

Winter 2023 Newsletter

seeds of **Hope**





Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

GIVING SENIORS ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

Dear Friend,

Seniors across Kansas are facing tough choices this winter.

When the temperatures drop, utility bills go up, cutting deeper into the limited fixed incomes of our most vulnerable population. *The sad truth is that many older adults will choose to miss meals to keep the heat on and a roof overhead.*

At times like this, I am even more grateful for your partnership that makes the difference for seniors like Pedro and his wife Julia as well as Pat, whose stories you will see in this Winter issue of Seeds of Hope.

Your compassion and generosity equip the Kansas Food Bank and our 700+ partners to meet the need head-on across our 85-county service area. You help make fresh fruit and vegetables, lean meats, and other healthy food available to seniors, families with children, and individuals who would otherwise not have enough food to eat.

Please accept my sincere thanks for your support that brings hope and healthy food to people who are facing hunger in households across Kansas.

By partnering with us again this winter, you are directly impacting vulnerable seniors, families and Kansans of all ages. We are all so thankful for you!

Gratefully,


Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

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SENIORS THANK YOU FOR SHARING FOOD AND HOPE

Health concerns brought Pedro, 66, and his wife, Julia, 61, to the HealthCore Clinic located in Wichita. Pedro's hands had become so painful it was impossible for him to continue working as a dishwasher. For months, they visited the clinic for blood work and various tests to learn what is causing the pain.

While the clinic's primary purpose is medical care, the belief that food is medicine is the reason the HealthCore food pantry was created for lower income communities in the area. Through a new partnership with the Kansas Food Bank, they are ensuring their patients of the clinic have access to nutritious foods that contribute to overall health and well-being.

The food distribution at HealthCore was perfect timing for Pedro and Julia. Since they have no insurance coverage, and very little income, having access to the medical help Pedro needs and being able to take home healthy fruit, vegetables and other staples was a huge relief!

Pedro and Julia are not the only patients receiving help with food. In the year since HealthCore added food distribution to their services, the number of seniors and families seeking assistance has tripled according to Dietician

Pedro and Julia at HealthCore in Wichita, where they receive help with health care and access to healthy foods.



Lauren and Community Outreach Advocate and Pantry Manager Ivris.

“Thank you [for helping] people like us.”

On behalf of seniors who are struggling to afford life's most basic necessities — including food — thank you for giving to ensure our most vulnerable

neighbors can get help when it is needed most.

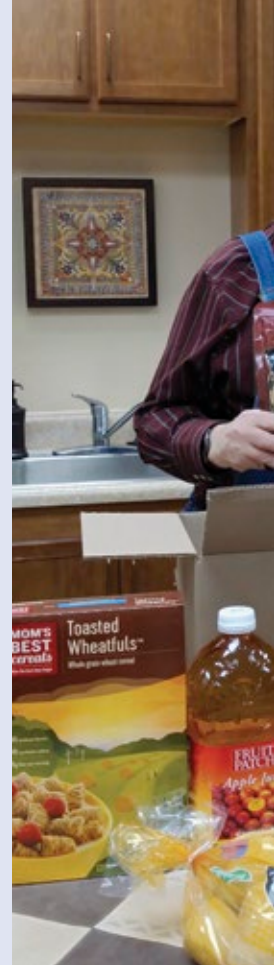
Julia looks forward to the day when she and Pedro can get back to a full and active life that includes riding bikes, working out at the gym and Pedro cooking dinner on the grill. Until then, these seniors are truly thankful to caring friends and donors who are helping them through a difficult time. “Thank you,” Pedro says, “[for helping] people like us.”

LOOK AT THE GREAT GOOD YOU DO TO SHARE FOOD AND HOPE ACROSS KANSAS!



PRODUCE BOXES

Nearly **4.1 million pounds of fresh produce** was distributed. Fresh produce helps improve health for everyone, but it is especially helpful for our vulnerable neighbors who need specific, healthy food while they battle diabetes, heart disease, and other ailments.





SENIOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION

In rural areas of Kansas, we distributed more than **10,700 senior food boxes**.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Which provided Kansans facing hunger with more than 13,600,000 meals last fiscal year — 97% of your donations are utilized for program funding!



