

Summer 2024 Newsletter

seeds of

Hope





Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

YOU FUEL OUR KANSAS FUTURE!

Dear Friend,

The school year has wound down across Kansas, which means, together with friends like you, we are ramping up our efforts to ensure every Kansan has access to nutritious food this summer.

Thousands of local students rely on school meals, which means families will be left to make up the difference now that schools are beginning to break for three long months.

As you can imagine, it's not an easy task to make up for meals with budgets that are already tight and food prices that are already so high.

That's why I couldn't be more grateful for partners like you. Your generosity has already been hard at work, making sure our partners and programs are prepared to meet the increased need for food across Kansas this summer.

In this summer issue of *Seeds of Hope*, I hope you'll enjoy hearing from just a few of the many neighbors you've already paved a path of better health for.

I think you'll be encouraged to hear Guadalupe's story (page 8) and how she and her husband are better equipped to provide nutritious food for their four grandkids thanks to your support.

Thank you for joining us today and through every season to give Kansans of all ages the fuel to thrive.

Gratefully,

Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO

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FAMILY MAINTAINS DIET, THANKS TO YOU

Annie has prioritized health and wellness for most of her life, having studied public health and administration and working in public health as a career. But her focus on health these days is much closer to home.

Annie, 70, is mother to Johanna and grandmother to Ainsley. All three follow a vegan diet, Annie says, which is something that has been made easier thanks to the food she receives from Living Waters, a Kansas Food Bank partner food pantry.

“They know our diet and [provide] things for us they know we can have,” Annie says of Living Waters volunteers and staff. “They won’t offer things we can’t have.”

Annie no longer works outside the home but prioritizes caring for Johanna and Ainsley. She shares that, in addition to developmental disabilities, Johanna has health problems that require dietary restrictions, such as a low-potassium diet. Ainsley has been diagnosed with autism and epilepsy, so a healthy diet is also critical to her overall health.

The family gardens together as a way to share special time with one another and also grow their own fresh produce. And, because you choose to give, Annie can visit Living Waters all year long to pick up plenty of fresh produce and additional healthy, vegan food for her girls.

Living Waters follows Healthy Eating Research (HER) nutrition guidelines, helping clients choose healthiest foods based on a color-coded system. Food items are ranked based on their levels of saturated fat, sodium and sugars.

Thank you for helping put nutritious food within reach of every Kansan this summer!

“ They know our diet and [provide] things for us they know we can have. ”

Annie is grateful for the vegan food you help provide for her, Johanna and Ainsley!



SERVICE INSIGHTS HELPS TRANSFORM

SERVICE INSIGHTS HELP TRANSFORM KANSAS FOOD BANK OPERATIONS

This past year, we launched the Service Insights initiative, a major effort by the Kansas Food Bank and our partner agencies to collect enhanced data about our community and what is driving food insecurity in Kansas.

We are still in the early phases of this project, collaborating with partner agencies to learn this information and we've had significant early wins — including one example below from Hillside Christian Church Food Pantry.

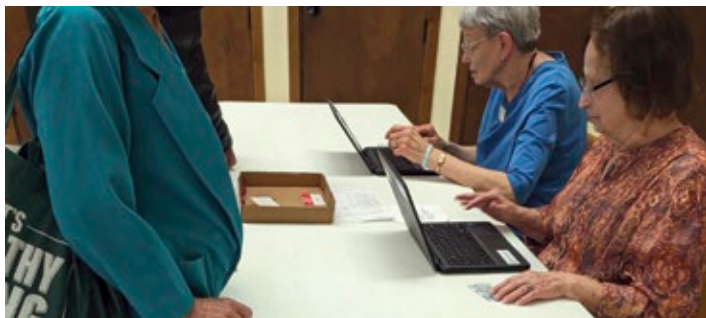
We have major hopes that Service Insights will help revolutionize all of our operations such as how we order food, where we place mobile pop-ups, forming new partnerships with organizations, what new services we can provide, and how we can be a better advocate for our community.

We have set up a website to share updates with partners like you as we learn and do more.

We encourage you to check it out:

www.kansasfoodbank.org/serviceinsights/

SERVICE INSIGHTS IN ACTION AT HILLSIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH FOOD PANTRY



An intake form for every visit. Names signed each and every time into a large binder. This was what our neighbors faced year after year, visit upon visit to the Hillside Christian Church Food Pantry. *Until now.*

We began using the Service Insights computer program in mid-April last year and have not regretted it one moment. We can log visits and get our neighbors processed in record time — and with the extra time they have, many can enjoy a cup of coffee and conversation.

We have also used the data collected to share statistics with our congregation. The knowledge that so many we reach are older adults and children has not only led to increased donations, but it has also brought additional volunteers in to help us.

When we reach out to neighborhood schools or businesses for donations, we are better able to show whom we are serving and where the food is going. The Independent School in our neighborhood held a couple of food drives for us as part of their community service activities. Businesses have contributed donations of food or money, again based on the statistics and demographics.

We have identified that we have a large Asian community nearby and are working on finding ways to purchase more culturally appropriate food to have on hand.

We also have plans to design a brochure and/or presentation for recruiting additional donors.

Service Insights has been a winning choice for us, and we have all benefitted from participating in ways we could not have anticipated. Now, we can look forward to partnering with friends like you to serve even more neighbors facing hunger.

