



Iowa
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MEDIA RELEASE-

Des Moines Area Religious Council brings SNAP Application Process to Food Pantry Consumers

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September 20, 2010- DMARC will launch a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach Project in cooperation with the [Iowa Department of Human Services](#). The project will start in October 2010. Funded in part by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service](#) and [United Way of Central Iowa](#), the project will place up to ten computerized SNAP application stations in four DMARC food pantry sites, two community meal sites, and six other human service agencies. Trained outreach assistants will help consumers with the onsite SNAP electronic application process.

In the first year this project is expected to increase financial stability for up to 350 families (875 people), while directing more than \$263,000 in federally funded food assistance to low-income households in Dallas, Polk, and Warren counties.

United Way of Central Iowa is pleased to partner with the Des Moines Area Religious Council to reach out to low-income families who are working hard to make ends meet,+said Jane Fogg, Director, Financial Stability, [United Way of Central Iowa](#). Many, through no fault of their own, require supports and services they may never have needed before. Providing increased access to nutrition assistance and other public benefits today creates a safety net so that families can work towards being more financially stable in the long term.+

Through this new partnership, DMARC will be providing information about how Food Assistance benefits can improve nutrition and help avoid hunger to customers at several DMARC partner sites,+said Wendy Rickman, Division Administrator, Adult, Children and Family Services, [Iowa Department of Human Services](#). The DMARC SNAP Outreach Project will also provide assistance to persons who request help applying for benefits through the DHS Online Application for State of Iowa Services (OASIS). This new partnership is exciting and may help mutual customers who are not already receiving Food Assistance benefits be able to buy more food.+

As many as 12,000 people who benefit from the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry network have not applied for SNAP benefits. We know some of the most common barriers may be language and transportation limitations and misinformation about eligibility,+said The Rev. Sarai Schnucker Rice, [DMARC](#) Executive Director. DMARC is deeply grateful for the partnerships with the United Way of Central Iowa, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Iowa Department of Human Services-

partnerships that increase our community's capacity to make sure every family and every person have enough to eat.+

As of October 1, 2008, [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) is the new name for the federal Food Stamp Program. The new name reflects the changes made to meet the needs of clients, including a focus on nutrition and an increase in benefit amounts. SNAP is the federal name for the program. The federal SNAP website includes a section of [SNAP frequently asked questions](#).

[DMARC](#) is an interfaith organization with a membership of about 150 congregations from 10 faith traditions. Since 1952, DMARC exists to provide a common means of responding to basic human needs and, in so doing, offers a context for interfaith dialogue, education, fellowship and support while serving as a liaison between member congregations and Greater Des Moines.

The [DMARC Emergency Food Pantry network](#) is the largest in Iowa, made up of a centralized warehouse and 11 partnering distribution sites. The DMARC Emergency Food Pantry network helps meet short-term food needs when families do not have enough to eat. Once each 30 days, families can receive a free, five-day supply of nutritionally balanced food. In 2009, DMARC assisted more than 11,600 different families in the Greater Des Moines community and provided the food equivalent of nearly 1.5 million meals.

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