

SEEDS OF HOPE

Winter 2021

kansasfoodbank.org



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Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

YOU PROVIDE HOPE DURING THESE DIFFICULT DAYS

Dear Friend,

Almost one year ago COVID-19 came into our lives, creating unprecedented challenges for seniors and many others who lost jobs and the income they need to care for themselves and loved ones.

Your gifts continue to provide food, help and hope to children and families, senior citizens and countless others who find themselves struggling to put food on the table. You will find a few of their stories in this issue of *Seeds of Hope*.

Our neighbors are grateful for your compassion and generosity and so am I. However, our work is not done. There are still long lines of people that need our help.

While we were all glad to leave 2020 behind, the sad truth is, the ongoing need for a most basic life necessity — food — is huge *and growing*.

I sincerely thank you for the trust you place in the Kansas Food Bank and ask for your partnership in the days ahead to continue providing the nutritious food our neighbors need.

Thank you. You are making a huge impact for so many.

Gratefully,


Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

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A GRATEFUL SENIOR SAYS, “THANK YOU, THANK YOU!”

Karen is a loving grandmother who is raising seven of her grandchildren on her own. She does whatever it takes to care for the children, but sometimes it is simply impossible to feed everyone on her disability income. Even with the help of SNAP (food stamp) benefits, Karen cannot always afford the food her grandchildren need to stay healthy.

She said it helps when some of the kids receive meals from the school. In addition, the children are receiving the *Food 4 Kids* packet every Friday. Our *Food 4 Kids* program ensures they have access to nutritious food over the weekend.

Still, all too often, Karen was finding herself facing impossible choices between buying groceries and paying bills. COVID-19 has also created extra stress and worry for this senior who says, “It is hard, but I have got to keep going. I got to do what I got to do to feed my grandkids.”

Thankfully, Karen found the help she needed through a Kansas Food Bank hunger relief partner in Wichita. Your kind support stocks the fresh fruit and produce, meats and more that is making such a huge impact on families facing hunger.

Easily half of their groceries come from the food pantry, so not a day goes by that Karen is not giving thanks for the kindness of neighbors like you.

“Thank you, thank you for the food for me and my grandkids,” she says.

Your support is bringing relief to the people across Kansas who need it most. On behalf of loving grandmothers like Karen, thank you for sharing what you have with our neighbors who are facing hunger!

Wichita senior, Karen, is thankful for your help

“Thank you, thank you for the food for me and my grandkids.”

YOUR PARTNERSHIP DELIVERS FOOD AND HOPE ACROSS KANSAS!

THANK YOU FOR HELPING MEET THE RISING NEED

One of the things the COVID pandemic has taught us is to think outside the box. With a significant increase in the need for food assistance, we knew we needed new avenues and new distribution methods to get food to those in need. For us that literally meant thinking outside the pantry walls. We knew that the need was greater than our pantry system.

With the health and safety in mind for the volunteers as well as the Kansans we serve, our regular pantry partners set up drive-thru distributions, while we were working feverishly with new partners to help meet the increased demand. And today, that extended work continues. The increased demand has yet to subside.

Food insecurity rates have hit an all-time high. In Kansas alone, the food insecurity rates jumped from 12.7% to 15.9%. That is one in every six Kansans is now in need of food assistance. The projected food insecurity rate for Kansas children is 24.7%. That is one in four children. Our mission has never been as important as it is today.

The Kansas Food Bank has set up mobile food distributions across the state as well as in Wichita. We are currently working with United Healthcare in Liberal on a special Stop COVID project serving 1,000 households each distribution. Our latest endeavor is offering a mobile distribution site in north central Wichita at the Evergreen Neighborhood City Hall along with Salud Más Bienestar. They work to help the Hispanic community who are disproportionately affected with conditions caused by chronic disease.

The difference between great and good is passion. As we look back on all that has transpired in the past year, we are grateful that so many others share our passion of making sure those in need have food on their tables. From our staff working tirelessly to make sure we have resources available to everyone across our 85-county service area, to the volunteers handing out food boxes and the generous donors who help fund our mission, we thank you. With your help, we will continue to make sure No Kansan Goes Hungry.