— *Your partners at Hillside Christian Church Food Pantry*

FROM KANSAS FOOD BANK OPERATIONS

SUMMER FEEDING SITES



Summer is here, KFB is helping provide nutritious food for Kansas kids all summer long. To check out summer feeding sites across the state, scan this QR code:



GET READY!



Kansas Food Bank will celebrate our 40th Anniversary beginning in October *this year*! Keep an eye out for upcoming events and plan to join us in celebrations.

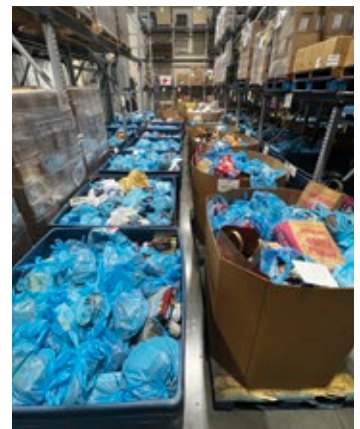
GARDEN CITY UPDATE



We are looking forward to more Kansans being served by our new Western Hub in Garden City. This new facility will enable Kansas Food Bank to streamline distribution processes and increase access to essential, healthy food for our neighbors in rural areas. Keep your eyes out for more in the near future!

LETTER CARRIERS FOOD DRIVE

Thank you for another successful year of the letter carriers' food drive! We are so grateful!



TEAMING UP TO VOLUNTEER

Harlond Beverly is a Wichita State University Masters student, a member of the men's basketball team and, together with several of his teammates, a proud volunteer at the Kansas Food Bank.

"It's something I really take pride in and just having the whole team there and knowing that we're making a difference," says Harlond.

The athletic department of Wichita State University began working to reach 1,000 hours of community service in Wichita, Kansas for the 2023/2024 academic year. Brooke Schultz, WSU student-athlete experience coordinator helped connect teams with a place to volunteer.

"Our student athletes have done a great job of being in the community this past [school year]," Brooke says, noting the goal was exceeded with 1,200 volunteer hours served in the fall alone. "We're really proud of all the work they have done."

"It's something I really take pride in and just having the whole team there and knowing that we're making a difference."

In 2023, Brooke connected with Kansas Food Bank and found us to be a great fit for larger groups to volunteer, and WSU volleyball, basketball and baseball teams began giving time with us — including Harlond's team.

"It was really nice to be a part of something bigger than yourself and helping out in any way possible," Harlond says.

We want to send our warmest thanks to all the student athletes of Wichita State University who have shared their time and talent to ensure our neighbors receive the healthy food all Kansans need!

Members of Wichita State University's Men's Basketball Team enjoy putting together packets for the Food 4 Kids Program.



GINNY SHARES THANKS FOR YOU

“My biggest accomplishment in this life is being a mom,” says Ginny, mother of Lola, 2, Elizabeth, 7, Dakota, 7 and Kale, 15.

It’s with that perspective in mind that Ginny, 35, does all she can to make sure all her children’s needs are met — and why she’s so grateful to friends like you for partnering with her to make that possible.

“I was financially struggling a bit, so we came here,” Ginny says of first visiting the food pantry at Shepherd’s Heart, a Kansas Food Bank partner housed in the Rolling Hills Community Church in Wichita. Every other week Shepherd’s Heart picks up an average of 3,500 pounds of food to distribute during their Monday evening pantry.

Recently, Ginny began a new job as a tire mechanic, which she says gives her flexibility to be present for her kids while also bringing in income.

“Being a mechanic is what I love,” Ginny says. “I feel like I’m helping the community.”

Most of all, Ginny enjoys supporting her kids and encouraging each one in whatever endeavors interest them. Together, the family especially enjoys



Ginny is encouraged to pay your kindness forward thanks to the food she receives from Shepherd’s Heart food pantry.

camping and participating in church activities.

Thanks to friends like you and the community of support she has found at Shepherd’s Heart, Ginny has a little extra help making sure each child also has the nutritious food needed to thrive this summer.

“My favorite thing about here is that we’re all family,” Ginny says of the food pantry.

Thank you for partnering with Ginny and so many neighbors to keep nutritious food on every Kansas table!

“My favorite thing about here is that we’re all family.”

YOU BRING GUADALUPE'S FAMILY AROUND THE TABLE

“I want to eat!”

These are the enthusiastic words heard almost daily from the mouth of Guadalupe's 2-year-old granddaughter — especially since Guadalupe's been visiting a Kansas Food Bank food pantry partner near her home to pick up some of her granddaughter's favorite food.

Guadalupe and her husband adopted all four of their grandchildren following the death of the children's mother, their daughter-in-law.

Thankfully, Guadalupe found out about the food pantry soon after adopting her grandkids and has been visiting ever since. Food pantry volunteers and staff almost always recognize her and often even ask to see photos of her grandkids.

“The vegetables, the fruit, the cereal, everything...they help me out a lot,” Guadalupe says of the food she receives.

Guadalupe's husband has worked the same stable job for the city for the past 17 years, but his income

“They help me out a lot.”

has understandably come up short with four more children in the household at once. That's why the couple is so grateful for the food pantry.

All four kids are big fans of the food Guadalupe brings home — though perhaps none as enthusiastic as her 2-year-old granddaughter. She enjoys

any fruit or vegetable Guadalupe chooses — even cabbage!

Guadalupe is grateful for the nutritious food she can provide for her family and the meals they share around the table together thanks to the Kansas Food Bank and friends like you.



Guadalupe finds a welcoming environment and plenty of healthy food she can cook for her family thanks to friends like you.



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