

AUGUST 20: End of Summer Sale – Finish out the Summer season with hot discounts at Fab-U-Less Finds thrift store. For every \$25 you spend, you'll earn \$5 in Fab Funds for your next visit. 10 am to 2 pm, 1203 N. 6th St.

SEPTEMBER 24: Heart Warmers Bring the Heat Car Show – Cars, food, drinks, crafts, vendors, & games, 12 to 4 pm, St. Joseph Civic Center Park.

NOVEMBER 1: Adopt-A-Family Program Begins – Applications will be available for the 2022 program; forms can be downloaded from the website, helpmenow.org, or picked up at the agency, 1203 N. 6th St.

AFL-CIO Community Services
1203 N. Sixth St.
Saint Joseph, MO 64501

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AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES

SPRING 2022



SHOW YOUR SUPPORT



GIVE FUNDS The success of all agency programs is due to the generosity of community members and businesses that provide financial support. By making an unrestricted monetary donation or becoming a business/corporate event sponsor, you are allowing us to respond to the program with the most current needs. Because many of the programs are seasonal, a monetary donation ensures the success of the programs rather than restricting the funds to a limited period of use. To make a donation, visit the agency website at helpmenow.org, complete and return the included donation envelope or call 816.364.1131.



GIVE YOUR TIME Volunteers are the backbone of many agency programs. In 2021, volunteers distributed 781 pairs of shoes to school-age children through the Soles for Christ program; helped sort and distribute clothing and household essentials in the Fab-U-Less Finds thrift store; and adopted, shopped for and distributed Christmas gifts to nearly 730 families living in the St. Joseph area through the Adopt-A-Family program. The options for volunteering are endless and we can always find a match for your talents. To give time, please visit the agency website at helpmenow.org or call 816.364.1131.



GIVE GIFTS The opportunities and the options for giving are numerous for donors interested in giving items, and every item received goes to good use. New and gently used clothing and household items are always welcome in the Fab-U-Less Finds thrift store. We are happy to pick up yard sale leftovers, or take items you can no longer use when you do your Spring or Fall cleaning. Diapers and wipes are always needed for the Diaper Depot; used eyeglasses can be donated to the Lion's Club eyeglasses program; and new shoes can be given to the Soles for Christ shoe program. Donate by calling 816.364.1131.



GIVE ONLINE AFL-CIO Community Services is online at helpmenow.org. In addition, many agency programs have their own Facebook pages. Information on the programs are updated regularly through the website and Facebook pages. Please "like" us to keep up on the latest news, share information with your friends and to show support for the agency programs. In addition to the AFL-CIO Community Services Facebook page, there are individual pages for Adopt-A-Family Christmas, Soles for Christ and Fab-U-Less Finds.

❖ One pair of shoes through Soles for Christ
❖ A dozen items for a parent and child on a Fab Finds voucher
❖ Gas to get a person to get to work for week

\$25

Agency seeks public funds for program growth, expansion

From Agency on Pg 1

For the majority of the agency's programming, we are very fortunate that finding the resources to keep programs afloat is not too arduous. Those who choose to support many of our programs, like Soles for Christ and Adopt-A-Family, do so whole-heartedly. They are generous in their time, donations and financial support. We are very aware of how fortunate this is for our agency and the individuals it helps.

Ironically, the same programs that provide year-round assistance and make the largest impact in our community are the hardest to garner support for; the I&R program that has made it possible for us to search out resources for others, has very little luck with garnering resources of its own.

Most funders, including both federal and private grants, prefer to fund "direct" sources of support, or those programs that actually provide the service. While the Help Me Hotline IS providing a service - the referral - is not seen as a tangible resource.

Because AFL-CIO Community Services is not an affiliate of a national organization, it relies heavily on local funding to support the eight programs it administers.

