

FALL 2023

# AT THE TABLE

NEWS FROM THE HUNGER SOLUTION CENTER AT FOOD LIFELINE

**FOOD**   
**LIFELINE**  
HUNGER DOESN'T HAVE TO HAPPEN

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*“I struggled, but I don’t struggle anymore,” Arlene said. “We volunteer together. It’s something worthwhile to do and to help our community.”*

**— Arlene and Judy**



# LOCAL FARMER DONATIONS HELP FAMILIES THRIVE

Jesús  
and family  
on their  
family farm



Jesús has always believed in the power of food. For him, the belief is rooted in his strong commitment to being a great steward of the land. The art of farming—the planting, the weeding, the maintaining, the harvesting—is one that requires patience, determination, a little bit of faith, and an enthusiasm for playing in the dirt.

**“I started farming on one acre of land, and some of the first things I grew were strawberries, tomatillos, onions, and we eventually started to grow lettuce,”** said Jesús. He continued, **“It isn’t always easy, but I am grateful for my experience and for the blessings from above that allow me to grow food.”**

The Community Food Sovereignty Fund has allowed Food Lifeline to provide a total of \$695,000 in grants to 17 partners this last fiscal year. We’re proud to support organizations and individuals like Jesús who are making a tremendous impact within their local community food systems.

Jesús is doing tremendous work that has had amazing results, even surprising himself.

**“Last year, I was able to donate just over 14,000 pounds of food to Tri-Parish Food Bank as well as to other families and community members. I had much more of a staff last year to help with harvesting, but now it’s really only me, my two brothers, and my nephew doing all of the work.”** This year, Jesús believes that he will end up donating between 5,000 and 7,000 pounds of food.

While less than last year, this donation continues to have a transformational impact on many lives. For him, food is a unifier, and it is something he believes that no one should do without.



**“My family and I are blessed that we have enough food for all of us to thrive and survive. Not everyone else is that lucky or privileged to be in the same situation. So, all the food that I do not sell to my clients ends up being donated. No one should have to go hungry, and it brings me so much joy to know that I am helping provide nourishment to other people.”**

There really is nothing quite like good food. Food that you know has been grown with care, love, and joy. Jesús continues to grow food because he sees the impact his fresh produce has on himself, his own family, and his community.

**“What we put into our bodies is so important! My goal is to help my family and my community be healthy and strong and that starts with the very food that we consume. I’m proud to say that I’m an organic farmer because I value the health and wealth of people and of the Earth.”**

Farming is not easy work, but Jesús is doing it with conviction and with the mentality that he will create a positive impact for generations to come.

# THE GIVING CYCLE RECEIVING HELP TO GIVING HELP

Ariene  
& Judy,  
Food Bank  
Volunteers



Food Lifeline strongly believes that food is a human right and love is love. No one should go hungry, regardless of who you love or any other identifying factor.

Unfortunately, identity often affects the rate of food insecurity in marginalized groups.

We are grateful to have agency partners such as the Good Neighbors Senior Center of Ocean Shores, that are working to uplift the LGBTQ+ community here in Western Washington.

Every week, Arlene Hansey volunteers with her wife, Judy, at the Ocean Shores Senior Center where they help pack food and get it ready to be distributed into their community. Arlene never takes food or having enough to eat for granted, because years ago—she needed a little extra help too.

**“Back in 1984, I had four little kids and didn’t have any support from my husband, who had moved to Florida,”** she said. **“I was working at a newspaper selling ads and making \$100 a month. That went to the mortgage and to the kids. We did struggle, but we made it through it.”**

Arlene did more than make it through. She triumphed. She saved enough money and went back to school. Soon after, she began a career in the medical field, and she hasn’t looked back since – retiring as a cardiac tech nine years ago. She enjoys spending some of her free time volunteering at the

food pantry and making as many memories as possible with Judy.

**“I struggled, but I don’t struggle anymore,”** Arlene said. **“We volunteer together. It’s something worthwhile to do and to help our community.”**

Judy and Arlene have been together for 25 years and retired for the last nine. Ocean Shores is considered a retirement community, and people who have moved into the town generally have a higher income. However, residents who have lived there for the last 20 to 30 years are often the people facing hunger. **“When the mills started to leave the town maybe 25 years ago, the people born and raised here got stuck and never left,”** Judy said. **“And the only jobs here now are in restaurants or hotels.”**

Making an impact and bettering the community keep Judy and Arlene coming back to volunteer every week.

**“We just chip in and do whatever needs to be done,”** Judy said. **“Sometimes it’s sorting food or handing out food. During the summer, we put together summer meal boxes and then we go around (the county) delivering those.”**

While volunteering at Ocean Shores is keeping the couple busy, they’ve still got plenty of time to enjoy life and each other.

