

2017 Annual Report



ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

"Throughout history progressive transformation has occurred when the power of people and the power of ideas align."

Tamara Draut, Just Harvest's 2017 Harvest Celebration Dinner Keynote Speaker



We've been taking action against hunger for thirty years, and we've never seen anything like the current policy climate. At the state and federal level, we're facing a barrage of heartless, unjust legislation. Every week, we witness new attacks against those of us who are asking not for a handout but for a leg up.

That's why we launched *30 Weeks of Action Against Hunger* in June, 2017. This public campaign leveraged our thirty years of experience to help our members respond to the threats at hand. Every week we saw more people taking part. The following months brought new battles in the fight against hunger and poverty, with more yet to come. Our members have been responding to our ongoing calls to action in creative and inspiring ways.

It is time to hold our nation accountable to its promise to help hungry people, and to put hope into action. Just Harvest is part of a national movement for economic justice that is growing stronger every day in response to current threats. As you will see in the pages that follow, the accomplishments of the past demonstrate that, with your help, Just Harvest can meet the difficult challenges of the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Regal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ken Regal, Executive Director

ADVANCING HUNGER POLICY

WINS...

PROTECTING CRITICAL FEDERAL PROGRAMS

This year Just Harvest and its members joined advocates across Pennsylvania and the nation in beating back Republican leaders' plans to shred critical safety net programs. Our collective victories included: blocking the full repeal of the Affordable Care Act and the "restructuring" of Medicaid and SNAP/food stamps. Their original goal was to gut these programs' funding in the Fiscal Year 2018 federal budget and then turn them over to the states to further fund as they saw fit or were able. Pres. Trump also wanted to zero out funding for home heating assistance and cut housing programs as well as Supplemental Security Income for people with disabilities. It was a full-scale attack on the vulnerable.

But advocates and activists' huge outcry and coordinated defense stopped them. Together, we also prevented any harm to the Child Nutrition Act (overdue for reauthorization) as well as to WIC and to school meals and summer food programs.

CONNECTING LOCAL ISSUES

Low-income neighborhoods are typically not well-served by mass transit, even though their residents are less likely to own cars. This makes it hard for them to access good jobs as well as grocery stores where they can buy healthy food -- trapping them in poverty, hunger, and poor nutrition. A 2012 Urban Institute study found that inadequate transportation is a leading cause of poverty in the Pittsburgh region.

Just Harvest joined **Pittsburghers for Public Transit** to work in food desert areas of Allegheny County to improve public transit. Together, we launched a campaign, in the fall of 2017, to address the impact of the county **Port Authority's** Bus Rapid Transit plan. After months of raising awareness and mobilizing concerned citizens, we won in early 2018. The Port Authority announced the BRT plan would no longer include reduced bus service nor raised fares for Mon Valley riders.

and ongoing battles...



Our tax program coordinator, Kristie Weiland-Stagno, spoke out with SEIU-Healthcare PA and One Pennsylvania in October to protest Pres. Trump's plan to further reduce taxes for the wealthy and cause huge budget shortfalls.



Our public policy advocate, Rochelle Jackson, joined State Sens. Art Haywood and Vincent Hughes, and officials from the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center in March to announce a "Fair Share Tax" proposal help fix Pennsylvania's unfair tax system while boosting revenue.



STRENGTHENING THE SAFETY NET



Susan Seibel, resident of Overbrook, came to file her taxes at Just Harvest through the **United Way's Money in Your Pocket Coalition**, of which Just Harvest is a member. She and her son walked into our South Side office location with a large box of homemade cupcakes for the volunteers.

This was not her first year at the Just Harvest tax site. After learning about the program around 2005, she has filed here every year since. Previously she went to H&R Block, whose tax services cost her almost all of her refund, she said, and is thrilled to have found a better option.

