Dear Friends and Supporters,

As the long-awaited summer has us now dreaming up vacation plans, hunger won’t be taking a vacation in our community. Many families struggling with food insecurity are dreaming of having access to sufficient food, or food of adequate quality, to meet their basic nutritional needs. Inflation has slowed, but food prices remain historically high, and cuts to food benefits like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) began in March. SNAP benefits were reduced by approximately $90 per person per month ($360 per month for a family of 4), leaving hundreds of Coloradans struggling to access healthy meals. The glimmer of hope is that, thanks to you, IFCS remains open with life-sustaining food support.

HUNGER HAS INCREASED

IFCS has nearly tripled its services over the past 3 years, providing more food support to metro Denver area families than ever in its 59-year history. Last month alone, visits to IFCS fed 3,310 individuals (1,211 households), 644 of which were first-time visitors. IFCS’ April support in the community is valued at $486,570, with food sourced from Emergency Food Assistance grants and purchased in bulk using donations from supporters like you.

OUR COMMUNITY IS STRUGGLING

With reduced SNAP benefits and a lack of affordable housing, food support is a survival necessity for low-income households. The current housing crisis creates an enormous financial strain; a recent report by the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless shows that over half of extremely low-income families have no affordable housing options. As a result, the majority of these households are using 50% (or more) of their income for rent, making food support a lifeline for these families. There’s no doubt that IFCS’ hunger alleviation program is helping put healthy meals on tables and keep roofs over heads.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YOU, IFCS IS ADAPTING

To address the drastically increased hunger in a sustainable way, IFCS was forced to limit visits to the food market to once per month beginning March this year — an unfortunate overlap with the reduction of SNAP benefits. With support from the community, we were able to stock the Market @ IFCS and make some important adjustments — from a pandemic model of pre-made grocery box distribution, to an indoor market with a range of self-selected grocery staples.

Program participants now enter IFCS and, with volunteer assistance, select from available food items in quantities allowed for their household size. The new, more personalized shopping experience allows participants to choose groceries they like or know how to cook, which reduces waste. During a visit, each individual or small household is provided with 75-100 lbs of groceries that include fresh produce such as melons, cucumbers, tomatoes, oranges, cabbage; dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt; and protein items such as chicken, fish, shrimp, and eggs. Program participants are especially grateful for fresh groceries, as well as the compassion they receive at IFCS.
KEEPING OUR MISSION ALIVE

Known for fostering self-sufficiency and respecting the dignity of each person, IFCS is living its mission at the Market @ IFCS. Creating a culturally-responsive experience of belonging and equal opportunity allows visitors to feel respected and supported without shame. The burden of “not having enough” is lifted, and they’re so appreciative of what is provided.

WE COULD USE YOUR HELP

IFCS has been partnering with the community to alleviate hunger since 1964. As we approach our 60th Anniversary, we have no intention of decreasing our presence or reducing our life sustaining services; however, the increased needs leave us struggling to respond adequately. With the high demand for food assistance, our small nonprofit is at a $98K budget deficit 8 months into this fiscal year (Sept. 2022 to April 2023). Please help nourish lives with your gift today. Our greatest needs at this time are for financial and volunteer support:

▶ DONATE TO NOURISH LIVES

Financial donations keep the Market shelves stocked and allow IFCS to acquire/source/purchase the most needed grocery items. Tax-deductible individual and corporate donations of all sizes make a big difference! Donate today at: ifcs.org/donate/

▶ VOLUNTEER IN THE MARKET

Managing a “market of choice” requires more volunteer support; if 6 volunteers are not available for one of the Market’s morning or afternoon shifts, IFCS cannot open. Learn about IFCS volunteer opportunities and sign up to help at: ifcs.org/volunteer-core/

Whatever role you play at IFCS, we are grateful for your partnership and your support. Summer is coming and hunger won’t take a vacation, but the Market @ IFCS will be open because of you.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Alm
Board President

Sandra Blythe-Perry
Executive Director

P.S. We would like to share our appreciation: please take a moment to see the impact you’ve made in our community:

Scan to watch a video depicting how our donors, volunteers, and participants make IFCS better:

Scan to see our “How to Shop the Market @ IFCS” flier, created to show recent service updates:

FEED A FAMILY

Mail a check with the enclosed envelope,

SCAN THIS QR CODE
to make a secure donation online, or visit ifcs.org/donate

Contact Todd McPherson, Development Director, at 303-725-9894 or toddm@ifcs.org about the best way to give.

VOLUNTEER IN THE MARKET

SCAN THIS QR CODE
to learn about volunteer opportunities, or visit ifcs.org/volunteer-core