

Alpena Store Director Defines Success by Community Impact

When he moved to Alpena, Mich. in 2015, Warren Richter wanted to do more than open a supercenter. Even before cutting the ribbon on the new Meijer store he would lead, the store director believed a better measure of success for his new supercenter should go beyond traditional expectations.

While it was important that the store stay busy and customer satisfaction remain high, Warren's aim was focused more on the impact his store could make in the community. His first step was introducing himself to his new neighbors and learning more about Alpena.

Fast forward seven years, and evidence of Warren's focus remains apparent. He regularly partners with local food banks as part of our ongoing fight against [hunger](#) and has a long list of other charities and local events that his store supports.

"I've always believed being part of the community is about more than making a check donation," Warren said. "It was important to let them know we were here to stay and want to grow with the community."

The most recent example was a combined \$60,000 in donations to the local Boys & Girls Club, which provides mentorship programs, meals, and a place to go after school for local youth. Last year, the Boys & Girls Club of Alpena served more than 20,000 meals and worked with 1,200 pre-teens and teens from seven different schools. The organization was first chosen by Alpena store team members in the fall to receive \$10,000 through the [Meijer Team Gives](#) program and was then recently surprised with an additional \$50,000 as part of a [\\$1.2 million donation](#) to Boys and Girls Clubs across our communities.

Brad Somers, Executive Director of the [Boys & Girls Club of Alpena](#), said the latest gift will allow more kids to participate in the club's summer program. It will also help support the construction and renovation project for a new facility that will allow them to move from a 6,800-square-foot building built more than 50 years ago. When completed, the 22,000-square-foot facility will feature a gym and provide the opportunity to formalize a Workforce Development Program, enhance its ability to teach kitchen skills and double its capacity, allowing the staff to expand the total number of kids it can host from 145 to nearly 300 daily.

"Warren came to us before the walls of the store were up and wanted to know how he could help," Brad said. "What's really blown us away, though, is he hasn't stopped finding ways to help. The support they've shown for our mission over the years has made a huge difference."

This type of ongoing support, while not uncommon, has not been typical in a small city like Alpena. But after seven years of developing long-term partnerships for community giving have helped Warren find his mark for success.

"When it comes to giving, Warren is not just about the here and now. He's more focused on 'what's next,'" said Matt Poli, Director of Alpena Public Schools. "When he's in the store, he's stocking shelves, does whatever needs to be done and shows he's invested in Northeast Michigan. In our minds, he's as much a part of the community as someone born here. you could not have found a better fit to make such a dynamic first impression."

Additional assets available online: [Photos](#) ⁽¹⁾

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