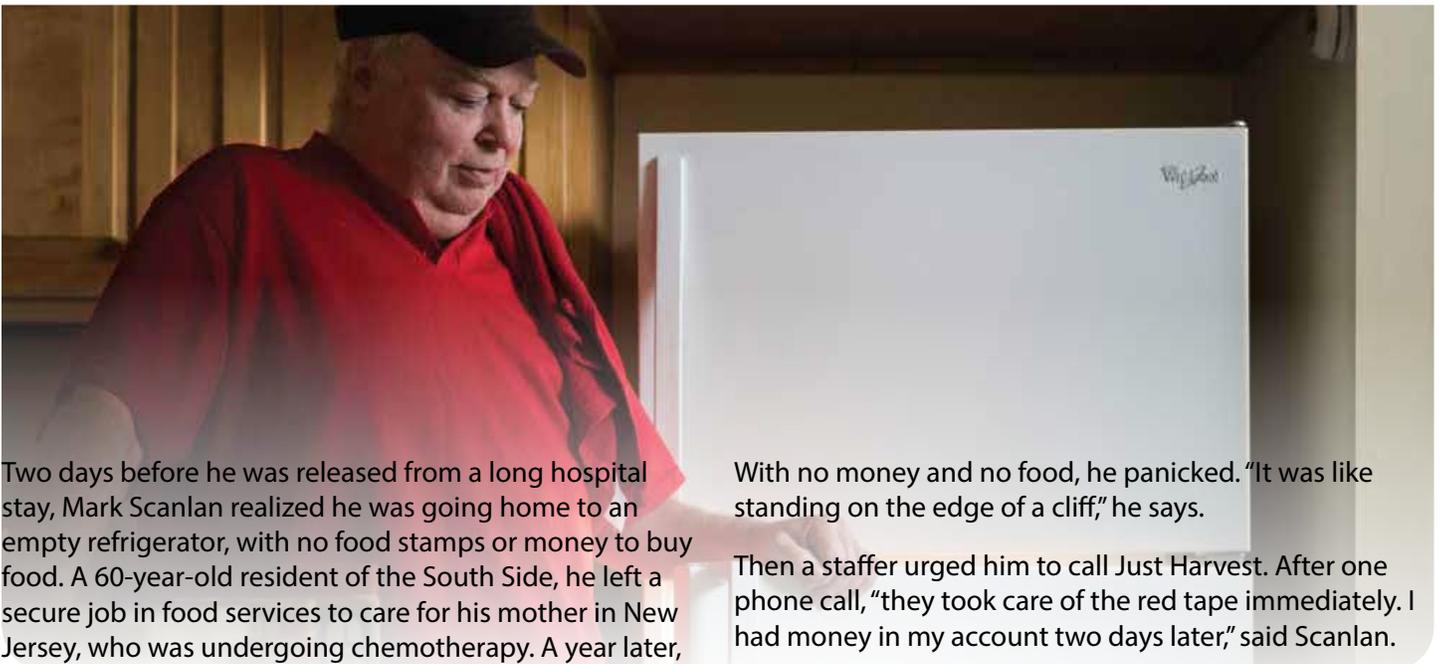
Each year Susan uses her tax return to make repairs in her home, owned since 1977. "I do the repairs myself," she said. Susan raised her two children in the Overbrook house and was also a primary wage earner for the family.

In order to fill the hours for a full-time work week, Susan supplemented her nanny position by working at McDonald's. She started there in 1995, for \$5.75/ hr. Twenty-two years later, she makes \$9.00/ hour, raises — averaging 25 cents a year — that she has had to fight to acquire. For seventeen years, Susan worked seven days a week; it's only in the past five years she's taken a day off.

Susan's gratitude for the tax preparation services is clear and abundant. She began bringing baked goods a few years ago because she knows how valuable the service is to her: "I try to bring something because I know you work and get hungry," she remarked.

When we talked about what she would do if the service disappeared, she said, "I don't know what I would do. I rely on the United Way, I can't afford to go anywhere else."

Susan was one of our nearly 3,000 tax clients in 2017. Since 2013, your support has made it possible for us to provide free tax filing assistance to those who need it most, resulting thus far in \$53 million through 28,900 refunds in Allegheny County — more than \$6 million (a record!) in 2017 alone.



Two days before he was released from a long hospital stay, Mark Scanlan realized he was going home to an empty refrigerator, with no food stamps or money to buy food. A 60-year-old resident of the South Side, he left a secure job in food services to care for his mother in New Jersey, who was undergoing chemotherapy. A year later, when he returned to Pittsburgh after her death, he was unable to find work and qualified for food stamps.