KANSAS FOOD BANK RECEIVES \$1,000,000 FROM INLAND EMPIRE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

We are honored to announce the receipt of a one million dollar grant from the Inland Empire Community Foundation to help us with COVID-19 Food Assistance. The funds will help us provide specific food items such as ground beef, canned chicken, helper meals, cereal and shelf stable milk to supplement food pantries throughout our 85-county service area. Funds will also be used to support our *Food 4 Kids* Weekend Backpack Program.

Our food donations have dramatically decreased while our food purchasing has dramatically increased. From March through December we spent an additional \$1.6 million on food purchasing alone. At a time when we have seen such a large increase in the demand for food assistance across our state, this grant will help so many Kansans put missing meals on their table.



MORE WAYS TO CHANGE LIVES FOR THE BETTER



People often ask how they can really help the families and individuals served by the Kansas Food Bank.

When we get this question, we tell them that it is their faithful support that keeps our outreach going strong day after day, year after year.

If you, like so many generous Kansans, want to do more, include the Kansas Food Bank in your estate plan. A planned gift means you are really going the extra mile to ensure that needs will never exceed our ability to provide nutritious food where and when it is needed most.

And after a year like 2020 — where the number of people who received food nearly doubled in some parts of Kansas — it is clear that strong, consistent foundational support is absolutely critical.

The most common way to make a lasting gift that supports the important work of the Kansas Food Bank is a bequest in your will.

Other planned giving options include making the Kansas Food Bank a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, creating a charitable remainder trust or setting up a charitable gift annuity.

Your compassion and generosity can make lives better for parents struggling to feed their children, older adults on fixed incomes, people facing job loss and illness — in this life, and beyond.

Contact your financial planner for more information on how to best establish a legacy gift.

THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING BOXES OF HOPE

Alice retired in 2012 because of cancer and, while she has been cancer-free for eight years now, she has other health issues that make her vulnerable to COVID-19.

“I use my mask and sanitize things,” she says. “I don’t have much company.”

She does venture out once a month to pick up a senior food box from our partners at the Salina Food Bank. The food box is an important source of nutrition and supplements the groceries she can afford to buy with her limited income. With only \$16 a month in SNAP (food stamp) assistance, the food box makes up a large portion of her meals.

Her senior box includes fresh items like meats, fruits and vegetables, plus nonperishables, too. She says it lasts her about a month. “I make it stretch,” Alice says.

Alice looks forward to her visits to the pantry in Salina each month. In part because the nutritional food is important, but also because she enjoys the people she meets there. “They are awesome people, very nice,” Alice says.

She leads a simple life without television or internet, so it’s difficult to find anything else to cut in order to save money. You really are a lifeline with the food you provide through her monthly senior boxes.

Although her two daughters and three grandchildren all live out of state, Alice knows she has neighbors like you who care about her and want her to have the food she needs to stay healthy. She says she is deeply thankful, “You have helped me so much.”

On behalf of thousands of older adults, like Alice, thank you for your ongoing support that provides senior food boxes and so much more through our partner agencies across 85 Kansas counties.

“*You have helped me so much.*”

Alice at Salina Food Bank



YOUR SUPPORT SHOWS DANNY AND RENEE YOU CARE

Kansas senior citizens are among our most vulnerable population and COVID-19 has only increased the risk of hunger for neighbors like Renee and Danny.

“We don’t get out very much,” Danny says. “Money is pretty tight.”

Danny has significant health issues, including severe back problems that make walking and working a huge challenge.

The couple works hard to stretch the disability assistance they receive, but sometimes they find it hard to get by.

Thankfully, when money is too tight to make ends meet, they turn to a Kansas Food Bank partner in Council Grove for a senior box. This special senior resource is loaded with fresh fruit and vegetables, lean meats and more. “It has been helping quite a bit,” Danny says, especially since the onset of the pandemic.

Knowing that food is available because friends and neighbors like you support the Kansas Food Bank is a great comfort to Danny and Renee.

“Thank you for everything you do. Without you, we wouldn’t have it,” says Danny, with gratitude for your generosity.

We echo Danny in saying thank you for your partnership with the Kansas Food Bank and for being a lifeline to seniors like Danny and Renee who are struggling to afford food.



Danny and Renee in Council Grove



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