



RING THE BELLS THAT STILL CAN RING.

FORGET YOUR PERFECT OFFERING.

THERE IS A CRACK, A CRACK IN EVERYTHING

THAT'S HOW *the light* GETS IN.

— Leonard Cohen

MISSION

CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank is a volunteer-driven organization that provides immediate and non-judgmental support for individuals facing emotional, food, or financial crisis.

VISION

Every individual in our community has support in a time of need.

QUICK CONTACTS

- DONATE
builtbycommunity.org/donate
- CRISIS HELPLINE SERVICES
Text or call 988
Chat online at chat.988lifeline.org
- MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE
1-855-581-8111
- FINANCIAL SUPPORT
(319) 569-6393
- FOOD PANTRY
(319) 351-0128
1045 Highway 6 East, Iowa City
- HEALING PRAIRIE FARM
(319) 255-7006

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A WORD FROM OUR CEO

This past year, we’ve seen just how quickly the ground can shift beneath your feet.

Dramatic policy changes, rising costs of living, and reductions in public safety nets have created deeper, more complex challenges for too many of our neighbors. At CommUnity, we’ve felt these impacts firsthand and so have the people who turn to us when there’s nowhere else to go.

Amidst this uncertainty, one truth remains clear: when we connect people to the right support at the right time, we can break the cycle of crisis.

What makes CommUnity unique is the way our programs work together. A person calling our crisis line might also need a food box delivered to their doorstep. A young person receiving mental health support at Healing Prairie Farm might return home to a family that now feels confident navigating housing or utility assistance. The threads of our services are woven tightly, each one strengthening the others.

We didn’t build this safety net alone. You - our donors, our volunteers, our partners - are part of every story of hope and resilience you’ll read in this report. Every bag of groceries, every conversation on the helpline, every night a family stays safely housed happens because someone like you believes in this work.

But we’re not naïve. The challenges ahead are real, and the future remains uncertain. We know the systems our community depends on are strained, and we know we’ll need each other more than ever.

We’re ready to meet that moment. And we’re deeply grateful to know you’ll be standing with us when we do.



Sarah Nelson
CEO



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

SARAH NELSON
Chief Executive Officer

ADRIANNE KORBAKES
Chief Operating Officer

DREW MARTEL, LISW
Chief Clinical Officer

JENNIFER STEINES
Chief Financial Officer

ANGIE MEIERS
Finance Director

JULIA WINTER
Director of Development

RYAN DICKSON
**Director of Staff
Development & Training**

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Greg Vrchoticky
Geoff Wagner



FOOD PANTRY

BEYOND THE BEANS: HOW ONE EXCHANGE CAN MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

By Krystal Kabela, Food Bank Assistant Manager

Working at the food bank, I'm reminded daily that our work is about more than food. It's about listening to our neighbors, balancing guidelines that help us serve as many people as possible, and still finding ways to provide individualized care when we can. I've learned that some of the most meaningful moments happen in the quietest, simplest exchanges.

One afternoon not long ago, I had an experience that brought this balance into sharp focus. A gentleman came in, and just as he had finished

“

I've always liked helping others and [volunteering] has been a great way to do that. In some respects the pantry has been sort of a second home for me in Iowa City.

-Barbara, volunteer since 1989

565

volunteers served 16,983 hours in fiscal year 2025.

1.98M

pounds of food distributed to **80,049** individuals in Johnson County.

1.34M

pounds of food donated. **1.2M** pounds came from Table to Table.

46K

visits to the pantry in addition to **6K** food deliveries and **2K** mobile pantry visits.

up his shopping, a few bottles of olive oil were stocked on the shelves. He noticed them right away and asked a volunteer politely if he could exchange one of the items from his cart - a can of beans - for the oil instead.

Our volunteer followed procedure exactly as trained: once a cart has been weighed and checked out, we don't allow people to re-enter the shopping area. This ensures fairness, consistency, and efficiency so that we can serve hundreds of households each day. The volunteer explained this gently, and the man nodded and said, "No problem." He wasn't upset, and according to our guidelines, the matter was settled.

Still, it stuck with me. He wasn't asking for anything extra—just to trade beans for oil, an item that can stretch into multiple meals and is often costly at the store. I decided to take a bottle of oil off the shelf and walked it over to him.

