

FOODBANKFOCUS

A PUBLICATION OF THE AKRON-CANTON REGIONAL FOODBANK
FALL 2023



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akroncantonfoodbank.org

MAIN CAMPUS

350 Opportunity Pkwy
Akron, OH 44307

STARK COUNTY CAMPUS

1365 Cherry Ave. NE
Canton, OH 44714

SERVING 8 COUNTIES

Carroll, Holmes,
Medina, Portage, Stark,
Summit, Tuscarawas &
Wayne Counties



Every meal has a story. Meet Vincent.

We meet Vincent with his two sons at his local food pantry. He loves his kids more than anything. Vincent Jr. rambunctiously waits for their shopping cart to be filled with food. He runs into his older brother Tylen and laughs.

Vincent asks the food pantry volunteer if they have any diapers his family can have, but Vincent Jr. interjects, "I want cookies!" There is never a dull moment in their household.

But having a large family with five young children isn't easy — bills accumulate quickly. Vincent was injured several years ago and broke multiple fingers but still tries his best to support his family. Sometimes he works 12-hour-days as a handyman. His wife is working hard to earn her GED so she can apply for higher-paying jobs to better support their family.

"I do everything for the kids," says Vincent. "We don't come here to be greedy or selfish; we do what we can to survive for the kids."

Vincent's family receives food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), but because of the benefits reduction earlier this year, their budget does not stretch as far as it once did. When they need a bit of help, the food pantry provides them with groceries, cleaning products and other essential items that SNAP doesn't cover. The pantry helps alleviate stress for Vincent, knowing the money he makes can go toward their rent and utilities.

Vincent is so grateful for the food program and for the kind people that support local hunger relief. "It's amazing that people care and want to help."

“

We want people to have the food they need. My heart, as is Theresa's heart, is to help people. We're thankful for the Foodbank and for people in our community who donate to the organization.”

Joe Szeker

*People to People,
Director of Operations*



Your generosity helps People to People extend hope, nourishment and support

In Wayne County, nearly 13,000 individuals, including 3,500 children may be food insecure. Families struggling to put food on the table often face additional hardships when attempting to support their loved ones. Purchasing school supplies, clothing or other essential items can be difficult when living in poverty. People to People in Wooster, a hunger-relief partner of the Foodbank, recognizes the many challenges a family in need may face and hopes to alleviate some of these burdens.

Each month, the organization's food pantry serves approximately 250 households, including 50 seniors and more than 300 children.

“We want people to have the food they need,” said Joe Szeker, People to People's director of operations. He and pantry coordinator Theresa Markley have been managing the program for 6+ years. “My heart, as is Theresa's heart, is to help people. We're thankful for the Foodbank and for people in our community who donate to the organization.”

People to People understands the importance of fresh, nutritious foods. In addition to receiving nourishing food from the Foodbank, their relationships with local dairy farmers help secure donations of farm-fresh milk. Individuals in their community often donate vegetables and fruits directly from their gardens, and the county fair donates fresh meat.



Donna enjoys volunteering in the food pantry.

When families in need visit People to People, they often leave with more than a cart of food. The organization hosts a free clothing room that allows people to obtain seasonally-

appropriate clothing four times per year. The clothing room offers clean attire for homeless individuals and helps families save money in their budget while trying to keep growing children in clothes that fit.

Supporting children is a priority for People to People. Before the school year starts, students can receive free school supplies. And around the holidays, the organization's Christmas Toy Project ensures every child in their community receives a special gift to open in December.

The hunger-relief partner also has a program that temporarily helps households pay for rent, prescription medications or utilities until they can get back on their feet. No matter a family's circumstance, People to People is there to help.

We're so grateful for People to People and for their dedication to our neighbors in need. Because of your support, we can continue to fight hunger together.

