



Episode 1: Jeff Tetzlaff, Executive Director

00:00:06

Gaye: Hello and welcome to the very first podcast from Many Hands Many Meals. My name is Gaye, and I will be hosting these episodes, at least for a while. All of our episodes will be short, under 10 minutes. Our goal is to provide short, educational adventures as we explore the work that is being done by Many Hands Many Meals. Today we're going to meet the executive director of Many Hands Many Meals, Jeff Tetzlaff. Hello, Jeff. And thank you.

00:00:33

Jeff: Hi, Gaye. Thank you for having me on your first podcast.

00:00:38

Gaye: Let's start at the beginning. Tell us a bit about Many Hands Many Meals, how it got started and why it is in existence.

00:00:46

Jeff: Sure, Many Hands Many Meals is a volunteer-driven organization where we try to engage and educate, involve and inspire people, especially children, to think beyond themselves and to give back to the community by packaging these lifesaving meals that ease world hunger. The organization started back in 2004 when a small group of women were seeking a local opportunity to help fight world hunger. Their first Pack-A-Thon was held five years later and they packed over 250,000 meals. Last year, we packed our 10 millionth meal.

00:01:29

Gaye: Wow, that is an impressive milestone. Where do all of those meals go?

00:01:34

Jeff: So, our role is to package the meals and then we partner with a number of organizations who help distribute these meals throughout the world. Let me see if I can remember all of them. There's Children of the Nations, Orphan Grain Train, Go Serve Global and Feed My Lambs, and they ship food to places like Sierra Leone, Malawi, Haiti, Iraq, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Nairobi, Liberia, as well as domestically meals have been shipped to Eagle Butte, SD and New Orleans after the hurricane.

Honestly, there's no shortage of places in need, and people who are hungry. In fact, the World Health Organization estimates that 30% of the world's population is food insecure. Packing these meals provides an opportunity for people in our community, particularly young people, to learn about the value of volunteering and helping others. Our motto is "Pack Meals, Save Lives."

00:02:38 Speaker 1

Gaye: So, what is it that makes many hands many meals special or unique?

00:02:43

Jeff: Back in 2004, when the organization first started, it was called Kids Against Hunger because our founders wanted to give people, especially children, the opportunity to participate in packing food for people who need it. We continue to see real value empowering young people to teach them to contribute to their community by providing these healthy meals. Packing meals provides one opportunity for people in our community, our area, particularly young people, to learn about what it means to think beyond themselves and to volunteer to help others.

00:03:20

Gaye: How do people learn more about Many Hands Many Meals?

00:03:24

Jeff: There are several ways to get more information about us. People can visit our website at MH-MM.org for Many Hands Many Meals. They can go to our Facebook page, Instagram, but perhaps the best way to learn about our organization is to participate in one of our packing events.

Our website and social media have a calendar of events. When these packing events occur and people can register or just show up and pack meals.

00:03:56

Gaye: Jeff, thank you for taking the time to talk with us today.

00:03:59

Jeff: Thank you, Gaye.