

When SNAP benefits were paused nationwide late last year, the effects were felt quickly in Jackson County. Local food pantries saw shelves thinning just as more families were walking through their doors, searching for reliable access to nutritious meals.

Recognizing the urgency of the moment, the Jackson Community Foundation issued a call for help in the fall. “Due to recent budget cuts and the federal government shutdown, many food banks and pantries are struggling to meet increasing demand with fewer resources,” the Foundation shared. With South Michigan Food Bank supplying many of Jackson County’s pantries, support for its work became critical to ensuring families did not go without healthy food options.

Seven donor-advised funds at the Jackson Community Foundation stepped up to meet that need. Together, they awarded a grant totaling \$30,391.31 to the South Michigan Food Bank, helping stabilize food access during a time of uncertainty. The funds included the Reizner Family Fund, the Jerry & Jackie Booth Family Fund, the Eric B. Walton Family Endowment Fund, the Tony & Bonnie Krupa Family Endowment Fund, the Regina Griffus Memorial Fund, the James M. & Helen M. Crowley Donor-Advised Endowment Fund, and the Georgia & Travis Fojtasek Legacy Fund.

The grant directly supported **20 food pantries across Jackson County**, giving them greater flexibility to purchase the foods their communities needed most — from pantry staples to more nutrient-rich options. This flexibility allowed local organizations to respond more effectively to the unique needs of the families they serve.

For pantry leaders on the ground, the support came as a welcome and timely surprise. Kelly McCloughan of Jackson Free Methodist Church shared, “It was a great surprise to look at the SMFoodbank account and see a donation from your organization. Thank you for supporting our efforts to help food insecurities in Jackson.”

The Jackson Community Foundation extends sincere thanks to the representatives of the seven donor-advised funds for their generosity and responsiveness. Their willingness to act during a critical moment strengthened local food systems and helped ensure Jackson County families had access to the nourishment they needed. Contributions like these demonstrate how adaptable, community-driven philanthropy continues to make Jackson a better place to live, work, and play — even in challenging times. If you have a fund at the Jackson Community Foundation and wish to start your 2026 grantmaking, get in contact with us at 517.787.1321 or email Erik at elyman@jacksoncf.org!