He was surprised, and then emotional. He explained that he doesn't come in often, only every couple of weeks, and that he had never imagined he would find himself needing this kind of help. He admitted that he felt embarrassed to be here at all and his eyes became glossy.

At that moment, I could feel the weight of what he was carrying. It wasn't just the need for food, but the vulnerability of asking for help. I thanked him for his kind words and told him we were grateful he came in. I reassured him that there is no need for embarrassment here, we all need help sometimes. He smiled through his tears and said

that he felt welcomed, and he thanked me again for the food.

That brief exchange has stayed with me, and it will probably stick with me for a long time. Our guidelines exist for a reason, they help us make sure resources are distributed fairly and that we can serve as many neighbors as possible. But this moment reinforced that there are times when making a small swap, when we're able, makes a real difference.

We're proud to maximize our impact not only through systems and procedures, but also by responding to individual needs at the moment. Sometimes, that can mean a family getting the ingredients for a complete meal instead of just part of one. Other times, it can simply be a reminder to someone that they belong here, even in a hard season of their life.

For this neighbor, it was a single bottle of olive oil. For me, it was a reminder of why individualized care matters and why every small decision can make a lasting impact.



Matt & Caleb pose for the 2025 Strike Out Hunger food drive.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

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3,196

mailing address
assists.

94

families obtained
new housing through
the Iowa City security
deposit fund.

646

housing and utilities
assists kept the
lights on and the
heat running.

286

Cultivating Careers
assists provided work
or school enabling
items for our
neighbors.



Did you know... A larger indicator of homelessness in terms of services we provide is mail agreements. Our Financial Support office acts as a temporary mailing address for those without a permanent residence. We currently have 534 people with active mail agreements, which is up by 267 people from this time two years ago.

While we are seeing the need for housing assistance climb dramatically, funding sources are less stable and less accessible. Unfortunately, due to federal funding cuts, we were not able to serve as many families as we would like in order to sustain our services as a whole. Your ongoing support provides as much support to as many individuals as possible, but the need is growing faster than individual contributions.



Kayla takes a client call

CRISIS HELPLINES

104K

total helpline contacts. **24,686** of which were contacts to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

78K

contacts to the recently-terminated 988 LGBTQI+ line.

23%

increase in total contacts compared to fiscal year 2024, and **50% increase** compared to fiscal year 2023.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

On June 17, CommUnity CEO Sarah Nelson was notified that the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) would terminate the LGBTQI+ 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline effective July 17 at 11:59 p.m. This decision means that the dedicated line, which provided lifesaving support to LGBTQI+ youth in crisis, no longer exists.

The most troubling part is that these funds, totaling nearly \$4.2 million, were not reallocated to the broader 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Instead, they simply disappeared. While the administration may choose not to continue supporting LGBTQI+ youth experiencing suicidal thoughts, the reality is that the need is only increasing.

Without this resource, two significant challenges emerge.

Our counselors top quality* areas this year were...

BEING PRESENT WITH CLIENTS

EXPLORING CLIENT ISSUES

SUPPORTING CLIENTS AT HIGH RISK OF SUICIDE

*according to a quality improvement evaluation by Vibrant

First, call volumes on the main 988 line will inevitably rise, but no new funding has been provided to meet this increase. Second, and perhaps most devastating, many LGBTQI+ children and young adults may not feel comfortable reaching out to the general line for support - leaving them without a safe and affirming place to turn.

Every call to 988 represents a person in need, and removing specialized resources does not reduce that need. It only increases the risk that young people will fall through the cracks.

Thanks to the generous ongoing support of mental health advocates like you, we'll still be

here to provide as much support as we can to as many people as we can. But fiscal year 2026 and beyond will come with new challenges, and youth in crisis need you now more than ever. So every chance you get, speak up, show up, and lend a listening ear.

*Note: Help is (still) here. While the challenges we are facing in fiscal year 2026 have required dramatic shifts in how we operate behind the scenes, we are still providing top tier care. **If you or someone you love is in need of a listening ear, please don't hesitate to seek help.** We are changing our processes and tightening our belts in order to ensure the quality of care our clients receive remains steady.*

“Thank you for being there.”

