



November 2010

Cameron Community Ministries

*Nurturing Families...
Inside and Out*

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Visit our Website :
www.cameronministries.org

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Our Programs

- Hot Lunch Program
- Kid's Café Supper
- Sunday Celebration
- Reading Program
- Learning Partners
- Summer Safe Haven
- Family Computer Learning Program
- Clothing House
- Personal Hygiene Supply

Message from our Director

Dear Cameron supporters,

As we begin getting ready for the Christmas season here at Cameron, it's a wonderful time to reflect on the past year. Throughout the year, TV and newspaper headlines talked about the difficult economy, the state of many not-for-profits in the area, the drop in donations and the immense challenges we're facing because of (a) unemployment (b) education (c) crime (d) poverty affecting families (e) all the above and more. We see the impact of this every day in our client's faces yet we also see something else...**hope**. This is what keeps all of us motivated at Cameron.



What does hope look like? We hear it when we go into the lunchroom and people are talking about what they are doing later that afternoon after they've eaten here. We see it when a child in our afterschool program reads a book about a far-away place and announces that "someday I want to go there". We see it when people come to us after an emergency that forced them to leave their apartment with just the clothes on their back and then find out Cameron has bedding and dishes to help them start their life over again. We hear about it when people who used to come to Cameron have since found a different path and come back to tell us more about their new life. In other words, **hope** can be difficult to spot but very rewarding when it is found and celebrated!

We also spot **hope** in our many supporters, whether it be their **hope** that what they do will make a difference to someone here at Cameron or their **hope** that others see what they see happening at Cameron and want to join our efforts. Please know that your support helped us feed a record number of people this year while many other organizations were forced to make cuts or reduce services. We are always thankful for the support we get as it helps us get through many challenging days!

As we begin a traditional season of **hope**, everyone here at Cameron has many **hopes** for all of you including a blessed holiday season filled with joy. You give us **hope** that helps us believe that we are truly helping others change their lives.

With everlasting **hope** and faithful service,

Cindy

The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what to hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance, but live right in it, under its roof.

Barbara Kingsolver

Summer Lunch Program Sets Record Number

This summer we welcomed more guests to our hot lunch program than any summer in our history.

At first we thought it was some kind of variance that would pass. But as summer drew to a close we looked back in surprise. In September and October the numbers remained high. We held steady at about 4000 meals a month, the same as our summer attendance with children subtracted.

At a recent meeting with other hot meal programs in Rochester, we compared trends and discovered that our increase in attendance has been more dramatic than most kitchens. Most have seen 10% increases, while our increase has been between 25% and 30%.

Most significantly, we learned that we are one of the only meal programs where women and children make up a large portion of the population. It was clear over the summer when the number of children coming to lunch nearly doubled. It was not uncommon to see families with 5 or 6 children coming as a group.

Even now, we see many moms and preschool children. We also see many families on school holidays. Thank you for the many ways that you help to make Cameron a welcoming place. Your financial gifts, food drives, volunteer time and prayers help us provide some of Rochester's most fragile families with hot and nutritious meals.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

John 21:15 (NIV)

Cameron Ministries Is...

A Place where women and children can come to eat.

This summer we served a record number of meals. We thought the trend would subside in the fall, but our monthly average still hovers around 4000.

Meals at a Glance

Month	2009	2010
July	3568	4429
August	3114	5366
September	2488	3996
October	2840	4266



The age group that saw the greatest increase in attendance was children. We feel blessed that families see us as a safe and welcoming place for a hot meal.

Children At Hot Lunch

Month	2009	2010
July	688	1350
August	631	1253
September	215	246



Welcome to Beth and Bev—New Cameron Faces

Beth LaPointe joined us in August as our new Academic and Volunteer Coordinator. Beth graduated from Medaille College in January 2002 with a BA in Elementary Education. During college she worked for the YMCA at Camp Hough as a Program Director. Immediately following college she took a position teaching 1st grade in Webster, NY. The following year she taught 4th grade at the same school.

In 2003 Beth moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and took a position teaching 1st grade. After 3 years in Ft. Lauderdale, she moved to Pensacola and taught 2 more years of 1st grade followed by 2 years of 4th grade. During the 7 years Beth spent in Florida she specialized in teaching students who were learning English as a second language in urban settings. Her interest in teaching second language learners spurred her to start her masters in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) while in Florida.

