

Sharing the Warmth Featured News

A Panera Bread® relationship in Ohio keeps one soup kitchen cooking

The mission of Panera Bread is “A loaf of bread in every arm.” So when Brian Campbell, marketing manager for the two bakery-cafes in Lima, Ohio, heard about Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, he knew Panera Bread could also help the group carry out its mission to provide a warm meal each day to those in need.

In 2008, the soup kitchen became a regular evening donation recipient, picking up leftover bread at the end of the day from the bakery-cafes in Lima and distributing it to more than 200 individuals who count on the organization. (As part of its Day-End Dough Nation™ efforts in 2010, Panera Bread and its franchisees donated \$100 million worth of bread and baked goods throughout the United States.) But Brian and the board of Our Daily Bread knew their partnership could accomplish something more.

One visit to the soup kitchen convinced Brian that the organization’s stove needed to go. “They were running on a very old, inefficient range,” he recalls. “Burners didn’t ignite and the thermostat inside the oven was broken. And that’s the thing that they need every day. It’s an important piece of the soup kitchen.”

Through Panera Bread’s Community Breadbox™ program the bakery-cafe management worked with others from the Panera Bread franchisee to purchase a \$5,000 commercial range with money raised in part through donation boxes placed near registers. Now, with six burners, a griddle, and a working oven and thermostat, the soup kitchen has been operating “efficiently and easily,” says Stephen Jenkins, executive director of Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen. “We’re pleased and privileged to be the recipients of the stove. Panera has been a wonderful partner.”

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