

We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and all people suffering the devastating impacts of war in their homelands.

Food For Thought



Central Pennsylvania Food Bank
3908 Corey Road, Harrisburg, PA 17109 717-564-1700 | 3301 Wahoo Drive, Williamsport, PA 17701 570-321-8023

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INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Central Pennsylvanians are resilient and generous. Throughout the past two years, you have helped the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank rise to the challenge of providing food security to our neighbors in need. You have also helped us extend this generosity to our community partners so they can expand their capacity and better serve their clients.

Through our Bold Goal Grant program, over the past several months we have invested heavily in several of our partners.

The St. Francis Soup Kitchen serves 3,000 meals per month in the Harrisburg community. Seeing a need to expand their reach and meet those they serve where they live, St. Francis requested money for a new van to distribute meals directly to seniors, shut-ins, veterans, and the homeless population.

“We recently started taking leftover meals out in the streets and delivering them directly to those who are not able to join us at St. Francis for a variety of reasons including distance, and physical or age limitations,” said Kirk Hallett, St. Francis Board Member. “We’ve been using my personal vehicle to deliver meals and the new van, provided by the Food Bank, will help tremendously in reaching more folks in a more dignified way.” St. Francis expects to receive the new van later this spring.

The Spanish American Civic Association works to meet a great need in the Latino community throughout Lancaster County. Their Community Meals Program provided nearly 52,000 meals last year. These warm meals offer a sense of community connection to neighbors in need. SACA's kitchen needed an upgrade to keep serving these meals efficiently. The Food Bank provided a major grant so that SACA could add a commercial refrigerator, gas range, A/C unit and more.

Downtown Daily Bread was awarded an emergency grant to purchase to-go containers and other supplies to help them safely serve their clients during the COVID-19 surge this winter. With sit down service resuming at DDB, reusable items such as silverware and trays were also needed. With COVID's impact on the supply chain, you helped the Food Bank provide this emergency supply of critical items.

“Bold Goal grants from the Food Bank have been essential for keeping our soup kitchen open and serving every day of the year,” said Susan Cann, director of development for Downtown Daily Bread. “We serve an average of 100 meals a day to people who are experiencing hunger and homelessness in Harrisburg. Thanks to the Food Bank team, the grant process is simple, clear, and fast.”



A volunteer from St. Francis Soup Kitchen. An immigrant, he tells us he volunteers because he “knows what it’s like to be hungry.”

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JAVA WITH JOE

Dear Friends of the Food Bank,

On April 22, more than 1 billion people across the globe will honor Earth Day as a day of action to help address climate change. As we welcome another spring in our beautiful Susquehanna Valley, I thought I would take a moment to reflect on how our mission contributes to a cleaner, healthier environment, every day.

Right now, in an average week, our Food Bank and our Partner Agencies, as a network, rescue over 1 million pounds of food and share that bounty with our neighbors in need. That is about 25 full tractor trailer loads of food rescued and shared every single week or 1,300 trailer loads per year. Were it not for this mission, most of this food would end up in landfills, be left in fields, or in some other way be disposed of in an environmentally harmful way. Our efforts do not end there: each week we recycle tons of cardboard, plastic, and wood, and send tons of organic waste to a certified composting plant for use in enriching soil.

We are proud of the positive impact our mission has on our part of the planet as well as the people who live here. We have so many wonderful mission stories to tell, including those featured in this issue about our investments in our Partner Agencies. Remember, none of this would be possible without caring and generous friends like you. Thank you!



SUMMER PROGRAMS HELP FAMILIES



Megan and Allyssa are grateful to summer feeding programs that help them feed their families during the summer break.

With the added costs of childcare and warm weather activities, summertime for parents isn't always stress-free. Thankfully, Summer Alive (a partner program of the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank) is here to help. By offering parents fresh food to keep their children's bellies full, moms like Megan can rest assured their kids will have a happy, healthy summer.

"It takes a lot of stress off me. Especially during the summertime, when you have added the costs of a sitter and everything, to not worry about food on top of all that. You know you're always going to get a balanced meal — fruits and vegetables and everything. My kids are big into those!"

Megan has received food assistance before, but this is her first time getting a box of fresh food like this. She's excited to make so many nutritious meals for her family.

"I got sweet corn because I wanted to make corn on the cob and some chicken for dinner," Megan explains. "Now, I don't actually have to go out and buy the chicken because here it is! That frees up money for other needed items. The food is always a welcome help," she says with a smile.

Another family benefitting from the Summer Alive food program is Allyssa's. Allyssa works in the school system and temporarily loses income during the summer, which can be stressful.

