

VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 1 | SPRING 2023

CONNECTIONS

THE DIFFERENCE **YOU** ARE MAKING FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED



**“Thank
You!!”**

*For giving a senior
peace and comfort.*

 **Volunteers of America®**
MICHIGAN

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA MICHIGAN
21415 CIVIC CENTER DR. SUITE 306
SOUTHFIELD, MI 48076



Hilda in her apartment at McDonald Senior Apartments.

**“I have never lived in a community like this. I love to live here! This building is kind, clean and so nice. Everything feels together and I am at such peace.”
-Hilda**



Hilda posing for a portrait in her apartment.

A place to call Home.

How YOU made it possible for Hilda to find peace and comfort.

Hilda and her husband, Ricky, were happy for over 40 years making a difference in their community. They raised three children and focused on always being grateful for what they had. But everything changed in 2014 when **her husband passed away**. Suddenly, without her other half and the life they'd built together, Hilda found herself in a very lonely place. In addition to the loneliness without her husband, Hilda was diagnosed with Stage 3 breast cancer and struggled financially. **She had to decide between paying her medical bills or keeping a roof over her head.**

Thanks to YOU, Hilda found hope and a home at McDonald Senior Apartments. She can now afford rent, medical bills, and has a strong community around her. Hilda says that the community she found at McDonald feels like family.

“For so long I felt alone, but now I feel happy.”

YOU helped Hilda continue to live peacefully in a place where she feels safe and is part of a thriving community. **Without your support, communities like McDonald Senior Apartments could not exist.** Seniors like Hilda wouldn't have the medical resources and financial support they now depend on.

“Today I am on the road to recovery and looking forward to a healthy future. I know Ricky would be so proud of me.”

Because of **YOU**, Hilda can focus on her health and feels relieved knowing that she is not alone. Your giving spirit continues to shine bright, ensuring more seniors like Hilda can stay happy, safe, and healthy.



YES! I want to help seniors, families and veterans thrive!

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of

\$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$ _____

I would like to make this a:

monthly gift

annual gift

one time gift

Check Enclosed

Signature: _____

To donate online visit us at www.voami.org or scan the QR code below.



PROGRAM Spotlight



Reginald Harvey (Veteran Client), Dave Woodruff (BWF) & Gary Conley (VOAMI)

Veteran Food Security Project

Funded by:  BOB WOODRUFF
FOUNDATION

Did you know that Volunteers of America Michigan started a new program? **The Veteran Food Security Project (VFSP)** was created with funding from the Bob Woodruff Foundation in December of 2022. This program serves Michigan veterans regardless of their discharge status. VFSP is open to any veteran, or their family, who has served at least one day of active duty outside of basic training, and who is unemployed.

The Veteran Food Security Project **gives veterans a 10–15-pound box full of shelf-stable food items to last a week**, and tailors the boxes to the specific needs of the recipients if they have dietary restrictions. Veterans are also given a hot meal in the kitchen of the Detroit Veterans Housing Program, are connected to other veterans with similar experience, and they can be enrolled in other veterans' programs offered by VOAMI. VFSP is offered in Detroit, Battle Creek and Grand Rapids.

The goal of the project is to help veterans facing food insecurities, but to also **provide relief for the veteran and their family members**. Veterans who receive the food box can now focus on their family and other financial needs, rather than what is going to be on the dinner table.

“It definitely goes beyond the box,” says Mary Linder, Data Compliance Manager for Social Services. **“By providing the meals, veterans can focus on other bills and their family’s home life. To be able to provide that comfort, is wonderful.”**

In Detroit, over 220 pounds of food are given to veterans and their families monthly. You can help make a difference by volunteering at the Call Sam Kitchen to serve meals, helping pack food boxes, grocery shopping and donating shelf-stable food items, or by purchasing pantry items from our Amazon wish lists. You can also volunteer to help organize the items received in the pantry as needed. **We hope that we can count on you to allow veterans facing food insecurities find peace and comfort.**



“By providing the meals veterans can focus on other bills and their family’s home life. To be able to provide that comfort is wonderful”

Where is he now?

YOU showed Curtis a second chance.

Last year we shared Curtis' story, and how YOU gave him shelter at the Detroit Housing Veterans Program. He served in the United States Marine Corps for four years until an injury brought his career to a halt. After he was discharged, Curtis leaned on his family for support during that challenging time. However, within a few short years, he lost his mother, father, and grandmother. **The support system he leaned on was gone, and he became homeless.**

That's when **YOU** stepped in. Because of **YOU**, Curtis found safety, community, and support at our Detroit Veterans Housing Program. In addition to building a strong community – Curtis was able to complete and graduate from the program, and **now he has a home of his own.**

Curtis can now appreciate peace and quiet any time of the day. He has four grandchildren and cannot wait for them to be able to play in his fenced backyard – they had never been able to visit him before. But it wasn't just the living situation that improved for Curtis. His relationships improved, too. He also appreciated all the help he got from the VOAMI staff.