Without local support, the agency could not continue to provide services for our community members who need it. In addition to the Help Me Hotline, Community Services administers five perpetual programs and two annual programs. Year-long programs include: Fab-U-Less Finds thrift store, Lions Club eyeglasses, Diaper Depot, Seasonal Services, and Emergency Assistance. Annual programs are Adopt-A-Family Christmas and Soles for Christ.

To provide a better picture of how funds are used, please consider the highlighted common program values to the left. To see the impact made by supports' donations, please review the 2021 program outcomes shared on pages 3-5 of this newsletter.

To assist with these valuable programs, please return your donation in the included remittance envelope or visit helpmenow.org to donate online.

❖ I&R services for 7 individuals
❖ A prescription with Emergency Assistance
❖ Four space heaters through Seasonal Services
❖ A case of diapers through Diaper Depot

\$50

❖ Free items for family of six on Fab Finds voucher
❖ Holiday gifts for a teen through Adopt-A-Family
❖ Four pairs of shoes for Soles for Christ
❖ An air conditioner unit for one household

\$100

❖ Gifts for family of four through Adopt-A-Family
❖ Five cases of diapers for Diaper Depot
❖ I&R for 35 individuals
❖ A pair of glasses through Lion's Club program

\$250

❖ One month rent for family to remain in home
❖ 240 items from Fab Finds for 40 individuals
❖ Shoes for 20 children through Soles for Christ
❖ Gifts for a family of five through Adopt-A-Family

\$500

❖ 60 days of access to CommunityPoint database needed for Help Me Hotline
❖ Box fans for 50 families through Seasonal Services
❖ Diapers for 40 infants with Diaper Depot
❖ Glasses for 4 individuals through Lion's Club

\$1000



❖ Callers are provided resources for basic needs including food, shelter, healthcare, mental health, employment, education and seasonal assistance (tax preparation, school supplies, heating/cooling centers).

❖ Callers reach a trained, caring Call Specialist who assesses the needs of each person and searches a database with more than 8,000 services to connect callers with the help they need.

❖ In 2021, the agency had 21,620 contacts, made 6,461 referrals, and advocated on behalf of 2,579 clients.

❖ Anyone can now search the agency's database through Help Me Online by visiting www.helpmenow.org.

21,620
unduplicated contacts

❖ Of the 724 families that applied during the 2021 program, 273 households had \$0 income.

❖ The majority, 89 percent (647 families), are at 100 percent or below poverty guidelines; 8 percent (55 families) are up to 35 percent above poverty guidelines; and 3 percent (22 families) are 36 percent or more above poverty guidelines.

❖ In 2021, 730 different adopters provided assistance to the families. This included, 124 individuals/families; and 63 businesses/organizations. There were 510 undesignated monetary donations made to the program to help cover the cost of food baskets, gift cards and vouchers for families.



2,198
individuals adopted

89,000 individuals have been served by Adopt-A-Family since 1983.

887 adults

1,143 children

168 seniors



\$2,085
in funding provided assistance for **242**
individuals

❖ Heart Warmers is a partnership for the agency. Created by R.J. Jackson, the program provides space heaters to those in need during the cold weather months.

❖ To combat summer heat, fans are donated by Everygy and air conditioners are donated by the public.

❖ In 2021, 57 heaters, 39 fans and 3 air conditioners were given to 86 households, which included 242 individuals.