Then, as Scanlan was helping a friend move furniture, he fell and fractured his spine. After a months-long stay in UPMC Mercy Hospital and then a rehabilitation center, he tried to reapply for food stamps two days before being discharged.

"I was told that, because I was still in rehab, I couldn't even begin the application process until I was off the premises," he says.

With no money and no food, he panicked. "It was like standing on the edge of a cliff," he says.

Then a staffer urged him to call Just Harvest. After one phone call, "they took care of the red tape immediately. I had money in my account two days later," said Scanlan.

But solving emergencies like Scanlan's may only get harder. Says Just Harvest Executive Director Regal: "The current public policy environment is as bad for hungry people as it has been in a generation."

Thanks to advocacy by Just Harvest, Mark Scanlan has the food assistance he needs while he recovers from an injury.

Photo by Joshua Franzos; a longer version of this story by Mackenzie Carpenter was originally published by The Pittsburgh Foundation. Just Harvest helps about 1,200 families each year apply for food stamps.

BOOSTING COMMUNITY FOOD ACCESS

IMPROVING NUTRITION THROUGH FRESH ACCESS

In the 2017 farmers market season, Just Harvest and the **Allegheny Traditional Academy (ATA)** Parent Teacher Organization partnered up to bring classroom learning outside to the North Side farmers market.

During the fall season, there were a total of four farmers market visits by classes and afterschool programs. This provided 120 students the opportunity to visit the North Side market, one of the oldest farmers markets in Pittsburgh.

During their visits, the Allegheny Traditional Academy's PTO gave each student \$1 to spend on a fruit or vegetable, and we provided a scavenger hunt that engaged students to talk to the farmers and learn about seasonally produced fruits and vegetables.

While these bright minds are learning math, reading, and writing indoors, there is plenty to learn from going to the farmers market. Their trip to the North Side farmers market gave them the chance to

- talk to farmers about how they grow produce,
- learn about new fruits and vegetables,
- learn about nutrition and home cooking,
- get exposure to seasonal and local foods,
- engage with their community members, and
- create relationships with their classmates outside of the classroom.



Your support of Fresh Access and the Food Bucks incentive program helped low-income households buy fresh, healthy food at 21 area farmers markets while also supporting the neighborhoods that host these markets and regional farms. Total Fresh Access sales since the program began in 2013 surpassed \$785,000 by the end of 2017.

These market visits have been a highlight of their school days and for the farmers as well. The children's active engagement made clear the market isn't just a place where people can access fresh, delicious food – it's an engine for community life.

Special thanks to Jeanne Emhoff, ATA's PTO Vice President, for enabling us to get these visits underway. Just Harvest and the Allegheny Traditional Academy teachers and PTO will continue this collective effort to give students this special opportunity to experience the importance of supporting local businesses, eating fresh produce, and engaging with their community.

...AND FRESH CORNERS

In 2016, we began partnering with local store owners in "food desert" neighborhoods to help them add fresh, nutritious foods to their shelves. Our Fresh Corners program greatly expanded in 2017, going from three stores in McKees Rocks and one in Larimer to four additional stores in Carrick, East Liberty, Rankin and McKeesport.

Fresh fruits and vegetables like apples, bananas, oranges, potatoes, and onions are now available – and can be purchased using food stamps – at locations that previously only sold junk food and canned and packaged products. In areas lacking a grocery store, this puts better nutrition within reach. And because seven of the eight stores in our Fresh Corners network are minority-owned, it is also advancing diversity in the food sector and local business.



Carl Lewis at his store, Carl's Café, in Rankin.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

From Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2017 (unaudited)

A CENTER FOR ACTION
ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

EDUCATION FUND

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Grants	\$ 9,747	\$ 721,711
Fresh Access Transactions	\$ —	\$ 156,686
Dues & Contributions	\$ 32,564	\$ 41,502
Contracted Services	\$ 727	\$ 34,375
Fundraising Events	\$ 58,280	\$ 30,718
Other	\$ 73	\$ 94
Total	\$101,391	\$985,087

