

Bounty in the Pantries

Grant Type: **Dollar support**

Dollar Amount: **\$75,000 over three years**

Foundation Name: **Sisters Health Foundation**

What was your objective with the grant or initiative?

The objective was to increase capacity of food pantries in nine Ohio counties to receive, store, and distribute healthy foods and was done primarily through equipment and infrastructure enhancements and increased access to technology.

Initial funds were raised through the first-ever community fundraiser, Bounty on the Bricks, a dinner held on the street in downtown Athens, Ohio, in August 2013. The funds were matched 1:1 by the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation of Nelsonville and the Sisters Health Foundation and used to create Bounty in the Pantries, which is administered by the Athens Foundation.

What were the results of this grant or initiative?

In 2013, 18 food pantries received equipment and infrastructure enhancements that enabled them to increase their ability to receive, distribute, and store healthy foods. This effort resulted in a request for assistance to increase food-purchasing ability for 17 food pantries in 2014. Given that most equipment needs were met, Bounty in the Pantries in 2015 provided \$75,000 to seed accounts for 45 local food pantries in a seven-county area; agencies can purchase food via those pantries using the purchasing program of the Southeast Ohio Food Bank & Kitchen.



Why would you say this grant or initiative had outsized impact?

From 2013 to 2015, the match funding provided by the Sisters Health Foundation, Athens Foundation, and Osteopathic Heritage Foundation resulted in a total of \$225,000 being distributed to support capital, technology enhancements, and food purchases within the food pantry network (i.e., SEO Food Bank and member food pantries). An estimated 150,000-plus southeastern Ohio residents benefited from this pooled funding. The 2016 goal is to raise and match funds for a total of \$90,000.

Southeast Ohio Food Bank & Kitchen Division Director Katie Schmitzer described the impact the grants have had:

Starting here a few years ago, I was taken aback by how much work was suddenly in front of me. We had hurdles at our facility but also needed to come up with a plan to help all of our agencies with the same issues. They had not been given the tools needed to succeed and grow in quite some time, and any growth the food bank had could not have been handled at their level. I was deeply concerned that we wouldn't be able to help enough of them in a short enough time to keep us all sustainable. The first two grant cycles from Bounty on the Bricks completely addressed the most dire issues of our agencies in only 2 years! Realizing that there is a community out there willing to support us provides me with the positive energy, I need to continue to move forward.

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