

fall 2010

seeds *of hope*



KANSAS
food bank
HELPING THE HUNGRY • SINCE 1984
A Member of FEEDING AMERICA

**You're Keeping Kids Full
and Focused this Fall!**



Brian Walker
PRESIDENT AND CEO

BACK TO SCHOOL

Dear Friend,

The beginning of a new school year is usually an exciting time for children. The anticipation of seeing friends, getting new teachers and buying school supplies gives many kids – and their parents – something to look forward to.

But when a child isn't getting enough to eat, it's hard for him to be excited about anything – especially heading back to the classroom. Without regular access to nutritious food, children are at an increased risk for developmental delays, behavior problems and academic hurdles.

Sadly, this isn't a hypothetical scenario. There are thousands of kids right here in Kansas who are at risk of going hungry this fall. More than 70 percent of the students in Wichita public schools alone participate in their schools' free or reduced-price meal program because their parents can't afford to buy enough food for breakfast and lunch.

Fortunately, the [Kansas Food Bank](http://www.kansasfoodbank.org) is working hard to feed children in need – with the help of friends like you. Thanks to your support, we can provide chronically hungry kids with backpacks full of nutritious food to last through the weekend through the Food 4 Kids program. Food 4 Kids currently serves 5,000 children in 301 elementary schools across the state. You can read more about the ways your gifts are making a difference in kids' lives through this unique program on page 8.

And now, barreling full speed into September, we're gearing up for national Hunger Action Month. Please make plans to be a part of this important hunger-awareness initiative – check out www.kansasfoodbank.org for details and how to get involved.

As you read the stories in this fall issue of *Seeds of Hope* and see the lives you've transformed, I hope you'll be as encouraged as I am by the real and significant impact you are making in our community. Thank you for all you do for our neighbors in need!

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YOU HELP FAMILIES THROUGH LIFE'S TRIALS

There's never a good time to lose a job. But when Martha lost hers five months ago, the timing couldn't have been worse.

Martha and her husband had barely begun to figure out how to provide for their 8-year-old daughter on one income instead of two when her parents and grandmother came to them needing a place to stay. All of the sudden, their household had doubled in size – but their income had been cut in half.

“Thanks to people like you, we have food on our table.”

Martha desperately wants to work again and has been looking for a new job every day. Although she's qualified and has years of good experience, she hasn't been able to find anything. Her parents have also been looking for work so they can help supplement the family's income, but they've been coming up dry in their search, too.

“There's just nothing out there,” says Martha.

Martha loves her family more than anything. But the expense of having three extra people in her home is stretching her resources to the breaking point. She and her husband can barely afford to pay utility bills right now, much less buy groceries for six people. Their daughter especially needs regular access to nutritious food so she can concentrate in her classroom this fall.

“It's very stressful,” says Martha.

Fortunately, friends like you are helping families in need like Martha's every day. Thanks to your gifts to the [Kansas Food Bank](#), she can come to The Lord's Pantry in Wichita for a box full of nutritious groceries to help her stretch her budget as far as she can. This Food



Bank hunger-relief agency provides individuals and families in need with important staples like rice, beans, fresh vegetables, frozen meat and other needed items.

Martha is beyond grateful for the food she receives. Because of your compassion, she has the resources she needs to feed her family as she and her husband work to get back on solid ground.

“Thank you!” she says. “Thanks to people like you, we have food on our table.”

THANK YOU FOR FEEDING KANSANS THIS FALL!



Your gifts mean nutritious groceries for families in need.



Hungry children are all smiles because of the food your gifts provide!



Seniors in need are so grateful for your compassion.



Thank you for caring for our hungry neighbors.



You're feeding the future of our community!

THANK YOU!

Aida's Upscale Gifts and Coffeehouse

Aida's, located in Old Town Wichita, was among retailers across the United States that joined Brighton in offering



Aida's

limited-edition jewelry designed

to help feed struggling Americans. Brighton asked its retailers to

nominate American heroes who are feeding people in their communities. The Kansas Food Bank was selected from among hundreds of entries that Brighton received because of the passion that Aida's and its customers showed for the work the Kansas Food Bank does in the community. Aida's presented the [Kansas Food Bank](#) with a \$5,000 check to help feed those in need. Thank you to both Brighton and Aida's for their generosity!

National Association of Letter Carriers

This year's National Association of Letter Carriers Food Drive reached a new record with 77 million pounds of food collected, boosting the 18-year overall total to more

than 1 billion pounds of food raised in the United States! Our own Wichita carriers brought in more than 240,000 pounds of

food to the [Kansas Food Bank](#). Thank you to our letter carriers



and to everyone who donated food to help make this food drive such a success!

WAYS TO FIGHT HUNGER!

Sponsor a Child, Sponsor a School

School is back in session, and that means thousands of Kansas children are depending on the Food Bank's Food 4 Kids backpacks as their source of weekend food. It only costs \$4 to provide a backpack

of kid-friendly, nutritious food for one child. Or, you can sponsor a child to receive a backpack for an entire school year for only \$120. Backpacks contain peanut butter, crackers, juice boxes, cereal, shelf-stable milk, raisins, fruit cups, granola bars and other healthy snacks. Visit [nomorehungrykids.org](#) to find out how you can sponsor one of the 5,000 precious children



REMOVE THE MOST ESSENTIAL SCHOOL SUPPLY IS FOOD.

who need the help this special program provides. Or, think big and consider sponsoring one of the 301 schools that we serve! Thank you for making a difference in Kansas kids' lives.