FOOD 4 KIDS AND SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM

More than 6,052 children received weekly food packets during the 2021-22 school year with our Food 4 Kids program. We distributed **more than 132,150 food packets**. In addition, **over 111,300 meals** were served to children through our summer food program.

TIME TO GIVE BACK: A PASSION THAT'S CONTAGIOUS

Gary, 69, says his soul's calling has long been to spend his time volunteering. Now that he's retired, he's making that dream a reality — and encouraging friends like you to join him.

“Try it (volunteering) and it will change your life for the better.”

After working in the steel industry for 48 years — 37 of those years in sales — Gary retired in 2021. He and his wife, Toni, have been married for 46 years and have one adult son.

Because Gary always traveled while in the workforce, he says

he never got a chance to embrace hobbies outside of his love for travel. Now, Gary has made volunteerism his main hobby, and gives back to our community every Monday and Wednesday at the Kansas Food Bank.

“ Try it (volunteering)
and it will change your
life for the better. ”

Gary lives just minutes away from the Food Bank, and he says the volunteer service began as a way to stay busy while his wife

worked. Now, his twice weekly visits are an act that serves as a love letter to our community.

“I love working here, he says. “There's always something to do. Getting more younger people involved will keep the machine moving,” he says.

We want to send our warmest thanks to Gary and all volunteers who give from the heart to ensure every neighbor has access to healthy food!



Gary always wanted to volunteer and promised himself that once he retired, he would start.

YOU HELP BRIDGE THE GAP FOR NIDIA'S FAMILY

Family and church fill Nidia's days. And with five children to care for, she has her hands full!

Nidia was formerly a Burger King manager but lost her job in the height of the pandemic and hasn't found stable work since. These days, her family relies solely on her husband's income as a food truck driver.

But Nidia remains optimistic that a good opportunity will come her way, perhaps as a translator since she is fluent in English and Spanish. "I want my kids to see that I am still

trying to not only help them but help myself, too." Nidia says.

Like many households across Kansas, the high cost of living and groceries has greatly impacted Nidia's ability to put food on the table. When she heard the food pantry at her local Catholic Charities is a place to access healthy foods, she visited hoping for a little extra help to feed her family.

It was a huge relief to her to find smiles and a warm welcome at the food pantry, plus a wide variety of

fruit, vegetables and other nutritious foods to choose from!

“ It is very generous of all involved to put their time in to help us. ”

Nidia is grateful for the help she received at Our Daily Bread, and for the kind gifts from many caring donors that make food available to people who are facing hunger. She says, "It is very generous of all involved to put their time into helping us. I'm blessed."

A visit to Our Daily Bread food pantry at Catholic Charities is a big help to Nidia's family.



TAKING HUNGER OFF THE TABLE FOR KANSAS SENIORS

Pat, now 75, spent many years working customer service in Collections and Mortgage Service in the Dallas area.

After being laid off, she took her sister's advice to return to their home state of Kansas. But her homecoming has not been easy. She tried to find work, but she was unable to find a stable situation that paid enough. She ultimately decided to retire. Now,

living off social security helps, but it is not enough...

Her hardships have been compounded by inflation which has pushed her fixed income to the limit. Now, a fire did significant damage to her home, forcing her to live with a friend while reconstruction is underway.

"With the cost of groceries and only living off social security, I

didn't know what I was going to do," Pat says.

Fortunately, a friend who attends St. Patrick's church told Pat about the food pantry. For Pat, knowing there is a place she can go to access fresh foods takes a huge worry off her shoulders.

"With the cost of groceries and only living off social security, I didn't know what I was going to do."

The Lord's Pantry drive-thru at St. Patrick's church helps seniors like Pat access healthy food.

Pat is counting the days until she can return to her home and is thankful for all the help she has received since the disaster upended her life. To donors who support the important work of the Kansas Food Bank, Pat says, "I say a prayer of thanks and I'm blessed that [you] choose to help."

The Food Bank deeply appreciates the partnership of friends like you who give generously to reach seniors like Pat and neighbors of all ages with help and hope. Thank you for taking hunger off the table.



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