

SEEDS OF HOPE

Summer 2021

kansasfoodbank.org



IN THIS ISSUE:

PG 3 *A Grateful Grandmother —
Thankful for You*

PG 7 *Neighbors Helping Neighbors*

PG 8 *Thank You for Helping
Michelle's Children Thrive*

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THANK YOU FOR SHARING HELP HOPE THIS SUMMER

Dear Friend,

In this summer edition of *Seeds of Hope*, you will meet neighbors like Teresa, Claudia and Michelle who are so grateful for your support that has connected them with the nutritious food their families need to thrive.

I am grateful for you, too. With summer upon us, children across Kansas will be more likely to experience hunger. Without regular access to meals kids normally receive at school, good nutrition is often out of reach for parents whose budgets are already stretched thin.

When children face a nutritional deficit, it can have lifelong repercussions — slower learning, developmental problems and poor health.

Your support of the [Kansas Food Bank](#) will help expand outreach throughout the state to ensure children have the nutritious food they need now and all summer long. Families and individuals will be able to put balanced meals on the table.

The pandemic has caused widespread economic devastation that will linger for many years and hunger could once again increase over the summer and into the fall. But friends like you make it possible for the Food Bank to meet the needs head on.

On behalf of everyone here at the Kansas Food Bank, our 700-plus hunger-relief partners, and our neighbors who will turn to us for help, hope and food in the months ahead — thank you for your compassion and generosity.

Gratefully,

Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

A GRATEFUL GRANDMOTHER — THANKFUL FOR YOU

Teresa and her loved ones visit our food pantry partner in Strong City



“Without them, we wouldn’t have what we have,” Teresa says of the Chase County Care and Compassion Food Pantry in Strong City. “It is a godsend, just knowing that it’s there.”

After an illness left Teresa unable to work and made it difficult for her to care for her grandchildren, ages 6 and 9, they moved in with Teresa’s mother in rural Chase County.

The move presented new challenges, like having the nearest grocery store 45 minutes away. Teresa receives SNAP (food stamp)

benefits but it’s not enough to feed her entire family, especially with her grandkids learning remotely from home. Her monthly benefits get used up even faster.

Thanks to support from friends like you, Teresa found help at our hunger-relief partner in Strong City. Once a month, Teresa, her mother and the grandchildren make the trip – 20 minutes each way – to get the extra food they can’t afford to buy.

Teresa is grateful to you for helping families like hers during a difficult time. You are giving her a sense

of relief knowing everyone in her home will have enough to eat. “I can’t thank [you] enough,” Teresa says, passionately.

Because of you, Kansans who might otherwise experience hunger will have good, balanced meals on the table throughout the long summer months and beyond. Our work would simply not be possible without your generosity.

“ I can’t thank [you] enough. ”



YOU'RE HELPING FIGHT SUMMER HUNGER!



UNEXPECTED GIFTS

Unexpected gifts can bring such joy. One example is a donation made by a [Kansas Food Bank](#) supporter who received their first stimulus check and decided to pay it forward to help neighbors facing hunger.

Then, when the second round of stimulus payments came through, that same friend made another donation to help the Food Bank provide assistance to others. The note accompanying the gift said, “the amount I have given this year is equal to the check I received from the U.S. Government for relief to its citizens. The pandemic has created no income loss for me, therefore, it didn’t seem quite right for me to keep it for myself so I decided to contribute to the Kansas Food Bank.” This beautiful gesture was not the only unexpected gift.



The Food Bank had plans to add a mobile food pantry in northeast Wichita to reach under-served community members who are facing hunger, but the launch was about six months out. An unexpected gift from an anonymous donor through Feeding America granted Kansas Food Bank \$85,000 for the purpose of starting a mobile distribution for families in a neighborhood that was more disproportionately affected by food insecurity. This great gift enabled the Food Bank to launch the mobile pantry in the northeast area of Wichita and will fund this important outreach for six months, making a tremendous difference for families in a location often overlooked.

SUMMER FOOD PROGRAMS BEGIN

Kansas Food Bank is proud to once again be a sponsor for the USDA Summer Food Service Program to reach kids in rural communities.

