

# Teen Feed Times

## Summer 2009

### *In this issue...*

Offering Thanks & Pledging Support	1
An Infinite World of Possibilities	2
Teen Feed: More Than A Meal	2
In Loving Memory	2
Special Thanks	3
Passing the Teen Feed Torch	3
What to Give Right Now	4
One More Goodbye	4

### USM Staff

Ryan Fouts

*Service Links for Youth Support Coordinator*

Megan Gibbard

*Executive Director*

Jaime Jamison

*Teen Feed Coordinator*

Alexis Lair

*Direct Service Support Staff*

Will Thompson

*Outreach Support Coordinator*

### Board of Directors

Jeff Albertson

*Chair*

Brad Papineau

*Vice Chair*

Alisa Betz

*Secretary*

Jack Yeager

*Treasurer*

Arezou Arefi-Afshar

Elliott Barrere

Thoa Huynh

Frank Lawler

Luciann MacDonald

Mike Weybright

## USM's Annual Celebration: Offering Thanks & Pledging Support

"We couldn't do it without you" is an old volunteer appreciation adage – quite true, certainly, but never very descriptive. To be more clear, the "you" are over 400 volunteers, advocates, meal team members, donors, cookie bakers, dish washers, food servers, and sock buyers.

And the "it" we couldn't do without you? It is 60 dinners to homeless youth and young adults every single Sunday through Thursday night, 52 weeks each year. It is youth leaving with full bellies, a good conversation, and the knowledge that a caring adult believes in them. It is being treated with respect as they move through a food line – small interactions that communi-

cate: You are valuable, and we believe in you.

You know that what Teen Feed offers is more than food. You know that our youth are young people with tremendous potential and dreams. They are people with a future, one made brighter by the consistent support of everyone that helps make sure that Teen Feed keeps its doors open.

Come join our Board members and dedicated USM community--veteran food team members, behind-the-scene donors, and those new to our work--for a heartfelt afternoon on September 28th for USM's 3rd Annual Celebration.



We will share food with one another. We will recognize the 2009 Teen Feed Meal Team and Advocate of the Year. We will listen to our youth and community members reflect on the impact Teen Feed has on the youth who eat with us. We will ask you, then, to make a 2010 pledge to support the ongoing work of Teen Feed.

Come be a part of our youth's path off the streets.

In hope,  
Megan

## SAVE THE DATE!!

### USM'S ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Sunday, September 28th

1pm—3pm

University Heights Center

# An Infinite World of Possibilities



As we cross the halfway mark of the year, I'm reflecting back on what a great year it's been. The people we serve have had many successes from getting housing, a job or ID, to finding proper medical or mental health care or even just creating a clearer plan for their future. When I think of everything they've accomplished, I can't help but think of the incredible impact Teen Feed has had on their lives.

I sometimes find myself getting stuck in the idea that Teen Feed is just a simple dinner program. In reality, that couldn't be farther from the truth. Teen Feed is a resting place, a haven, for so many youth. It starts with dinner, a nutritious meal that allows them to focus on their other goals. It gives them solid connections with staff and volunteers that truly care for them, which is vital in helping to reassure them that they are special. No, Teen Feed is not "just" a

dinner program, it's a launching pad into an infinite world of possibilities.

I recently had the chance to celebrate a young man that graduated from a local job training program. It was a beautiful experience to celebrate his accomplishments and to see the pride on his face. He is now on his way to Job Corps. Before he left, we sat down for lunch and looked back over all his accomplishments in the ten or so months we've known each other. He knows he is doing great, that he is absolutely worth it.

Another young woman that I'm working with recently completed drug treatment and is in stable housing. She is several months clean, and is absolutely committed to a new life of sobriety. She recently sat with the USM staff during our Teen Feed Coordinator interviews. Her poise and presence were remarkable, her

ability to articulate the importance of Teen Feed to the potential candidates, superb. She has taught me so much lately about being present and patient. She is great, and she knows she's worth it.

