

SUMMER 2021

AT THE TABLE

NEWS FROM THE HUNGER SOLUTION CENTER AT FOOD LIFELINE

FOOD
LIFELINE
HUNGER DOESN'T HAVE TO HAPPEN

IN THIS EDITION

- pg.2** Join Our Mission to Root Out Hunger
- pg.3** Digging In! Community Centered Program Expansion
- pg.4** Nutritious Food Strengthens Families
- pg.5** Mercy Housing Provides Stability
- pg.6** Businesses & Community Groups Team Up to End Hunger
- pg.7** You're Invited! Upcoming Events
- pg.8** Give Time, Give Money, Give Voice

Double Your
Impact With
Food Lifeline's
Root Out Hunger
Summer Match



FAMILIES FACE SUMMER HUNGER, PAGE 5

Rebecca Chen and her family love the fresh produce, *"The food is so wonderful."*



WE'RE ON A MISSION TO ROOT OUT HUNGER

As we enter the second summer of COVID-19, I'm struck by the continued creativity, resilience, and positive energy I experience in my conversations with our agency partners, our dedicated volunteers, and our hard-working staff team. For hunger relief organizations, summertime always brings a new set of challenges to face as we work to bridge the gap in food assistance for families with school-age children. With most children still attending school on a remote basis, school meal programs are providing a fraction of the level of assistance as during pre-pandemic years. This summer the gap is magnified.

Through our emergency response efforts, we know that the need for food assistance has grown most dramatically in traditionally marginalized communities that experience food insecurity at twice the level of the general population. Employment recovery, while making gains in higher-earning categories, has left behind families earning less than \$75,000. These facts reveal the basis of food insecurity and hunger in our community. At the root of these disparities are poverty, racial inequity, and social injustice. For all of us to flourish, we must create a more equitable approach to ready access to nutritious, culturally appropriate food. Inspired by our commitment to end hunger, we are launching a new campaign this summer, to **Root Out Hunger**.

In partnership with our community, Food Lifeline will enhance our traditional hunger relief efforts by investing in a targeted, equity-focused approach to innovative programs and partnerships designed to root out systemic disparities in food access. By prioritizing enhanced support to BIPOC communities, sourcing and distributing culturally appropriate food, alleviating burdens on partner agencies, and investing in Regional Distribution Organizations who help us get nutritious food to agency partners in every corner of western Washington, Food Lifeline is committed to working toward a vision where access to abundant, nutritious, and culturally relevant food is available to all.

This work is just beginning, and we invite you to join us for the journey. In a crisis, only 5% of donors typically continue to support emergency response efforts once the initial emergency fades. **Yet the pandemic recovery is a years-long process, and we must do more for our neighbors facing hardship. Together, we can Root Out Hunger.**

Sincerely,

Linda Nageotte
President & CEO



COVID-19 Grant Funding:

*Food Lifeline Launches
Community Centered Program
In Whatcom & Skagit Counties.*

— Eber Rivera with Mutual Aid,
Solidarity of Skagit Volunteers

DIGGING IN! ENGAGING COMMUNITY TO END HUNGER

To solve hunger, we need to better understand its roots. The pandemic brought stark differences into focus among the counties we serve. In Whatcom and Skagit counties, populations north of the Seattle metro, the counties are home to a vibrant mix of rural, migrant, Indigenous, and farming communities. These communities are shaped by their diverse histories and culture, with unique needs and aspirations.

To understand those needs, we've launched a community-centric program funded by a Feeding America Covid-19 relief grant. To launch, we hired our first community Food Access Specialist, **Eber Rivera**. As a local resident, Rivera knows the community fabric. **"My cultural background includes Mexican, Indigenous, and American cultures,"** he says, **"My background can help Food Lifeline and our partners understand the community, while learning from our neighbors facing hunger."**

Engaging communities in problem solving and learning first-hand from our clients experiencing hunger is a guiding principle in our hunger relief efforts. As we pilot this program, Rivera looks forward to making an impact.

Still in the early months of the program, Food Lifeline is optimistic about progress. Community Programs Manager **Leah Rapalee** notes, **"Eber has already helped Food Lifeline forge deeper connections with partners and community members with lived experiences of hunger."**

While food insecurity remains at crisis levels throughout western Washington due to the pandemic, we know seven counties in our service area are disproportionately affected by food insecurity, including

King, Pierce, Snohomish, Skagit, Mason, and Lewis counties. With this program as a model, Eber envisions program expansion in the future. **"I'm eager to see how this program continues and expands to other communities looking to solve**



food insecurity."

