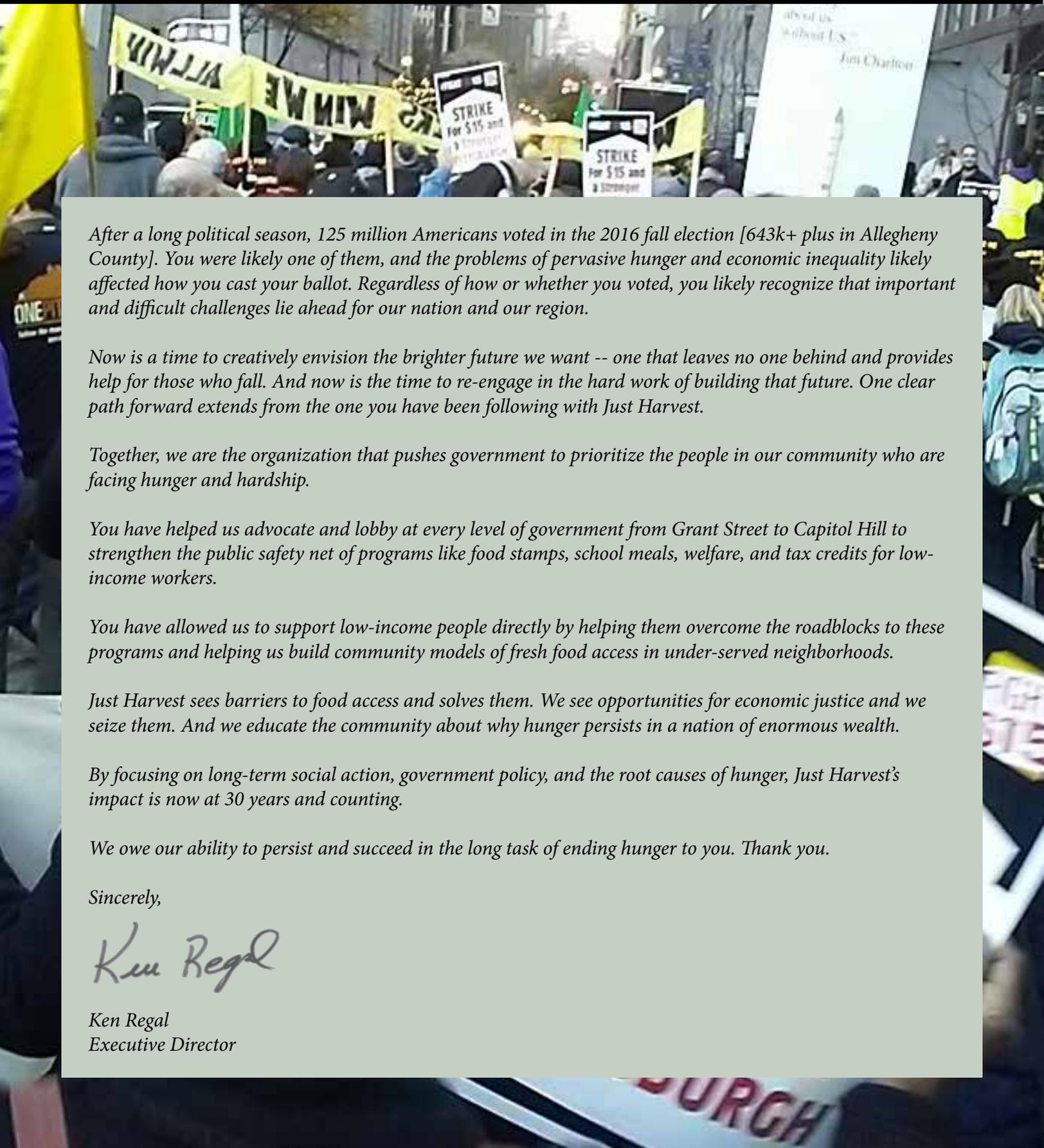


# Annual Report 2016



ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

**"The work of justice is pursuit. It is not easy or relaxing or spontaneous. It persists throughout the year. And it moves us beyond mere charity, to work arm in arm with those in poverty to pursue and to demand real and lasting economic justice for all."**



