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**The Salvation Army to break ground on expanded West Park  
community center**

*Enhanced facility to feed more people on the west side with enhanced food  
offering and provide more emergency services to area families*

CLEVELAND, Ohio (April 28, 2016) – The Salvation Army of Greater Cleveland announced plans today to enhance its wide array of emergency assistance programs offered on Cleveland’s west side by breaking ground for a larger West Park Corps Community Center, located on Lorain Road and West 126<sup>th</sup> Street. Among other services provided, the West Park center houses The Salvation Army’s largest food pantry in the city, currently feeding more than 100 families per day. With the expansion, The Salvation Army will be able to nearly double the number of families it feeds, as well as offer a healthier food offering that includes more fresh produce and groceries.

“The Salvation Army has experienced an increased demand for services on the west side, and our West Park Corps is one of the fastest growing community centers in the region,” said Major Lurlene-Kay Johnson, divisional secretary for Greater Cleveland area services. “Often families come to The Salvation Army for our food pantry, which then provides an opportunity to connect them with other supportive services and programs.”

Each family who comes to the food pantry receives a bag of groceries with enough food to serve meals for three days. During the summer, the West Park Corps serves more than 24,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables each month to more than 500 community members as part of its Mobile Pantry program. The West Park Corps is the only location in the city to distribute this volume of fresh produce.

The Salvation Army employs current and former clients to help sort, pack, and deliver groceries at the West Park Corps, helping these individuals build a work history and gain job references. Strong partnerships with the Cleveland Food Bank, Dave’s Supermarkets, Giant Eagle, and other local grocery stores enables The Salvation Army to serve fresh produce and food staples through the food pantry, hot meal programs, after-school snacks

and weekend backpack meals for kids, and meals for senior citizens. However, limited storage space in the current facility provides a challenge to meet the heightened demand for groceries, particularly fresh food. The West Park Corps operates from an older, repurposed building and the current facility can no longer accommodate the need for expanded services.

On April 28, The Salvation Army of Greater Cleveland joined Councilwoman Dona Brady to break ground on an expanded West Park Corps Community Center to provide enhanced food assistance, emergency services and supportive programs in West Park and surrounding neighborhoods. The renovations will double the size of the current building and provide space for a walk-in freezer and cooler to store more fresh produce.

“Our renovated facility will provide additional space and flexibility to enhance our food pantry and serve more people more efficiently,” said Major Johnson. “In a larger building we will be best positioned to meet the needs of seniors, families, and children on the west side.”

The West Park Corps renovation project is part of a \$35 million capital campaign to realign and enhance services throughout Greater Cleveland. The *Strength for Today, Bright Hope for Tomorrow* campaign will provide funds to upgrade four service facilities and expand services in the areas of greatest need. In addition to the West Park Corps project, The Salvation Army is establishing new facilities in Collinwood, East Cleveland, and downtown. The Salvation Army has already secured \$30.9 million toward its \$35 million goal through a combination of philanthropic gifts and New Markets Tax Credits.

Last year, The Salvation Army of Greater Cleveland served more than 68,600 people through the emergency food programs in the area. The Corps Community Centers offer emergency services and supportive programs to help individuals and families find the resources they need for all family members. In addition to the food pantry, the West Park Corps Community Center offers clothing and utility assistance, after-school tutoring programs, music and arts activities for local youth, parenting classes, organized recreational leagues, and daily programs for senior citizens.

The Salvation Army continues to seek philanthropic support from the community for the ongoing emergency food programs and the capital campaign. To learn more about how to give back, individuals are encouraged to contact The Salvation Army of Greater Cleveland or visit [www.SalvationArmyCleveland.org](http://www.SalvationArmyCleveland.org).

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### **About The Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army is an evangelical part of the universal Christian church. Nearly 30 million Americans receive assistance from The Salvation Army each year through the broadest array of social services that range from providing food for the hungry, relief for disaster victims, assistance for the disabled, and outreach programs for youth. For more information, go to [www.SalvationArmyCleveland.org](http://www.SalvationArmyCleveland.org).