



MUW General Campaign Chair Special Update

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To hear more about Sue Bemis's work at the Kidz Cupboard and how your support makes a difference click [here](#)



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Monadnock United Way

PACESETTER

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A big "thank you" to **Hamshaw Lumber** for being a pacesetter and first completed workplace campaign of 2021! Their campaign total of \$10,438 helps MUW get a jump-start on our new annual campaign.

PLEASE NOTE:

With the importance of social distancing, we are limiting the number of hours that our staff come into the office to process gifts received via US Mail. We

Dear Friends of MUW,

According to an article in the [Keene Sentinel](#) published in November of 2019 and updated in February 2020 just under 15% of children were living in poverty in Cheshire County in 2016 as compared to the state average of 11%.* This makes Cheshire County second only to Coos County in the rate of childhood poverty.

For many children and their families this means, among other things, not knowing where their next meal is coming from. As you can imagine, the Covid-19 pandemic has worsened this situation. **"Our numbers increased from 27-45 at our highest during the worst part of Covid-19. My families wanted protein items, milks, juices, fruits, simple meal items and healthy snacks"**, said Sue Bemis, Director of the [Kidz Cupboard](#) in Marlborough. She went on to say, **"We partnered early on with MUCH & Feeding Tiny Tummies to help deliver bags of food that were coming to the school for our children on Mondays. Seeing their bag contents enabled me to evaluate what the Thursday bags should include and helped to stretch the money and give families more variety."**



Beth Richardson, who runs the [Federated Church Food Pantry](#) in Marlborough, said she has seen an increase in the past year of new people and families coming to the pantry. She put the food insecurity situation in perspective, **"Over a three-year period I have seen our numbers go up and up. The pandemic contributed to an already bad situation."**

MUW is proud to support the [Monadnock Food Pantries Collective](#), a collaboration between the Community Kitchen in Keene and six other pantries around the region, including the Kidz Cupboard and the Federated Church Food Pantry. The collective shares funds, resources and buying power at the wholesale level to provide healthy foods and fresh produce to people across the region. During the height of Covid-19, it also enabled smaller pantries to keep their doors open.

"I don't know what I would have done during

are asking donors to use our safe, secure [donation portal](#) whenever possible. However, we gratefully accept checks from anyone who prefers to donate in that manner and we will ensure that they are processed in a timely manner.

Covid-19 without the help of the United Way Covid-19 fund and Phoebe (Bray) at the Keene Community Kitchen. The decision to stay open was a hard one to make and I decided to stay open and do what it would take to take care of our families.” –Sue Bemis, Kidz Cupboard

The members of the Food Pantries Collective, and other organizations in the region, have done an amazing job of working together to get food into the hands of individuals and families who need it. But Beth Richardson fears that there are many more who are not taking advantage of the resources available to them, **“Some families don’t come to the pantry because they feel like they don’t qualify. If you need help, we are here for you!”**

No child should have to endure the stress of not knowing where their next meal is coming from. Together, through the generosity of our community, we can support organizations like the Monadnock Food Pantries Collective and drive down the numbers of families and children that are facing food insecurity.

Sincerely,

Laura Gingras, Ted McGreer, Alan Stroshine
General Campaign Co-Chairs

*The link to a reference to the New Futures 2019 Kids Count report is broken. To view this resource, click [here](#).

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