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High School Students Fund Yearlong Hunger-Relief Effort in Greenville

Comstock Park, Michigan — June 14, 2016 — Greenville High School sophomore Tom Stephenson feels strongly about hunger. He sees it among his peers.

“I’ve heard from the lunch ladies that if they have extra food they’ll give it to the kids in need,” he says, “and I’ve seen kids waiting to get their breakfast in the morning because they don’t have anything to eat, and it’s hard to look at.”

That’s why Stephenson and fellow members of the [Greenville Youth Advisory Council](#) chose to fund monthly food distributions at their school and at two other sites in Greenville for an entire year. Each Mobile Food Pantry from [Feeding America West Michigan](#) will provide 5,000 pounds of fresh produce, dairy, baked goods and other foods to students, their families and people in need from the community.

The funding comes from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation where GYAC, part of the Greenville Area Community Foundation, has an endowment. GYAC is providing \$19,620 to support the Mobile Pantry program at [Greenville High School](#), the [Church of the Nazarene](#) and the [American Legion](#).

More than [22 percent of children](#) struggle with hunger in Montcalm County. That puts parents in tough situations.

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“To to have to choose between [food] and taking your kid to the doctor because they have an ear infection, I think that’s a really tough choice people shouldn’t have to make,” Stephenson says.

Stephenson believes Mobile Pantries can alleviate some of the pressure on struggling families because, while free and reduced-price meals serve students at school, Mobile Pantries provide food for the entire family after school.

“We’re absolutely thrilled to have a partner this focused and motivated to get food to people in their community,” said Ken Estelle, CEO of Feeding America West Michigan. “Our whole team has been impressed by the sincerity and the generosity of these students. We’re proud to fight hunger alongside them.”

Mobile Pantries at Greenville High School will take place on the third Monday of each month. The next is scheduled for 4 p.m. on Monday, June 20.

Dates and locations for upcoming Mobile Pantries in West Michigan and the Upper Peninsula can be found at FeedWM.org/FindFood.

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About Feeding America West Michigan. Serving local families in need since 1981, Feeding America West Michigan reclaims safe surplus food from farmers, manufacturers, distributors and retailers. We distribute that food through a network of more than 1,100 food pantries, youth programs, and other hunger-relief agencies in 40 counties from the Indiana border through the Upper Peninsula. Each year, an estimated 492,100 people receive food from Feeding America West Michigan. For more information, visit FeedWM.org.