



**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank distributes an average of 110,000 pounds of food each day.

SPRING 2017

# THE FOODBANK FOCUS

A publication of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank

Serving Carroll, Holmes, Medina, Portage, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas and Wayne Counties



350 Opportunity Parkway  
Akron, OH 44307-2234  
main: 330.535.6900  
fax: 330.996.5337  
akroncantonfoodbank.org



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## Thank you for helping families like Elva's

In 1963, John F. Kennedy declared May to be Senior's Month to acknowledge the accomplishments of our past and present older citizens. While the month is dedicated to honoring our nation's seniors, it is also an opportunity to raise awareness about issues facing older adults.

One of the problems continually seen is food insecurity— or the lack of access to healthy, nourishing food. Recently, the Foodbank staff had the pleasure of meeting Elva at the Brunswick Food Pantry in Media County.



Standing outside the doors of the Brunswick Food Pantry in Medina County, Elva stood patiently with her walker, waiting in line for groceries with dozens of other families.

Elva spent her entire life working in the fashion industry, supporting her family and living comfortably. When she retired, and began living on a fixed income, she found herself choosing between paying medical bills or buying groceries.



When her surgery bills became unmanageable, Elva found the Brunswick Food Pantry, a partner hunger-relief program of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, and is proud to share her gratitude.

"This place helps me and so many others get through the month," said Elva. "Senior citizens especially need places like this and we are blessed they are here."

After going through the pantry line Elva has a cart full of fresh produce, meats, breads and treats, and she smiles as volunteers from the pantry help her out of the door.

**"PLEASE TELL THE PEOPLE WHO PROVIDED THIS FOOD HOW THANKFUL WE ARE," Elva said.**

Many seniors like Elva are making that tradeoff between paying for food and paying for other necessities like medication—but with your continued support, your Foodbank and our network of hunger-relief programs are there for families like hers!





## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Volunteer Celebration  
Event: Volunteer Prom  
**MAY 2, 2017**

Harvest for Hunger  
Campaign Celebration  
**MAY 12, 2017**

Stamp Out Hunger Annual  
Letter Carrier's Food Drive  
**MAY 13, 2017**

CORE Event  
for Young Professionals  
**MAY 17, 2017**

Taste of the Pro Football  
Hall of Fame  
**AUGUST 29, 2017**

Operation Orange  
**SEPTEMBER 8-9, 2017**

Selfless Elf 5K  
**DECEMBER 16, 2017**

Please visit our website for  
additional event details.

[akroncantonfoodbank.org/events](http://akroncantonfoodbank.org/events)

Are you hosting a community event  
benefitting the Foodbank? Submit  
details online, and we'll add it to  
the calendar on our website.



Hello, friends!

2016 was another record-setting year for your Foodbank. We distributed more than 28.8 million pounds of food to our network of hunger-relief partners. Of that, more than 8.4 million pounds was fresh produce. The scale of the Foodbank is the reason for the incredible efficiency we offer the community and our donors.

We have consistently maintained a 4-star ranking by Charity Navigator, and the return of dollars into program ratio we have here has always run over 90 percent. It was our scale that made our merger with the Canton-based Community Harvest prepared and perishable food resource program such a big win in 2016. And going forward we will use our resources to help better connect the work of the local food movement, both in Summit and Stark Counties, to efforts in the charitable sector.

Your Foodbank is a stable organization with a fanatical commitment to our mission, our integrity and our efficiency. Please do not think that the size of this warehouse is an indication that we have it all covered or that your contributions don't make a difference. Remember, the Foodbank's very size and scale is precisely what makes it THE BEST investment you can make...charitable or otherwise.

But here, at this Foodbank, we believe who and why is every bit as important as how and what. For what purpose is a journey of a thousand miles if every step be full of tears? And of what value is charity without love, or compassion, or empathy, or the happiness that giving brings? To lose sight of those is to forgo the joy of the journey entirely. And what good is it to arrive having never travelled with hope?

