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**PAID**  
 JACKSON, MS  
 PERMIT NO. 821

*Faith meeting needs in our community*



A Newsletter of Stewpot Community Services

Spring 2020

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

# COVID-19 Has Ushered in Many Changes



**As I write, we are seven weeks into the changes ushered in by the COVID-19 pandemic.** It seems that we have all lived a lifetime in those weeks. And while much has shifted around us, we at Stewpot are clear about our mission at this time: do everything we can to strengthen the safety net underneath those without adequate food and shelter.

Like all other essential services, our workload has only increased during this crisis. Only now have I had a chance to stop and write about the past seven weeks and tell you about the brave and wonderful people who have raised the bar for the Stewpot ministry.

One of those extraordinary people is a liver transplant surgeon, Dr. Felicitas Koller. With a team of dedicated third year medical students, she quickly developed a grocery delivery system for the senior citizens who frequent our pantry that included "COVID care kits" of toilet paper, paper towels, hand soap, thermometers, hand sanitizer, and medical information.

But that was not all. She then connected us with volunteers from the Mississippi Organ Recovery Agency who engineered hand washing stations for the Community Kitchen and Brumfield Shelter using five gallon buckets and tubing.

With help from New Gethsamene Baptist Church and donors who have given through our Amazon Wish List, our terrific Afterschool Program staff have been delivering home meals and snacks to our kids and teens and their families. With help from the Mississippi Children's Museum, they've also been delivering STEM activities students can do at home.

To accommodate overflow from both Brumfield and Gateway men's shelters, we opened the Opportunity Center for overnight emergency shelter. Crossgates Baptist Church, St. Andrew's Episcopal School, and Why Not Now have provided dinners and dozens of other volunteers have contributed needed items through the OC's Amazon Wish List.

Our Community Kitchen is now staffed with two work crews. Immediately after the Mayor issued shelter-in-place orders,

we began serving breakfast five mornings a week, dinners for the Brumfield shelter, and weekend meals, none of which our kitchen had done before.

Thankfully, restaurants that have traditionally supported *Taste of Mississippi*, such as Iron Horse Grill and Beagle Bagel, have sent us food. Together with our partners at Extra Table and the Good Samaritan Center, we have received massive deliveries of food that have been shared with our other partners including Grace House, Our Daily Bread, Gateway Rescue Mission, and Salvation Army.

Your Stewpot staff have worked together tirelessly. They are here day after day, night after night, even with their own personal challenges during this pandemic. No task has been too small or too large. They have jumped into implementing new health protocols, securing needed supplies and delivering what was needed at any moment.

So many donors – new and faithful regulars – have opened their wallets and given generously. We have used these funds to purchase desperately needed supplies for people whose lives have been turned upside down by the pandemic. These extra contributions, the incredible Stewpot staff, wonderful volunteers and new partners have made possible our response to a community of people wounded by the shutdown of jobs and schools.

Every day I wake up grateful for the work that Stewpot is doing right now, and grateful for being right here, right now. Like all of you, I never imagined our community would be faced with this kind of challenge. Some forty years ago, a group of people came together to make sure Jackson could meet the needs of their neighbors. Because of that vision, and the commitment of thousands over the last four decades, we are doing just that in the midst of this pandemic crisis.

Your support of Stewpot makes real the words of sacred Scripture: "For I was hungry and you gave me food...I was a stranger and you invited me in." Thank you for giving us your gifts, your time, your prayers, and your commitment to this ministry in our corner of the world.



*Consider Participating in Stewpot's Annual Christmas in July Food Drive.  
 Beginning July 1st*

*Make it an inner office, church, or social group competition.  
 Get started collecting TODAY!*

Call Stephanie Echols for more information at 601-353-2759.



### RAISE MONEY FOR STEWPOT JUST BY SHOPPING AT KROGER

Don't forget that you can support Stewpot just by shopping at Kroger. It's easy when you enroll in Kroger Community Rewards\*! To get started, go to [www.kroger.com](http://www.kroger.com) and click on the Community link. That will bring you to the Kroger Community Rewards page. Sign up with your Plus Card and select a local organization you wish to support (Stewpot). Once you're enrolled, you'll earn rewards for your chosen organization every time you shop and use your Kroger Plus Card!