Harvest of Hope

Harvest of Hope is just around the corner! Be a part of this initiative for local businesses and community organizations to come together to fight hunger. Visit our website at [www.kansasfoodbank.org](#) for more information.

GIVING BACK THROUGH RETIREMENT



Doug Patry

"It's hard to see – through no fault of their own – kids [going] hungry," says Doug Patry. "You just want to make sure they have a meal every day."

As one of the [Kansas Food Bank's](#) most faithful volunteers, Doug helps ensure that children in

If you'd like to volunteer at the Kansas Food Bank, contact Larry Gunkel at lgunkel@kansasfoodbank.org.

our community don't have to go hungry. Two days a week, Doug comes to the Food Bank to prepare and pack backpacks for the Food Bank's Food 4 Kids program. He also helps distribute the backpacks to local elementary schools.

Doug says that he first began volunteering to stay active and engaged in the

community after retiring from a lifelong career as a letter carrier and postmaster. But when he came to understand just how great the need for food is here in Kansas, especially for children, he became even more passionate about serving each week.

"It's an eye-opener to realize how many kids go to bed hungry every night – and it's rewarding

knowing [I'm] preventing that," he says.

Doug says working at the Food Bank has also made him more aware of and grateful for what he has. He feels that the more thankful and appreciative he is, the more motivated he is to help others.

"I just feel that I've been blessed," he says. "If I can help someone in need get through life, then that's what I want to do."

Doug encourages others to give back in any way they can.

"Just try it. After you start, you're going to want to come back," he says. "A lot of us have been blessed with a good life, and we have everything we need. But we can help others who don't have what they need."

The Food Bank simply couldn't exist without the support of dedicated volunteers and community leaders like Doug. We are so very grateful for his tireless passion to help make sure no child in our community has to go hungry.

YOU PROVIDE HOPE FOR THE HUNGRY

Nine years ago, Mary and Michael left their home in California and moved to Junction City, Kansas to help their son take care of his three little girls while his wife was serving in Iraq with the United States Army. It was a big move, but Mary and Michael didn't think twice – they knew they would do anything for their only child.

But everything changed in 2004 when their son was killed by a drunk driver. Mary and Michael were more devastated than words could express. Having to watch their granddaughters process their father's death made the loss even more painful.

**“It's a
godsend”**

When the girls moved with their mom to Manhattan, Kansas after the accident, Mary and Michael decided to stay in Junction City so they could be close by. But it wasn't long before the couple was dealt another tragic blow: Mary was diagnosed with cancer.

After many treatments, Mary is now in remission. However, she remains unable to work, so she receives a small disability assistance check each month. Michael isn't able to work, either. He spent years serving his country in the Army, even going to Iraq numerous times, and was medically discharged in 2001. He, too, receives a disability check each month.

But even with their combined fixed incomes, this assistance is barely enough to cover the cost of rent and utility bills, much less medications or food. Mary has many expensive prescriptions she must take as part of her treatment – and she says there have been many times when she's been forced to skip her pills so she could eat instead.

To stay healthy, Mary needs both her medicine and food – but she and Michael just can't afford it right now. With all that they've been through, the



last thing they want to worry about is when their next full meal will be.

Fortunately, they don't have to worry anymore. Thanks to your gifts to the [Kansas Food Bank](#), they can take home nutritious groceries from the Geary County Food Pantry in Junction City. Mary and Michael are beyond grateful for the food they receive from this Food Bank hunger-relief agency – and they know it's your generosity that helps make it all possible.

“Thank you! There aren't enough words to show appreciation for how much you provide for people who need it,” says Mary. “It's a godsend.”

FULL BACKPACKS MEAN FULL STOMACHS



Most students at Colvin Elementary School in Wichita look forward to Friday each week because it means a break from classes. But there are dozens of students who look forward to Friday mostly because that's when they get their special backpacks of food for the weekend.

With more than 900 students, Colvin is the largest elementary school in Wichita – and one of the most underprivileged. More than 95 percent of students participate in the free or reduced-price meal program and come from low-income families.

Fortunately, the [Kansas Food Bank's](#) Food 4 Kids program is making a big difference in the lives of Colvin Elementary students. Thanks to your support of the Food Bank, this special program provides chronically hungry children with a backpack full of nutritious, kid-friendly food each Friday to last through the weekend.

Laurie Fischer, who distributes the Food 4 Kids backpacks at Colvin, sees first-hand what an impact nutritious food can have in a child's life. She says that many students complained

of having headaches before they started receiving Food 4 Kids backpacks. Now, not only are they feeling better, they're more able to focus in class and take pride in their schoolwork.

"Their teachers say it makes a huge impact – especially on Monday mornings," says Laurie. "Kids learn better when they're not hungry."

Laurie says she loves passing out the backpacks because the kids are so grateful for the food they receive.

She knows many of them wouldn't eat at all over the weekend if not for Food 4 Kids.

"They get really excited about it!" she says. "They'd be heartbroken without it."

“ Kids learn better when they're not hungry. ”

It's your gifts to the [Kansas Food Bank](#) that enable us to provide hungry children with backpacks of nutritious weekend food through Food 4 Kids. Because of your generosity, the students of Colvin Elementary have regular access to the nutrition they need so they can succeed in the classroom this fall. Thank you for all you do.



1919 E. Douglas
Wichita, KS 67211

316.265.4421

www.kansasfoodbank.org

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