The ripples of cause and effect and subtleties in our human interactions are an endless canvas of exploration into the practice of love for ourselves and others. For it is in our connections with each other that we see ourselves. In my goodness to you I see the goodness in me. In your support of the Foodbank, we see the endless goodness and potential for positive change in our community.



Peace-  
Dan Flowers  
President & CEO

The diverse faiths of the world share a common compassion to nourish the hungry and the vulnerable, especially children. That shared compassion finds expression during the Akron Area Interfaith Council's Hunger Walks.



**JOIN THE HUNGER WALKS ON MAY 7TH**



On May 7, 2017, join hundreds of community members with walking locations in Akron, Medina and Stark County. We look forward to seeing you during this kid-friendly and pet-friendly event!



**VISIT HUNGERWALKS.ORG TO REGISTER**

Harvest for Hunger is the Foodbank's largest fundraising initiative and is one of the largest food & funds drives in the nation. The campaign is a collaborative effort of four food banks serving 21 counties in Northeast Ohio.

### **THERE IS STILL TIME TO GET INVOLVED WITH THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN!**

**Fundraise online** with the Foodbank's new online fundraising portal which allows you to customize your fundraising and generate gifts virtually! Check it out at [give.akroncantonfoodbank.org/hfh](http://give.akroncantonfoodbank.org/hfh).

**Host a food & funds drive:** Nearly 200 businesses, schools, community organizations and families are holding food & funds drives throughout the months of March and April. To host a food & funds drive, simply register and download a coordinator's kit from the Foodbank's website, [akroncantonfoodbank.org/hfh](http://akroncantonfoodbank.org/hfh).



The biggest impact in the fight to end hunger is made through financial donations. Every \$1 donation provides four meals for those in need.

**Check Out Hunger:** Local retailers including local Buehler's Fresh Foods, Dave's Supermarkets, Fishers Foods, Giant Eagle, Ace Hardware and Heinen's Fine Foods, participate in Check Out Hunger, which allows shoppers to scan coupons and make donations of \$1, \$5 or \$10 at the checkout register.

**ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF ALL HARVEST FOR HUNGER DONATIONS WILL GO DIRECTLY TOWARD FEEDING OUR HUNGRY NEIGHBORS IN NEED.**

## **THANK YOU TO OUR INCREDIBLE VOLUNTEERS**

Although the Foodbank celebrates the work of their volunteers all year long, we are proud to celebrate National Volunteer Month this April, a month dedicated to showing gratitude for those who give their time and talents. Just last year in 2016, the Foodbank hosted nearly 10,000 volunteers who donated more than 58,000 hours of service.

On a daily basis, our committed volunteers are doing a variety of tasks like inspecting, sorting and repacking every non-perishable food and essential item that is donated to the Foodbank or spend their time like Dennis, working in the Foodbank's office.

Every Wednesday morning, you'll find Dennis Moroney folding or stuffing envelopes as a key Development team volunteer at the Foodbank.

Dennis, who is semi-retired and self-employed, has been volunteering at the Foodbank since 2012. He shared that coming in every week grounds him and reminds him where he is in his week.

Dennis shared that he loves coming to volunteer at the Foodbank because he has made many friends with both staff and other volunteers. "I can't emphasize enough how much I love the environment and the positive vibe that is infectious throughout the whole organization."

"To the other recently retired seniors, if you're not sure what to do, come and volunteer at your Foodbank," Dennis stated. "I know that they will be welcomed warmly; you'll have fun working for a great cause."

**TO OUR VOLUNTEERS,  
THANK YOU FOR BEING SUCH  
INTEGRAL MEMBERS OF  
OUR FOODBANK FAMILY!**

## **HONOR ROLL**

The Honor Roll recognizes our top supporters of the season.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

