[00:00:03 Announcer](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[The Missouri State Journal, a weekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri State University.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:00:10 Emily Yeap](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[As this year comes to a close in a few days, it’s a good time to reflect on our blessings and head into the new year on a positive note. It’s also the perfect opportunity to consider how we can help our community by participating in year-end giving of our time and resources.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[For the university’s](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3) [[Bear Pantry](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)](https://www.missouristate.edu/CCE/bear-pantry.htm) [and other nonprofit organizations in the area, the need is especially great this time of year. I’m Emily Yeap.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[My guest today is](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3) [[Alex Johnson](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)](https://search.missouristate.edu/people/alexjohnson)[, director of the](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3) [[Center for Community Engagement](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)](https://www.missouristate.edu/CCE/default.htm) [at Missouri State University. He joins me to highlight why people should give back and some ways to get involved.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:00:46 Alex Johnson](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[I think it's always important to give and volunteer, not only giving of folks’ time to the community and to nonprofit agencies who have missions to create positive change, but also to give their money if they have any to support causes because it helps folks to connect with community agencies, neighbors and the missions that they are all looking to achieve.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:01:12 Emily Yeap](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[With so many deserving causes and organizations out there, how do you decide where to give and volunteer?](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:01:19 Alex Johnson](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[Through the Center for Community Engagement, a lot of what I get to do is work with students who are looking to give their time and abilities to connect with passions, and I suggest to them to always think about what issue is important to them to address what might connect to their career goals or major, and to find agencies and programs to support.

Some go-to spots in our community are the United Way of the Ozarks that supports several different nonprofit agencies and issues in the community, Community Partnership of the Ozarks and some websites or platforms that I suggest to folks to use are things like givepulse.com and also volunteerozarks.com.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:02:04 Emily Yeap](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[At Missouri State, gifts of any size to the Missouri State Foundation make a difference.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:02:10 Alex Johnson](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[The Missouri State University Foundation supports a lot of different missions and programs that supports not only students, but also the community.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:02:19 Emily Yeap](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[With prices for food and other essential items going up, another area at the university that welcomes gifts is the Bear Pantry.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:02:26 Alex Johnson](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[One of the things that we get to work on in the Center for Community Engagement and campus wide is to address the growing need of students, this is nationwide of students who have some level of food insecurity that they are experiencing. And so that's the lack of consistent access to healthy and nutritious foods.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[And we know that college students without that nutritious food aspect as a basic need, might be less likely to succeed in college. And so, the Bear Pantry is a resource that we have here on Missouri State's campus to address that need and to serve as a resource to increase student success.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[To support a program like the Bear Pantry, we're always looking for, of course, food donations or hygiene item donations, or if people are able to give money to the program, that lets us purchase food and hygiene donations to then distribute.

In the last academic year, we consistently served about 950 individuals and distributed just about 75,000 pounds of goods. That number has increased every year since the Bear Pantry began back in January of 2019, so we know that the resource is gaining traction and people are learning more about it, but also the need might be rising as well.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:03:49 Emily Yeap](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[According to Johnson, giving and volunteering helps people better connect to their communities.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:03:55 Alex Johnson](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[I get to have a really fun job at Missouri State University and that is to connect people's passions to issues in the community and to talk about and promote our pillar of public affairs, community engagement and a lot of important aspects of community engagement or volunteering is that it makes people feel and be more connected to the community.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[A more connected community is a stronger one. It allows for folks to test career skills and build strengths. It also helps to build social networks in the community as well, and so when people are giving back and connecting more to their neighbors, we're able to build social capital with each other and build a stronger community.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:04:39 Emily Yeap](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[To help the Bear Pantry, visit missouristate.edu/CCE/bear-pantry.htm.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[To give to the Missouri State Foundation, go to missouristatefoundation.org.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[I’m Emily Yeap for the Missouri State Journal.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[00:04:56 Announcer](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)

[For more information, contact the Office of Strategic Communication at 417-836-6397. The Missouri State Journal is available online at ksmu.org.](https://livemissouristate-my.sharepoint.com/personal/er73s_login_missouristate_edu/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/mo-state-journal-dec-26-2023.mp3)