These two youth, and so many others, know they are worth it in no small part because they come to Teen Feed. Many have had conversations where a volunteer has specifically told them they are special, but even for those that haven't...the warm meal, the pair of clean socks...it ALL matters and it ALL makes a difference in their lives.

Thank you for making the infinite possible,  
~Ryan

**DONATE SECURELY ONLINE!**  
[www.teenfeed.org](http://www.teenfeed.org)

## Teen Feed: More Than A Meal



What a momentous time it has been working at USM! It's been nearly a year since I was hired and the time has flown by.

As a former client, I came into this position with (what I felt) was a reasonable understanding of what was valuable about a program like Teen Feed...the last 11 months has shown me that I had only actually seen the tip of the iceberg.

The true power of Teen Feed, and USM as a whole, has less to do with the number of meals we serve or socks we distribute than I thought. It lies in our unique ability to foster a sense of trust and understanding with those whom we serve. Through an

acknowledgement of our shared humanity, we are able to set aside our preconceived notions of one another and really work together toward a brighter future.

I think of one youth in particular that wanted nothing to do with us just 10 months ago. Through a series of interactions in Teen Feed and on the street during STOP outreach, I was able to show him that we were a group of people that had no desire to judge or take advantage of him. Today he is one of our most proactive clients and well on his way toward a healthy, sustainable future away from the streets.

It's the less tangible, sometimes small, things that really express the value of USM. In assisting us you

directly impact our ability to have these types of meaningful interactions. For this support I am forever humbled and in your debt.

In Solidarity,  
Will Thompson

### In Loving Memory

Shawn Clark, a young man that was known and loved by many on the Ave, passed away last month. His friends remember him as an older brother, as someone that was always genuinely concerned for the wellbeing of others, someone who would go out of his way to help friends in need. We are saddened by his untimely passing, but his memory and his impact in all our lives will forever shine like a bright star in our hearts.

## Special Thanks to the Following Donors:

Barbara Larson  
Barbara Paige  
Broadview Community United Church of Christ  
Dan & Betsy Norton-Middaugh  
David & Alicia Docter  
David Gauthier  
Debra Schwartz  
Dendreon Corporation  
Deupree Family Foundation  
DirecTV  
Donna Cooper  
Elaine Walsh  
Employee's Community Fund of Boeing  
Epiphany Parish of Seattle  
Essential Bakery  
First Congregational Church  
Gordon & Mary Hilstad  
Ian & Brenda King  
Jefferson & Thorley James

Jeffris-Wood Foundation  
Jennifer Keys  
Kawabe Memorial Foundation  
Kenneth Pickle  
Kristina Morgan  
Lake Serene Safeway  
Luciann MacDonald  
Lucinda Daly  
Marilyn Watkins  
Maura Sandroek  
Melinda & Randall Powers  
Melissa Bohm  
Melissa Larson  
Michael & Shauna Carette  
Mr. & Mrs. Blaine Hopp Jr.  
Nesholm Family Foundation  
OneFamily Foundation  
Otto & Pheobe Haas Fund  
Peter Kalbach  
Pride Foundation

Robert & Gail Allen  
Sammamish Presbyterian Church  
Sharon & Kevin Delaney  
Spektamur Agendo Foundation  
St. Anthony's School  
St. Mark's Catholic School  
Stephen & Kate O'Brien  
Susanne Banks  
The Bennett Family Foundation  
The Kroger Co. Foundation  
Thomas Ndamele  
Tom Choquette  
Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund  
University Congregational United Church of Christ  
University Temple, United Methodist Church  
Wayne Fuelling

## Passing the Teen Feed Torch

*The following is an excerpt from Eric's farewell letter to Jaime...*

You've been helping cover Teen Feed for some time now, so I think there is probably not that much that I can tell you that you haven't already figured out, but I do have some thoughts and reflections on Teen Feed I'd like to share with you and with the Teen Feed community.

Watch out. Teen Feed is an amazing and wonderful job. It is also quite possibly the hardest job you will ever have. It gets under your skin, creeps into your dreams, and changes the way you view and move through the world. And it doesn't stop affecting you after you've walked away.

