

SPECIAL INGREDIENTS

A Publication of The Food Bank for Central & Northeast Missouri
Summer 2017



Tim Rich, director of Welcome Home, and Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director of The Food Bank, at Welcome Home's new complex in Columbia.

Good Nutrition to Welcome Heroes

Homeless Veterans in need of shelter will now also find a hot meal, thanks to a new partnership that will save Welcome Home, Inc., money on food expenses.

The Food Bank has taken Welcome Home on as a partner agency and will provide food for Veterans living there at no charge to them or the organization. That means Welcome Home will be able to allocate its resources toward other expenses.

"We are thrilled to be part of efforts that help homeless Veterans in their transition back into society," says Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director of The Food Bank. "Our heroes in need deserve nutritious, consistent meals, and we are delighted to be the agency providing that service."

The partnership becomes effective when Welcome Home moves into its new \$8.1 million campus on Rangeline Street in Columbia next month. The facility will provide 29 transitional housing rooms.

This is not the first time The Food Bank has brought attention to Veterans living at or below poverty. The

Food Bank has been providing VIP Veteran Packs to Welcome Home since last year. The VIP Veteran Pack Program began in May 2016 as a pilot program in Boone County. With funding from Veterans United, 125 packs of ready-to-eat meals and personal care items are also distributed monthly at Central Pantry and Patriot Place, an apartment complex for Veterans.

Bringing Welcome Home and The Food Bank together through a formal partnership is a natural fit, says Tim Rich, the executive director of Welcome Home who previously served as The Food Bank's associate director.

"Agencies and partners working together is what makes Columbia a great community," he says.

The Veterans' shelter is The Food Bank's 137th partner agency.

"When you support The Food Bank, you are also supporting so many wonderful organizations such as Welcome Home," Lopez said. "We are proud to provide the food needed to feed residents there."

A Note from Lindsay

One year ago, The Food Bank launched the VIP Veteran Pack Program, a pilot program in Boone County to provide more food to Veterans in need.

Now, we are so excited to announce that Welcome Home, a shelter for otherwise homeless Veterans, has joined The Food Bank family. Residents there will now receive meals from The Food Bank, and we will provide those meals at no charge to Welcome Home.

We are the only food bank of six in Missouri that provides food at no cost to partner agencies or clients. Why? Because we believe we are called to share food—from Biblical instructions to give the masses something to eat, to scientific evidence that shows sharing food makes a person demonstrate additional altruistic behaviors.

We are committed to our mission of sharing food. We remember that 35 years ago, a group of compassionate citizens got together and formed this organization on nothing but faith—faith that others would get behind the mission and support it with gifts of time, talent and treasure. We remain optimistic that we will retain that support as we lead The Food Bank into a new era.

And we know that the future is bright. We see it in our longtime partners such as Columbia Public Schools and in newer partnerships such as with the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture. We see it in the faces of our newest employees, 20-somethings who have chosen less lucrative career paths because their hearts are full of compassion. We pass it on in the form of produce we will begin providing at our summer feeding sites in Boone County this year.

And we see it in the form of the hope we bring to more than 100,000 people on a regular basis.

Last month, a man wrote to us that he suffered injuries from a job accident following a longtime career as a mechanical engineer. After multiple surgeries, he remains unable to work and is now awaiting approval for disability benefits. He needed food to get him through the transition. "It is so very hard for me to ask," he wrote. "I have always been able to provide for myself."

As we honor the past and look to the future, I invite you to join us in the fight against hunger in our communities. With a \$25 gift, we are able to purchase \$525 worth of groceries.

Thank you for bringing hope to the families, older adults, children and Veterans we serve on a daily basis.



Lindsay Young Lopez
Executive Director

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Volunteers Needed!

During the summer months, The Food Bank sees a drop in the number of groups and individuals who volunteer for us. However, summer months can be some of our busiest as the need spikes when school is out. If you and your family, work team and/or friends would like to help repackage bulk food at The Food Bank or stock shelves and distribute groceries at Central Pantry, please visit sharefoodbringhope.org and click on "Volunteer."

A 20-year partnership

Nearly 15 years ago, The Food Bank for Central & Northeast Missouri began providing classroom snacks to teachers at West Boulevard Elementary School who expressed concerns about the food insecurity they witnessed among their students.