# COLLEGE STUDENTS FACE HIGH FOOD INSECURITY



Chirs,  
University  
Food Bank  
Volunteer

On a sweltering Tuesday afternoon, people and cars are lining up outside a parking garage on the North Seattle College campus. Inside the refreshingly cool confines of the garage, a weekly food bank distribution is in full swing. Volunteers in orange safety vests are passing out bags of food to students and community members who smile and exchange hellos.



**“The food really helps”,** says student Joel Perry. **“Everyone will help you pay for books and tuition, but they don’t cover rent and food.”**

Every week, the University Food Bank supplies the college with more than 400 bags of groceries, and hundreds of pounds of milk and proteins for these distributions.

According to Jeanette Miller, Director of Workforce Education here at NSC, the need is critical.

**“These students are caught in a vortex of high housing costs, high tuition, and rising food costs that are leaving them vulnerable.”**

36% of students here are experiencing food insecurity. Most don’t qualify for EBT, or **“food stamps”**, because they don’t work enough hours. That leaves a gap that the college is looking to fill.

Student Chris Simpson is busy filling bags of fresh fruits and vegetables. He studies Computer Sciences at the college, has a work-study job on campus, and volunteers here. He’s had affordable housing for years, but he’s losing his place in the next couple of months. The cost is going to make his busy schedule even tougher.

**“Right now, I’m getting together money together for first, last and deposit. That’s going to be around \$3,000. I’m going to have to take a second job here soon.”**

He’s been offered groceries the past couple of weeks, and graciously declined. But today, after serving everyone else, he’ll take home a bag of produce.

**“It’s just a hard time between paychecks.”**

Food Lifeline is proud to partner with University Food Bank and North Seattle College by providing food and resources for this program. Food Lifeline supports community led programs, and community-based solutions to ending hunger

# HUNGER IMPACTS MILITARY FAMILIES



*Desiree  
& baby.*

Jasmine Wheeler has her hands full. With two toddlers, and a husband currently stationed in Korea, this young military wife and mother is doing her best to keep the home fires burning. But she has another challenge that might surprise you.

Jasmine visits a food bank three to four times a month to keep food on the table for her young family.

**“It’s expensive. Especially with grocery prices going higher up. It’s definitely frustrating”,** says Jasmine. **“We have car loans we have to pay, we have car insurance, phone bills, internet, and all of these things you have to maintain in the army.”**

Believe it or not, Jasmine and her family are not alone. Every year, nearly 40,000 military members in Western Washington rely on food banks to feed themselves and their families.

Just a few blocks away from the Wheeler’s home on Joint Base Fort Lewis McChord, the Tarrant family is struggling to feed their family of seven. Desiree Tarrant and her husband were barely making ends meet before the pandemic, and since then, inflation has taken a toll.

**“Our food budget went from \$350 a paycheck, to \$500 a paycheck”,** says Desiree. **“So, we’re spending a thousand dollars on food. A month.”**

She says the food bank helps close the food gap every month. **“We were living paycheck to, like, day three. So, know we’re making from paycheck to the next actual paycheck. So at least we’re surviving to the next paycheck though.”**

Eloise’s Cooking Pot is a sprawling food bank that takes up the better part of two city blocks in one of Tacoma’s commercial districts. Executive Director Ahndrea Blue is in the eye of the hurricane, making sure everyone gets the food they need to thrive. Blue says the military food crisis shouldn’t come as a surprise.

**“Food insecurity is a huge problem for everyone”,** Says Blue. **“I think the thing that shocks people most, is that we have people who serve our country, and we assume that they are taken care of. And they’re not. They have the same issues that everyone else that’s experiencing food insecurity have.”**

Food Lifeline is working with Eloise’s Cooking Pot to make sure they continue to receive the critical foods they need to serve military families. We’re also working with state and local representatives to change policies that create barriers for these families. Until then, Jasmine Wheeler and others are keeping the faith.

**“I just hope we get to a point in his army career where we’re not struggling to pay our bills. As well as feed ourselves and our children.”**

# dress down hunger

an evening in the warehouse

SATURDAY  
OCTOBER 7<sup>th</sup>  
6:00 PM



## JOIN US FOR DRESS DOWN HUNGER TO CELEBRATE OUR COMMUNITY'S EFFORTS TO END HUNGER

Our work to end hunger centers on community, and our Annual Dress Down Hunger event provides an opportunity to pause and celebrate our community's collective actions in this movement. Join us Saturday October 7 as we gather at the Hunger Solution Center for a casual and fun evening to recognize the outstanding contributions of local hunger activists and share the path ahead as we make progress in our mission to end hunger.

Honoring our Ending Hunger Award winners serves as a highlight of the evening. These activists embody the concept of problem solving as a community to help our neighbors facing food insecurity, creating energy and momentum toward our big goal of ending hunger for good. We will announce three Ending Hunger Awards:

- **INSPIRATION AWARD:** This award recognizes an individual, group, corporation or foundation for their inspirational achievements that have emboldened others to get involved with the work of Food Lifeline's mission.
- **EQUITY CHAMPION AWARD:** This award recognizes an individual or organization's commitment to ending hunger by working to counter the racist systems, practices, and consequences that perpetuate it.
- **TOM HALEY MEMORIAL AWARD:** This award recognizes an individual, group, corporation or foundation that deserves recognition for their contributions to the success of Food Lifeline's mission.

