

# [***-Marathon Petroleum Corporation - Canton Refinery Addresses Youth Hunger Needs in Stark County***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:605J-JTB1-JD3Y-Y2B7-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

In a typical month, the Stark County Hunger Task Force (SCHTF) in Ohio provides approximately 33,000 meals.

As everyone is well aware, the last several months have been anything but typical.

For Maureen Kampman, SCHTF executive director, it feels as if the devastating economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has fallen squarely on the shoulders of her nearly 40-year-old organization.

'Pre-COVID, 14% of Stark County residents suffered from food insecurity,' says Kampman. 'We don't have current numbers, but I can tell you that in our pantry alone, we've seen a little over 200% increase in number of people served.'

This tidal wave of demand has stretched the limits of the local capacities of SCHTF. It's here that Marathon Petroleum (MPC) colleagues stepped forward to offer support.

The Canton refinery is located in Stark County, and employees there raised more than $ 36,000. Utilizing the Marathon Foundation 100% match, the total gift to SCHTF is $ 73,000. It's a number that Kampman describes as 'mind-blowing.'

Even more mind-blowing is the realization that every $ 1 donated to SCHTF equals seven pounds of food, which in turn provides six meals in Stark County. In other words, the generosity of the Canton employees helped provide 438,000 meals for their community.

'We have a strong history of supporting our community, whether as individuals or as a whole,' says Heather Pennington, accounting supervisor at the Canton refinery. 'It is a positive way to show that we care about the communities that our employees represent. These communities are a part of the fabric of our employees' lives and are what allows our employees to be healthy, happy and successful.'

The funds raised will be used to support the SCHTF backpack program.

A majority of Canton elementary school-aged children qualify for free breakfast and lunch. To address their nutritional needs on the weekends, on Fridays, SCHTF provides backpacks for the students to take home. Each contains non-perishable food items, with servings for two breakfasts, two lunches and two dinners. The meals, kid friendly and health conscious, may include packs of oatmeal, fruit cups, mac and cheese cups and at least one piece of fresh produce. The meals in the backpacks are designed so the students, usually grades 3-to-5, can prepare them on their own.

With schools closed, SCHTF is offering all its services via drive through, including the backpack program.

'Knowing that kids are going to miss meals due to school closures was a big motivator for a lot of folks who contributed to this campaign,' adds Pennington. 'We wanted to pick something that would have an impact toward helping the community. We recognized that with all the folks losing their jobs in this current ***environment***, and kids being out of school without access to food, the situation would become even harder on our community.'

Kampman is unsure if this historic level of demand for SCHTF's services are her new run rate. 'Everything is changing day to day, and it's difficult to predict the length of time we'll need to serve the community at this capacity. I just know that (the MPC donation) is going to make a huge impact.'

'At the onset of the pandemic, we had a number of employees ask about having a focused effort to support the community and businesses around the refinery,' adds Jeff Zuech, Canton refinery operations department manager. 'That is really what made the giving campaign a success. That it was an idea that came from the workforce.'

'Our Canton employees showed how they truly care about helping others in our community,' adds Don McCord, Canton refinery general manager. 'Especially the lives of vulnerable children through our amazing support of the hunger relief backpack program.'

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