In 2021, 240 volunteers donated **2,009** hours toward agency programs

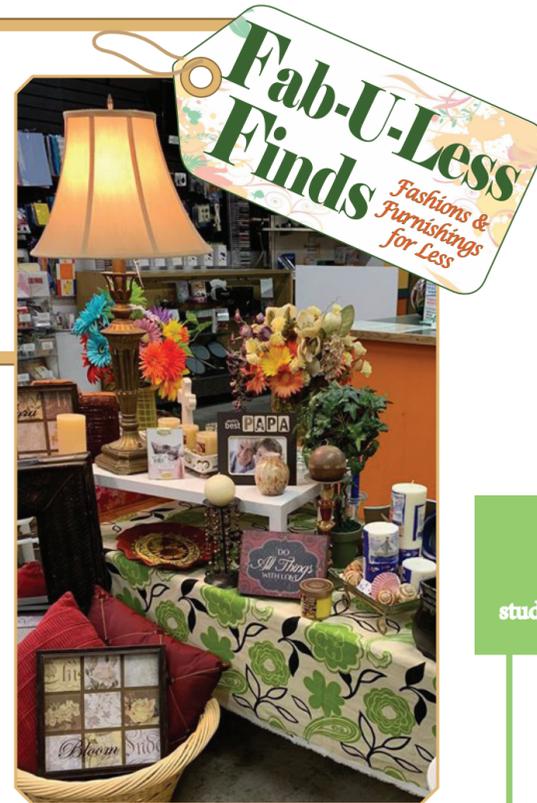


\$24,170
in funding provided assistance for **2,016**
individuals

❖ The Fab-U-Less Finds voucher program allows each household to receive six free items per person within the household, four times a year.

❖ The store is open to the public and relies on donations for its inventory; the store offers pick ups for those donors who cannot deliver.

❖ The voucher program served 2,016 people in 2021, providing 10,441 free items, including clothes, household, furniture and medical supplies.



❖ Parents are able to get diapers and wipes through the program up to four times each year. Quantities are based on availability.

❖ A few years ago, the agency added adult incontinence supplies to the inventory. Many older adults struggle with this issue. Being on a fixed income makes buying these items a difficulty for elderly individuals.

❖ Last year, the Diaper Depot provided diapers to 118 children, and provided 240 units of adult incontinence supplies, at a total value of \$725.

1,807
items provided

\$5,127
in funding provided assistance for **96**
individuals

❖ The four most common funding needs of 2021 were: gasoline/automotive, sewer bills, medical expenses/prescriptions and water bills.

❖ There are no boundaries, no eligibility guidelines and no fees for this service.

❖ The agency uses emergency funds for the people that "fall through the cracks" like car payments, insurance, and repairs, phone bills, medical needs and other necessities required to exist. The agency tries to fill those gaps.



❖ In 2021, 56 individuals applied for glasses, with 31 receiving a pair.

❖ Nearly 2,560 people have been provided with a pair of glasses critical for work, injury avoidance and optic health.

❖ This program is a group effort: Family Guidance provides funding for eye exams; local optometrists provide the exams and fit clients for glasses; the three local Lions Clubs fund it as a group; and Community Services administers the program.



\$2,890
value of glasses

781
students given shoes

\$19,525
value

❖ Children in pre-k through 12th grade, living in Buchanan and Andrew counties in Missouri and Doniphan County in Kansas, are eligible to receive a free pair of new tennis shoes.

❖ Beginning in 2022, children living in DeKalb and Clinton counties will be eligible for the program.

❖ Every qualified child who comes to the distribution receives shoes.

❖ The first year, 210 pairs of school shoes were distributed.

❖ In 2021, the program utilized 153 volunteers performing 731 hours of service.



1 GOAL: Expand Soles for Christ shoe program into DeKalb and Clinton counties for the 2022 program. Give at least 1,500 pairs of new tennis shoes to students.

VALUE: \$25 per pair of shoes

FUNDS NEEDED: \$37,500

2 GOAL: Expand the Diaper Depot program into a supplementary, rather than emergency, program; serve at least 400 children with up to 50 percent of monthly diapers.

VALUE: Approximately \$50 per child

FUNDS NEEDED: \$20,000

3 GOAL: Provide Christmas gifts to 750 families through the Adopt-A-Family Christmas program.

VALUE: Approximately \$75 per person, based on a yearly average of 2,500 individuals.

FUNDS NEEDED: \$187,500

4 GOAL: Process at least 2,400 individuals through the Fab-U-Less Finds Voucher program; giving each person six free items.

VALUE: Average \$2.25 per item

FUNDS NEEDED: \$30,000