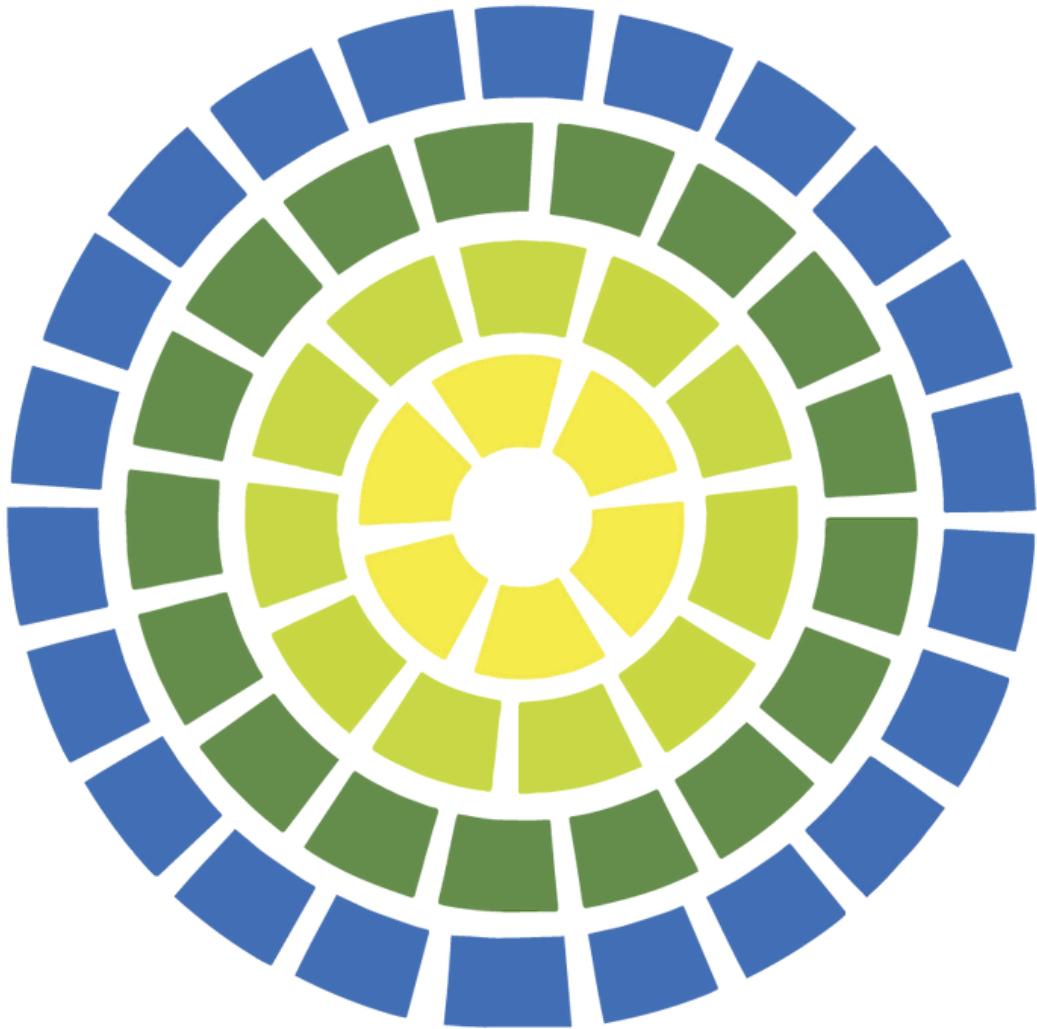


# 2024 Annual Report

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Neighbor by Neighbor  
Bridging a Gap. Changing a Life.

A heartfelt thank you to our major grantors:  
The Pokagon Fund, Berrien Community  
Foundation, United Way of Southwest  
Michigan, and The Upton Foundation.



# THE POKAGON FUND



**UNITED WAY**  
Southwest  
Michigan

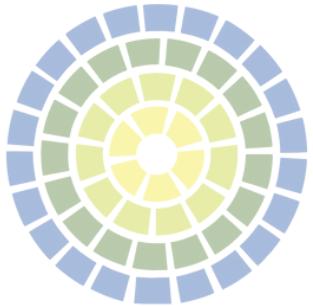


FREDERICK S. UPTON  
Foundation

We could not continue to assist our neighbors in  
need without your support!



