

SEEDS OF HOPE

YOU'RE PREPARING
KIDS FOR SUCCESS
THIS SCHOOL YEAR!

KANSAS
**food
bank**
HELPING THE HUNGRY • SINCE 1984

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DEAR FRIEND,

Your partnership made such an impact in our community this summer. With school meal programs unavailable for nearly three months, many families would've had a hard time providing enough food for their children if it weren't for your support.

When family budgets are stretched too far, our neighbors face truly difficult choices. In this issue of *Seeds of Hope*, you'll meet two parents who've had to sacrifice their own well-being to ensure their children have enough to eat. Thanks to your help, that won't have to happen anymore.

September is Hunger Action Month — a great time to raise your voice, volunteer and financially support the fight against hunger in Kansas. Your partnership will help ensure boys and girls in our community — and their families — are able to reach their full potential this fall.

The [Kansas Food Bank](#) partners with 398 schools across our state to provide backpacks through the *Food 4 Kids* program. These bags are filled with healthy food kids can open and eat over the weekend, when they're at an increased risk of missing meals because school breakfasts and lunches are not available.

Having enough balanced meals every day is essential to children's learning — they simply can't focus with a growling stomach. The food you help provide prepares them for success.

On the back cover you'll meet Taylor and Madison, two students in Pittsburg who have an advantage as they start a new year of learning because they now have access to nutritious weekend food.

It's truly inspiring to carry out the mission that your gifts make possible. Please continue that support during Hunger Action Month!

Sincerely,



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YOUR PARTNERSHIP GIVES KIDS THE OPPORTUNITY TO THRIVE

On a recent visit to Whitewater Food Pantry, we met Lakin, 10, as he picked out food with his mom, Clarissa, and grandma, Mary. He told us how much he loves swimming and playing outside in the summer and was looking forward to the start of school — he loves math class.

Lakin and his little sister, Addie, 6, live with their mom, but their grandma helps care for them when their mom's at work. Clarissa is a home health aide but hopes to soon get certified as a radiology tech so she can earn more money. Providing for two growing kids on her own is often a challenge.

That's why she's so glad she found out about the pantry. While she and her mom shop for healthy groceries, Lakin and Addie can read books and play together. The women always pick out healthy fruits and vegetables for the kids to snack on — they want to provide them with quality nutrition to help them focus at school and develop properly.

“You’ve put in such hard work to help us.”

“Lakin's a big eater,” his grandma says as she smiles over at Lakin. “The boy's growing like a weed!”

Your gifts are helping ensure he and his sister have the fuel they need to achieve their dreams —

and their caregivers are so grateful. While her daughter went to gather the kids from the waiting area, Mary took a moment to reflect on what your generosity means for her family.

“We appreciate all the help that you can give,” Mary says. “You've put in such hard work to help us.”

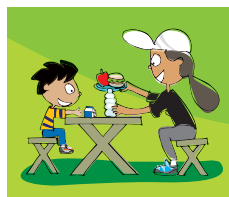
When you support the [Kansas Food Bank](#), you connect boys and girls across 85 Kansas counties with balanced meals, the most essential school supply. Thank you for feeding the future of our community!



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ARE THRIVING, THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT



ConAgra Brand Foundation Assists with the Summer Food Program



The [Kansas Food Bank](#) was one of 25 grant recipients from ConAgra Brand Foundation via our membership with Feeding America. Funding of \$20,000 was awarded to assist with the USDA Summer Food Service Program at rural sites sponsored by the Food Bank. The grant allowed us to cover the cost share

for four VISTA positions, which were vital to help us run the program at 29 sites. The grant also provided outreach to the communities where the USDA program was run as well as a bicycle for each site to give away. This is the third time we've been awarded the ConAgra Hunger-Free Summer Grant to assist with the summer meal program! We were first awarded in 2010, then last year and now this year.

Amerigroup on the Road

We're proud to announce that Amerigroup



has once again partnered with the Kansas Food Bank, providing \$20,000 so we can distribute food through mobile pantries in four counties. Cloud, Morris, Republic and Neosho were selected to receive two mobile pantry distributions this year. In addition to funding, Amerigroup staff joins our team at the mobile pantries to distribute food. We are grateful for their generous support of our work!

Empty Bowls — Save the Date



Saturday, Oct. 28, 11 A.M.–1 P.M.
It's time again for the fourth annual Empty Bowls event! This year some special activities you won't want to miss have been added.

Open Streets ICT

at Kansas Food Bank — this will be an opportunity to see how ceramic bowls are made. The WSU Ceramics Guild will be in

our parking lot doing bowl demonstrations. In addition we will have bowls for sale. Sunday, Sept 24th, 12 – 4 p.m.

Empty Bowls Invitational Exhibition

at Rueben Saunders Gallery — special bowls and ceramics will be available in a silent auction. Final Friday, Sept 29, 6 p.m.