*After a long political season, 125 million Americans voted in the 2016 fall election [643k+ plus in Allegheny County]. You were likely one of them, and the problems of pervasive hunger and economic inequality likely affected how you cast your ballot. Regardless of how or whether you voted, you likely recognize that important and difficult challenges lie ahead for our nation and our region.*

*Now is a time to creatively envision the brighter future we want -- one that leaves no one behind and provides help for those who fall. And now is the time to re-engage in the hard work of building that future. One clear path forward extends from the one you have been following with Just Harvest.*

*Together, we are the organization that pushes government to prioritize the people in our community who are facing hunger and hardship.*

*You have helped us advocate and lobby at every level of government from Grant Street to Capitol Hill to strengthen the public safety net of programs like food stamps, school meals, welfare, and tax credits for low-income workers.*

*You have allowed us to support low-income people directly by helping them overcome the roadblocks to these programs and helping us build community models of fresh food access in under-served neighborhoods.*

*Just Harvest sees barriers to food access and solves them. We see opportunities for economic justice and we seize them. And we educate the community about why hunger persists in a nation of enormous wealth.*

*By focusing on long-term social action, government policy, and the root causes of hunger, Just Harvest's impact is now at 30 years and counting.*

*We owe our ability to persist and succeed in the long task of ending hunger to you. Thank you.*

*Sincerely,*

*Ken Regal  
Executive Director*

# IMPROVING HUNGER POLICY



Just Harvest activists at a Fight for \$15 and a Union march in Pittsburgh, April 14.

## SCHOOL MEALS

Childhood hunger is of paramount concern to our members. In 2010, the U.S. Congress passed the United States Department of Agriculture's **Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act** to improve school meals authored at President Obama's request. The legislation reformed the nutritional content of school breakfast and lunch for the first time in 30 years. Yet local public school parents continue to have concerns about poor meal quality, in part due to insufficient federal funding.

As a part of the **Pittsburgh Food Policy Council**, in 2016, Just Harvest took on leadership of Council efforts to improve local school meals. Along with **Community Kitchen Pittsburgh** and **Allies for Children** we worked with **Harvard Law School Clinic on Food and Law Policy** to analyze and report on Pittsburgh school food systems. Just Harvest will be leading the effort to move that report into action in partnership with **Pittsburgh Public Schools** in order to:

- increase the nutritional quality of school meals;
- incorporate more locally-grown, fresh produce;
- ensure that students have access to nutritious foods outside the normal school day; and
- make the school food environment more conducive to healthy eating habits.

## ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

A critical part of changing hunger policy lies in mobilizing community support. This year, donor support helped us create the **Action Against Hunger Council** as a place for members, clients, and activists to learn about key public policies and be part of our advocacy efforts.

We trained Council members on the policymaking process at different levels of government, and how people can engage in that process. These members then trained others and took action on a number of opportunities for policy reform, including: strengthening the Child Nutrition Act, improving TANF rules, expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, and protecting PA's Department of Human Services (DHS) from state budget cuts. Our members also participated in our 2016 Election voter education and mobilization efforts, helping Just Harvest get the second highest voter registration numbers among the 12 **Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership** members involved.

In conjunction with **DHS' Immigrant and Internationals Advisory Council** and the **Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh** we helped local immigrant communities to address their unique food barriers and economic struggles.

# OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SAFETY NET PROGRAMS

Today, our nation's federally-funded and state-administered social safety net exists because people like you understand that too many in our country – 15% at any given time, and as many as 80% of Americans over the course of a lifetime – need public assistance. But many Republican legislative leaders in DC and Harrisburg have long been pressing for safety net cuts and restrictions.

In January 2016, Pennsylvania was due to reinstate work requirements for certain food stamps (SNAP) recipients. Since 1996, food stamp rules have required all “able-bodied” people between the ages of 18-59, without dependents, to work at least 20 hours per week or face a time limit on assistance of 3 months in a 3-year period. The federal government had suspended these requirements since the 2008 recession; now that recession was deemed over.

