



Neighbors Helping Neighbors | In HUD's Region VII, Organizations Are Coming Together to Serve Those in Need **#Inthistgether**

As communities combat the coronavirus outbreak, HUD is highlighting stories of communities coming together to help their neighbors in need.

Kansas City, MO – A number of Kansas City (KCMO) nonprofits and service agencies have teamed up to serve the homeless population during the coronavirus outbreak. A portion of a street in downtown KCMO was blocked off to make room for large white tents where the homeless can pick up a meal, shower, and get a health check in an environment that allows for more social distancing requirements. While the area was set up primarily to serve the homeless, agencies are serving more low-income and families in need due to job loss or decrease in resources due to the pandemic. The center was opened to provide immediate relief to those in need. [Read the full story from the Kansas City Star](#)



[Photo courtesy of the Kansas City Star](#)

Des Moines, IA – The City of Des Moines, Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS) and eight local restaurants have partnered to help feed Des Moines residents in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City provided \$350,000 in CDBG COVID relief funding

for the *Mulberry Street Café Initiative* that pays each of the eight metro-area restaurants to prepare hot grab and go meals to distribute at various locations across Des Moines. The initiative also supports these small businesses to bring laid off restaurant staff back to work. On July 16, Regional Administrator Jason Mohr joined CISS and Bubble Teacups staff to distribute lunch meals at River Hills 2 Apartments. [Read more about the Mulberry Street Café Initiative](#)



[Photo Courtesy of Des Moines FOD, Steve Eggleston](#)

Minneapolis, KS - Personal protective equipment is in high demand across the country. Virginia Proctor, a resident of the Minneapolis Housing Authority in Kansas is doing her part to help with the shortage. For Proctor, making masks is personal. Her daughter is a healthcare worker at the Salina Regional Hospital. As a seamstress, Proctor is used to sewing clothes for family and friends. Recently, however, she turned her dining room into a makeshift sewing factory, cranking out lots of masks.

Proctor's daughter reached out to for her help to support the need for masks at the hospital. With the state's stay at home order in place, Proctor couldn't think of a better way to utilize her time. With material donated by the hospital, Proctor has sewn over 400 masks. *"I'm so proud that I can help healthcare workers who need it the most,"* she said.



[Photo courtesy of the Minneapolis, KS Housing Authority](#)

Omaha, NE - At last count, Youth Emergency Services (YES) says there are nearly 3,000 homeless or near homeless youth in Omaha. YES is concerned that many of them are no longer coming to their center for food or resources, as they normally have. So, with their mobile pantry full, staff are going out and looking for youth in need. YES staff are calling and using social media to find youth, to ensure they don't end up on the streets. "We don't want the number of homeless youth to go up because of this, so If we can get them food and other resources, then they will be fine," said, Mary Fraser Mients, YES Executive Director. [Read more from KETV 7](#)



[Video courtesy of KETV 7](#)

St. Louis, MO - As newly designated HUD EnVision Centers, Friendly Temple and Better Family Life, Inc. provide resources and a holistic approach to help St. Louis residents achieve self-sufficiency. Recognizing the need for more resources to assist families impacted by COVID-19, both agencies sought out philanthropic support. Friendly Temple and Better Family Life were awarded \$20,000 and \$15,000 grants, respectively, from the Deaconess Foundation COVID-19 Equitable Relief and Recovery fund to help families in need.

Recently, the two EnVision Centers joined forces with the CARESTL Foundation for a food give away, including vegan meals, for individuals and families who have been economically impacted by COVID-19. Friendly Temple hosted the drive-thru event in their church parking lot. [Read more at STL Real News](#)



[Video courtesy of STL Real News](#)

Kansas City, MO - As the lead agency for the Kansas City, MO and Kansas City, KS EnVision Centers, aSTEAM Village has been instrumental in inspiring students and families to pursue education and career pathways in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM), through community-based project learning and innovative programs. In light of COVID-19, a-STEAM Village recently launched a free Virtual School for students and parents. *"Since the coronavirus hit, schools have been canceled and students are at home. Many parents are working from home or lost their jobs and are at home searching for a new career,"* said William Wells, aSTEAM Village founder and executive director. *"We have free online tools and one low-cost online certification program for teens and adults."* [Read more from KSHB](#)



[Photo courtesy of KSHB](#)

Coralville, IA – Jack Jensen-Fitzpatrick is like most active 12-year old boys, except for one thing, walking the equivalent of two marathons in one day to raise funds for a local shelter. When Shelter House in Iowa City launched its "Beat the Heat" fundraiser, Jack set a goal to raise \$5,000 for Iowa City's Shelter House to help people who may be experiencing financial strain during the pandemic. In January, Jack did a similar walk for Shelter Houses, raising almost \$4,000. With the heat index reaching 105 degrees in July, Jack just kept walking and thinking about his goal. *"Obviously with COVID right now, the unemployment rates have gone really high. Skyrocketing,"* he said. [Read the full story from KGAN CBS 2](#)



[Video courtesy of KGAN CBS 2](#)

Bird City, KS - While individuals with sewing skills have been hard at work making masks for donation to area hospitals and healthcare workers, Deb Smith is making headbands for essential workers. Smith is the Executive Director of the Bird City Housing Authority in the NW corner of Kansas.

It all started when Smith's daughter, a respiratory therapist in Superior, NE told her mom that the masks protecting against the virus were hurting the back of co-workers' ears. From there, Smith decided to sew headbands that attach to the masks and make them more comfortable.

The headbands are made from colorful material and ribbons and have buttons that say, “homemade with love.” Smith and two public housing residents (who wish to remain anonymous) have made over 100 headbands for healthcare workers and family in Nebraska, California, and a nursing home in Texas where Smith’s in-laws reside. Smith adds, “Just a small gesture for those on the front lines.”



[Photo courtesy of the Bird City Housing Authority](#)

St. Louis, MO – As homelessness continues in St. Louis, Sultana Davis is grateful that she has a place to call home during the pandemic. Davis lost her job in the hospitality industry and was at risk of becoming homeless. St. Patrick Center provided permanent housing and support services through their Housing First program and continues to help Davis until she can find employment. “St. Patrick Center helped me out a lot. It’s an awesome program. It made me more self-sufficient. I learned so much,” Davis said. [Read more from the St. Louis Review.](#)



[Photo courtesy of St. Louis Review](#)

Omaha, NE -During the pandemic, families are struggling to access healthy food options in their area. That's why nonprofits and churches have teamed up to provide healthy food options during COVID-19. Neighbors are working together to help their community finding its way through a crisis. [Read the full story at WOWT 6 News](#)



[Video courtesy of WOWT 6 News](#)

To find HUD resources related to the coronavirus, visit www.hud.gov/coronavirus.

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