



**HART Pantry**

## **WHO IS HART PANTRY?**

HART PANTRY is an all-volunteer non-profit organization in Peoria, AZ. HART, founded 10 years ago as a church mission has grown to an independent 501(c)3 corporation with over 50 volunteers. The corporation is run by Executive Director and a volunteer Board of Directors (14) including President, Treasurer, secretary, Vice President, Volunteer Coordinator, Purchasing Agent, and members at large.

The volunteers to date have logged over 7,000 hours in the past year period. No salaries or expenses are paid, and administrative costs are kept to a minimum.

The goal of HART PANTRY is to reach local at-risk teens that do not have enough or any food at home.

Working with local school and community counselors our staff strives to provide eligible teens with food and needed services.

## **WHAT DO WE PROVIDE?**

HART PANTRY provides weekend, 18 items, shelf stable, high protein food packs to at-risk and homeless teens in Title 1 High schools in the West Valley of Maricopa County. (At present, Peoria Unified School District. High Schools in Dysart School district, Glendale School District, Peoria Accelerated HS. Food is provided to Eve's Place – Peoria CC. and Dysart CC. There is also a nutritious snack/supper bag of 5 items provided for At-Risk teens wishing to have food after school during the week. In addition to weekly food packs, we provide basic clothing, reclaimed bikes, toiletries, Christmas and graduation gifts.

## **WHAT IS AN AT-RISK TEEN?**

An At-Risk teen may truly be homeless, living in a car, a shelter or “couch surfing” from one friend’s home to another or the teen may be in a crisis situation at home. Crisis at home is where there is no parent or guardian to provide care or protection of the minor. It is usually a situation where food is not available on a regular basis.

Students are designated by school counselors, nurses, or resource officers. The legal basis for their decision is based on the McKinney-Vento Federal statute describing

the at-risk and homeless teen. We at HART PANTRY do not make these distinctions; rather we rely on the school staff to handle all contact with the student.

HART PANTRY works with these school guidance offices, nurses and Resource Officers, Social workers. After contact by the Executive Director with the school personnel presenting our program and being accepted as able to provide that program to their teens, we set up a school contact, time, and place of drop off and method of communicating needs to us. An email is sent on Mondays to school contact and they return a list and number of their needs. The bags are packed and any other needs are met and we deliver the bags to the various locations on Thursday morning. In the interim, we may get a call for emergency need and we are available to meet the need.

The history of HART PANTRY begins in the pastor's office of the Peoria Presbyterian Church. My husband and I had recently moved here from NC, found a home at this church and we were there when a lady came in asking for help to feed homeless teenagers at Peoria High School. We decided to help and filled our garage with food items she wanted. That relationship became difficult and we decided to have this operation a mission of the church with the congregation involved. We had a closet for supplies, fellowship hall to bag in and our mission grew quickly from 1 school to 2 to 4. It became apparent that we needed more space and more financial help; I formed the HART PANTRY as a 501(c)3 non-profit in 2014. We moved to larger quarters at the Eve's Place location, donated by them, in Sun City.

HART PANTRY has grown in the last 6 years to work with 6 high schools in the PUSD, 5 high schools in the Dysart district, 8 schools in the Glendale High School District, Peoria Accelerated and schools through association with EVE'S Place.

Support comes from corporations, churches, Cities of Peoria and Surprise grants, Peoria city Council Members, local civic organizations including Lion Clubs, From the Heart Foundation Glendale. We receive support from Peoria Diamond club and the community at large; hold fundraisers and apply for grants to round out our funding. All supplies are either in kind donations or the funds for the supplies are donated.

As of 2017 we moved our warehouse and packing operation to the Lions Foundation Campus at 9451 n. 99th Ave, Sun City. The location is not open to the public and our office is at 8456 W. Sanna Street, Peoria, AZ 85345.

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

To provide support to At-Risk and homeless high school teens as they endeavor to complete their high school education. This support may include food and other necessities in concert with public schools.