# Organizational Achievements



-  Added a part-time case manager due to increase in client need
-  Became a partner of Feeding America: West Michigan
-  Held first Community Benefit Dinner in partnership with Granor Farm
-  Hired a part-time accountant
-  Secured two Feel Good Fridges from Whirlpool in order to carry more perishables in our food pantry
-  Held our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Founders' Day Gathering and 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Acorn Concert Fundraiser
-  Held our first, free Neighborly Gatherings to help engage the community
-  Won the Golden Acorn Award for Excellence

## Client Services Achievements

-  278 Households representing 626 individuals were assisted
-  1,030 bags of food were given to 128 households from our in-office food pantry
-  531 bags of hygiene were given to 112 households from our in-office hygiene pantry
-  Volunteers delivered Mobile Food Pantry Boxes to 29 households of clients
-  31 seniors received Senior Commodities delivered by Neighbor by Neighbor
-  136 boxes of diapers were given out to neighbors in need
-  33 households representing 131 individuals received holiday assistance

# Board of Directors

**JANET HENDERSON**  
BOARD CHAIR

**DAVID BALL**  
VICE CHAIR

**REV. JAY FAST**  
SECRETARY

**PEGGY LEFEBVRE**  
TREASURER

**MARCIE DUST**

**JUDY GADIEL**

**BARB WARREN**

**RICK CANADA**

**BRUCE MURPHY**



# Meet our Staff

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**KERI HASKINS**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**MEG SMYTH**  
SERVICE COORDINATOR

**JESSICA KIDWELL-SABOSKI**  
CASE MANAGER

**JEN BOMAR**  
PROGRAM AND GRANT DIRECTOR

**MARY CAMPBELL**  
ACCOUNTANT

**MICHAEL HOWE**  
AMERICORPS MEMBER

**KIP WALKER**  
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





## Mission

Neighbor by Neighbor connects the most vulnerable residents of SW Berrien County with resources and services to address immediate needs, while facilitating greater independence through targeted programs and services. Neighbor by Neighbor also mobilizes the community to build networks of mutual service and care through robust volunteer participation.

## What We Do

Neighbor by Neighbor is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that works to address food insecurities, homelessness, and the dire needs of the vulnerable seniors and disabled individuals in our community. We are a resource for our low-income neighbors in SW Berrien County that provides the tools and education for them to progress from dependence to independence.

# Who We Serve



## Income Requirements

| # of People in Household | Dollars Per year |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1                        | \$33,885         |
| 2                        | \$45,990         |
| 3                        | \$58,095         |
| 4                        | \$70,200         |

Neighbor by Neighbor serves economically disadvantaged individuals living at or below 225% of the Federal Poverty Level. Our geographic service area includes the towns of New Buffalo, Three Oaks, Sawyer, Harbert, Union Pier, Lakeside, Bridgman, Baroda, Galien, and New Troy.

## Neighbor by Neighbor Receives the 2024 Golden Acorn Award



Pictured here are BCF Director, Phil Malloy and Neighbor by Neighbor's Program and Grant Director, Jen Bomar

In September, Neighbor by Neighbor was the recipient of the 2024 Golden Acord Award from Berrien Community Foundation for “[our] compassion and care for senior citizens living in Harbor Country.” Neighbor by Neighbor’s approach is to keep low-income seniors safe inside their homes by coordinating and financing home repairs. The award comes with a \$3,000 grant, but a generous end-of-life gift from BCF donor, Bonnie Benson, raised the total that Neighbor by Neighbor received to \$13,000! A huge congratulations to our case manager and grant director, Jen Bomar, for all of her hard work on this grant.

# Meeting the Need: A Creative Solution for Connection

At Neighbor by Neighbor, our goal is to remove barriers for our clients. We aim to do whatever we can to make their day-to-day lives just a little bit easier.

Last spring, a single father of three daughters came to us for help. He and his children were living in a motel within our service area, and he was concerned for their safety and well-being

Dad was working part-time, and while he was at work, the girls stayed home. Though they were old enough to be on their own, he shared that their only way to reach him was through the internet—they had just one cellphone, and couldn’t afford another line. Unfortunately, the motel’s internet connection was unreliable, and he was worried about having no dependable way to stay in touch with his kids while he was away.

As a team, we agreed this was not okay. Children should always have a way to contact a parent in case of an emergency. Our case manager stepped in and purchased a Tracfone for the family, complete with pre-loaded minutes.

While this may seem like a small gesture to some, it made a world of difference for this family.

For Dad, it meant peace of mind—knowing his children could reach him if they needed to. It meant a safer, more connected day-to-day experience for all of them.

It may have been an outside-the-box solution, but it removed a real communication barrier. And that’s exactly what we strive to do: meet needs, however we can.



