



Contact: Alison Hanner
515-244-2268, Option 2
ahanner@bidwellriverside.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bidwell Riverside Center raised over \$33,500 to help alleviate food insecurity in Central Iowa

On November 7th, Bidwell Riverside Center held its 3rd annual Empty Bowls fundraiser to shed light on the food insecurity faced by our neighbors and raised over \$33,500 to support Bidwell's mission to increase stability and self-sufficiency in our Central Iowa community. Each attendee at Empty Bowls selected a hand-made artisan bowl to take home to remind them to fill the bowls of others as often as they can.

The funds raised go towards Bidwell's programs that serve those who are hungry and living in poverty right here in Central Iowa. Our Distribution Center, the largest-serving food pantry in Iowa, served over 16,000 members of the community in 2018. So far this year, the food pantry has averaged approximately 4,000 individuals served every month. Our Child Development Center served 101 children in 2018 and provided them a quality all day education to prepare them for kindergarten. 80% of the children are funded through the Department of Human Services or scholarships due to the families' low income.

Jimmie Warren was recognized as Bidwell's 2019 Volunteer of the Year. In the last year, Jimmy has volunteered over 700 hours in the food pantry. He helps cover shifts in the pantry when we are short-staffed and helps us pick up food orders and food recovery. Jimmie is loved by all in the Bidwell pantry, and volunteer groups have even been heard to chant "Jimmie, Jimmie!" at the end of their volunteer events.

John Deere was recognized as Bidwell's 2019 Community Partner of the Year. For the last six years, John Deere employees have been responsible for all of our spring landscaping. They also help plant our community garden, so that we have fresh food, hand-picked, available throughout the summer. In addition, a group of employees have been helping us once a month to serve our clients in the food pantry. From guiding clients in the grocery aisle to stocking shelves, no job has been too big for their wonderful employees to help us strive toward meeting our mission.

We were very fortunate to have the support of many talented local artists who donated their handmade bowls for our event: Marion Nehmer, Deb Anderson, Emily MacFarland, Pam Hyde, Greg Lamont, Alfar Pottery, Katy Flynn, Maggie Harlow – Vogt, Dowling Catholic High School Ceramics Class, Creative Artists' Studios of Ames, and the Des Moines Art Center.

The fundraiser was such a success thanks to our many supporters, board members, volunteers, sponsors and community support. Our sincerest thanks go to our sponsors: Davis Brown Law Firm, UnityPoint Health Des Moines, Bankers Trust, Great Western Bank, BH Companies, Wine Styles of Johnston, and the Iowa Pork Producers Association.

About Bidwell Riverside Center: Bidwell Riverside Center is committed to a vision of a future where no one lives in poverty and every person has the opportunity for a positive future. Established in 1893 by a group of Methodist women dedicated to helping disadvantaged families, Bidwell has evolved into a secular organization seeking to build hope for a better future by providing support through two primary programs, a distribution center and child development center. Bidwell Riverside Center is a partner agency with Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC).

###