Keep your sense of humor. There are things about Teen Feed that are just hilarious. Situations, things said, weapons checked at the sign in desk: me: "do you have any weapons to check?" guest: "just these big guns!" (flexing spindly arms at me) – it never stops being funny.

Spend time getting to know the meal teams. They are phenomenal people, and you are so lucky to get to work with all of them. Tell them "hi" for me.

Be consistent about the rules – They are there for a reason: to keep things safe. Everyone will always have a pressing and important reason why this time is different. Every time. That said, a part of being consistent means being consistent about knowing when to break your rules and when to make exceptions.

Always thank the church staff – they have been putting up with Teen Feed and all that it entails for a long time, and they do a lot of work

Continued on the next page...

Hi there! My name is Jaime C. Jamison, and I am the new Teen Feed Coordinator. I have worked for USM for the past two months as the fill-in Teen Feed Coordinator for Eric "The Awesome". I was introduced to Teen Feed when I served as part of a meal team. I loved the experience so much that I decided to join Teen Feed in a part-time position.

While working part-time, I was amazed at USM's youth-centered care and their network for staff support. This supportive working environment and youth first attitude caused me to not be satisfied with part-time (because yes, I love the work so much!), so I applied for the full-time coordinator position. Just working part-time helped me gain so much knowledge about the helping profession that I am truly looking forward to being full-time.

Before joining Teen Feed I have been a Human Services student at Western Washington University, youth minister, fundraiser, public speaker, mailman, soldier and an extra in the Seattle Opera. I also have a beautiful wife and two of the sweetest daughters on earth!

To a new future,  
Jaime



**Passing the Torch, continued from pg. 3**

to support us. Don't let that slip your mind ever.

Be flexible. Every day will be different, and every situation will be different. Remember how I said be consistent? Well, I want to emphasize that you should be consistently flexible and adaptive.

Take care of your heart, but let it stay open. You have already met, and will continue to meet the most amazing people through Teen Feed. People you would not otherwise have the opportunity to get to know. The hard part is worrying about people you know are in danger – simply through the circumstances they have found themselves in – and in coming to terms with the fact that you can't change that, and that the most we can do is offer a brief respite and a consistently compassionate ear and heart.

I think that is about it. Tell the volunteers they are amazing for me. Tell the kids that I love them, heck, tell them my eyes are welling up as I write this and think of them. Take good care of Teen Feed, take good care of yourself.

yours,  
--eric

**Special thanks...**

...go to John Keatley for providing the photos of some of our young people in the last Teen Feed Times issue.

Summer 2009  
Offer. Build. Ally.

**What to give right now...**

**SOCKS!**

The importance of taking care of your feet can't be stressed enough. The most basic way our young people can do this is to have regular access to "freshies" — clean socks — to help combat foot odor, fungus and other problems.



**UNDERWEAR!**

Having access to clean, fresh underwear is another vital way for our young people to stay healthy. We are specifically in need of smaller male sizes (30-34) and plus size female garments.

**HYGIENE SUPPLIES!**

Hygiene supplies are of course essential to help our young people feel prepared for their day-to-day experiences. We are currently in need of razors and shaving cream, nail clippers and personal use containers of both sunscreen and hand sanitizer.



To make a donation, please contact Megan at [megan@teenfeed.org](mailto:megan@teenfeed.org) or 206-522-4366.

**One More Goodbye**

In mid-August will we be saying goodbye to Alexis, our Direct Service Support Staff and Lutheran Volunteer Corps member. Alexis is planning to spend some time traveling throughout Thailand and hopes to return to Teen Feed in the future to serve as an Advocate. Bon Voyage, Alexis!

Have a different address you would prefer that we use? Receiving more than one copy of the TFT? Please contact us with any address changes or updates!



UNIVERSITY STREET MINISTRY  
4740 ~ B University Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98105-4516  
Phone: 206-522-4366  
Fax: 206-522-3043



NON PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
SEATTLE, WA  
PERMIT NO. 5718