



The CedarWood Report



Spring 2018

Volume: 6 Issue: 2

CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY!

What began as a heart for the disadvantaged and a small seed of faith, step by step has grown into a ministry that impacts hundreds of families each week. Through the efforts of our food bank, clothing closet, weekend children's feeding program and homeless outreach, as well as partnership with other organizations providing support and counsel to women, we have been able to address people's physical needs as well as the need for friendship, community and connection with God's power to change their lives from within. In this Issue, we are honored to hear from our Founding Team—Ken & Kathy Rickey, Don Warner, Adam Shephard, and Ricci Wilson—who each provided their thoughts below. Enjoy reading about our beginnings and the journey that brought us to this day!

KEN & KATHY RICKEY, FORMER CW DIRECTORS

When Ken and I came out of our retirement in the fall of 2012 to help WFJM start a ministry to the poor, we didn't have a clue how to go about it. We can honestly say it would have been overwhelming if not for the Lord's clear direction. We moved from Portland to the Seattle area and started volunteering at neighboring city food banks to get a feel for how they operated in the local sector. We also started to network among the local stores and business to raise support and gain interest.

CedarWood Startup

We caught Nita and Ricci's vision for CedarWood, to not only start a food bank (The Pantry) but also a kid's weekend food program (BackPack Kids) and a clothing ministry (The Clothes Closet) for those in need of something nice to wear. We connected with the Rock Church who helped us get much of our food for the first few months for The Pantry and Kelly Clifton, of Operation Sky Valley, who through her connections offered us many nice clothing items to help build our Clothing Closet. This later broadened into getting resources from many other stores who wanted to help.

BackPack Kids Program

The school liaison for disadvantaged children in our local school district also said they needed us and badly wanted our help. Things were coming together. In February 2013, our first Backpack Kids assembly was launched and we put together enough kits for a whole month's worth of food for 30 food-challenged kids. [Current average is 100-150 children per week.]

Our Pantry Opens and Thrives!

The Pantry opened its doors in April of 2013 with only a handful of clients. I remember one night on my knees crying out to the Lord for meat for these hungry people. Later that week, He not only brought 5 boxes of assorted meats, but also milk and eggs

that kept on coming for months down the road! Ken and I rejoiced over and over that day for His amazing answer to prayer. It set a precedent for what was to come.

He also gave us connections with stores that gave us produce, cheese and breads. We prayed for a team of people who had a ministry of inner healing and the Lord led us to partner with Pastor Yana and her amazing team at *I Am Becoming*. God was so gracious to supply every need! What a delight it has been to watch Him at work in every detail and aspect as this "baby" grew to reflect the love and heart of God for precious, needy people.

Our hearts are full of gratitude for the opportunity to have been on the ground floor of CedarWood and to see how it has grown and is now meeting the needs of hundreds of people.



CedarWood International is a division of *The World For Jesus Ministries*

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DON WARNER, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

As we progressed forward from those early days, we had to learn how to first walk before we could run. Ken and Kathy did an incredible job of networking and sharing the CedarWood vision with likeminded people who wanted to help. As both supplies came in and clients heard about CW, the need for both staff and physical organization, storage, shelving, refrigeration equipment, and transportation of supplies grew very quickly, and added the need for maintenance/periodic inspection of refrigeration and vehicles.

The BC storage situation required a lot of double handling, prepping for and closing out each Monday pantry. This led to the need for annual ergo safety training to lessen the physical impact to our team, beginning logistics centralization and staging in key locations; the addition of weekly janitorial services to help our CW team each Monday and to maintain Bethel Church in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord and respects God’s provision. God knew our needs and He met those needs “just in time” as we often say. And we have outgrown our footprint the Lord has given us and we continue to seek that next building and location He has for this ministry.

As I stand back and watch how the Lord has brought together such a unique marriage of clients, staff, volunteers, and suppliers, it is by His grace that He has provided the ability of CW to serve the whole person—food, prayer, and counsel. And to the children and now even to the homeless. There are no limits to the God we serve. To God be the glory for all He has done!



Day 1 (above)—Dry goods and bread

5 years later (below)—Veggies, fruit, dry goods, bread, desserts, cheese, yogurts, eggs, milk, meats, care items, pet food, clothes, and household items



ADAM SHEPHARD, OPERATIONS MANAGER:

I remember our very first Pantry. We had posted flyers all over town—in libraries, community centers and laundromats—but we had no idea how many people would actually show up to our first feeding event on April 5, 2013. There were only 3 staff members and about a dozen volunteers who were nervously waiting to help the masses of people that were expected, but it turned out that the first time we officially opened our doors, only 2 families from the community came to shop for food! Now, in 2018, we have 7 staff members and 19-25 volunteers each week to serve an average of 75-85 families each week, with some weeks peaking up into the 90’s.

At that first Pantry we had many tables offering dry goods, pastries, and bread—and *that was it*. There was no produce, no dairy, no meat—no non-food items at all. Today we have 6 tables alone full of fresh fruits and veggies each week and several overflow tables to replenish the produce as needed. In addition, we offer sliced breads, artesian breads, dry goods, pre-made salads, yogurts, cheeses, drinks, meat, dairy, desserts, personal care items, a weekly clothing closet, and miscellaneous household items each week.

Year Over Year—Average # of Families Served Weekly:

2013— Mid 30’s	2014— Upper 50’s
2015 -- Mid to upper 60’s	2016— Upper 60’s
2017 -- Mid 70’s to low 80’s	April 2018—Low to mid 80’s
Projected growth by end of 2018: Upper 80’s to low 90’s.	

RICCI WILSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: TO CW STAFF & VOLUNTEERS AND PASTOR MATT & SU OF BETHEL CHAPEL

This is an exciting time as our CedarWood Department celebrates its 5th birthday! As I prayed, what came to me was a tremendous sense of gratitude for all those who’ve sacrificed so much over the last five years to enable CedarWood to make it to its 5th birthday! Nita and I can never thank you all enough for what you do. Just know that the long hours, strategic planning, hefty physical demands and the spiritual preparedness to enable you to serve those in need the way you do each week is not without honor or reward in the Kingdom of Heaven. Thank you for giving your time, your love, and your support over the last five years! Luke 6:38

Get Involved!

CedarWood International needs **YOUR** help to build stronger families! Consider donating money, food, or even volunteer your time. Monetary donations are tax-deductible. Please write checks to World For Jesus Ministries (WFJM) and mail to the address on Page 1. Please notate “CedarWood” in the memo section of your check. Online donations also accepted at <http://worldforjesus.org/ministries>, Just click the “CedarWood International” donate button to add your donation to the cart.

THANK YOU!