

Extraordinary times reveal extraordinary need:

## Now more than ever, neighbors rally for neighbors

After missing a second paycheck during the government shutdown, a South Park man grew from worried to panicked about feeding his family.

When temperatures dropped below zero – and stayed there – a single mom feared her paycheck wouldn't cover her heating bill and her rising grocery bill with three growing – and hungry – boys at home.

As word spread about the unavailability of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) during February, a man who is seasonally employed in the summer called SHIM for guidance on how to put food on his table in the meantime.

And this was just in January.

"January is when we see the highest need for food," explained Molly Patterson, Operations Coordinator at SHIM, who noted that more than half of SHIM's food pantry users are employed and 35% of the people SHIM serves are children.

Every day, SHIM is the safety net for people who are struggling to meet basic needs. In 2018 alone, our three food pantries hosted 10,286 visits, a number that nearly doubled since 2015. In fact, nearly 3,000 of those visits happened at our Baldwin food pantry, which opened in 2016, underscoring the need for serving our neighbors there.

Additionally, SHIM was the go-to

resource for 370 households receiving emergency food boxes in 2018. Nearly half of these first-time neighbors in need went on to become certified food pantry users.

Growing need in the South Hills is the driving force behind SHIM's annual Sack Hunger, Pack Hope campaign to raise awareness, critical dollars and much-needed food for local families.

"Sack Hunger is the shining example of neighbors helping neighbors," said Jim Guffey, SHIM's Executive Director. "We are honored that congregations, schools, businesses and community groups come together for each other. It proves there's nothing we can't do together."

## Get involved

Join us to help our local families

### Host a Food or Cash Drive

Learn more at [shimcares.org/sackhunger](http://shimcares.org/sackhunger) or contact Seth Dubin, [sdubin@shimcares.org](mailto:sdubin@shimcares.org).

### Make a gift and have it matched!

Visit [shimcares.org/sackhunger](http://shimcares.org/sackhunger).

### Spread the word

Join us on social media, become an ambassador in your community, and tell your friends and family that when we all come together, we can make a difference.



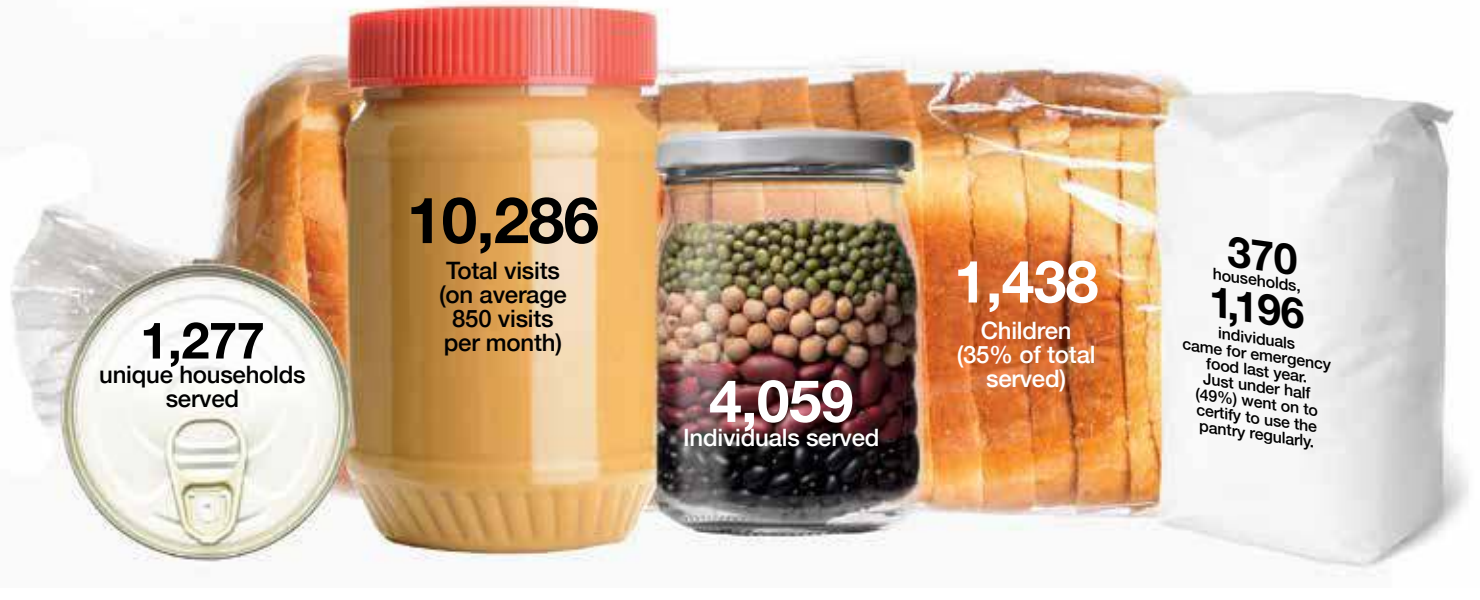
Doing the math, stretching our dollars:

## SACK HUNGER, PACK HOPE

Right now, you could go to the local grocery store and buy a jar of peanut butter for less than \$3. When SHIM "shops" at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, that same \$3 buys three to four jars of peanut butter.

"The food the community collects and brings to SHIM is inspiring," Jim added. "But SHIM purchases more than half of the food we distribute so the added dollars are critical."

# SHIM FOOD PANTRY USAGE **2018**



## Meet NeighborWorks: Helping neighbors reach financial stability

When one South Hills resident noticed an inaccuracy on her credit report, she wasn't sure where to turn for help. Already struggling with managing her finances, she felt lost and frustrated.

