



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Hetti Brown, Couleecap

Phone: 608-632-3754

Email: Hetti.Brown@couleecap.org

Couleecap Community Harvest Food Pantry Opens in Norwalk

Couleecap has opened a new food pantry in Norwalk. Community Harvest Pantry is located within Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers at 200 West North Street and will be open from 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM each Wednesday.

Community Harvest is located in an area with high poverty, low access to healthy and nutritious food, and where many of the residents with the greatest needs do not have transportation. More than 30% of the population has poor access to groceries, and 46% of children and 27% of adults live in households with incomes below the Federal Poverty Rate. The pandemic only made these issues worse, as Couleecap witnessed as the organization mobilized to help residents who were impacted.

“We knew there were needs in the area, but the pandemic showed us the depth of the need,” said Hetti Brown, Executive Director of Couleecap. “One of our board members, Nidia Alcantar, resident of Norwalk and faculty at the local school district, helped us connect with residents and distribute financial assistance, diapers, and other household supplies. That’s also when started talking seriously about a more permanent presence in Norwalk.”

The food pantry provides fresh produce, meat, dairy, and shelf-stable products to residents in a low-barrier way. Locating the pantry within the Scenic Bluffs clinic was also a way for Couleecap to reach residents in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

Brown says, “Collaboration with the clinic enables us to reach more of our neighbors. The Scenic Bluffs team immediately invited us in and have been wonderful to work with. As service providers to the community, they knew how a food pantry could also address health issues they commonly saw due to poor nutrition.”

“As a Community Health Center, staff at Scenic Bluffs focus on the social needs of our patients, just as much as the physical and emotional needs. We’ve had a collaborative relationship with Couleecap for many years, as they provide wonderful resources for patients and community members. We are grateful for the opportunity to share this space to reduce food insecurities in Norwalk and the surrounding communities. We are excited to see the impact the food pantry has on our patients’ health and the health of our community,” says Kim Hawthorne, Chief Executive Officer of Scenic Bluffs.



201 Melby Street, Westby, WI 54667 • Phone 608.782.4877 • Fax 608.634.3134 • www.couleecap.org
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The Community Harvest Food Pantry has been made possible by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Great Rivers United Way, Century Foods International, and WI Department of Health Services. Couleecap also recognized Second Harvest, Hunger Task Force, ALM Charities, Mayo Sparta, and Theisen's at their grand opening event.

Those wishing to learn more or donate to the food pantry can visit <https://www.couleecap.org/food-assistance.html>.

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About Couleecap

Couleecap, Inc. is a private non-profit 501c3 charitable organization. Couleecap helps people in need with housing, food, transportation, and more. Created in 1966, we are a community action program that fights poverty and promotes self-sufficiency in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. Couleecap is a member of the Community Action Network, originally created in 1964. Learn more at couleecap.org.