But just because you're healthy enough to work doesn't mean you can. Thousands of Pennsylvanians still face other serious barriers to gainful employment – like inadequate access to transportation, lack of education or employable skills, criminal records, homelessness, and limited language skills.

**SENIOR OUTREACH** The success story below is similar to many others your support makes possible. Hundreds of seniors in Allegheny County are particularly vulnerable to hunger, and lack the ability to navigate the welfare system to get the nutrition assistance benefits they're eligible for and desperately need. Thanks to you and new funding from the **National Council on Aging**, Just Harvest's outreach about a new easier application process for seniors (ESAP) and case advocacy gets the problem solved and benefits approved for our older neighbors in need.

## Brian

Brian is a 75-yr-old resident of a senior high-rise apartment building, living on his Social Security Income of \$702 per month. He had been receiving food stamps for more than 5 years when his benefits suddenly stopped. He had missed his semi-annual renewal, the certification of eligibility that DHS requires every six months. Brian is illiterate, and his daughter had been handling most of his paperwork over the past several years. But she had moved away.

We submitted an application for him right away and contacted DHS to let them know that this application was in lieu of a renewal form, and asked them to reinstate his benefits. His benefit of \$160/month was approved and reinstated within five days.

**Congressional Emerson Hunger Fellow** Khalena Thomhave joined us for 6 months to research the effects of the expiring waiver, and to develop an outreach and action program to help us reduce its impact. Because as she wrote, “Hunger is possibly the most devastating effect of poverty. Food is necessary not only for surviving but for thriving. It's the most basic human need, and the first that we should look to when working to bring people out of poverty.” Making people hungrier by denying them food stamps was only going to hamper their efforts to become self-sufficient.

Along with other Pa. allies we were able to wage a successful campaign to push back the resumption of work requirements until June. We continued to monitor the Pa. Department of Human Services' (DHS) resumed implementation of the requirements. We also advocated for flexibility in their determination of who could be exempt, and for better case management of welfare recipients facing sanctions for non-compliance with the changed work and job-search rules.

**RESULTS:** 92% of the people DHS originally estimated as at risk have kept their benefits.



**Janet was one of our nearly 3,000 tax clients this year.** The Earned Income Tax Credit – a tax break for low-income families – is the nation's most effective anti-poverty program. Yet as many as 1 in 5 tax filers don't know they're eligible. Many more wind up losing a significant part of that refund to fee-based tax services. For the past 14 years, your support has made it possible for us to provide FREE tax filing assistance to those who need it most, resulting thus far in \$47 million in refunds to 26,000 people in Allegheny County – \$5.8 million in 2016 alone.

# BOOSTING COMMUNITY FOOD ACCESS



## Bonnie & Andrew

Many farmers markets generally accept only cash, with only a few farmers able to swipe credit cards. Our **Fresh Access** program, which expanded to 18 farmers markets in the Pittsburgh area in 2016, allows shoppers to use credit, debit, and – most importantly – ACCESS (food stamps) cards. Shoppers swipe their cards in exchange for tokens to buy goods at the market. With tokens, customers can buy any products they would normally buy at grocery stores but get farmers market quality and freshness.

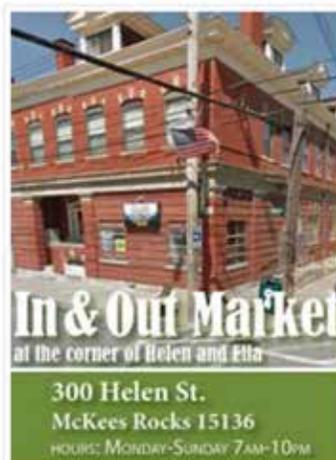
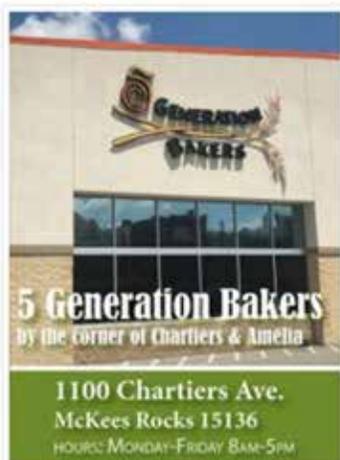
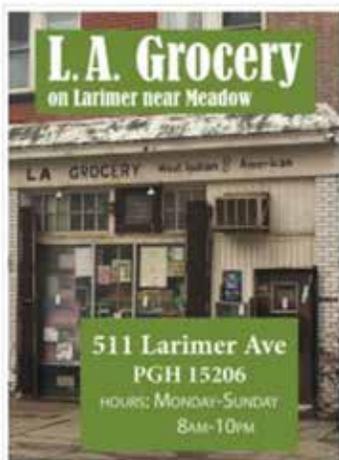
For Bonnie, an employee at a nearby public library, buying fresh food for herself and her son Andrew hasn't always been easy. Bonnie has been a regular at the East Liberty market since she learned about the Fresh Access program four years ago. She was ecstatic to find that fresh food was more accessible than ever.