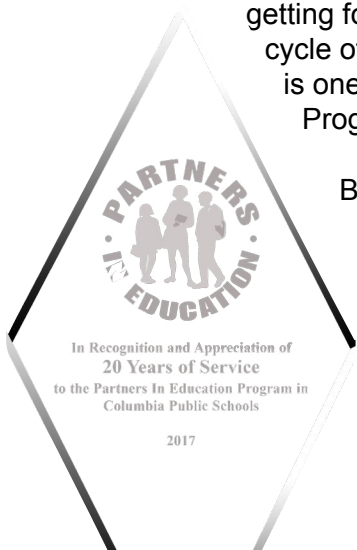
The concept was simple: Children cannot concentrate on studies when they are suffering from hunger pangs.

It was not long before the classroom snack program took on a new life in the form of Buddy Packs. Today, The Food Bank sends bags full of kid-friendly nutrition home with children who attend Columbia Public Schools, and other schools across our service area.

The program is just one way The Food Bank and Columbia Public Schools have worked together on behalf of the community.

The entities celebrated a milestone anniversary this year when the school district recognized The Food Bank for its 20th year of participating in the Partners in Education program.

“Education is the path out poverty,” says Stacey Brown, children’s programs coordinator at The Food Bank. “But poverty can impact the educational process when students do not have enough to eat. Without intervention—getting food to hungry children—that cycle of poverty will continue. That is one reason the Buddy Pack Program is so critical.”



Buddy Packs are just one way The Food Bank and the school system collaborate. Columbia Public Schools’ Smithton Middle School also helps provide lunches for the Summer Food 4 Kids program in Boone County when school is out



Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director of The Food Bank, and Peter Stiepleman, Columbia Public Schools superintendent.

for the summer. Sandwiches, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, cheese sticks and milk are provided to children 18 and under at no charge when children do not have access to free or reduced-price school lunches.

Columbia Public Schools gives back in other ways. During the school year, classes, clubs and athletic teams can often be found lending a hand in the Volunteer Room.

For several years, Mill Creek Elementary classes have participated in Float Your Boat for The Food Bank, raising thousands of dollars for neighbors in need. This year, Battle, Hickman and Rock Bridge high schools joined in on the fun, as well.

“The school district is truly a valued partner,” said Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director of The Food Bank. “We are one community, and it takes all of us to ensure the next generation is prepared.”

Sharing *fresh* food.



GREENHOUSE, AG PARK HELP DISTRIBUTE FOODS TO ENCOURAGE

A greenhouse in rural Phelps County in The Food Bank's southern region will now help provide fresh produce to clients in need at agencies in the area.

In May, The Food Bank staff and Ramona Rinehart from the Saint James Caring Center harvested more than 250 pounds of cabbage, beets, radishes and kale. In the future, tomatoes, peppers and zucchini will be added to the offerings.

The greenhouse is the latest creative partnership The Food Bank has entered in an effort to get foods that encourage good health into the hands of those in need. That mission aligns with Feeding America's newly announced commitment to increase access to healthy food options.

Some of the nation's most prevalent health issues, illnesses such as obesity, hypertension and Type 2 diabetes, are directly related to unhealthy diets. That is especially problematic for the one in six adults who face food insecurity.

The problem is multi-faceted. Those living on fixed incomes have to make tough budget decisions, and energy-rich starches, sugars and fats are the most inexpensive way to fill empty stomachs. For years,

food banks operated on a non-perishable grocery donation system, which led to the distribution of highly processed foods.

While canned foods, rice, beans, cereal and peanut butter remain staples, The Food Bank is striving to increase the percentage of produce, protein and dairy products provided. Partnerships with growers and organizations will help, says Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director of The Food Bank.

In the next few years, the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture and partner affiliates will open an Agricultural Park in Columbia that will produce 50,000 pounds of fresh produce for The Food Bank yearly.

The Phelps County greenhouse is expected to produce thousands of pounds for pantries in that area.

And other farmers and growers throughout The Food Bank's 32-county service area are also contributing by making fresh donations to local pantries.

"The bottom line is that we all deserve to have access to foods that keep us healthy," Lopez says. "We so appreciate these new partnerships that will help us increase our clients' access to foods to encourage."

