

The Charlotte Observer

Foundation offers to match \$25,000 in donations to Loaves & Fishes

By Mark Price

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- **HOW TO HELP** You can make a tax-deductible gift to Loaves & Fishes by donating online at www.loavesandfishes.org or by mailing a check to 648B Griffith Road Charlotte, NC 28217. You can also donate a gift of stock or from your IRA. For more information contact Loaves & Fishes at 704-523-4333.

Loaves & Fishes has found an ally to help overcome a 23 percent drop in local food drives this fall.

The Levine-Sklut Family Foundation is offering to match up to \$25,000 donated to Loaves & Fishes this winter.

Beverly Howard, executive director of Loaves & Fishes, said \$50,000 would provide 138,889 meals for Mecklenburg County's hungry. That's enough to feed 6,614 people for a week, she said.

"This is a wonderful incentive to people who may say they can't give enough to make a difference," said Howard. "This is a way for them to double the impact of a fairly modest donation. Fifty-five percent of our donations are \$100 or less."

The Levine-Sklut foundation is operated by Lori Levine Sklut, daughter of Family Dollar Stores founder Leon Levine, and Eric Sklut, owner of the automotive parts business Perfection Automotive.

Eric Sklut said the foundation liked the idea that the grant would be used to encourage new donors. "Or it may inspire people to increase their gift," he said.

The foundation offers up to 30 grants a year around the world to causes, including Jewish institutions and arts organizations. The offer to match local donations to Loaves & Fishes runs through Feb. 28.

Loaves & Fishes provided a week's worth of groceries to 126,803 people in 2012, about half of them children. The agency has 16 pantries, including sites in Davidson and Pineville.

A recent sample survey of 1,200 clients helped by the agency showed 39 percent were unemployed in the past year, one-third were doubled up in the homes of friends or relatives and 70 percent went hungry during the past year because they didn't have money for food.

Read more here: <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2013/12/05/4523068/foundation-offers-to-match-25000.html#.UryAYyh4YzI#storylink=cpy>