During the summer of 2010 Beth moved back to NY and started to look for a position outside of a typical classroom setting that still allowed her to utilize her skills. She is thrilled to be joining Cameron as the Academic and Volunteer Coordinator. She feels Cameron is an excellent fit with her qualifications and experiences. In the future Beth hopes to continue to work on her Masters degree.



Beth LaPointe, our Academic and Volunteer Coordinator specialized in teaching students learning English as a Second Language. She is working with the children in our Reading program.

Beverly Bauman is the new Rochester AmeriCorps employee working with Cameron Community Ministries. She graduated from Wells College, a private institution in Aurora, NY, in May, 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts in Performing Arts and will eventually pursue a career in the theater and film business. Born and raised in Rochester, NY, she is very excited to be working and helping the community that lives in the city that she loves.

Beverly has numerous years of experience working with children, from teaching swim lessons, being a summer camp counselor and a Lake Director, and is always ready to have new experiences and face challenges that may come her way.

Bev's work experience at Cameron Community Ministries will include a variety of experiences. She has spent some time in our meal and clothing program in addition to her primary role as one of the youth assistants in our afterschool program. Bev is currently working with our fifth and sixth graders and they're keeping her on her toes! Cameron is fortunate to have Bev with us for the year.



Bev Bauman, our Americorps employee is a former camp counselor. She now works in our after school program

Cameron Ministries Is...

A Place You Can Trust.

Greg is a quiet and courteous man who has been a long-time Cameron lunch guest. He has lived alone and been independent, relying on us for the occasional meal.

This year he lost his sight to complications with diabetes. After a long absence, he finally came in for lunch, navigating the stairs with a white cane.

Karen sat and talked with him, asking how we might help. Greg was getting all the services he needed from ABVI, the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. What he needed was someone he could trust.

Greg needed help filling out NYS disability forms and answering sensitive personal health and finance questions.

Now when he comes to lunch, the staff help him find a seat and bring him a lunch. If he has papers, he asks for Karen.

He navigates Lyell Avenue by himself but he knows that at Cameron, he is not alone. His lunch is served with good cheer and his information managed with good faith. **He thanks us for being a place he can trust.**



Campbell's Soup Labels & Box Tops for Education

Cameron participates in the Campbell's Labels for Education program, sending in proofs of purchase to help us earn recreation and science items for our after school program

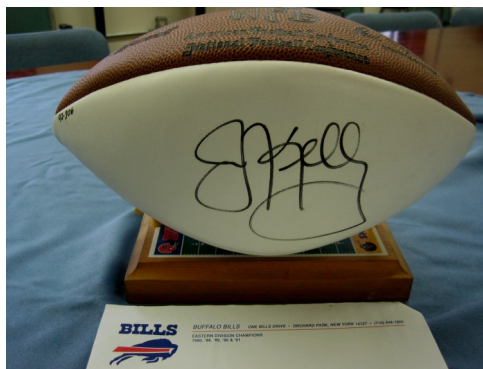
We also collect Box Tops for Education and send those to our nearby School #30. Box Top proofs of purchase can be found on a wide variety of baking, cereal, paper products, storage bags and school supplies. A full list can be found at www.boxtops4education.com. This is a great project for long-distance supporters who can collect and mail us the proofs of purchase for the school.



Holiday Gift Buying Opportunity

Are you in need of a holiday gift for that hard-to-buy-for friend? These two items were donated by Cameron Supporters who would like the proceeds from the sale to benefit our programs. Maybe you have a Buffalo Bills fan who needs some cheering up. Perhaps you have a favorite fashionista with a love for designer bags.

These two items will be available by silent / email / phone auction for Holiday gift giving. Call or e-mail Cindy at ccmexec@rochester.rr.com or at 254-2697. Items will go to the high bidder on Friday December 10



It's a discouraging year for Bills Fans. Don't despair! You can relive the glory years when Jim Kelly lead the team to four consecutive Super Bowls.
This autographed Jim Kelly football comes with certificate of authenticity

Project Runway, America's Next Top Model, Fashion is front and center.
Give this gently used vintage white Gucci bag with protective felt storage pouch to your favorite fashionista.