“

Thank you for helping me get out of my room.

“

Thank you for understanding. I really appreciate you. Your compassion just oozes through the phone like a big hug.

“

I'm scared out of my mind, but you're helping comfort me a little bit right now. Thank you for being here.

“

I know I got y'all on my side. It gets easier every time I call because I know y'all don't judge.

“

God bless your soul man.

“

(Client could be heard talking to someone at the end of the call)
That lady's mad nice. She always takes time and listens to me bro.

“

You're like an angel on my shoulder. You really talk to my heart.

“

Thank you. You understand. I wish you were my mom.

-A selection of feedback from real Crisis Helpline Services clients



CommUnity volunteers, staff, family, and friends walk and ride in the Iowa City Pride Parade 2025.

Did you know... Last fiscal year, 8% of Mobile Crisis Response calls came directly from law enforcement agencies. When officers encounter someone experiencing a mental health crisis, they can connect with our trained crisis counselors who provide on-the-spot support and follow-up care. This collaboration ensures that individuals receive the specialized care they need, rather than being funneled into systems that may not address the root of their struggles.

At the same time, it allows law enforcement to focus their time and resources where they are most effective—keeping the community safe. By working hand-in-hand, Mobile Crisis Response teams and law enforcement create a more compassionate and effective response to mental health emergencies. Together, we are reducing barriers to care, lessening the strain on public safety, and ensuring that people in crisis find the right help at the right time.

CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES

28 MIN.

average mobile crisis response time.

1,685

total mobile crisis dispatches with **2,379** total follow-up contacts.

95%

mobile crisis diversion rate from hospitals or jails.

43

out of **289** youth mobile crisis calls resulted in a warm hand off to Healing Prairie Farm.

2,329

client contacts at GuideLink Center. **1,365** listed substance abuse as the primary presenting issue, and **964** listed mental health as the primary presenting issue.

1,197

hours providing crisis counseling at GuideLink Center.

**30 MIN.
52 SEC.**

average GuideLink triage contact.

GROWING HOPE & HORSES ON THE FARM

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Where does the time go? Healing Prairie Farm is already in its second year of operation, and the impact is growing every day. Thanks to your generosity, this past fiscal year, we were able to provide 1,463 nights of safe shelter to 186 Iowa youth facing crisis. Healing Prairie Farm was created as a place of refuge and stability for young people navigating some of life's toughest challenges. Here, they find not only a roof over their heads, but also the compassion, guidance, and tools they need to take their next steps forward. Your continued support makes it possible to meet kids where they are, offering them care, dignity, and the chance to build a brighter future.

1,463
nights of safe shelter
and support.

186
youth served through
the Runaway &
Homeless Youth Shelter
and Crisis Stabilization
program.

14.5
average age of
youth clients
served.

10
night average length
of stay with an
average of **13** nights
in Youth Shelter and
7 nights in Crisis
Stabilization.