Every week, Bonnie is sure to bring her ACCESS card to the Fresh Access table and purchase enough tokens to stock up on vegetables for the week. When asked how the Fresh Access program has helped her, she replied that she is "more likely to eat healthy foods throughout the week."

Bonnie also spoke enthusiastically about the things she learns at the farmers market. She explained, "I've discovered new foods here – things I never knew existed because you don't see them at the grocery store!"

Access also means being able to afford the produce that is available. Your support of our **Fresh Access** and **Food Bucks** incentive programs helps low-income households buy fresh, healthy food while supporting regional farms and farmers markets, a great source of locally-grown, nutritious food. Total Fresh Access sales since the program began in 2013 reached nearly \$570,000 by the end of 2016.

**Fresh Corners** is another of our forward-looking responses to the problem of "food deserts." The program seeks to improve communities from within by partnering with local store owners to provide affordable access to fresh, nutritious, foods. Starting in 2016, fresh fruits and vegetables like apples, bananas, oranges, potatoes, and onions are now available – and can be purchased using food stamps – at the following stores:



**MORE  
STORES  
SIGNING  
ON IN  
2017!**

# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

From Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 20156

A CENTER FOR ACTION  
ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

EDUCATION FUND

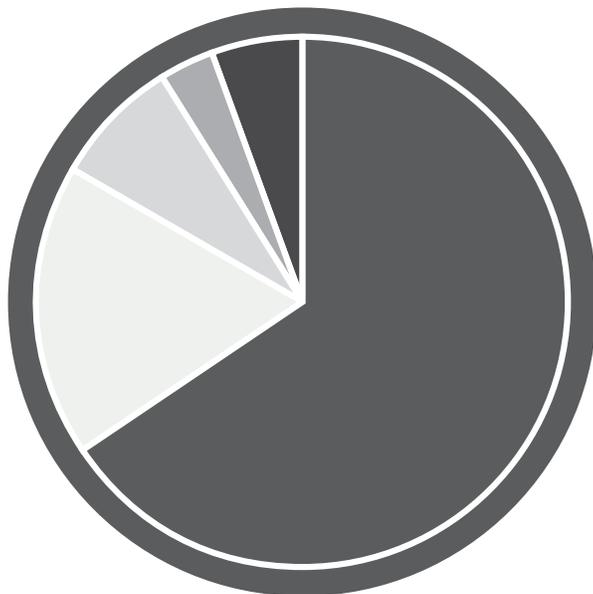
## REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Grants	\$10,109	\$614,669
Fresh Access Transactions	\$ –	\$170,328
Dues & Contributions	\$38,478	\$34,540
Contracted Services	\$ –	\$31,750
Fundraising Events	\$37,612	\$10,650
Other	\$1,602	\$1,283
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$87,801</b>	<b>\$863,220</b>

## EXPENSES

Program	\$67,513	\$736,029
Management and General	\$17,115	\$54,439
Fundraising	\$8,483	\$27,082

