

Helping Hands Establishes Endowment

Miami County Helping Hands, Inc. celebrated its sixth year of serving those in need in our community this month. Since opening its doors, the interdenominational, non-governmental food pantry has provided short-term emergency assistance to well over 2500 Miami County families. Helping Hands has also developed programs that provide assistance with heating bills and prescription medicines.

The organization is run totally by volunteers who provide concern and assistance to those who are sick, homeless, hungry, lonely or lost. Helping Hands is supported entirely by donations from area churches, organizations, and individuals as well as from grant funds. Now it has a new means of accepting donations: a permanent endowment through Miami County Community Foundation.

"We want to have a vehicle for people who want to invest in the long-term needs of the food pantry and crisis center," Hershel Manhart, Executive Director of Helping Hands explained. "We wanted donors to know that their investment would be preserved."



Hershel Manhart accepts another donation for Helping Hands.

So the Helping Hands board of directors approached the Miami County Community Foundation about establishing an endowment. For 14 years, Miami County Community Foundation has helped area agencies and donors develop funds to support their organizations' on-going needs.

"We work with agencies and donors to find the best kind of fund to meet their charitable needs," explained Community Foundation Associate Director, Jenni Marsh. "Permanently endowed funds are established so the charitable organization benefits from the interest earned on the fund. The principal of the fund is protected, so the fund lasts forever, and continues to pay out to the charity forever."

The Community Foundation is prepared to accept many different kinds of gifts, such as marketable securities, real estate, and even credit cards, on behalf of Helping Hands. Another benefit of creating the endowment, Marsh added is that it can be a vehicle for donors considering planned giving, either through bequests or living trusts.

"We wanted to have some way for people who want to remember Helping Hands in their will, to be assured that their gift will be handled properly," Manhart said.

"Helping Hands is so much more than a food pantry," Marsh said. "It provides exemplary compassion, care and ministry for those in need in our community. We are so pleased to provide this measure of assistance to this wonderful organization."