

SEEDS OF HOPE

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CHILDREN
ARE READY TO
LEARN!

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DEAR FRIEND,

Another school year is here, and students across Kansas are busy studying hard and making new friends. This is a time that many children look forward to — especially those who rely on free and reduced-priced meals in the cafeteria.

With access to this important resource, boys and girls from struggling families don't have to worry about going without food during the day. Unfortunately, there are still thousands of children in our community who return home to empty cupboards in the evenings and on weekends.

But thanks to your support, programs like *Food 4 Kids*, as well as community food pantries across our service area, are available to connect children in need with healthy meals and snacks. With every gift you make to the [Kansas Food Bank](#), you're preparing students for success inside and outside the classroom.

In this back-to-school issue of *Seeds of Hope*, you'll read about children and families whose lives you're changing through your generosity. These stories are only possible with your continued support of the Kansas Food Bank.

Thank you for your partnership in the fight against hunger. I know if we keep working together, we can feed more children than ever this school year!



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YOUR GENEROSITY HELPS FEED STUDENTS IN NEED

Alberto is a special needs student at the Levy Education Center in Wichita. As he heads home for the weekend, he's happy to know that he won't go hungry — and it's all thanks to your generosity.

“We wouldn't know what to do without your kindness and compassion.”

With your support of the [Kansas Food Bank](#), school partners like the Levy Special Education Center are able to provide healthy food to kids in need through the *Food 4 Kids* Backpack Program. This help means so much to Alberto's family — who have been struggling financially for the past few years.

“The pack is very special for him,” says Cheryl, Alberto's mom.

While Alberto's in class, his mom cares for the rest of the family and his dad works as a roofer. This sometimes unpredictable income, plus Alberto's small Supplementary Security Income (SSI) is all that the family has to pay for rent, utilities and a minimal amount of groceries each month.

Alberto isn't alone. There are thousands of students just like him — kids from families who are barely scraping by. For many of them, your gifts mean the difference between a full plate and an empty stomach.

When Alberto's not at school, he enjoys playing games, working on puzzles and exploring the outdoors. When he graduates, his family plans

to help him find a job at a nearby grocery store. Until then, *Food 4 Kids* will be there to give him the fuel he needs to work hard and stay focused in school — and both he and his family are so thankful.

“We really appreciate your support,” says Cheryl. “We wouldn't know what to do without your kindness and compassion.”



Alberto

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!



Racing for Food

This August, runners and walkers of all ages joined together to help hungry people in our community! On August 8, the Feed Kids 5K and Kids Run — an outreach ministry of Aldersgate United Methodist Church — held its fifth annual event benefitting the Food 4 Kids program. Then, on August 11, the Kansas 811 Run donated all proceeds from the race, which included an 8.11K

run, 1.5-mile fun walk and an 811 foot kids race. A huge thank you to the race organizers, runners and walkers for your generosity!

September is Spontember

This September marks the return of Hunger



Action Month. As a way to help raise awareness about hunger, The [Kansas Food Bank](#), along with the entire network of Feeding America food banks, is introducing Spontember. Participation is a snap! Just take a “spoon selfie” with an orange spoon balanced on your nose and post the photo on your Facebook, Twitter or Instagram account with the hashtag #spontember. Encourage your friends

to do the same and you’ll help get the conversation started about the need for nutritious food in our community!

Volunteers In Service To America

The [Kansas Food Bank](#) has been honored to have the support of three AmeriCorps VISTA members to assist us this summer. Jacob



Funschelle, Chisholm Branscum and Miles Thompson all served ten weeks with us helping provide summer meals through the USDA Summer Food Service Program. The VISTA program offers members an opportunity to give back to their community through designated projects at nonprofit organizations.

Although we’re sad to say goodbye to

Jacob, Chisolm and Miles, we’re pleased to welcome Rhianna Kline, a senior in marketing at WSU, who will be joining us for the next year as a VISTA. During her term of service, she’ll be working to formalize and build the volunteer program at the Kansas Food Bank.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: BRENDA LICHMAN PREPARES FOR EMPTY BOWLS 2015

Brenda Lichman is a ceramic artist and committed hunger relief advocate. This year, she's excited to be serving as an organizer for The Empty Bowls Event to benefit the [Kansas Food Bank](#). Alongside fellow volunteers Dr. Deborah Ballard-Reisch and Carolyn Cople, Brenda is working hard to plan the annual fundraiser to be held at Wichita State University on Saturday, October 24.