Cameron Christmas Calendar

Christmas is always a busy and exciting time at Cameron. There are holiday meals to prepare, gifts for lunch guests and presents for the Children in our youth program and our huge Neighborhood Santa Party. Here are the many ways that individuals, work groups and church groups can be involved. If you'd like to participate in any of these activities, contact **Beth LaPointe**, our volunteer coordinator, **Karen Deyle** or **Cindy Harper**. The lists of suggested gifts for each event can be found on our website in our holiday flyer.

Afterschool Program—Kid's Shopping Day — Wednesday December 15

This fun-filled event allows the kids from our afterschool program to select Christmas gifts for two special adults in their lives. Maybe Mom or Dad, maybe a Grandma or a special teacher. It helps our kids learn to be "givers" rather than just "receivers".



- Purchase gifts for children to give— \$10 price range. (list online)
- Donate gift bags, tissue paper and stick-on gift labels

Afterschool Program—Kid's Holiday Party — Thursday December 16

This is an exciting day for our 40 children. They have a party with games, activities and refreshments. Each child receives a toy, a book, pajamas and a clothing—this year items that fit the school uniform requirements.



- Purchase a toy or book for a child—\$10 price range. (list online)
- Donate gift bags, tissue paper and stick-on gift labels
- Be on hand to help with activities and snacks

Neighborhood Santa Party — Monday December 20

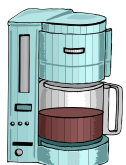
Santa comes to Cameron with gifts for more than 300 children, from infant to early teen. Kids enjoy cookies and juice and a visit with Santa.



- Purchase a toys for a child infant to young teen. (list online)
- Donate wrapping paper, bows and stick-on gift labels
- Spend a day wrapping and sorting gifts by age
- Be on hand to help with activities and snacks

Christmas Luncheon with Gifts — Wednesday December 22

We serve a big Christmas lunch with ham and all the trimmings. Each guest (we expect 300 this year) chooses a useful household gift like dishware or small appliances. Guests also receive hats, mittens and new toothbrushes.



- Purchase a (\$10-20) household gift. (list online)
- Donate toothbrushes for adults or children
- Be on hand to help with meal and gift distribution

Cameron Ministries Is...

A Place To Rely On.

Beneeka came to Cameron 15 years ago. She had a family of young children and a terrible drug habit. Scared and uncertain, she worked with a caring Cameron staff person who connected her with a rehab program and walked her to the center's door.

She got clean and started over, asking to be placed at Cameron for her Welfare-to Work program. She worked extra hours, glad to give back to the place that had helped her.

Soon she found a job, stable housing and reliable transportation. She even started a small 401(K) at work.

Last year she was laid off, and even with unemployment, fell behind on rent. She had to spend down her savings and move her family to a shelter. She applied for assistance and food stamps all over again.

Her new Welfare to Work assignment is at the Rochester City School District, helping families who have become homeless keep their kids in school. Who better to work with families during crisis?

Last week we wrote her a letter of recommendation as the district is interested in hiring her full time. We delivered it gladly, happy to stand behind a woman whose resilience continues to amaze us.



Our Youth Program Passes Inspection !

Cameron Ministries Is...

Something to look forward to.

Our summer program drew to a close. It had been six weeks of activities including sports, arts and crafts, reading and games.

Each week included one day at the nearby High School pool and sometimes at a beach, thanks to Danisco employees who bought and donated new swimsuits and a beach towel for each child. No more faded second hand suits for them. These were fun and colorful and chosen just for them!

It was also a summer full of field trips. Visits to museums, ball games, splash parks and to a farm for berry picking were favorites.

The finale of the year was an all day trip to Darien Lake. The rides home are usually a challenge with everyone cranky and tired. But this ride was full of excitement. **"I can't wait till next year!"** said one girl. **"Can we do this again next summer?"** said another.

They know Cameron will be here for them every year as they go through elementary school. They have a safe and enriching place to go both during the school year and the summer months. **They know they can count on that.**



It was just a year ago that our capacity and programming required us to become a licensed school age care center. We filled out mountains of paperwork, repaired walls, painted hallways and re-built steps and a ramp. Our staff members took physicals, got flu shots and completed certification courses. Our certification was complete and we were delighted!

This was an enormous relief, but certification depends on an annual re-inspection. This month we re-touched walls, checked our emergency systems and cleaned and polished everything to a bright shine. New staff studied rules and regulations, making sure they were up to date on policies.

The inspector came, spent the afternoon touring the facility, observing our staff and children and checking our documentation. The report found our staff to be well-trained, all of our paperwork up to date, our space comfortable and adequate and our only need—flashlights posted in the hallways; an easy fix!