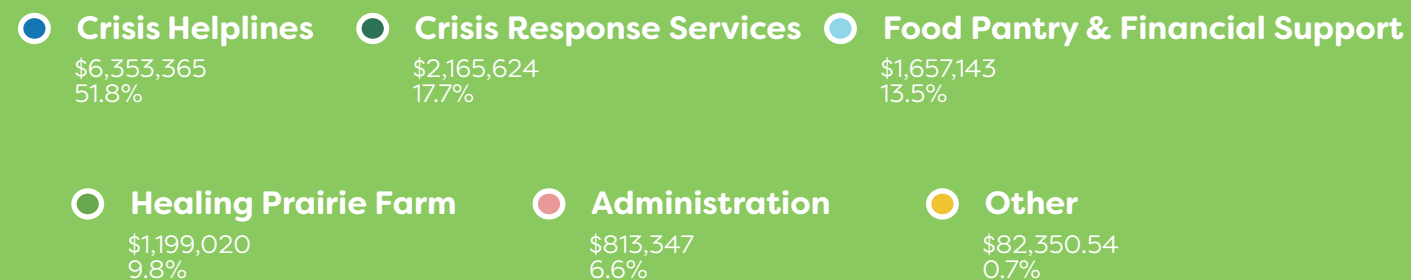
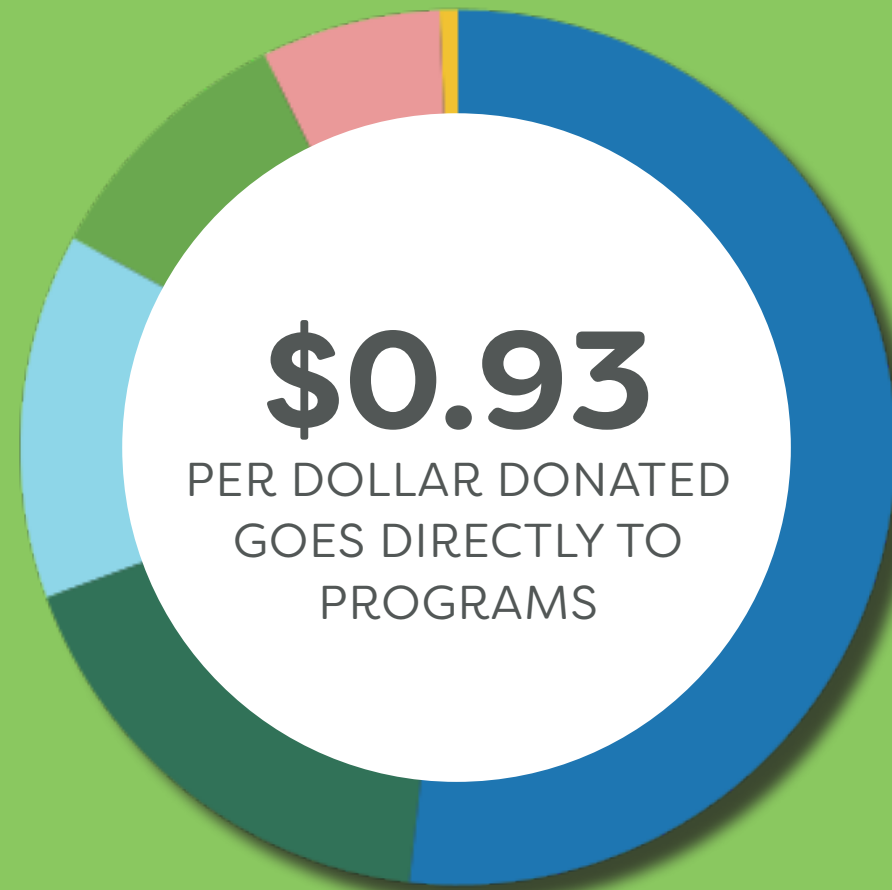
The sign and Youth Shelter house at Healing Prairie Farm.
Miss Kitty the horse shares her excitement about living on the farm.

FINANCIALS

.....

Deep funding cuts and increasing demand for help have created an urgent need for community support in order to sustain vital services.

EXPENSES



*Unaudited financials

**Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding

A TURNING POINT

For years, this section of our annual report has been a steady, almost uneventful reflection of our commitment to sound financial management and fiscal responsibility. For our donors, sponsors, and grantors, these pages have served as reassuring proof of performance. While we will always ensure that your investments are stewarded with care and impact, what you see below no longer tells the full story.

While these pages reflect a completed fiscal year 2025, they mark the end of a chapter that may not look like the next. This is true not only for CommUnity, but for all American nonprofits. But don't mistake this change for excitement. This is a change like an earthquake, like an illness, like a crisis.

We are operating in an incredibly challenging funding environment. Historic cuts to government funding, sharp increases in demand for services, and the steep cost of living have converged. The result: the nonprofit sector is under immense pressure, and every financial decision has become a question of survival.

An executive order signed in August directs federal agencies awarding grants to include "termination for convenience" clauses which allow the government to terminate already-awarded funds if the award "no longer advances agency priorities or the national interest." This executive order would make cuts like that of the 988 LGBTQI+ Lifeline legal, dramatically limiting the recourse available to agencies who rely on promised funding. This creates a volatile funding

