

## Grand Rapids Organization Provides Community Father's Day Cookout Thanks to Meijer Team Gives



Today, 18.4 million children live without a biological, step, or adoptive father at home. Despite this challenging statistic, one local organization is working to reduce this staggering number one father at a time.

Alpha Men's Center (AMC), located in Grand Rapids, assists dads so they have the tools to provide a stronger livelihood for their children, regardless of any trauma, challenges, and setbacks these men have faced. Since its grand opening in June 2021, AMC has served more than 350 men with medical, support, and educational services. This includes 1:1 mentoring, support groups, soft skills programs and parenting classes.

Earlier this year, AMC received a \$10,000 donation from our recent Meijer Team Gives program to support its numerous programs and events tied to its mission to ensure the father community is met with expert help and genuine compassion. Meijer Team Gives started in 2021 and annually empowers Meijer store and distribution facility team members to select and donate to nonprofits meaningful to them and their local communities. The program has supported hundreds of nonprofits with more than \$7 million in donations to date.

"When our store was given the opportunity to choose an organization to donate to, I wanted to make sure our team members were involved," said Chuck Wiersma, Store Director at the Knapp's Corner Meijer in Grand Rapids. "It's a great feeling knowing that we're supporting a cause in their own community."

Most recently, AMC held their 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Father's Day cookout, with all food and giveaways covered thanks to our donation. The event had a successful turnout with about 50 people total, including 17 men alongside their families and friends – as well as volunteers. In addition to the food, each dad received sidewalk chalk, bubbles, and assorted water toys to take home and enjoy with their kids.

"Meijer plays a major role in our community and their support is just one of the many ways that helps foster the health and prosperity of father-child involvement," said Matt Haviland, Director of AMC. "Many of our families come from low income households, but because of Meijer, we're able to host multiple events this year where families can get a good meal and have some fun, which isn't always in grasp for these dads. We are grateful for Meijer and their continued support in helping AMC be a safe and welcoming place for years to come."

AMC is part of the larger organization, Alpha Grand Rapids. Its neighboring center, Alpha Women's Center (AWC) has been operating since 1985 and continues to reach record numbers of individuals and families through comprehensive women's services and care.

"Alpha Men's Center does incredible work with dads in the community," Chuck said. "We also have a team member who goes to the Alpha Men's Center, so it was a no-brainer that our store wanted to support the organization."

Alpha Grand Rapids served 1,280 families in 2022 with sights set to aid more families this year.

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<https://meijercommunity.com/Grand-Rapids-Organization-Provides-Community-Fathers-Day-Cookout-Thanks-to-Meijer-Team-Gives>