She called SHIM.

"When the local woman called, I was so glad we could be a resource for her, thanks to NeighborWorks," explained Corrie Yanko, Service Coordinator at SHIM.

The program, in partnership with NeighborWorks of Southwestern PA and funded by the Jefferson Regional

Foundation, helps individuals overcome barriers to financial stability and achieve self-sufficiency through financial education and one-on-one counseling.

"We were able to get her connected with a financial counselor to address her concerns one-on-one," Corrie said. "The financial counselor helped her with budgeting, money management, credit report issues and more."

In addition to counseling, the NeighborWorks program also offers group financial literacy workshops where participants learn to create and

live within a personal spending plan that aligns with their income.

"Thanks to NeighborWorks, this woman who was struggling made positive changes to her budget. She's now effectively maintaining her finances on her own," Corrie shared.

Since the start of the program last year, more than 50 people have participated in the NeighborWorks program and are on their way to self-sufficiency. For information on the program, contact Corrie Yanko at 412-854-9120 x107 or [cyanko@shimcares.org](mailto:cyanko@shimcares.org).



## Building the American Dream: Karim and Naima's story

As a young child in Algeria, Karim dreamed about his future. College. A good job. Starting a family.

As Karim grew up, he realized that difficulties in his home country would hinder his ability to fulfill his dreams. After several attempts, Karim and his wife Naima were selected to move to America through the VISA lottery program. They were grateful, however they discovered that relocating to a new country came with its own challenges.

Thankfully, they found SHIM, where joining a community of neighbors helping neighbors changed everything. Read their full story at [shimcares.org/neighbors/karim-and-naimas-story/](http://shimcares.org/neighbors/karim-and-naimas-story/)

# New to the neighborhood: Young philanthropists step up to sack hunger

Still new to Upper St. Clair after their recent move from Michigan, Jackson and Alex VanHoorelbeke, 15-year-old twins, admit they don't know much about the South Hills. But after learning about the many people throughout our community struggling to put food on the table, they stepped up to make a difference through their high school community service project.

"We know that everyone in the South Hills is not as fortunate as we are," Alex explained. "SHIM was an organization where we could volunteer, and we thought hosting a drive for them was a good way to help people."

The Upper St. Clair High School students organized a food drive to collect some of SHIM's most-needed items for its three food pantries, including cans of soup, bags of dried beans, cereal and more. They made fliers, posted a call for donations on social media, and walked door-to-door spreading the word about SHIM, encouraging neighbors to donate to their drive.

"The neighbors were really appreciative and thought we were doing a good thing," Jackson shared.

In total, the duo collected nearly 150 lbs. of food in two weeks. They hope to plan another drive in the future and next time, try to involve the entire school to make an even bigger impact.

This spring, the Upper St. Clair School District participated in SHIM's Sack Hunger, Pack Hope



campaign by collecting and donating food for the pantries. With minimal help from a calculator, Jackson did the math. If all 1,500 students in Upper St. Clair High School host a drive like theirs, "we could collect 112,000 lbs. of food for our community. That's a lot of food!"

"We learned that people in the South Hills want to help their community," Alex added, "They just need the opportunity."

If your family or students want to host a drive for SHIM, contact Seth Dubin Director of Development, at [sdubin@shimcares.org](mailto:sdubin@shimcares.org) or 412-854-9120 x109 to get started. Or go to <https://shimcares.org/host-a-drive/>

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## Get your family volunteering!

Our kids can do great things for our community. Sometimes the simplest acts – like a lemonade stand or a SHIM Sack Hunger, Pack Hope food drive – can make a huge difference. Norma Schmidt, a South Hills resident who, along with her daughter Eva and their Girl Scout Troop, is actively involved with SHIM, offers tips for parents to help get their kids excited about giving back. Visit [shimcares.org/the-power-of-kids-giving-back/](https://shimcares.org/the-power-of-kids-giving-back/) to read her full story, then join the movement with SHIM at [shimcares.org/volunteer](https://shimcares.org/volunteer).

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## Help your neighbors: South Hills seniors

South Hills seniors are lonely no more. Thanks to CheckMates – launched by SHIM in the South Hills last year in partnership with United Way of Southwestern PA, AgeWell Pittsburgh, and the Jefferson Regional Foundation – volunteers are making phone calls to local seniors. The weekly, confidential telephone check-ins provide friendship, reassurance and a chance to identify any issues for seniors living independently in their own homes.

Is there a senior in your life who might benefit from this program? For more information or to sign up to receive calls, contact Mary Amatangelo at [mamatangelo@shimcares.org](mailto:mamatangelo@shimcares.org) or 412-854-9120 x116.





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looking forward:

**save  
the  
date**

## **Celebrate the South Hills with SHIM**

Honoring Ray and Joneen Betler  
Thursday, May 23, 2019 at 5:30pm  
Hilton Garden Inn – Southpointe

## **Volunteers Needed!**

### **Join the movement.**

South Hills neighbors make the best volunteers. And in the last year, volunteers served 20,200 hours – that's 842 days of non-stop volunteering by the South Hills community. But there's more work to be done.

Individual volunteers are needed for our after school and early childhood programs, to stock the food pantry, to mentor middle and high schoolers, to call seniors, and more.

Families can work together to host a drive, work with our interfaith programs, and help with special events.

Learn more and join the movement: [shimcares.org/volunteer](http://shimcares.org/volunteer)