



Help Feed Kids At Oakland School



To support two of our Promise Council Programs (Hope Packs and HOOT Tutoring Academy) we have a couple requests. Both requests will help us feed our Oakland kids (either making it through a weekend with Hope packs or having a snack to fuel extra learning in HOOT Academy).

We are collecting:

- 16oz jars of peanut butter (goal is 70 jars)
- Individually packaged peanut free snacks (goal is 180 count)
- Mini (8oz) bottles of water (goal is 90 count)

Shopping Options:

- Items can be purchased from our [Amazon Wishlist](#) and sent directly to school.
- Money can be donated directly to the **Promise Council** (remember employer matching!)
- Shop on your own (drop off options below)

We have two options for drop-off:

- Oakland Office (care of Promise Council), 1605 E. Oakland Ave. Bloomington, IL
- Porch drop at 33 Pembroke Circle

Also, if you happen to run across any great clearance deals on larger size (kids XL - adult XL) winter coats, we could use a few!

Thank you to all Promise Council supporters for helping our students!

Christmas In February

The Wesley Church women's group recently met with the Stevenson Elementary Promise Council about helping with the next Christmas adopt-a-family gifts. They are going to designate some of their funds to help with Stevenson's Christmas adopt-a-family gifts. We are so thankful they are willing to help and thrilled that we have a plan in place early.

John M. Scott Grant Funds Received



On January 23, 2023, the Bloomington City Council confirmed that Promise Council will receive \$10,000 from the John M. Scott (JMS) Health Care Trust fund. 100% of these funds will be used to pay for healthcare and related services for school-age children in McLean County whose families have annual incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty level.

Over the next few months, City staff will work with Promise Council to execute the needed documents for this funding, and the funds will be available for use from May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024. JMS funds may be used to cover: a) payment and transportation for school physicals and other medical issues, b) exams and subsequent treatment for visual, dental, and hearing problems, c) prescriptions needed to treat illness or medical conditions and d) the purchase of hygiene products.

According to William Bessler, Grants Coordinator for the City of Bloomington, “this was an extremely competitive funding cycle, and a funding recommendation is a testament to the service [Promise Council] provides to our community.” Promise Council is both honored and humbled by the faith shown in our organization by the JMS Healthcare Commission. We will be careful stewards of the funds we receive.

LINUA LOCAL 362 BIDS FOND FAREWELL TO JOHN PENN



Photo by D. Jack Alkire reprinted from the Pantagraph, January 26, 2023

John Penn, a member of Promise Council’s Board of Directors, is retiring following fifty years of service to the Laborer’s International Union of North America. John joined the Laborers union in 1965 at the age of 16 and his skills rapidly led him into a series of leadership positions. He was elected in 1994 to serve as Business Manager of

For more than 40 years he has supported organizations such as Promise Council, the Stay 4 Project, Special Olympics, the McLean County Economic Development Council, and the McLean County Democratic Party. John led by example, encouraging countless others to get involved in their communities. Judge Carla Barnes who attended John’s retirement described him as “a local icon” and a “person in our local community that helped move everything along.”

In a testament to the importance of John and his work, his retirement event was attended by local, state and federal politicians, as well as hundreds of laborers, friends, family and community leaders. As is so typical of John Penn, he insisted the event be used to raise funds for both Stay 4 and Promise Council. Through his efforts,

the Great Plains District Council. By 2008 he had become LiUNA Vice President and Midwest Regional Manager, a position he held for three five-year terms.

John Penn has always been committed to bettering the lives of his fellow Laborers and his name is synonymous with community service.

the work we do will continue to benefit children. We are fortunate to have John in our community, and on our board.

John, we join your fellow Laborers in saluting you and everything you have accomplished. You are a great leader, a great friend, and a great man. Congratulations!

Message From The Board

The Promise Council Board of Directors is proud to introduce its newest member, Akil Smith. Akil is the Deputy Director of the Illinois State Police (ISP) Division of Internal Investigation. He is a proud alumnus of Illinois State University (ISU), earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Sciences. Akil is a dynamic and motivated leader with a record of generating and building relationships. His strengths include managing projects from conception to completion, implementing strategies, coaching, developing, and mentoring. Akil was a police officer and detective with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department until 2002, when he joined the ISP. As an instructor of Procedural Justice, Akil was part of a team that trained 1800+ officers on the methodology and principals of procedural justice, which is instrumental in the continued professionalism and legitimacy of the ISP and the overall law enforcement profession.



When asked why he was interested in serving as a Promise Council board member, Akil indicated that he valued the opportunity to assist in helping area youth succeed and excel in education and in life. Akil is the father of three and his youngest is a 5th grader and attends a Unit 5 school. His wife Stacy is a Unit 5 Speech Language Pathologist and you may find them at ISU Men's and Women's Basketball games cheering on their favorite teams. Go Redbirds!

Please join us in welcoming Akil to the Promise Council family. He can be reached at ContactUs@PromiseCouncil.org

Volunteer with us!

Promise Council

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