"We only have one income during the summer months, so this summer feeding program helps a lot with getting healthy food for my family." Allyssa is grateful for the summer program as it is "one less meal I had to worry about for my children. **Thank you for this treat!**"



A volunteer from the St. Francis Soup Kitchen delivers meals in the community.

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Recent funds enabled us to purchase a supply of disposable food containers and utensils along with a new set of re-usable, dishwasher-proof tableware. With two types of serving ware, the kitchen can continue to respond immediately to changes in COVID-19 health practices and supply chain issues.”

“Our Bold Goal Grants help our Partner Agencies to continue their important missions of serving all their clients,” said Joe Arthur, executive director of the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. “These grants help them extend their services and meet the needs of their communities. We are proud to be able to help.”

The Central Pennsylvania Food Bank is grateful to the generosity of the community, which allows us to invest in our partners. We are on the way to ending hunger in our communities through your generosity and these partnerships. We truly are, Better Together.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: MILTON YMCA

To say Madalene from the Milton YMCA is “busy” would be an understatement. As leader of the Food Bank partner’s Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), she makes sure her young clients receive healthy, nutritious food. With 250-300 lunches going out per day across multiple summer camps and programs, this is a big job — one Madalene would never be able to do, she emphasizes, without the crucial resources the Food Bank provides.

“With anything we do, the Food Bank food is definitely involved,” Madalene says. “All of these walk-in freezers have been donated by them. [The] sink was a donation, these prep tables, the electricity to run this cooler ... these were all paid for by the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. We couldn’t do anything without them.”

Madalene, who holds a Master’s in education and previously managed another center’s CACFP, sees firsthand how important nutritious food is for growing kids. Back when she first came to work at the YMCA’s daycare in 2009, meals had to be brought from home. Years later, she shudders when recalling an unsettling surprise in one child’s lunchbox.

“I had a family that would send wet cornmeal for their kid’s lunch. That was it — a container with wet cornmeal in it. I was like, ‘There’s no nutritional value whatsoever here! We cannot feed this to a child.’”

While Madalene helped implement the CACFP at the Milton YMCA, she knows there is much more work to be done to end child hunger. Still, she does not let this discourage her.



Madalene and volunteers from the Milton YMCA.

Instead, she lets the importance of filling young, hungry bellies motivate her to do better — celebrating victories, big and small, along the way.

“At the end of the day, I feel satisfaction,” Madalene says, smiling. “I know I’m doing the best that I can to help meet the needs of my community. Someday, hopefully, there’s no more kids that will have to go hungry.”

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: HELPING IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Seventh-grade twins Emma and Taylor, and their friend Madelyn, are proof the future is bright. The girls began volunteering at one of our partner food pantries in their hometown in November 2020 and quickly grew their own passion for the service.

“I like working here because I know people are being helped,”

Emma says.

The girls started volunteering when their school closed due to the pandemic. When they went back to in-person learning they were unable to volunteer but continued to lend a helping hand by holding fundraisers and selling their crafts, with all proceeds going toward putting food on the table for their neighbors.

When summer break came around, they started volunteering once more, as they enjoyed the satisfaction of helping fellow community members get the nutritious food they need.

“There’s a lot of hunger in the world. I know not to waste my food now. I like knowing when I go to bed that people are eating,” Madelyn says, smiling.

While every partner has different rules and age requirements for in-person volunteering (the minimum age is 18 at the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank) becoming a virtual volunteer is a great way for anyone to give their time and talent where the Food Bank needs it most. All you’ll need is an internet connection and your passion.



Three young volunteers at the Dubois Food Pantry, a partner of the Food Bank.

Start a virtual food drive or online fundraiser

Consider volunteering to start a virtual food drive.

A virtual food drive allows you to help many more of your neighbors in need by raising funds for the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. The Food Bank can purchase food in bulk quantities at less-than-wholesale prices including fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, and center-of-the-plate proteins which can’t be donated in a traditional food drive. The \$1 you might spend on one can of green beans can provide 6 full meals through a virtual food drive. It is a simple and immediate way to help end hunger in central Pennsylvania.

Get on social

You can help spread the word.

Learn about food assistance in your area or ways your family and friends can give back to the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank simply by following us on social media and sharing our posts.

Fight for the programs that help end hunger

Our neighbors need more support than we can provide on our own. Take action and help us build a powerful movement. Together, government, employers, communities, neighbors, and others can address the root causes of food insecurity to ensure every family has access to adequate food and nutrition by becoming a digital advocate.

Shop for a Cause

Find out what companies are hosting a giving event where you can give back simply by buying a product, like Amazon Smile.

For more information on ways to give, visit www.centralpafoodbank.org.