*“Neighbor is not a geographic term, it is a moral concept.”*

Rabbi Joachim Prinz

# Fresh Hope, Full Shelves: Growing Our Pantry Through Partnership and Persistence

One of our main goals for 2024 was to continue offering our food and hygiene pantry as a resource for our clients. After much success starting our pantry in 2023, we wanted to look at how we could expand and serve more of our struggling community members. We were able to do this is by cultivating a partnership with Feeding America.

Feeding America is a nonprofit whose main focus is combatting the hunger crisis in the U.S. They do this not only by facilitating Mobile Food Pantries, but also by allowing other nonprofits to partner with them and purchase discarded or overstock food at little to no cost. In 2024, we were able to purchase 2,668 pounds of food and hygiene supplies to distribute to our clients. By becoming a partner, we were able to serve more clients and provide more items that people were consistently in need of. We are looking forward to seeing how this partnership will continue to grow our pantry.

Initially, we were grateful to have a partnership with Feeding America to expand our pantry services and shelving to have many kinds of non-perishable goods. What we soon realized is that there was a large gap in our pantry – we had very limited capacity to take any kind of produce, dairy, or product that needed to be refrigerated in any capacity. Fresh goods are not only desirable to people, but they are also a necessity for proper nutrition.

With this in mind, we decided to reach out to Whirlpool to see about getting a Feel Good Fridge. The Feel Good Fridge is a program that Whirlpool facilitates where they donate old scratched and/or dented fridges to a nonprofit to stock perishable goods.

One of our staff members, Jen, collaborated with Berrien Community Foundation to get the process moving. Within a week, we had two fully functioning fridges to help store perishable items for our neighbors in need.

We are so grateful, as this allows us to carry frozen meats, dairy, and produce – all expensive items that our clients would not otherwise be able to afford. We look forward to seeing what 2025 has in store for even more growth of our food and hygiene pantry.



# Honoring, Celebrating, and Supporting Our Neighbors: A Year in Fundraising



This year proved to be another successful year of fundraising for Neighbor by Neighbor. We held our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Founders' Day Gathering and our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Acorn Fundraiser.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Founders' Day Gathering was held on Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11:30AM-2PM. Hosted at the beautiful home of Kirk Amptmeyer and Gary Allen, this elegant brunch honored four individuals and organizations that were instrumental to the growth and development of Neighbor by Neighbor: (top photo L to R) Megan Bolinder, Peg Kohring Cichon, Jay Fast representing Harbert Community Church and Peggy Lefebvre. The event also featured high-quality hors d'oeuvres from local Harbor Country businesses, as well as plenty of mixing and mingling with fellow neighbors. A show-stopping live auction also took place with big ticket items like a delicious Granor Farm dinner for fourteen and tickets and an overnight stay for our Acorn Fundraiser. We also held a paddle raise, where we accumulated well over our fundraising goal and were able to meet our match for The Pokagon Fund grant.

Following a successful Founders' Day Gathering was our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual "Do it With Love" Acorn Fundraiser. The night featured a pre-show party outdoors hosted by Alapash New Home, Nick and Jess Hawes, and Commune and Market, and an electrifying performance by Meagan McNeal. In addition to outstanding appetizers from some Southwest Michigan favorites, the event featured some thoughtfully curated raffle baskets with prizes like a cruise from New Buffalo Sailing Excursions and more. Meagan also put on a stellar performance and was really able to communicate the needs of our neighbors, making for a fruitful event.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone next year for even bigger and better fundraisers!

# Stronger Communities Start *Neighbor by Neighbor*

\$5 Donation: 1 load of clean laundry for an unhoused client

\$15 Donation: A bus ticket for a client to get to a job interview who does not have reliable transportation

\$25 Donation: Will buy feminine hygiene products for two neighbors who could not otherwise afford them

\$50 Donation: A gas giftcard so that our seniors don't have to miss their medical appointments

\$75 Donation: One month of diapers for a struggling, single mom

\$100 Donation: An electric bill paid for a family to avoid shut off

\*\*Neighbor by Neighbor is a registered 501c3 nonprofit and all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law\*\*

## How you can help



**Donate online at [neighborbyneighbor.org/donate](http://neighborbyneighbor.org/donate)**



**Sign up for one of our volunteer opportunities - get started by emailing Allegra at [allegra@neighborbyneighbor.org](mailto:allegra@neighborbyneighbor.org)**



**Drop food or hygiene items for our food pantry to our office (16170 Red Arrow Highway C7, Union Pier, MI 49129) during our office hours or send items via our Amazon Wishlist linked on our website**