## REVENUE AND SUPPORT



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

## EXPENSES



- Program
- Management and General
- Fundraising

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President

**Barbara Coffee**  
Vice President

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Secretary

**Alexander Carlisle**  
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**Leah Lizarondo\***

**Mary Elizabeth McCarthy**

**Gabriel McMorland\***

**Theresa Orlando**

**Jennifer Thoma**

## STAFF

**Joshua Berman**  
Fresh Corners Coordinator

**Emily Cleath**  
Communications Coordinator

**Amanda Fry**  
Food Stamp Specialist

**Helen Gerhardt**  
Grassroots Organizer

**Averyl Hall**  
Fresh Access Coordinator

**Rochelle Jackson**  
Public Policy Advocate

**Barbara Jakab**  
Tax Training Developer

**Ken Munz**  
Operations Coordinator

**Carla Payne-Harrison\***  
Food Stamp Specialist

**Ken Regal**  
Executive Director

**Kristen Rodack**  
Food Stamp Specialist

**Rena Saimoto\***  
Food Stamp Specialist

**Ann Sanders**  
Volunteer Coordinator

**Heather Seiders**  
Office Manager

**Shontyia Utterback**  
Food Stamp Specialist

**Kristie Weiland Stagno**  
Tax Campaign Coordinator

## AMERICORPS MEMBERS

Nadia Pacheco Amaro  
Lorita Gillespie  
Averyl Hall  
Kristen Hochreiter  
Max Rosenfeld  
Dawn Marie Smith

## EMERSON HUNGER FELLOW

Kalena Thomhave

## INTERNS

Janice Bahary  
Corinne Beaugard  
Abigail Carpenter  
Jennie Duquette  
Maryann Fix  
Amanda Fry  
Sarah Freedman  
Yanqing Ge  
Julian Hricik  
Sicheng Jiang  
Hannah Jones  
Jayme Jordan  
Syed Kaleem  
Shenqian Lu  
Casey McCauley  
Megan McElhaney  
Holland Millure  
Angela Mitchell  
Nora Moorefield  
Monii Peters  
Hannah Rannali  
Kristen Rodack  
Kristen Roelofson  
Shontyia Utterback  
Alexandra Waasdorp  
Tessa Weber  
Lindsay Wojtaszek  
Weilun Wu

## FRESH ACCESS STAFF

Amanda Fry  
Jayme Jordan  
Holland Millure  
Angela Mitchell  
Erika Olsen  
Thomas Raines  
Kristen Rodack  
Rena Saimoto  
Shontyia Utterback

## TAX STAFF

Sara Bennett  
Stephanie Bennett  
Mary Grace Diana  
Ed Heath  
Lauren Hill  
Barbara Jakab  
Marrissa Johnson  
Kellie Kasbee  
Grace Muller  
Shirley Musselwhite  
Rena Saimoto  
Vaughn Schmid  
Elysa Schwartz  
Kay Tanney  
Kathleen Vello  
Janet Willoughby

## MEMBERS

Just Harvest is grateful for our **363** members and donors who donated over **\$61,000** in 2016. Your generosity, ranging from **\$5 to \$5,000** makes our work possible.

## VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to our **164** volunteers who donated **7,375** hours to make our work successful.

## FUNDERS

Allegheny County Bar Foundation  
Allegheny County Health Department  
Food Research & Action Center  
MAZON: A Jewish Response To Hunger  
National Council on Aging  
PA Department of Human Services  
Passavant Hospital Foundation  
The Food Trust  
The Forbes Funds / Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership  
Three Rivers Community Foundation  
United Way of SWPA

Just Harvest Education Fund is a proud partner agency of the United Way of Allegheny County. 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

Gateway Health Plan  
Highmark  
Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh  
Peoples Natural Gas  
PNC Bank  
SEIU Healthcare PA  
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 23  
United Steelworkers District 12  
University of Pittsburgh - School of Social Work  
UPMC Health Plan

*\* Special thanks for their service to Just Harvest ending in 2016.*

**JUST HARVEST**  
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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

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(412) 431-8960  
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[twitter.com/JustHarvest](https://twitter.com/JustHarvest)



[youtube.com/PAJustHarvest](https://www.youtube.com/PAJustHarvest)

**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: Training Irish youth visiting through Amizade to do street outreach and door knocking; protesting state budget cuts with the Consumer Health Coalition; registering voters; teaching members of Wilkinsburg Youth Project about local healthy food shopping options; discussing income inequality as part of a nationwide multimedia 2016 election series by Spotify.*