Honor Roll

THANK YOU TO OUR TOP SUPPORTERS OF THE SEASON

Akron Area Interfaith Council
Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank Staff
Tony & Becky Alexander
Jon & Kitty Antalvari
Atlantic Food Distributors
Bober, Markey, Fedorovich & Company
BoxLunch
Bridgestone Americas
Buehler's Fresh Foods
Cargill, Inc.
Cenweld Corporation
Citizens Bank
Community Christian Church
The Mary S. and David C.
Corbin Foundation
CSE Federal Credit Union
Dave, Inc.
DSBG Charity Golf Outing, Inc.
Richard Edwards & Marcia Adair
Energy Harbor
Fifth Third Bank
FirstEnergy
Frost Financial Services
Kevin & Peggy Gaffney
The Gessner Family Foundation
Giant Eagle
The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
Diane L. Graham
Greg & Tricia Griffith
Donald Hafner
The Hillier Family Foundation
John Hinds
Integrity Fiber
James & Grace Kozak
Rick & Lisa Laubacher
The Lehner Family Foundation
Nick & Kathy Lekas
Dale A. & Lucinda J.P. Leppo
Gary & Susan Lichten
Rita Kelly Madick
Matt & Baily Meeker
Nationwide Foundation
Gertrude F. Orr Trust Advised Fund
of Akron Community Foundation
Hyun & Catherine Park
Louise Pursley
Rand Charitable Trust
Douglas Saltz
Subaru of America, Inc. & Serra Subaru
Sheetz For The Kidz
Sudheer & Charulata Shirali
Kenneth Siloac
The J.M. Smucker Co.
Stark Hunger Walk
Timken Company Charitable
and Educational Fund
The TJX Companies Inc.
David & Cheryl Venarge
Christine & Michael Walker
Walmart & Walmart Foundation
Westfield

Volunteer drivers and route partners needed for food rescue program

Workout while making a difference for our neighbors in need! The Foodbank is recruiting volunteers for our food rescue program, Community Harvest. Becoming a volunteer driver or route partner may seem like a sedentary activity, but this volunteer gig is extremely active!



Volunteers work in pairs to pick up food donations on weekday mornings from local restaurants and grocery stores and deliver them to several hunger-relief partners. Driving the Foodbank's refrigerated box truck, no CDL required, this volunteer opportunity is 4-6 hours of engaging activity. Volunteers pick up and distribute an average of 500-1,200 pounds of food in containers weighing 10-40 pounds each.

We are seeking volunteers willing to make a 6-month commitment, volunteering 2-4 times per month.

This volunteer opportunity begins and ends at our Stark County Campus in Canton. If you are interested, please contact Tasha Ledrich at 330.777.1065 or tledrich@acrfb.org.



“

This CGA is a wonderful opportunity and a win-win for both the Foodbank and me. To be able to supplement my income through a program like this is great. Plus, I'm able to help the community and feel good about it."

Beverly
Foodbank Donor

Donor creates a "Win-Win" gift

You'd never know Beverly is 80 years old. Just five years ago, she drove across the country to help her brother move to Colorado. She's chatty, witty and spry. Already retired, it's important for her to manage her money carefully. Just because she has a budget doesn't mean she can't also support organizations doing important work in her community.

Beverly has been a Foodbank supporter for a few years — becoming a financial donor during the pandemic.

After Beverly's initial donation to the Foodbank, she received more information about the organization's impact. She toured the new Stark County Campus and saw her donations hard at work. Soon, she decided to take her involvement with the Foodbank one step further. Beverly established a charitable gift annuity (CGA) for the Foodbank.

A CGA will provide Beverly partially tax-free and fixed payments during her lifetime.

CGAs terminate when the donor(s) pass(es) away, and then the

Foodbank receives the residual funds from the donor's CGA.

"This CGA is a wonderful opportunity and a win-win for both the Foodbank and me. To be able to supplement my income through a program like this is great. Plus, I'm able to help the community and feel good about it."

Growing up in a family of six during the Great Depression was difficult for her parents. "My dad always had a job. We always had what we needed, but nothing extra." This experience, along with seeing so much heartache in her community over her lifetime, has inspired Beverly to support the Foodbank's work.

"There are so many people out there hurting. If I can help in some small way, then I'm happy to. I care about people."

