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Local Nonprofit Opens New Office Space and Food Shelf

📅 March 23, 2026 👤 Ella Barry 📁 Charity 💬 Leave a comment

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The Residents of Color Collective (ROCC), founded in 2019 by Kae Jae Johnson, opened their own office space in West St. Paul with a food shelf that's open to the community.

Why: As ROCC grew over the last seven years, Johnson began to recognize a need for an office to expand their organization, including adding a food shelf.

Where & when: Located at 33 Wentworth Avenue E., Suite 390, the office is currently open for walk-ins Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., though Johnson says they're working on extending their hours.

Truly Local Food Shelf

Those who come in to utilize the food shelf can expect to fill out a brief intake form, and then browse the shelves and fill a bag with what they need. Johnson emphasized that no one will be turned away.

According to Johnson, there's a lack of accessible food resources in West St. Paul. "You've got [Neighbors, Inc.](#) [in South St. Paul], you have [The Open Door](#) in Eagan, but we don't have anything for ourselves," she said.

Johnson said these organizations "aren't necessarily walkable or accessible by bus" to people living in Dakota County.

In an effort to rectify this, ROCC partners with nearby organizations, such as Neighbors Inc. to make food accessible to residents of Dakota County, specifically those in West St. Paul.

Johnson said rather than "reinvent the wheel," ROCC aims to utilize the existing resources in the surrounding areas and bring them to West St. Paul. "Every organization has a lane, but we can create a highway if we line those lanes up," Johnson said.

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Their goal of accessibility is what led ROCC to choose the Wentworth Center as their office space. It's in West St. Paul, close to Robert Street, has plenty of parking and is right on a bus line.

"We want to be there when you're at the end of the week and you don't have a meal," Johnson said. "It's gas or a meal, and I've got to feed my kids." ROCC is open."



Additional Efforts

- **More than food:** ROCC is also working on making hygiene products available at their office. Johnson said they want to "make sure that we're taking care of the whole needs of the family, not just the food."
- **Other programs:** ROCC will also be using their new office space to expand their ROCC Climbers after school program for students at Heritage E-STEM Magnet School. Johnson said their upcoming goals for the program include teaching the students seed starting and hydroponics to grow food.
- **Needs:** While the food shelf is currently limited to shelf-stable items, they're hoping to soon have a refrigerator in the office to store fresh food items too.
- **Support:** The food shelf is donation based. Johnson said they recently received a donation of hygiene products from [Amore Coffee](#), and a donation from the [South Robert Street Business Association](#). Those interested in donating can do so on the organization's [website](#).

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