415 Group  
Akron Community Foundation  
Andrew Carson Memorial Foundation  
Arcelormittal  
The Augustin Family Charitable Fund  
The Beaver Excavating Company  
Bemis Company Foundation  
Brechtbuhler Truck Sales, LLC  
H. Peter Burg Fund of the Akron Community Foundation  
Cardinal Health Foundation, Inc.  
CareSource  
Charles Millard Hall Foundation  
Cisco Systems Foundation  
Cisco Systems, Inc.  
Copley High School  
The George H. Deuble Foundation  
DRB Systems, Inc.  
Eaton Corporation  
Estate of Mathew Contessa  
FirstEnergy Foundation  
FirstMerit Foundation  
GAR Foundation  
The Gessner Family Foundation, Inc.  
GOJO Industries, Inc.  
The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company  
Greystone Group  
Harwood Rubber Products, Inc.  
Haslinger Family Foundation  
The Hoover Foundation  
W. Henry Hoover Fund  
The Huntington National Bank  
Insurance Services Office, Inc.  
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Miller Transfer  
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National Electrical Contractors Association  
Northeast Ohio Eye Surgeons  
The M.G. O'Neil Foundation  
The Pampered Chef  
The Pastore Foundation  
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The J.M. Smucker Company  
St. Michael Parish  
TANA Foundation  
The Walt Disney Company  
T.J.Maxx, HomeGoods, Marshalls  
Wagler Foundation  
Walgreen's  
Wayside Furniture, Inc.  
WBC Group, LLC  
Westfield Insurance



## WELCOME NEW CORE MEMBERS

CORE is made up of motivated, energetic young professionals interested in growing their professional network while helping feed those struggling with hunger in our area. We hope that you will join us in 2017 for various volunteer projects and opportunities to learn more about the Foodbank. For a full list of CORE events and details, please visit [akroncantonfoodbank.org/core](http://akroncantonfoodbank.org/core).

With any questions, please contact Megan Birman at 330.777.2318.

### 2017 CORE MEMBERS

- Abdullah Alkhaluiwi
- Amanda Bevington
- Megan Birman
- Deron Boyd
- Samantha Donaldson
- Ryan Dyke
- Rachael Erickson
- Katie Furnish
- Nolan Gibson
- Colleen Iacianci
- Holly Johnston
- Nicole Kokish
- Chelsy Kwiatkowski
- Weston Lott
- Sara Myers
- Rachel Osherow
- Natalie Peacock
- Jenny Provo
- Adam Reese
- Ryan Syroid
- James Wright
- Katy Yoak

# Thank you, brave Polar Bears!

On Saturday, February 18, 2017, more than 800 people traded their winter coats for bathing suits and flip-flops at the 14th Annual Portage Lakes Polar Bear Jump, all to benefit your Foodbank. A huge thank you to the volunteers at the Portage Lakes Polar Bear Club for your hard-work and dedication in making this event a success. The brave jumpers raised more than \$160,000!



PHOTO: RYAN HADEI, WKYC-TV



## State programs are critical

Ohio's Foodbanks have received support in the state budget for nearly 20 years. This support comes in the form of shelf stable commodities and fresh produce made available to network partners. Foodbanks from across the state, led by the Ohio Association of Foodbanks, will advocate for funding that will align Ohio's funded hunger-relief efforts within one request. A \$30 million per year allocation, sourced from existing federal and state dollars, will fund the following programs:

- The Ohio Food Program, providing shelf stable foods
- The Ohio Agricultural Clearance Program, providing surplus fresh produce, meats and eggs and the Ohio Food Program, providing shelf-stable foods (*OFP and OACP account for 21% of the total food made available at our Foodbank*)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) outreach to Ohio's most vulnerable populations
- Innovative programs for Ohio's hungry children, such as summer weekend meal programs and summer rural delivery meal programs
- Summer Farmer's Market Programs targeting families with children



- The Ohio Benefit Bank, a proven, effective collaboration with Ohio's nonprofit and social service sector to lift people out of poverty
- Capacity building for Foodbank and non-profit charities fighting local hunger

Hunger is a complex problem in Ohio, and it requires a comprehensive solution—including government funding, private and corporate donations, community and faith-based partnerships and access to federal nutrition programs and other programs for low-income individuals and families. This comprehensive approach is critical to this solution.

Visit [akroncantonfoodbank.org/advocate](http://akroncantonfoodbank.org/advocate) to join the Foodbank's Advocacy Network and you'll receive Action Alerts in your email notifying you of ways that you can join in the fight against hunger.