Because of the nationwide non-congregate waiver, we are offering Grab-and-Go meal packs one day each week so kids can take home five days worth of meals at one time. Last year we served three times as many meals as in the previous year due to the waiver being in place. This year’s outreach has been further expanded to include breakfast.

Jennifer Gum-Fowler from Kincaid shares her perspective on the new format of meal service, “I

had dads stopping their farm work and bringing their kids in to get the meals. By having the Grab-n-Go, parents who couldn’t bring their kids in before because of the drive on multiple days, now could feed their kids by just coming in once. These parents are hardworking [and] are just trying to make ends meet with everything that is going on.”

The food program is vital for so many families and will go far to keep children across Kansas healthy and strong all summer long.



SUMMER FEEDING SITE SPOTLIGHT: GIRARD LIBRARY

“Girard is a small but great community,” says the local library’s director, Barb Bailey. “We are lucky to have a community that is willing to help others when needed.”

One source of help that has become essential to the Girard community is the Kansas Food Bank’s Summer Feeding Program. This partnership between the library and the Food Bank has been going strong since 2015.

Barb says each summer, the Girard Library serves between 900-1000 kids for the duration of the program - roughly one third of the town’s population.

“The Kansas Food Bank is a great resource to the library in helping fulfill a need,” she explains. “To offer a service to our community that we would otherwise not be able to.”

“I love that fact that the program is offered to all children,” Barb praises. “If a child is hungry during the summer, they know they can stop by the library during the lunch program to get a meal.”

Barb’s library is a local hub— a place for kids to stay cool and participate in fun activities like the Summer Reading Program.

Friends like you who support the Kansas Food Bank also help community centers like the Girard Library flourish.

“Myself, library staff and board members would like to extend a ‘Thank you’ to the [Kansas Food Bank](#) and its donors for providing this service to Kansas communities.”

“The Kansas Food Bank is a great resource to the library in helping fulfill a need in our community.”

Barb at Girard Library, an important summer feeding center for local children



NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

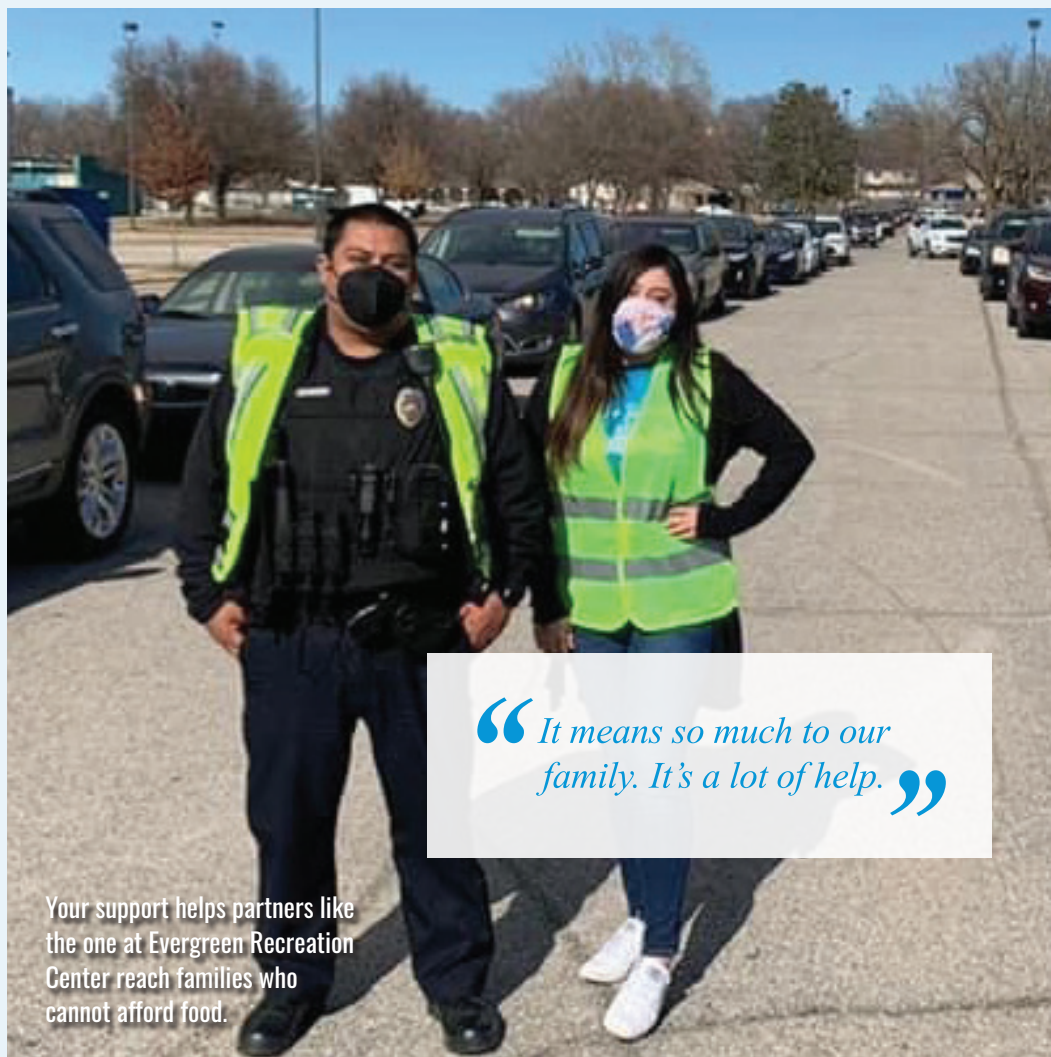
After volunteering at a large food distribution in South Wichita, Denise Romero, Executive Director of Salud Mas Bienestar, was determined she would help people in her own Northcentral Wichita neighborhood who struggle to buy food for their families.

