

## FISH OF WESTMINSTER, INC – 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

FISH OF WESTMINSTER was established in 1970 by a group of Westminster Christians, called to express their love and concern for their neighbors. In the early days, FISH was the emergency service referral network for the entire city. As the city grew and matured, and more social services became available, FISH evolved in two neighborhood food pantries – one at Westminster Presbyterian Church (WPC) and one at Westminster United Methodist Church (WUMC). The WPC food pantry is open daily, Monday through Friday. The food pantry at WUMC recently had to reduce its hours and is now open Monday and Wednesday.

According to the Food Bank of the Rockies, there are currently 39,090 food insecure (people who lack consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life) people in Adams County. We help families and individuals struggling with food insecurity in Westminster and unincorporated Adams County thrive by obtaining and distributing food and other essentials.

Over the past few years, FISH of Westminster has invested in maturing as a community organization – enhancing or developing new partnerships within the community, establishing an Internet presence, and developing effective communication tools. 2019 saw the results of these efforts including:

- Food drives for FISH of Westminster were conducted by new and long-time partners - the City of Westminster, the City of Westminster Youth Advisory Council, the Fraternal Order of Eagles – Aerie 4019, Take Off Pounds Sensibly (aka TOPS) at WPC, Boy Scouts (as an Eagle Scout project), and Westminster Recreation Center Pottery Group. Significant donations were also received from the “9Cares” community food drive.
- New volunteers from within the community were recruited through the FISH of Westminster Internet page (<https://fishofwestminster.org>).
- Financial donations continued to be received from throughout the community, beyond the members of the two sponsoring congregations.

Long-time partnerships also continued with:

- Essendant (a wholesale distributor of office supplies), Valente’s Italian Deli and Bakery, and Applebee’s Restaurant all providing support throughout the year.
- Grocery Rescue (a Food Bank of the Rockies program) partnerships with HMart, King Soopers, Miller Farmers Market, Safeway, Starbucks, Walmart and Whole Foods resulted in donations of bakery goods, meat and dairy products, canned and boxed items, produce, and non-food items in excess of **210,000** pounds.

While unemployment within the Front Range remains significantly low, the need for food assistance continues. Each month there are clients who achieve food security through better pay and no longer visit the food pantries. However, each month there are also new clients who register for assistance.

Clients reside in the areas between 52<sup>nd</sup> and 144<sup>th</sup>, and I-25 and Sheridan Blvd, though clients throughout Westminster are also served at the WPC location. Anyone asking for assistance from

outside the service area are provided with one box of food and provided information regarding food pantries in their local area.

In 2019, FISH of Westminster:

- Assisted **22,187 people** (1,849 people per month),
- Aided **6,216 families** (518 families/households per month)
- Provided **250,194 meals**,
- Supported **140 homeless individuals** with food and hygiene products.

Of those individuals:

Ages:

0-17	4,235
18-59	17,017
Seniors	935

Race and National Origin:

White	10,361
Hispanic	9,089
African American	753
Asian/Pacific Islander	704
Native American/ Alaskan Native	466
Other/Multi	814

FISH of Westminster is an entirely volunteer organization with volunteers ranging from 6 years old through 92 years old. These volunteers make it possible to keep our doors open. The **65 volunteers** donated **11,500 hours** last year.

The primary funding sources for FISH of Westminster in 2018 were:

- USDA - The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP),
- City of Westminster Human Services Grant,
- A grant from the Food Bank of the Rockies,
- Donations from members of WPC and WUMC, and
- Donations from citizens throughout the community.

Two annual fundraisers, open to the community, were also sponsored. The first, a Spring Afternoon Tea, took place in the library at WPC. The second, a Pancake Breakfast, was hosted by the Westminster Applebee's Restaurant in September. Both events brought in needed funds to help keep the food pantries well-stocked.

Thank you to everyone who has supported FISH of Westminster, Inc. throughout 2019!

FISH of Westminster, Inc. is a proud partner of the Food Bank of the Rockies.