

Our Daily Bread Food Pantry Newest Member of Blue Zones Project

By Maria Lamb

On Tuesday, September 7, 2021, Our Daily Bread Food Pantry (ODBFP) was officially recognized as a Blue Zones Organization after working with the Blue Zones Project for four years.

According to Chante Pemberton, Blue Zones Project Community Outreach Coordinator, ODBFP is the perfect and right tribe for the Blue Zones Project. The volunteers are fit; they exercise together every Saturday, they do so much in bringing people in the community together, and they are distributing food to people in need in the community.

Asked why Blue Zones is the perfect partner for ODBFP, volunteer Jean O'Neill shared her story. She attended the presentation on the Blue Zones Project and in 15 minutes, she was hooked.



Ribbon cutting ceremony and time to celebrate! Our Daily Bread Food Pantry is a perfect fit for a Blue Zones Project participating organization.



Photos by Maria Lamb

ODBFP President, Jo Anne Lundquist, NCH Senior VP Jim Mahon and Liz Pecora receiving the Blue Zones Project Participating Organization Certificate.



ODBFP's Well Being Team of Liz Pecora, Jean O'Neill, Nancy Kot with Blue Zones Outreach Coordinator, Chantay Pemberton. Missing from photo are Jane Blong, JoAnne Lundquist, and Pat Carr.



Ron McClay, ODBFP volunteer, says there is enough reserve food on hand in all facilities to feed 1,000 people in a week with nonperishable food.

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Volunteers Bob Chrystal and Pam Purevich helping out at the produce section.

Most of the things Blue Zones was proposing, Jean and her husband, Paul, were already doing. They were walking everywhere and thanks to Blue Zones, they are strengthening their ties with old friends and also focusing on reading food labels to see how nutritious their meals really are.

Jean also added “I was amazed at all the things we’ve already done at the Pantry.” Every Saturday morning, Jean leads stretching exercises before they start their busy day. Under the Move Naturally principle, you are encouraged to find ways to move more and burn calories.

Jane Blong, also a volunteer, had taken the lead on nutrition, sometimes trying Blue Zones recipe cards at home then sharing her feedback with the other volunteers. Most of the recipes suggest adding more fruits and vegetables. In addition,



Volunteers Rosie Poling and Kathy Vanderselt helping out at Our Daily Bread Food Pantry.

ODBFP formed a Well Being Team: Jean O’Neill, Pat Carr, Jane Blong, JoAnne Lundquist, Liz Pecora and Nancy Kot.

According to Liz Pecora, ODBFP’s involvement with the Blue Zones Project was a natural fit as it was wonderfully aligned with their mission; ODBFP is committed to offering nutritionally balanced food to those in need. This includes a large bag of fresh quality fruits and vegetables for every household – about 50 pounds per household - enough to get them through the week.

ODBFP is on pace to serve almost 200,000 individuals this year, gathering and distributing over one million pounds of food.

If you would like to help or learn more, please call 239-259-5188 or visit ourdailybreadfoodpantry.com.


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