“

To me, there's so much need out there. I wish more people knew about hunger in our community. I've been so blessed throughout my life — I just know God is directing me to do this."



For more information on how a CGA could potentially be a "win-win" opportunity to help you grow your income, save on your taxes and help the Foodbank, please contact Debra Hagarty at 330.535.6900.

Feeding our neighbors is a community-wide effort

The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank can feed its neighbors thanks to the support from its many community partners. Financial resources allow the Foodbank to purchase food when necessary and keep refrigerators running; food donations from a variety of sources help fill our shelves; nonprofit partners distribute food to families facing hunger; community leaders volunteer their time, talents and so much more. Caring for our community truly takes a village!

Every partner in the fight against hunger is vital to this work, and nonprofit partners who manage food programs are the boots on the ground when it comes to feeding our neighbors. Nearly 600 hunger-relief programs serve individuals and families in need across our eight-county service area. These pantries, hot meal sites, shelters, children and senior citizen programs serve as the difference between hunger and hope for thousands of people in our region.

The Foodbank is focused on building a strong, sustainable and collaborative network to help optimize the region's collective work in hunger relief. We couldn't feed our neighbors without the passion and perseverance of our hunger-relief partners.

To help cultivate growth and learnings for the network, we hosted nearly 20 roundtable



conversations for partners in 2022, offered 37 orientations and food safety trainings, and invested \$1.7 million in capacity-building resources through food credits, financial support, computers, shelving and more.

This year, we hosted our biennial network gathering for partners. Network partners came together to discuss best practices and share innovative ideas in our work. Topics covered included succession planning, asset building, fundraising strategies, cultural humility and grant writing.

Feeding our neighbors is a community-wide effort and you can help! Volunteer, make a financial contribution, become a hunger-relief advocate and so much more! Learn how you can get involved with your Foodbank at akroncantonfoodbank.org.

IN 2022

NEARLY
20
ROUNDTABLES


37
Orientations & Trainings

\$1.7M
FOR PARTNER RESOURCES



Celebrating 20 years in service!

Foodbank president and CEO Dan Flowers marked 20 years in service to the Foodbank this year. Under his leadership, our Foodbank has experienced monumental growth, innovation and service to our community. Thanks, Dan!

Mark Your Calendar

MARCH 1, 2024

Harvest for Hunger Campaign
Kick-off Lunch

Board of Directors

Amanda Montgomery **CHAIR**

Greg Long **VICE CHAIR & TREASURER**

Rob Bowers **SECRETARY**

Lisa Backlin

Amy Borcharding

Alison Breaux

Dan Brophy

Jerod Cherry

Rich Clark

Kristin Hannon

Nancy Hutchinson

Alicia LaMancusa

Teri Lash-Ritter

Terry Link

Annie McCauley

Hyun Park

Laura Query

Chris Richardson

Jonathan Thornton

Frank Wiley

Dan Flowers **PRESIDENT & CEO**



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Support local families this holiday season!



Sharing a nourishing meal with your loved ones is extra special during the holidays. Gathering around a table of warm food helps warm the heart. But unfortunately, not everyone has the food they need to thrive this holiday season.

You can help provide kindness, warmth and nourishing meals for local families by supporting the Foodbank this holiday season. **Together, let's help warm the hearts of our neighbors in need, one nourishing meal at a time.**



\$1 = 4 MEALS

Please consider making a personal donation or a corporate gift.



HOST A VIRTUAL FOOD DRIVE

Create a personalized online fundraiser and share with your social networks.



IRA ROLLOVER

Contact Debra Hagarty at 330.535.6900 to learn about beneficiary designated gifts and other deferred legacy giving options.



EMPLOYEE GIVING

A few dollars from each paycheck can make a lasting impact.



HOST A FOOD & FUNDS DRIVE

Collect food and financial contributions for your Foodbank.



DOUBLE DOLLAR DAY | November 27, 2023

On Cyber Monday, your gift will be matched! On this day, \$1 = 8 meals.

