

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Grand Rapids Nonprofit Reaches Food Distribution Milestone**

*Grand Rapids, Michigan - March 12, 2015* - As the sun sets Friday evening, Nonprofit Innovations will quietly celebrate its distribution of over 500,000 lbs. of good food to low income families in a familiar way - with a mobile food pantry distribution on Grand Rapids' south side.

The nonprofit organization, co-founded by the late food banking pioneer John Arnold and his son Jeff Thomas, is dedicated to identifying and promoting tools and models that can end hunger. Bringing tons of perishable food to underserved areas of Grand Rapids via mobile food pantries - farmers' market style outdoor distributions conducted in collaboration with Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank - has been a key part of their work since August 2010.

"Mobile food pantries by themselves aren't a complete solution to the hunger problem," says Nonprofit Innovations' Executive Director Jeff Thomas, "but they allow us to distribute fresh food, especially produce, that is difficult for many groups to handle, and to provide additional help to families who need more assistance than their local food pantry provides."

The demand for such aid is growing: In 2014, Nonprofit Innovations saw the average number of people served by each of their 21 distributions rise to 378 - a 6.5% increase over the previous year.

Thomas credits the mobile pantry program's success so far to Nonprofit Innovations' many partners, which include Missionary Church of Christ, Progressive AE, Rodef Shalom, Covenant House, Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, and the Sebastian Foundation, but he acknowledges that with an unmet need for millions of additional meals per year in Kent County, the vision of ending hunger here is still a long way off.

Nevertheless, Thomas is optimistic about the future, "This community has the resources and the know-how to ensure that none of our neighbors go hungry. We just have to make that choice."

Nonprofit Innovations is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to identifying, testing, and sharing tools and models that enable organizations and communities to provide adequate, appropriate, and timely food assistance to anyone in need.

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