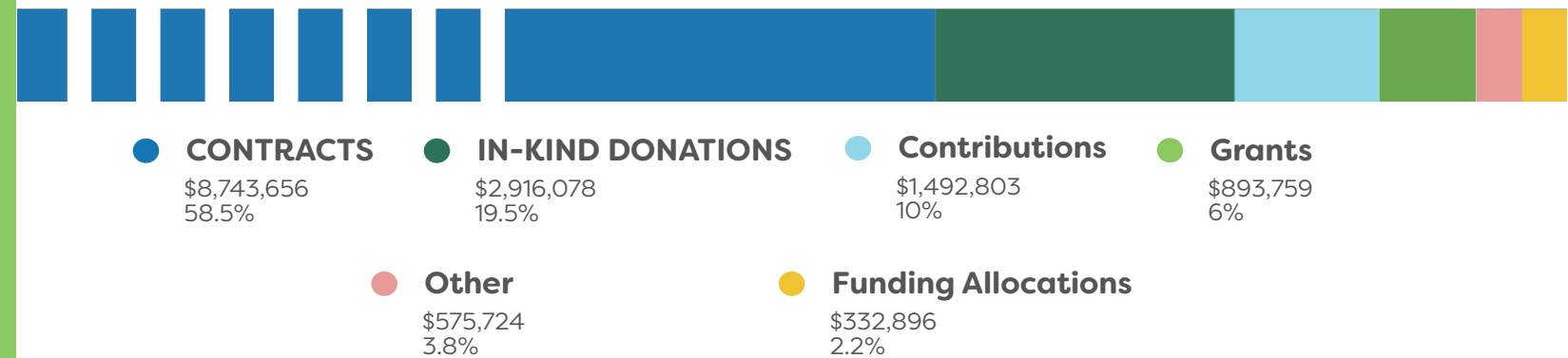
environment that demands conformity with the policies of the current administration. Thankfully, our organization has been large enough and supported enough to weather the storm and continue to provide high-quality services.

In order to continue to steward donor dollars well and in anticipation of a changing funding environment, we began planning structural changes in June. These plans included the reorganization and elimination of about a dozen staff positions so we could move into fiscal year 2026 with solid financial footing.

While we were anticipating funding cuts and unrenewed contracts following the federal government's fiscal year coming to a close in September, we did not anticipate contract-breaking, illegal, immediate cuts. We then had to lay off an additional 50 staff members following the termination of the 988 LGBTQI+ Lifeline, and employee benefits were scaled back organization-wide in order to preserve services. These are not changes any organization takes lightly. It's a reflection of just how committed our team remains to keeping our community supported, no matter the cost.

This report is not business as usual. It's a call to awareness and a call to action. Our neighbors facing crisis still have access to top tier help thanks to the support of our donors and the dedication of our volunteers and staff. If there was ever a moment to invest in the future of this work, it is now.

REVENUE



*White stripes represent a portion of FY25 revenue that has been terminated in FY26 due to funding cuts.

**Find a breakdown of funding sources for each program at the bottom of the impact pages using the legend on this page. Program funding source charts do not include the dollar value of in-kind donations.

DONORS, GRANTORS, & SPONSORS

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For the past few years, our donor listing has been published exclusively online. You can view the full list of generous supporters who make our work possible at builtbycommunity.org/thankyou25.

Publishing the listing digitally instead of printing it in the annual report saves us over eight pages of printing, reducing costs by nearly 20%. At a time when printing expenses continue to rise, that's a meaningful savings that allows us to put more donor dollars directly toward helping our neighbors in crisis.

