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**Ending Food Waste and Promoting Dignity for Food-Insecure Families**

Urban Ministries of Wake County Completes Client Choice Nutrition Program

Ribbon Cutting and Tours May 24, 2017 4:30 to 6:00pm

May 17, 2017, RALEIGH, N.C.—Urban Ministries of Wake County has completed converting its traditional food pantry to a client-choice model. The agency’s Hunger and Nutrition program now enables food-insecure clients to shop for their families instead of receiving pre-bagged food.

Urban Ministries was motivated by industry research to try the client choice model. Consideration of personal preferences, ethnic/cultural backgrounds, and medical restrictions can lead to a 50% reduction in food waste as well as improved community engagement.

“We’ve noticed that clients tend to hold their shoulders a little higher when realizing they get to choose the foods that are best for their families,” says Lisa Williams, Director of Crisis Programs. “Plus, our food donors know that their contributions are being put to the best possible use.”

Support from Coastal Federal Credit Union and local congregations helped fund necessary infrastructural upgrades to display fresh and frozen produce and ensure spill-safe flooring.

Urban Ministries’ Hunger and Nutrition program sees as many as 11,000 families every year, including 8,000 children. The program also helps educate clients, volunteers, and donors on the benefits of making healthier food choices.

The pantry is supplied by the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina, Interfaith Food Shuttle, and the generosity of local businesses, congregations, and organizations. Three volunteer-managed gardens supplement thousands of pounds of fresh produce annually.

A ribbon cutting ceremony and reception will take place at Urban Ministries on Wednesday, May 24 from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Meet and greet with members of your community, take a tour of the pantry, and see how you can help be a part of this exciting evolution.

**About Urban Ministries of Wake County**: [Urban Ministries of Wake County](http://www.urbanmin.org) is a North Carolina 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that engages our community to serve and advocate on behalf of those affected by poverty by [providing food and nutrition](http://www.urbanmin.org/crisis-history/), promoting [health and wellness](http://www.urbanmin.org/clinic-history/), and by laying the [foundations of home](http://www.urbanmin.org/hwcw-history/). Founded in 1981, the agency has been restoring lives and renewing hope for 36 years. As conscientious stewards of donors’ funds, Urban Ministries applies more than 90 cents of every dollar directly to programs that serve the poor.

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