Not long ago, Brenda moved to Kansas from her home state of Texas. It was there that she first began donating her creative talents to help fight hunger through the annual Empty Bowls event in Dallas. When she moved to Wichita, she felt it was important to continue supporting her local food bank through Empty Bowls.

With only a couple of months left until the 2015 Kansas Food Bank Empty Bowls event, Brenda is helping plan a variety of activities that combine her passion for artistic expression and helping people in need. She says that the fun began in August, when community members were invited to tour the Food Bank distribution center to learn more about hunger and the role Empty Bowls plays in addressing it.

“Come and get inspired.”



Brenda Lichman

In September and October, Brenda and her colleagues are planning “build-a-bowl” days for Wichita State University staff, students and the general public. Here, the WSU Ceramic Guild will demonstrate how to make the bowls that will later be featured at Empty Bowls. In addition to the “build-a-bowl days,” Brenda says the Empty Bowls planning committee will also be adding a third, family-friendly day with ceramics projects suitable for all ages.

For the main Empty Bowls event on October 24, Kansas Food Bank supporters will be able to view hundreds of hand-made bowls while sampling chili from several local restaurants, with all proceeds going to fight hunger in the community. As October draws near, Brenda hopes Empty Bowls 2015 will create wider support for the Food Bank and the people it serves each day.

“Come to the event and get inspired,” she says. “It doesn’t take much to make a big impact.”

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

YOUR GENEROSITY HELPS CHILDREN IN NEED

Jamie is a single mom with a preschool-age daughter, Lilly. Her family has endured a lot this year — including a house fire that forced them to spend most of the summer in a cramped hotel room.

Today, they're living in a rental home with Jamie's mother, Tammy, but there are still serious challenges that keep Jamie awake at night. She's currently between jobs and her savings is running low — the only money she has is barely keeping a roof over her daughter's head.

Without a steady paycheck, Jamie isn't able to provide young Lilly with the balanced meals she needs to thrive. This has been very frustrating for Jamie, who has had nowhere to turn to for help — until recently.

Thanks to friends like you, Jamie is now able to put food on the table while she continues searching for a job that will meet her family's monthly expenses.

Through your gifts, Jamie has found a lifeline at the First Metropolitan Community Church food pantry near her home. Each time she visits, she gets to take home healthy foods — like fresh fruits and veggies — that allow her to prepare filling

breakfasts, lunches and dinners for Lilly each day.

**“Thank you
for feeding my
little girl.”**

As she looks toward the future, Jamie is optimistic. In fact, she just had a job interview that she hopes

will lead to a career that will put her family back on the path to self-sufficiency. In the meantime, she sincerely appreciates the help your compassion makes possible. It's such a relief to her to know that no matter what happens, her daughter won't go hungry.

“Thank you for feeding my little girl,” she says, grateful for your generosity.



Tammy, Jamie and Lilly (front)

YOU'RE HELPING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THRIVE!



Amy, an assistant manager at a local retailer, is the hardworking mother of three children — Trisha, 3, Elijah, 6, and Riley, 8. The start of the new school year has been such a help to Amy, who spent all summer struggling to replace the breakfasts and lunches normally provided by the free meal program.

“I thank you for your big heart.”

She’s relieved that school is back in session and the cafeteria is once again providing daily meals for her kids, but this support only goes so far when it comes to supplementing her monthly budget. By the time she reaches the end of the month, there’s not much money left over to

buy healthy items — like fresh fruits and vegetables — for her kids.

“I would need to work multiple jobs to make ends meet,” she says. Something that’s just not possible with young children.

With her youngest daughter still at home, Amy can’t afford to pay any more for childcare. So to make her income stretch, she’s begun visiting Hillside Christian Church Pantry, a [Kansas Food Bank](#) partner agency in Wichita. She says that her kids get so excited when she’s able to bring groceries home from the pantry.

Thanks to your generosity, instead of cheap, processed foods, Amy has the ingredients to make nourishing meals for her children when they’re not in school in the evenings and on weekends. She especially appreciates the variety, which

includes vitamin-rich foods like carrots, grapes and oatmeal.

Amy knows that good nutrition is important to ensure her children’s success in the classroom. And now, with your help, Elijah and Riley have the energy they need to concentrate and continue learning.

“This is such a blessing,” says Amy. “I thank you for your big heart.”



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