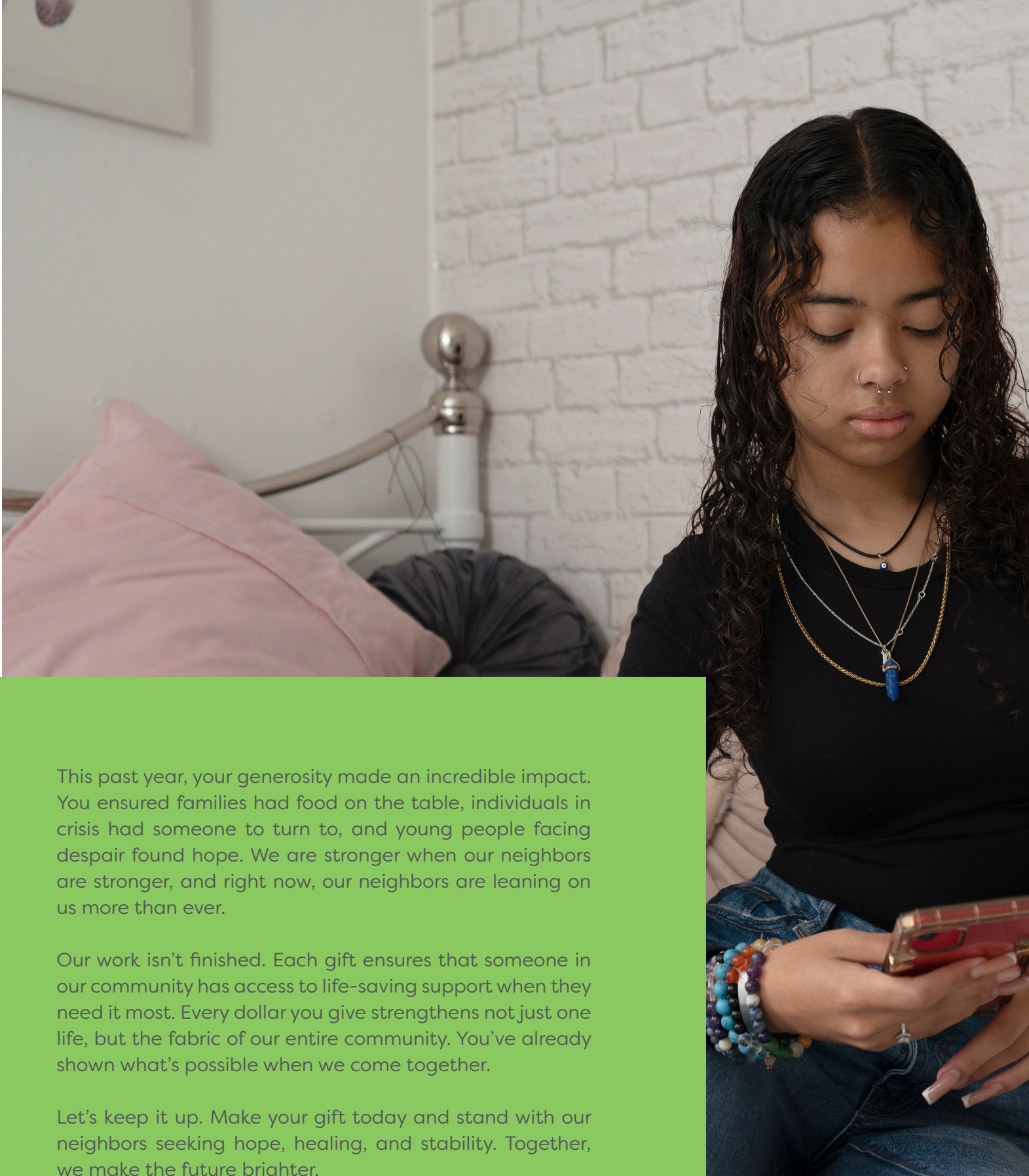
This change may seem small, but it makes a big difference. Every dollar we save on materials is a dollar we can reinvest in programs that provide food, housing assistance, crisis intervention, and hope.

Sharing our donor listing online also means we no longer have to limit recognition to gifts above a certain amount. We can celebrate every donor, because every contribution makes a real impact. Plus, the digital format gives us the space to use larger, more readable print and highlight some of the incredible fundraisers, food drives, and community events that made this year so special.

We remain deeply grateful for your support, and we're proud to recognize our donors in a way that's both fiscally responsible and aligned with our mission. Thank you for standing with us and with our community.



Development staff from CommUnity and Community Foundation of Johnson County celebrate Great Give Day 2025.



This past year, your generosity made an incredible impact. You ensured families had food on the table, individuals in crisis had someone to turn to, and young people facing despair found hope. We are stronger when our neighbors are stronger, and right now, our neighbors are leaning on us more than ever.

Our work isn't finished. Each gift ensures that someone in our community has access to life-saving support when they need it most. Every dollar you give strengthens not just one life, but the fabric of our entire community. You've already shown what's possible when we come together.

Let's keep it up. Make your gift today and stand with our neighbors seeking hope, healing, and stability. Together, we make the future brighter.



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builtbycommunity.org

