UPDATE

During the Spring/Summer Session of 2012 (May-August) MAC Bread Bin hosted its first summer season of functional operations. The Hunger Awareness Survey released by our service in February of 2012 indicated that there was a need for emergency food programs during the summer months. This was confirmed over the course of the summer as students consistently utilized the MAC Bread Bin programs.

SERVICE USAGE

The MAC Bread Bin summer volunteer team filled 82 food voucher requests during the months of May, June, July and August of 2012. This was an average of approximately 4-7 vouchers a week. At the beginning of the summer the request volume was even above the higher end of this range, and it went through a few other volume peaks before normalizing. Regardless of volume, we focused on filling our food voucher requests in a systematic and timely manner. Every request was filled within a maximum of 72 hours. This summer we served clients with various situations and dietary needs. This included helping individuals with dependents, allergies, specific diet requirements, and ailments like diabetes. We attempted to educate our volunteers about these circumstances in order to better meet client needs.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

On top of consistently filling voucher requests, we began a partnership with the Community Garden and the Office of Sustainability. Our volunteer team helped irrigate, mulch, plant and tend to the garden. Then once fresh produce became available, the Community Garden donated a percentage of their gains to our service. Produce donated included fresh greens, peppers, onions, herbs, tomatoes, eggplants, and various other vegetables. This fresh produce was included in our vouchers and we received only incredibly positive feedback from our clients. In the past our vouchers have only contained non-perishable food items, and this was an exciting initiative as it allowed us offer fresh nutritious food items as well.
During the summer we also had a few months worth of successful Good Food Box deliveries. The students that accessed this service over the summer months were past clients and were familiar with the ordering process. They placed their orders with Grace Lutheran Church, instead of the MSU Accounting Office. The amount of orders over the summer months was lower than during the year so this system made the most sense. However, since we did not handle orders directly, we are unsure of the exact number of students who utilized this program. Our contact at Grace Lutheran Church, Pastor Loretta Jauzins, noted that was pleased with the sustained use of this program.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

We have been successfulling running our service since September 2012. We have managed to maintain our level of service and continue the initiatives we began over the summer months.

BUDGET

During the summer we didn’t use any of our budget lines, except for the Reserve allocation. This budget line is for purchasing food when our cupboard stocks run low. We used 30% of the Reserve line during these months in order to maintain our quality of service. This seems reasonable as the 4 months of the summer are 1/3 of the entire year. During the year we run charitable events in order to keep our cupboards full. Similar preparations will be made for next summer in order to hopefully reduce budget spending in this area.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

The main challenge over the summer was finding volunteers. We recruit and train a very committed volunteer team during the Fall/Winter Session, but found this pursuit more difficult during the summer months. They aren’t as many students available to volunteer during the summer, and also a higher percentage of students take a lower courseload and commute. This meant that we had a reduced volunteer pool and had to work with limited schedules. However, flexibility and organization on the behalf of the Bread Bin staff helped overcome this.

SUCCESSES

This was an extremely successful first summer operations.

OTHER

MAC Bread Bin has no other new business to report on at this time.