



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mountain Resource Center will see a decrease of over \$50,000 in Food Pantry funding due to a grant priority change

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Conifer, CO, Thursday, December 14th, 2017—Due to a significant decrease in available grant funding and a funding priority change, Mountain Resource Center’s Food Pantry (Leigh’s Pantry) will see a decrease of over \$50,000 less funding in 2018. In 2016, Leigh’s Pantry served over 375 families, many of those utilized the pantry on a weekly or monthly basis. Did you know 1 out of 6 children in Mountain Resource Center’s service area struggle to get the food they need? Leigh’s Pantry helps to fill the need in the community by providing quality, nutritious and age appropriate food at no cost.

Unfortunately, stresses such as job loss, low paying wages, fixed incomes for seniors, health conditions and much more effect our community members and create the need for Leigh’s Pantry. In the month of November alone, Mountain Resource Centers Food Pantry had 355 visits....many relying on the pantry are children, seniors and veterans.

While Mountain Resource Center receives a significant discount to purchase quality perishable and non-perishable food from Food Bank of the Rockies, there is a cost and we still have to purchase it. (This seems to be a misperception that all food is donated and free of costs.) You may not realize that while food drives bring in many non-perishable items; fresh fruits and vegetables, along with meat and dairy products are purchased by Mountain Resource Center.

“One of the things that we find is if we’re able to provide food for the families, they’re able to take that crisis out of the picture so that they can focus on taking advantage of the classes and opportunities that we’re offering to move forward,” said Gail Ciepiela, Mountain Resource Center operations manager. “You can’t move forward if you’re hungry.”

“I know a lot of people only ask for help if they consider themselves ‘living in poverty,’ but poverty looks very different now, and it’s not just poverty. With a lower middle class income, you might really be struggling and eligible for some of these benefits,” Ciepiela said.

Mountain Resource Center is asking for financial support to help provide the overhead needed to ensure that we can continue to offer fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy along with the actual building and personal costs associated with Leigh's Pantry. For more information on how you can help with this community need please visit www.mrcco.org.

The Story of Leigh's Food Pantry at Mountain Resource Center

In the late 1990's Leigh Campbell, a parishioner at Saint Laurence Episcopal Church in Conifer, recognized the need for a food pantry in the community. He and other parishioners dug out a basement at the church to create a pantry. Saint Laurence Parish, along with 9Cares Food Drives and individual donations stocked the pantry with food and partnered with Mountain Resource Center to feed those in need. In September 2011, it was apparent that the need had outgrown the church. Mountain Resource Center opened Leigh's Pantry at the center, creating a larger and more accessible pantry for our clients. Saint Laurence continues to support the mission of helping to provide food to those who may otherwise not be able to feed their families by donating food as well as volunteering.

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