EXPENSES

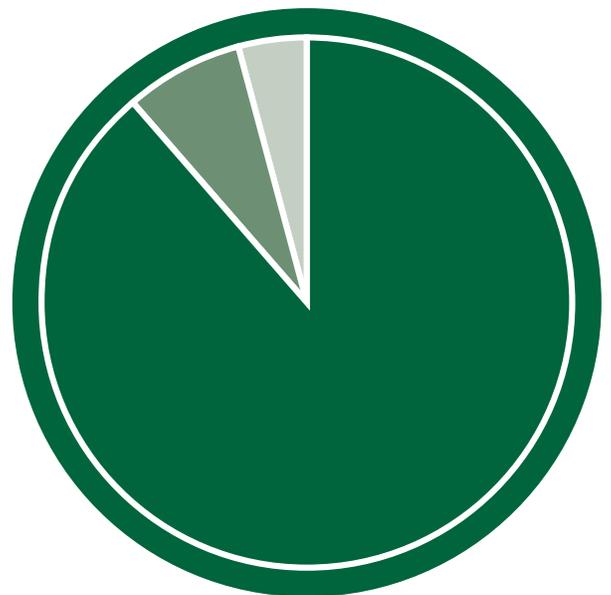
Program	\$ 65,789	\$ 830,470
Management and General	\$ 18,094	\$ 53,933
Fundraising	\$ 9,851	\$ 30,530
Total	\$ 93,734	\$914,933

REVENUE AND SUPPORT



- Grants
- Fresh Access Transactions
- Dues & Contributions
- Contracted Services
- Fundraising Events and Other

EXPENSES



- Program
- Management and General
- Fundraising

Copies of Just Harvest's official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll-free within PA (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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Shontyia Utterback
Food Stamp Specialist

Dawn Marie Smith
Fresh Corners Coordinator

Kristie Weiland Stagno
Tax Campaign Coordinator

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Jordanna Rosenfeld

Courtney Smart

Emma Sullivan

Grace Traini

FRESH ACCESS STAFF

Shareef Ali

Corinne Beaugard

Abigail Carpenter

Courtney Smart

TAX STAFF

Luz Blandon

Mary Grace Diana

Winter Epps

Ed Heath

Marrissa Johnson

Arlene Kasenic

Jonathan Koffmann

Vaughn Schmid

Emily Schmidlapp

Elysa Schwartz

Kay Tanney

Kathleen Vello

Janet Willoughby

MEMBERS

Just Harvest is grateful for our **267** members and donors who donated **\$47,550** in 2017. Your generosity, ranging from **\$5 to \$5,000** makes our work possible.

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to our **146** volunteers who donated **6,287** hours to make our work successful.

FUNDERS

Allegheny County Bar Foundation
Allegheny County Health Department
Consumer Federation of America
Economic Development South
Junior League of Pittsburgh
MAZON: A Jewish Response To Hunger
National Council on Aging
PA Department of Human Services
Passavant Hospital Foundation
Pittsburgh Social Venture Partners
State Farm Companies Foundation
The Food Trust
The Pittsburgh Foundation
United Way of SWPA
US Department of Agriculture

Just Harvest Education Fund is a proud partner agency of the United Way of SW PA. The United Way's Impact Fund enables us to expand and strengthen our efforts to help low-income people access the public safety net benefits they need.

EVENT SPONSORS

First Commonwealth Bank
Gateway Health
Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh
Peoples Natural Gas
PNC Bank
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 23
United Steelworkers of America
United Steelworkers Districts 10 & 12
University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work
UPMC Health Plan

* Special thanks for their service to Just Harvest ending in 2017.

JUST HARVEST
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ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

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ABOUT JUST HARVEST

Founded in 1986, Just Harvest works in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania to reduce **hunger** by addressing its root cause: economic injustice.

We do this through a focus on public policy, safety net programs, and community food access.

Photos on front cover, clockwise from top left: Raynette Griffin at Pittsburgh's 2017 Labor Day march; Mayor Bill Peduto, City Councilwoman Darlene Harris, and Rev. John Welch at our 2017 Primary Election Mayoral Debate and Candidates Forum; two participants at a poverty simulation at Duquesne University; Grassroots Organizer Helen Gerhardt, at a March Tuesdays with Toomey rally to protest proposed federal cuts to safety net programs; Executive Director Ken Regal on a December WQED town hall broadcast about poverty; Just Harvest staff and members at a June state budget rally in Harrisburg.