Throughout the evening, we will also raise funds to move Food Lifeline's mission forward. Bid on our silent auction, featuring items like a full outdoor movie setup from Outdoor Theater Systems, a sunset cruise on Seattle's Tall Ship, a Private Chef Experience from Honest to Goodness Personal Chef Services, and more. The funds we raise will allow us to continue fulfilling our mission to feed those experiencing hunger today, while working to end hunger for tomorrow.

For more information and to purchase tickets for Dress Down Hunger visit: [foodlifeline.org/dressdownhunger](https://foodlifeline.org/dressdownhunger)



# SAVE THE DATE



@ FOOD LIFELINE

GET INVOLVED! • ATTEND • DONATE • VOLUNTEER • ADVOCATE

## GET READY FOR HUNGER ACTION MONTH SEPTEMBER IS HUNGER ACTION MONTH

September is Hunger Action Month—the Feeding America Network’s annual campaign to raise awareness of hunger in the United States and to take action to combat poverty, inequity, and injustice so we can end hunger for good.

Your power, voice, actions, and commitment will ensure no person has to make an impossible choice between food and other necessities like medicine, utilities, or childcare. Invite your friends to a repack session in our warehouse or volunteer together at one of our partner agencies. Make your voice heard by joining our team of advocates and asking your representatives to address the root causes of hunger. Challenge your family to host a virtual food drive

To sign up visit:  
[foodlifeline.org/hungeractionmonth/](https://foodlifeline.org/hungeractionmonth/)



## DRESS DOWN HUNGER OCTOBER 7

Join us for a casual and fun evening filled with merriment as we raise funds to move Food Lifeline’s mission forward. We will celebrate our 2023 Ending Hunger Awards honoring the incredible work of local hunger activists.

Doors open at 6pm;  
Dinner and program start at 7:15pm  
Food Lifeline’s Hunger Solution Center  
815 S 96th Street



Purchase tickets:  
[foodlifeline.org/dressdownhunger/](https://foodlifeline.org/dressdownhunger/)

## OCTOBER IS FALL HARVEST

As the days grow shorter, we begin our plans to gather with friends and family to celebrate the season. Join us this fall in assuring no one goes without the food they need. Together, let’s put healthy foods on our neighbors’ tables while we work to dismantle the root causes of hunger.

For ways to get involved, visit:  
[foodlifeline.org/donate-fall-harvest/](https://foodlifeline.org/donate-fall-harvest/)

# HELPING

## Where Help is Needed Most

Crisp morning air, falling leaves, and pumpkin spice everything signals the annual transition from summer to fall. The abundance of the summer growing season releases its bounty to the fall harvest, and once again we are reminded of the incredible cooperation it takes between farmers, food donors, volunteers, and staff to help source and transfer this bounty into the hands of our neighbors who need it the most.



*"...all the food that I do not sell to my clients ends up being donated. No one should have to go hungry, and it brings me so much joy to know that I am helping provide nourishment to other people."*

— Jesús

While vitally important, what becomes available on our food bank partner shelves is only one aspect of the work we do to end hunger. While feeding people today is our most visible function (kind of like pumpkin

spice in your coffee) legislative efforts to end hunger take center stage in the fall. September is Hunger Action Month, a month where every partner in the Feeding America network works to elevate food insecurity at the local, state, and federal level. To truly end hunger, we have to feed people today while working to dismantle the systems that keep hunger and food insecurity in place. Hunger is a policy choice and we can choose differently. From universal school meals, to anti-poverty legislation like living wages, enhanced Child Tax Credits, and robust hunger relief programs in the farm bill, legislative efforts can dramatically uplift families and forever change the landscape of food insecurity. The tipping point comes when a critical mass of people work together to demand that no child, no person should be hungry, and we need your help. **Please consider becoming an advocate, volunteering or donating today at [foodlifeline.org](http://foodlifeline.org).**



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

FALLNEWSFY24

## HELP WHERE HELP IS NEEDED MOST

**I want to help families facing hunger receive the food they need to thrive!**  
*Visit [foodlifeline.org/newslettergift](http://foodlifeline.org/newslettergift) to donate*

- \$50 To help advocate for hunger relief legislation
- \$100 to help advance community led food programs
- \$75 to help build the movement to end hunger
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help our neighbors facing hunger
- Contribute By Mail

Mail to: 815 S 96th Street, Seattle, WA 98108-4934

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

MY EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_





### FOOD LIFELINE

FROM

I would like to make a one-time donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ using my credit card.

I would like to have my monthly contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ deducted from my checking account. *(I have included a voided check.)*

Please charge my credit card.

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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