"They gave me so many opportunities here," he says, "You don't have to worry about anything. They give you the opportunity to be yourself, improve yourself, and move on with your life." **YOU** made it possible for Curtis to receive assistance with food security, references for medical services, and professional advice for mental health.

When asked what he likes most about VOAMI, he sums it up in two simple sentences:

"None of them [VOAMI staff] turned their back on me. They all went far and beyond to try to help me and now I have created good friendships with everyone here."

YOU have made a huge impact on homeless veterans in Detroit. We hope more veterans like Curtis can count on you, too.

VETERAN Spotlight



OPERATION BACKPACK®



Creating outcomes for children

How YOU can make sure no child gets left behind.

With summer right around the corner, it may seem too early to think about the return to school this fall, but already hundreds of Michigan parents raising children in homeless shelters or low-income housing are asking themselves a simple question: **how am I going to provide my children with the school supplies they need this September?**

Something as simple as a backpack or pencil can instill the support and confidence students need to achieve success in the classroom and in their everyday lives. **Of all the challenges a child experiencing homelessness may be faced with, a basic lack of supplies to complete schoolwork should not be one of them.**

For 10+ years, **YOU** have given thousands of children experiencing homelessness or financial struggles at home a sense of normalcy during the back-to-school season through Operation Backpack®. Through your support, Volunteers of America Michigan can provide backpacks and grade-specific school supplies to youth living in Michigan. YOUR kindness and generosity enable us to provide children with the supplies they need.

Right now, **YOU** can make sure that every child in Michigan has a successful school year. We hope we can count on you to let your kindness shine.



Become a Sponsor

Does your workplace or family foundation give back to the community? **Consider becoming an Operation Backpack® sponsor today.** Your sponsorship contributions go toward purchasing new backpacks and school supplies, school supply donation events, and the Back-to-School Bonanza!

Do you have kids high-school aged or younger? They can get involved, too, and sponsor a backpack as a Backpack Buddy.



Scan the QR code to find out more about sponsorship opportunities.



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Donate Funds for Operation Backpack®

Your financial support makes this program possible. Community partners can gather funds together and give as one donation, you can donate online by scanning the QR code, or you can mail a check to Volunteers of America Michigan.

Organize a Drive

You can organize a local drive and invite your friends and colleagues to participate by donating school supplies and backpacks using our supply lists as a guide. Want to save some time? You can also purchase supply kits on our website.

Volunteer

Get involved! We need your help to sort all of the donated supplies. You can write encouraging notes to the students receiving the school supplies and help pack backpacks at our office! Sign up to volunteer beginning July 1.

Purchase Supplies

Purchase items off of our online store and the items will shipped directly to us at our office in time for the first day of school.

You can also purchase supplies and deliver them in person to our office at 21415 Civic Center Drive, Suite 306, Southfield, MI 48076



Donate now!



Sign up to host!



Volunteer Today!



Shop now!



Did you know?

You can continue your impact by leaving a gift in your will for Volunteers of America Michigan.

- Please send me information on how to continue my impact by leaving a gift in my will.
- Please call me to discuss leaving a gift in my will for Volunteers of America Michigan.
My phone number is: _____
The best time to call is: _____

- My employer offers matching gift funds. Enclosed is the appropriate form from my Human Resources Department.



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Thank you for keeping hope alive in your community!

Your gift is tax deductible as a charitable contribution. All gifts received are used where most needed to help care for people in need throughout the year.



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SOUTHFIELD, MI 48076

Volunteer with us

volunteers@voami.org
248-204-6042

Schedule a tour

kbenton@voami.org
248-204-6034

Planned Giving

kbenton@voami.org
248-204-6034

Donate your vehicle

carshelpingpeople.org
1-800-552-1515

Thrift pick-up

866-333-8281

Visit our website

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Volunteers of America Michigan



YOU COULD WIN A CUSTOM CHOPPER



For the third year, **The Sam Bernstein Law Firm, Darren McCarty & Volunteers of America Michigan** are teaming up to bring bikers together while supporting Michigan veterans who have selflessly served our nation.

We are giving **YOU** the chance to win a custom chopper. Purchase raffle tickets in-person, over the phone or request tickets online to throw your name in the hat. All proceeds go directly to helping Michigan veterans through VOAMI's available services.

RAFFLE DETAILS

Ticket price:

\$20/1 ticket
\$50/3 tickets
\$100/6 tickets

Drawing Date/Time:

September 15, 2023 | 7PM

Drawing Location:

Motor City Harley Davidson
24800 Haggerty Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 48355
at the Call Sam Chopper Shop booth.

Scan for your chance to win!