She reached out to the [Kansas Food Bank](#) to help her neighbors who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, and who have little to no access to food pantries.

The first distribution was held at the Evergreen Recreation Center in February and will continue the first Friday of each month. This single event provided nutritious food to 504 local households, including Claudia's family who has been struggling since the pandemic caused her to be laid off.

As a single-income family, paying rent and bills leaves little left for Claudia and her husband to provide nutritious meals for their four children.

The food Claudia received at the Evergreen distribution made a huge difference. "It means so much to our family. It's a lot of help," Claudia said, her eyes welling with tears.



“It means so much to our family. It's a lot of help.”

Your support helps partners like the one at Evergreen Recreation Center reach families who cannot afford food.

“Not only do we save money, but I have the opportunity to feed my family healthy food.”

For Denise, being able to help her community is bittersweet. Seeing the smiles of the families as the food is placed in their cars “fills my heart with joy,” she says. “I’m really happy to be able to help, but

sad at how many people need the help.”

Thank you to Denise and everyone who supports us to ensure nutritious food is available through our 700-plus hunger-relief partners for people who are facing hunger. through our partner agencies across 85 Kansas counties.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING MICHELLE'S CHILDREN THRIVE



Sean and Michelle with children Franklin, John and Tabitha outside the Salina Food Bank.

“It means my children will have something to eat and I don’t have to worry about food.”

The Massey Family in Salina has certainly faced their share of difficulties, yet through it all Michelle Massey does what it takes to keep her family moving ahead.

Her youngest son Franklin lives with multiple health issues and they make frequent trips to Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. The oldest, John, has been diagnosed with autism, ADHD and psychosis. Between her two sons, working is difficult for Michelle. She is currently on family leave from her job and looks forward to going back when she’s able.

Their middle child is excelling at everything! Tabitha was recently awarded Student of the Month and loves to play the trumpet.

But keeping up with her family’s needs on a limited income has been difficult. Melissa’s husband, Sean, is working but he will soon need cataract surgery and even though they are a one-income family, Sean makes too much to qualify for SNAP benefits.

That’s why the [Salina Food Bank](#) is so important to this family.

“It means I am going to be able to provide meals for my family,” Michelle says. “My teenage son can get enough food to eat.”

Due to Franklin’s medical issues his diet is very restricted. Low sodium food and fresh produce is essential for him. However, with a limited income, she is often unable to buy produce for him. “If I have

an extra two dollars, I’ll buy him a couple cucumbers or apples – and I always look for reduced produce.”

Because of your generosity, Michelle can visit the Salina Food Bank and fill her family’s table each week.

“It means my children will be able to have something to eat. And I don’t have to worry about food.”



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