Our facility passed with high marks and another year of certification begins.

The Difference of a Personal Connection

We know from our work here at Cameron that sometimes just talking to someone and knowing that they are making an effort to understand your needs makes all the difference in the world.

This was also the case with a recent grant request. We had submitted paperwork to a foundation two years ago with minimal response. This time Bob Peterson, member of our development committee asked if he could have a phone conference with the grant makers.

Bob is one of our treasures, and we recently presented him with our "Cameron Ambassador Award" In characteristic style he explained our programs, clearly defined our needs and answered questions for the grant chairperson.

To our excitement, we received the grant along with a lovely note saying how delightful Bob had been and how clear it was that he cared about the work of our organization. Thank you Bob for your support!



Special Thanks to Faithful Cameron Supporters

We offer special thanks to volunteers who have used their time and resources this summer to make a difference in our programs here at Cameron. There are endless ways to serve, and these are both generous and creative examples.

We were pleased to learn that **Danisco, USA**, one of our faithful corporate volunteer groups was selected to receive a Rochester Business Journal *Greater Rochester Award*. The outstanding volunteer group award recognizes a group of co-workers who have come together over the past year to make a difference in Rochester through their collective volunteerism.



Cameron nominated **Tim Emerson and the Danisco Employees** for their numerous projects that help support our work including a yearly donation drive of swim suits and towels so that our summer program children can go swimming. They also participate in purchasing gifts at Christmas. A big thank you all the Danisco employees who help us with our mission of serving the Lyell-Otis neighborhood!

This year, Cameron joined the group of agencies who benefit from the annual **“Ten Ugly Men”** summer event. The original Ugly Men formed a fun-loving group whose goal was to “party with a purpose”, having a good time while raising money for local charities. Now celebrating 21 years of “Getting Ugly”, they have raised money for dozens of agencies.

Their tried and true formula of fun, sports, music and refreshments has grown in popularity. Sponsors provide food and beverage so that more of the ticket price can go to charities. Cameron sent a group of volunteers to help in the food tents. In August, Cindy attended the reception at an East End pub and received a generous check for \$5400. Thank you Ugliers!

In a creative approach to fundraising, **Keith Harrington** a Cameron supporter decided to turn a summer adventure into a fundraiser. Keith is an avid cyclist, and a Cameron board member. Keith and several friends have made long distance bike trips together over the past few years.

This year, they turned their trek into a creative fundraiser, seeking sponsorship for their 577-mile route around Lake Ontario. Church members, friends and fellow Cameron Board members sponsored his journey, raising more than \$2000 in the process. We thank Keith for his awesome pedal power!



Cameron Ministries Is...

A place where it's safe to cry.

Cheryl is a changed woman in many ways. Once a suburban mom, she'd gotten caught in the cycle of drugs and ended up on Lyell Avenue. Desperate for drug money, she'd stolen money from her mother.

A judge sentenced her to make restitution and for two years she did, working two jobs and faithfully paying back much of the money.

Eventually, she made a tentative phone contact with her mother and they made plans to have coffee together, something Cheryl was looking forward to.

Before they could meet, Cheryl received a call that her mother had died. Cheryl was devastated, but made plans to attend the funeral.

It was only there, that she was able to connect with her own daughter, from whom she'd also been estranged. She discovered that she had a grandson that she'd never met.

“God closed a door, but opened a window.” she said through tears. “My daughter and I are working to mend our relationship, and not repeat the mistakes I made with my mom.



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Ella Marshall

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A heartfelt Thank You to everyone who has helped us meet the unexpected needs this summer as our meal attendance grew by the thousands.

From churches who took up food collections, to donors who sent extra checks, from individuals who faithfully called to see just what we needed and then appeared with it. We are blessed to call you friends.

Help Collect School Uniforms

This fall School #30 adopted a uniform code. This creates a "status-free" environment, promotes modesty and makes learning, not fashion a priority. Cameron has set aside an area of our clothing house for these items:

Grade	Tops	Bottoms
K-2	Light Blue or Yellow	Navy
3-5	Dark Blue or White	Navy
6	Navy or White	Khaki

Tops may be polo, oxford or turtlenecks
Bottoms may be slacks, capri pants, long shorts skirts or jumpers

Gently used clothing is accepted. Gift cards from Target or Wal-Mart are also helpful.



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