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# GENEROSITY TO BLUE CROSS & BLUE SHIELD TASTE OF MISSISSIPPI, "A BENEFIT FOR STEWPOT," DOESN'T STOP BECAUSE OF PANDEMIC



This year has truly been filled with major highs and lows. We were so excited about this year's Blue Cross & Blue Shield Taste of Mississippi event and entertaining old and new friends. Unfortunately, our plans came to an abrupt halt in March; when the world became plagued by the novel Coronavirus. We had to make the disappointing decision to cancel our event, which brings in much-needed funds for day-to-day operations.

Blue Cross & Blue Shield Taste of Mississippi brings together the best of the best Jackson and surrounding area restaurateurs and retail shops to help Stewpot provide the basics; for those in need. Because the event had to be canceled, the committee needed to figure out a way to make sure Stewpot and our friends were still taken care of. So, we reached out to all our event sponsors to ask if they would be willing to redirect their donation dollars to assist us, in our plight, to make sure those being affected by these unprecedented times ahead, could count on Stewpot to be there. I am pleased to share, ALL of the Taste of Mississippi sponsors maintained their commitment.

Stewpot and the committee want to highlight all our wonderful partners dedicated to meeting the needs of the community.

## Platinum Sponsor

Blue Cross Blue & Shield of Mississippi

### Gold Sponsors

Southern Beverage

### Silver Sponsors

Allstate Insurance  
American Field Services  
Ergon  
iHeartRadio  
Nissan North America  
Selby & Richard McRae Foundation  
The Ice House

### Bronze Sponsors

Baptist Health Systems  
Brad Piggott  
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Eat Drink Mississippi  
Enterprise  
Jackson Free Press  
Pigott & Johnson  
Regions Bank  
St. Dominic Health Services  
Trustmark Bank  
US Foodservice  
Wells Fargo Bank

### Friends of Stewpot:

Keesler Federal Credit Union  
PotlatchDeltic Corporation  
Ross & Yerger  
Southern Farm Bureau Life  
U.S. NEXT

## Thank You Mississippi's Finest Restaurants and Beverage Vendors for your Support!

1908Provisions	C Frazier's Sweets	Saltine
Amerigo	Grant's Kitchen & Grill	Scooge's Fine Foods & Drink
Aplos	Gumbo Girl	The Sweet Spot
Babalu	Holy Smokers of St. Andrews	That Special Touch
Barrellhouse Southern Gastropub	Iron Horse Grill	Southern Wine & Spirits
Blue Bell Creameries	Johnny T's Bistro	Community Coffee Company
BRAVO!	Kay's Kreations	E&J Gallo Winery
Broad Street Baking Company & Café	The Manship	Republic National Distributing Company
Crazy Cat Eat Up	Nothing Bundt Cake	Southern Beverage Company, Inc.
	One Block East	

## Thank You Community Partners

Thank you to the countless individuals and businesses who have helped make sure none of Stewpot's services, to our community, have had to go without. Your support is more important than ever to keep our work going.

People experiencing homelessness and people living in poverty are among the most vulnerable in a crisis like this because they have less access to basic resources necessary for survival. Thankfully, your support has made it possible to keep our doors open, providing a place for people to wash their hands and their clothes, get a shower, get groceries, and get a good meal to go.

We couldn't do this work without you!

### HERE ARE A FEW OF OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

Matt Hopkins Why Not Now	Urban Foxes
St. Andrews Episcopal Church	PJ's Coffee
Crossgates Baptist Church	Beagle Bagel
St. Andrews Episcopal Schools	Merchants Foodservice
Wright Foundation	Pizza Hut
Carol & Oscar Hartman	First Presbyterian Church
Fleet Feet	Extra Table
New Gethsemane MB Church	Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi
Rotary Club of North Jackson	Tyson Foods
Mississippi Children's Museum	Sanderson Farms
University of Mississippi Medical Center	Koch Foods
New Hope Baptist Church	Domino's Pizza
Beth Israel Temple	Becky Davis Frame
Beagle Bagel	Community COVID Response



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