

Empty Bowls Facts 2014 -2015

- The mission of Empty Bowls Monongalia is: *Through education and continuing community involvement, Empty Bowls Monongalia provides resources and assistance to Monongalia County agencies that support individuals and families threatened by food insecurity.*
- *Feeding America* states that in 2012 that 15.9% of the population or 15,370 people in Monongalia County are food insecure. This is an increase of 970 from 2011.
- *Feeding America* states that in 2012 that 16.5% of the children or 2,550 children in Monongalia County are food insecure. This represents an increase of 268 from 2011.
- The nutritional services coordinator for the Monongalia County School system states that 33.3% or 3,482 of **all** Monongalia County students qualify for free or reduced priced meals.
- The primary goal of Empty Bowls Monongalia is to raise as much money as possible to feed the hungry.
- Empty Bowls is the only organization in Monongalia County that raises money exclusively for the food insecure population in Monongalia County.
- Each year Empty Bowls holds a fundraising soup and bread luncheon, from which patrons take home a handcrafted ceramic bowl. They are asked to keep to keep the bowl as a reminder of the meal's purpose. Every time they take a bowl from the cupboard, they will be reminded that someone's bowl is always empty and that on this one occasion they helped alleviate hunger and could do so again at any time.
- All foods, pottery bowls, and supplies are donated to the event. Three hundred ninety five volunteers contributed 4,465 service hours during the year and the day of the event to make it a success. This contribution is valued at \$81,047. **There are no paid employees.** Many local businesses, organizations and individuals contribute in-kind donations (such as potatoes, apples, operating supplies) to support Empty Bowls. The value of these contributions for the past year was \$56,760. The only major expense is for the use of the Community Center and some marketing – fundraising expenses.
- In addition to ticket sales (\$15. donation) for the luncheon, Empty Bowls raises funds through individual contributions from members of the community, civic organizations, businesses and corporations, foundations, faith based organizations and from major gift solicitations
- This year Empty Bowls Monongalia 2014 campaign raised in excess of \$89,000.including contributions to its endowment fund.
- This year Empty Bowls distributed \$77,750 to seven meals programs, eleven food pantries and three weekend backpack programs.
- Since the first Empty Bowls luncheon in 2007 the event has grown into a community wide effort helping the hungry and educating the public, raising more than \$274,380. All funds raised stay in Monongalia County to support local feeding programs and food pantries.
- An endowment has recently been established which will eventually generate a perpetual source of income insuring that the mission of Empty Bowls Monongalia will be able to continue to support the thousands of individuals and families in Monongalia County who are threatened by food insecurity.
- According to the latest statistics from *Feed America* an additional **\$6,000,000** is needed in our county this year alone to meet the needs of our food insecure population.

- *Feeding America* states that the average cost for a meal in Monongalia County is \$2.77.
- In light of today's economy, the dollars required to meet the needs of this population will continue to grow.
- This is especially true with the reduction of the federally funded SNAP program. This reduction affects over 8,800 individuals in Monongalia County.
- The contributions from Empty Bowls for this year of \$77,750 certainly does not meet the entire need in Monongalia County. The United Way, many community agencies, foundations, corporations, local businesses, faith-based organizations and individuals contribute on a regular basis; however, the need is ever growing.
- Due to this increasing need the Board of Directors has established a fundraising goal of \$125,000 for the 2015 campaign.
- Empty Bowls Monongalia was the recipient of the 2014 Governor's Service Award. This award is presented to West Virginians and state volunteer organizations who exemplify the spirit of community service and volunteerism. Empty Bowls has been chosen because it has gone above and beyond for fellow West Virginians.