Bringing *fresh* hope.



GRANT ALLOWS PRODUCE TO BE DISTRIBUTED AT SUMMER SITES

This summer, The Food Bank will provide bags of fresh produce and produce vouchers to children attending Summer Food 4 Kids sites in Boone County.

The project is possible through funding from Conagra Brands Foundation's Hunger-Free Summer Program. With a \$20,000 grant, The Food Bank will allow summer feeding recipients to take fresh fruits and vegetables home after lunch. Additionally, up to two \$5 vouchers will be given out to be used to purchase fresh produce at local grocery stores and additional \$5 vouchers will be given weekly to be used at the Columbia Farmers' Market.

"This is a great time of year to implement a program that increases distribution of fruits and vegetables," says Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director of The Food Bank. "Summer months can be paradoxical. On one hand, gardens and greenhouses are overflowing with nutritious and delicious produce. On the other

hand, some children no longer have access to subsidized school meals, meaning they are more at risk of food insecurity."

Lopez is hopeful the produce program provides incentives for more children to attend summer feeding sites in Columbia. Lunches will be served from noon to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday at parks and churches located in high-need neighborhoods.

This is the second year The Food Bank has used summer feeding sites to educate children about healthy eating. A Farm to Table program began at Central Pantry last year to introduce children to new fruits and vegetables and ways to prepare them.

"We want the next generation to understand where food comes from and how it is grown and harvested," Lopez said. "We also want them to better appreciate nutritional foods that encourage healthy lifestyles."

SUMMER FOOD 4 KIDS 2017 LOCATIONS

BOONE COUNTY
JULY 5 - AUGUST 11
Central Pantry
Bear Creek Park
Indian Hills Park
Calvary Baptist Church
Memorial Baptist Church

COLE COUNTY
JUNE 26 - AUGUST 16
Playground at 1000 block of Buena Vista
Westview Heights Cul-de-sac
Elston Acres Trailer Park
Corner of Elm & Chestnut streets

ADAIR COUNTY
JUNE 5-30; JULY 5-28
PC Mills Park
Brashear Park
Jaycee Park

The future is **BRIGHT**



Don Moore, food solicitor, shares information about The Food Bank with younger employees.

They represent the largest cohort in today's workforce, but they are not interested in working only for a paycheck. For millennials—that generation born at the turn of the 21st Century—work must have meaning.

That is good news for The Food Bank for Central & Northeast Missouri. Today, as older generations begin to retire, The Food Bank is being staffed by caring individuals who take pride in not only the work they do but also the notion of feeding neighbors in need.

"I'm glad to see young people embrace the same mission that I accepted nearly 20 years ago," says Don Moore, longtime food solicitor. "They have the same enthusiasm, the same energy and the same passion that has been the driving force behind The Food Bank for the entire time that I've been here."

Meet four of the 20-somethings working at The Food Bank who are dedicating their careers to solving hunger in central and northeast Missouri.

Nick Lazechko, 22

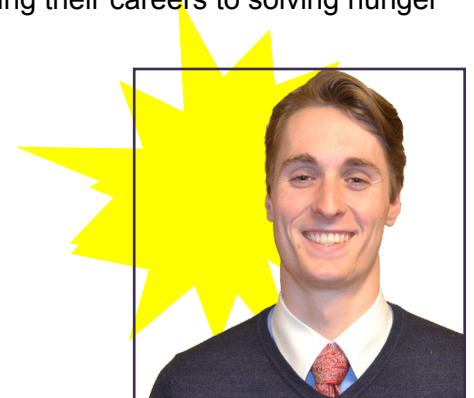
Nick Lazechko says he would not be working at The Food Bank had he not taken a mission trip to Jamaica in 2016.

"The mission trip halted my pursuit of success and money and gave me a new perspective on life grounded in love, compassion and understanding," he says.

He also credits Ricky. Lazechko was working at a marketing firm in Columbia when the man asked him for a couple of dollars to buy lunch.

"Ricky and I developed a friendship over the course of the next couple of months that really struck me," he says. "That relationship showed me how something as simple as a sandwich could ignite a friendship powerful enough to break down barriers around poverty and homelessness."

At The Food Bank, Lazechko continues to share food by helping The Food Bank develop key partnerships as the donor and community relations coordinator.



