UPDATE
Our focus since the beginning 2013 has been to reach out more to our community partners. We’ve completed this while maintaining the effectiveness of our voucher system and Good Food Box program. We have also made strides in targeting specific audiences to promote ourselves, by advertising for these initiatives in areas that will reach them. We hope to continue to do all this, as well run more events that will help to reduce the stigma of accessing emergency food services.

SERVICE USAGE
The Bread Bin general volunteer team has filled over 30 food vouchers requests since the beginning of January 2013. There has been a very steady request rate since the return after the December break. Regardless of volume, we have focusing on filling our food voucher requests in a systematic and timely manner. This year we have served clients with various situations and dietary needs, and we provide all new volunteers with training on how to best meet these needs.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES
Our most recent activity has involved organizing volunteer teams to go into various food banks and soup kitchens around Hamilton. We have been able to lend a hand preparing and serving food, sorting and organizing goods, and interacting with community members. Volunteers have loved these experiences and have only positive feedback. We have been going to volunteer with different organizations on a bi-weekly basis, and hope to continue this commitment throughout the rest of the semester.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES
We are currently planning for our March event entitled, ‘Feed the Bus’. We’ve been in contact with Attridge Transportation and they are generously donating a yellow school bus to us for an entire week. This year the event will be held during the week of the 11th-15th, and we will have hunger-awareness events going on each day. During this week we will collect nonperishable food and clothing donations inside of the bus to donate them to Neighbour-2-Neighbour, a local food bank and shelter.
BUDGET
We haven’t even used half of our budget yet, but plan on using the remaining amount to facilitate ‘Feed the Bus’ and order promotional items. We have also used approximately half of our budget allocated towards purchasing additional food supplies for our cupboard, but don’t anticipate needing any more of it as we have many upcoming food-raisers. Regardless, we are on track with our spending.

CURRENT CHALLENGES
As in line with previous years, our request volume has continued to increase. We believe this increase to be related to rising tuition costs and also increased awareness in the student community about the services that MAC Bread Bin offers. Our huge success with ‘Trick or Eat’ filled our cupboards for a few months, but the amount we were able to keep didn’t last long. Over the winter months, we are able to keep our stocks up due to the generosity of our supporters and many holiday food drives.

SUCCESSES
During December, Titles selected MAC Bread Bin as their cause to donate to. During their ‘December Round-Up’, any funds raised were on our behalf. This was a wonderful initiative of theirs and we were so pleased to be chosen. We are grateful that other members of the McMaster community believe we are a worthy cause and recognized us in such a substantial way.

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