Support program expansion and innovation by contributing to our summer Root Out Hunger campaign running June through August. Visit foodlifeline.org/donate.



"It's hard when we get to the end of the month. After the bills are paid, we're not always able to get the food we need."

— Adonis A.

NUTRITIOUS FOOD BRIDGES THE GAP FOR FAMILIES FACING HUNGER

During the pandemic, hundreds of thousands of people found themselves in long lines to get the food they need. Many of these families have never had to visit a food pantry before, but now, it's a weekly necessity.

The Chens are a family of four, living on a single income. **"My husband is the only one that works outside the home,"** says mom Rebecca. He was laid off, and with two small children at home, that can be a frightening experience. **"The pandemic kept him out of work for long periods of time. That's made it hard."**

To feed their family, the Chens have accessed community food distributions. Each week, taking home fresh produce and quality proteins - from lettuce, potatoes and strawberries, to dairy, eggs and more. With this access to nutritious food, Rebecca can focus on raising her family. **"It makes me so happy. I get excited every time I come here. The food is so wonderful."**

At this week's distribution, Rebecca and her son take home more than ten pounds of fresh produce. Food that will help sustain them until next week and help save them money for other things like rent and utilities. Rebecca's husband is soon returning to full time work, and thankfully, this family is making it through this extraordinary time. Rebecca wants our donors to know what a difference they've made to their family, **"Thank you so very much for this help,"** she says, **"it means so very much to us."**

Like the Chens, Adonis Aquino is doing everything he can to keep food on the table for his family of four, including taking a second job. "I'm doing some house painting on the side to help out with income." But even with the second job, it's hard, and after months of work reduction, today he needs help. More than a year into the pandemic, he's come to receive food from Food Lifeline for the very first time.



"A friend told me you were giving out food, so I'm here to pick up for my family." Adonis will take home enough to feed his family this week, at a time of the month that usually leaves little left over for groceries. **"It's really hard when we get to the end of the month. After all the bills are paid, we're not always able to get all of the food we need."**

Food Lifeline works with more than 350 food pantries, meal programs, and shelters to help bridge the gap in food assistance for families while parents work and care for their children.



“The Food Pantry has turned into a place where every resident can come get what they need each week for their families.”

— Manager Lindsey Karas

MERCY HOUSING NORTHWEST PROVIDES MORE THAN STABLE HOUSING

While there are eight Mercy Housing locations in Washington that partner with Food Lifeline to provide consistent and nutritious food access to their residents, Mercy Housing’s impact in the Pacific Northwest extends far beyond their partnership with Food Lifeline. Across Washington and Idaho, Mercy Housing Northwest owns and operates 55 properties that provide more than 6,700 families and seniors with affordable and sustainable housing. The Mercy Housing network believes an individual’s right to high-quality and safe housing extends beyond their financial means, and on-site resident services focus on developing educational and financial wellbeing, health and wellness, and community engagement.

Mercy Housing has partnered with Food Lifeline’s Mobile Food Program since April 2019, when Appian Way Apartments in Kent began distributing fresh fruits and vegetables to families and youth. Other Mercy Housing communities joined as Mobile Food Program partners during

COVID-19 to support residents in Seattle, Snohomish, Lynnwood, Bellingham, and Lake Stevens. Every month, Food Lifeline’s Mobile Food Program now helps Mercy Housing Northwest serve seven locations and more than 300 households.

For the last nine months, five Mercy Housing Northwest properties have also been partnering with Food Lifeline to utilize Feeding America grant funding aimed at increasing access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food for tribal communities, farmworkers, and immigrant and refugee communities experiencing food insecurity. As Mercy Housing’s Resident Services Manager Lindsey Karas says, **“On the first day of the Food Lifeline supported pantry, residents in Bellingham went home with three full grocery bags and needed a second person from their household to help bring all the food home.”**

To learn more about Mercy Housing Northwest’s Resident Services or to donate, visit mercyhousing.org/northwest.





ROOT OUT HUNGER

BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TEAM UP TO ROOT OUT HUNGER!

For several years, Food Lifeline’s “Food Frenzy” has been a favorite among western Washington businesses as a way to help those experiencing hunger. During the event, local companies join in a friendly competition to raise money for hunger relief and to give time by volunteering to sort and repack food for distribution to our community food pantry partners.