Heartland Table Event

at Kansas Food Bank — an opportunity like no other! This one-of-a-kind event will feature ceramicists from across the United

States along with food and beverages. Saturday, Oct 14, 6 p.m.

Empty Bowls

Wichita State University Campus — View hundreds of bowls handmade by local potters, craftspeople, educators and community members — and sample almost as much chili and desserts! In exchange for a \$20 donation, you can choose a bowl to keep as a reminder of all the empty bowls in our community. Saturday, Oct 28, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LOCAL YOUTH CHOOSES KANSAS FOOD BANK FOR EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

One of the very best ways to direct neighbors to a mobile pantry distribution is with good, old-fashioned signage. But that's something we didn't yet have.

About a year ago, Jarrett Barton approached the Kansas Food Bank about completing his Eagle Scout project with us. He wanted to do something that would make a difference in his community.

When we met with Jarrett, we knew just what he could do to make a meaningful impact. We decided as a team that it would be a great help to have him produce signage for our mobile pantry distributions. We needed the signs to be sturdy enough to withstand the strong Kansas winds, especially in western Kansas, and they'd need to be easy to transport and store.

Jarrett did his research, presented a design — which we approved — then brought a mock-up sample for our team's review. In the end, his finished project was amazing! Jarrett even used recycled materials in producing the signs.

The consulting, design and production process required more than 300 hours of Jarrett's time — and the Kansas Food Bank now has 15 sturdy, attractive new signs to



let hungry neighbors know where they can pick up fresh produce and other nutritious groceries right where they live, work and play.

We're so very proud of Jarrett and want to extend our heartfelt thanks

to him for choosing the [Kansas Food Bank](#) for his Eagle Scout Project! Dedicated hunger fighters like him are making a real impact across the communities we serve.

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

YOU HELP NEIGHBORS GET BACK ON SOLID FOOTING

Ronica's family has fallen on tough times. She told us she had to stop working at a local home siding business due to severe arthritis and fibromyalgia — the pain just got to be too much. In fact, her pain and weakness recently caused her to fall, and she suffered a nerve injury.

Right now, the only income Ronica has to provide for her two growing teenage boys, Ronnie and Jerimiah, is a small amount of disability assistance. Raising her sons on her own was hard enough, but without her weekly paychecks, their financial situation is really tough.

"I pray every day that things will get better," Ronica says.

She's proactive about improving her family's situation — she recently began applying for office jobs that are less physically demanding, and she's hopeful she'll have an income again soon.

"Thank you very much!"

But until then, Ronica and her boys will continue to struggle. When she spoke, she admitted she'd gone to bed hungry earlier that week to ensure Jerimiah and Ronnie were able to have dinner.

No parent should ever have to go without to fill their children's plates.

And with Ronica's medical issues, she needs access to consistent, nutritious food to improve her health.

Fortunately, she knew where to turn for help. Ronica was so relieved to know about Bread of Life, a [Kansas Food Bank](#) hunger-relief partner that could help her provide groceries for her family. She couldn't be more grateful for your role in making it possible.

"Thank you very much!" she says. "If it wasn't for this food, we'd just have to go without."

You bring hope to so many people. Thank you for sharing what you have!



LOCAL FAMILIES ARE GIVING THANKS FOR YOU



Stacey and her daughters, Taylor and Madison, at Meadowlark Elementary in Pittsburg

family's table. She says sometimes she must sacrifice her own good nutrition to ensure her children are fed.

"I always make sure that the kids eat first before taking care of myself," Stacey says.

Madison and Taylor attend Meadowlark Elementary in Pittsburg, where they participate in the *Food 4 Kids* program at their school. Each Friday, the girls take home backpacks filled with healthy, kid-friendly snacks to last through the weekend.

The program has helped supplement Stacey's food budget, and she says Taylor and Madison have loved every item in their bags. The food helps them stay focused and active. Taylor's creative — she loves drawing and playing viola. Madison's an athlete and is into soccer and basketball. Your gifts are keeping them happy and healthy with access to quality food when they need it most.

"Thank you so much for thinking about us in this time of need," Stacey says.

Your generosity clearly makes a difference in the lives of those we serve together. On behalf of our neighbors facing hunger, thank you sincerely for your support.

Providing all the things kids need to grow and prosper every day can be difficult on a single income. Stacey knows from experience. She's held multiple jobs in retail, as a certified nurse assistant and working heavy construction — and all the labor has taken a toll on her health.

Stacey has both osteo- and rheumatoid arthritis, as well as lupus and fibromyalgia. It's hard for her to spend time on her feet, lift things and move around.

"Thank you so much for thinking about us in this time of need."

Her sweet young daughters — Madison, 11, and Taylor, 12 — have assumed the household responsibilities and help her out a lot. She appreciates them dearly and does her best to meet all their needs.

But unfortunately, Stacey often can't stretch her limited disability income to afford enough food to fill the

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