"This work gives me the opportunity to pursue love, compassion and understanding," he says. "I do not think I would have found that in the corporate world."

EMMIE HARCOURT, 25

Emmie Harcourt worked remotely for the Oregon Food Bank while serving in the AmeriCorps program prior to coming to The Food Bank for Central & Northeast Missouri.

She conducted a food assessment for a small community that had been identified as a food desert.

“Living somewhere where you couldn’t just go buy something or go out to eat or to the movies helped me realize what things are really important and what things I can live without,” she says. “I also really grew to respect the resilience of the community. I got a better perspective of the ways

in which rural communities feel as though they are forgotten and left out of decision making that impacts them.”

Harcourt also gained valuable insight during college. She spent her spring breaks volunteering, including at an urban farm and soup kitchen in Detroit; and the summer following her junior year, she conducted research on agricultural methods in Ecuador.

That combined experience led her to The Food Bank, where she serves as a grant writer.

“I had taken a tour of The Food Bank for a class, and it was my



No. 1 choice for where I wanted to work when I was looking for jobs in Columbia,” she says. “For me, I like that you get to make a very tangible impact on a complicated issue such as food insecurity. I continue to feel lucky to work here with such dedicated people.”

AMANDA PELLETIER, 22

Amanda Pelletier knew she wanted to join The Food Bank team after taking a tour.

“The passion of each employee drew me to this organization,” she says, adding that her first few weeks of work as a data entry specialist confirmed that. “I’m always hearing how we can serve our clients better, more efficiently and more effectively. It isn’t about what works for us; it’s about what works for them. That’s an organization I want to be a part of.”

The Food Bank is not Pelletier’s first non-profit experience. She was a communications intern for two not-for-profit organizations last summer, including “When the Saints,” a ministry in Malawi that opened Africa’s first safe home for victims of exploitation.

“That impacted my life in a radical way,” she says.

Pelletier also spent three weeks working for a non-profit in Mozambique. Back in Columbia, she interned for the Heart of Missouri United Way.



Now, she says, she is excited to be a part of The Food Bank team. “It is an absolute honor and privilege to work for an organization where the primary value is selflessness.”

SARAH SYKES, 27

Sarah Sykes was still in college when she snagged an internship at a for profit corporation.

“I found that I was not motivated to come into work every day because I didn’t connect with the goals for the company,” says Sykes, executive coordinator. “This is when I knew I wanted to dedicate my career to working in the non-profit sector.”

Following an eye-opening road trip across the western U.S., she went to work for Feeding Texas, where she first interacted with The Food Bank via longtime food solicitor Don Moore. The two worked on a produce project together.

The Food Bank, she says, also lets her use her logistical skills.

“The Food Bank is perfect because



the mission helps people achieve a most basic need as well as being an extremely complex logistical operation,” she says. “And I find that fascinating.”



SCORE AGAINST HUNGER WELCOMES NEW PARTNERS

MPIX IS TITLE SPONSOR

The nation's premier high-end photofinishing lab has become the title sponsor of the Missouri Tigers Score Against Hunger campaign.

Mpix is a company with a heart for storytelling and creativity, providing photos on high-quality prints, books, cards, wall art and decor. Owner Richard Miller also runs Miller's Professional Imaging, the largest professional photo lab in the U.S. A longtime supporter of The Food Bank, Miller has a heart for helping, as well.

"We cannot think of a better organization to partner with us on our signature campaign," says Lindsay Young Lopez, executive director of The Food Bank. "This company cares about feeding those in need—and that is what a Score sponsorship is all about."

Tailgate event is Sept. 13

A new tailgate event leading up to the Sept. 16 Missouri Tigers home game against Purdue aims to let attendees sample some of Columbia's finest eateries while also helping The Food Bank tackle hunger in the community.

Part of the annual Missouri Tigers Score Against Hunger campaign, Taste of the Tigers is set for 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 13. It will be held along the north concourse at Memorial Stadium.

"We are grateful to the restaurants and other entities partnering with us on this premiere event,



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which we hope becomes an annual affair," says Kimberly Kent, events coordinator with The Food Bank.

Further details are being finalized. Please visit sharefoodbringhope.org to learn more.