This year, as demand has grown for food assistance in western Washington, Food Lifeline is expanding the invitation to include community groups. Teams from church groups, neighborhood associations, youth sports, and more can all join in on the fun while raising money and giving time for a worthy cause.

Our need has never been more urgent. **When you Root Out Hunger you are reducing the disproportionate impact of poverty, inequity, social injustice, and food insecurity on people of color, Indigenous populations, immigrants, and refugees.** To learn more about getting involved or to register a team, visit foodlifeline.org/food-frenzy.

JOIN US THIS SUMMER TO ROOT OUT HUNGER

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT WITH MATCH

All summer long, YOU can make a HUGE difference because every dollar you give will go TWICE AS FAR to provide food for children, families, and all our neighbors facing hunger.

A group of Food Lifeline supporters will match all gifts, dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$100,000.

Just go online to FoodLifeline.org and click on the Root Out Hunger banner or visit foodlifeline.org/donate.



YOU'RE INVITED

UPCOMING EVENTS

JOIN US!

TOWN HALL ROOT OUT HUNGER JUNE 10, NOON - 1PM

Join us to learn about the innovative ways we are addressing food insecurity in this compelling event with community stakeholders. To register, visit foodlifeline.org/events.

FOOD FRENZY July 16-30, 2021

Join businesses and organizations large and small in this friendly competition to raise funds, collect food, and volunteer with Food Lifeline. Help us make 2021 our biggest event yet. For more information about getting involved, visit foodlifeline.org/food-frenzy.



AUGUST 1 - 31 IS HUNGERMITAO MONTH

This community centered program enlists the support of Indian Americans in our efforts to Root Out Hunger.



Inspired to support hunger relief programs across the United States, Founders Raj and Anna Asava have created a grassroots movement engaging Indian American adults, youth, and families in volunteer and

fundraising efforts. Recruitment for steering committee and program participants is happening now. August is focused on fundraising. To learn more visit foodlifeline.org/hungermitao.



When asked what inspired the Asava's to support hunger relief, Anna says,

"In India, before any important event or celebration, every family feeds someone else before they eat."

Anna Asava, Co-Founder
HungerMitao

DONATE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS GIVE THEIR TIME, TALENT, & TREASURE TO HELP END HUNGER.



Loyal volunteer **Jeanette Roden** has volunteered for more than a decade, **“I work in tech. I love it, it’s rewarding, but draining. You don’t really get to see the impact your work has on the world.**

So volunteering is a way for me to give back, to feel more connected and to feel like I’m making a concrete difference.” To volunteer, visit foodlifeline.org/volunteer.



Washington Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland is a vocal advocate in the effort to end hunger. After participating in Food Lifeline’s recent Town Hall focused on military families facing hunger, **Rep. Strickland**

introduced the Military Hunger Prevention Act. To learn more, or join our grassroots movement to end hunger, visit foodlifeline.org/advocacy.



Chalo chooses Food Lifeline.

Take one look at Chalo and you can see a vibrant brand - colorful, joyful, happy - but there’s a serious mission behind it. When asked why they contribute to Food Lifeline, they say, “We survived 2020 and we’re grateful. As a part of our commitment to the community, we wanted to give back. After much thought, we decided to support Food Lifeline because so many people are struggling.” Chalo sees hunger and food insecurity intersecting with its root causes - poverty, racial inequity, and social injustice. They understand that poverty and food insecurity disproportionately effect communities of color and as part of their commitment to giving back, Chalo is donating \$10 to Food Lifeline for every Chalo designed bag purchased at MadeInWashington.com.

Please cut off the reply form below, and return with your gift.

FBF-FLL-19499

YOUR DONATION DOUBLES THIS SUMMER. JOIN US TO ROOT OUT HUNGER

I want to help families facing hunger receive the food they need to thrive!

Enclosed is my gift of:

- \$35 to help create 350 meals
- \$100 to help create 1000 meals
- \$50 to help create 500 meals
- Make a donation on-line at foodlifeline.org/newslettergift

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

MY EMAIL: _____

Food Lifeline, 815 S 96th. St, Seattle WA 98108-4934



I would like to make a one-time donation of \$ _____
 My check is enclosed Charge my bank card

I would like to make a monthly contribution of \$ _____
 A voided check is enclosed Charge my bank card



DONOR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

Phone Number: _____ - _____ - _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Exp. Date: ____/____/____

Signature: _____

FROM

DDM21E1