

WINTER 2024

# AT THE TABLE

NEWS FROM THE HUNGER SOLUTION CENTER AT FOOD LIFELINE

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

## IN THIS EDITION

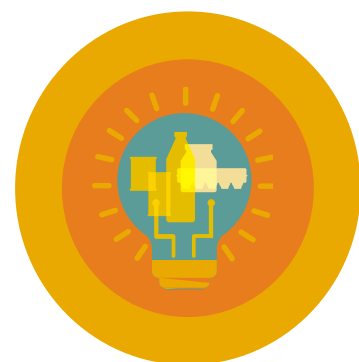
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*“There are no grocery stores here, and I have to go a long way to get to one. This food bank is in my neighborhood, and the food is so very good.”*

**— Mercedes, Providence Regina House Food Bank client**



# HAPPY NEW YEAR! CHEERS TO 2023 HIGHLIGHTS!



## AMAZON RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT FOOD INSECURITY, DONATES FOOD AND FUNDS TO “TOGETHER TO END HUNGER” CAMPAIGN

This holiday season, Food Lifeline partnered with Amazon, the Kraken fan community, and artist Stevie Shao with the shared goal “Together to end Hunger.” On November 22, Amazon hosted the “Together to End Hunger” Food Drive before the Seattle Kraken game to benefit Food Lifeline. The 1900 pounds of food they collected and donated will help fill the shelves of over 400 food banks, shelters, and food program locations across Western Washington. They also used their platform to widely publicize our mission and the rising rate of food insecurity in our region.

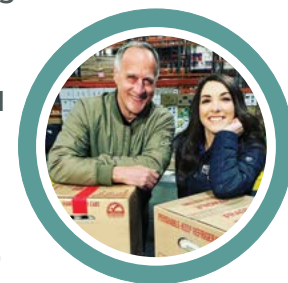
Local artist Stevie Shao painted live on the southwest plaza outside Climate Pledge Arena, and the “Together to End Hunger” Canvas she created was later delivered to our Hunger Solution Center for permanent display.

At the end of the first period, the Kraken, and the One Roof Foundation honored Food Lifeline with its “Hero of the Deep” award. The award recognizes and honors individuals doing outstanding work transforming lives and making a difference in our communities. Three members of the Food Lifeline transportation team were taken rink side for the presentation and accepted a grant check of \$32,000!

We’re grateful to Amazon, Seattle Kraken, and Stevie Shao for helping us raise awareness about the critical issue of food insecurity in the Puget Sound this holiday season. You can view a video on the campaign online. <https://foodlifeline.org/amazon/>

## KOMO NEWS AND FOOD LIFELINE TEAM UP TO RAISE OVER \$65,000 TO TACKLE HUNGER

Food Lifeline and KOMO News teamed up to raise over \$65,000 to tackle Hunger on February 10th. It was an action-packed day, with KOMO News crews reporting live at both the Hunger Solution Center, where volunteers sorted and packed food for distribution, and at the telethon in KOMO’s Seattle-based television studios, where volunteers staffed the phone bank to take donations from the public. BECU matched caller donations with a \$25,000 donation.



Special thanks to the sponsors of our special event with KOMO Tackle Hunger, BECU, Rich’s for the Home, Ford Genesis Hyundai of Kirkland, and Kroger’s Zero Hunger Zero Waste Foundation.



## **GENO SMITH AND DELTA RECOGNIZE FOOD LIFELINE DIRECTOR AARON CZYZEWSKI'S WORK ON MILITARY HUNGER**

On December 6, Food Lifeline's own Aaron Czyzewski, Director of Advocacy & Public Policy, was surprised by a team from Delta Air Lines and the Seattle Seahawks, led by no other than quarterback Geno Smith, with the Delta Community Captain's award.

In recognition of the advocacy work around military family and veteran hunger that Aaron and his team work tirelessly to advance, the Seahawks donated \$10,000 to invest in furthering this vital work. In Washington state, as many as 1 in 5 military households are facing food insecurity. Food Lifeline's Washington Military Family Hunger Advocacy Campaign aims to unite people and organizations all across Washington in support of veterans and our more than 160,000 service members, reservists, and their families that live in and around the state's 6 active duty military bases. Aaron has been instrumental in organizing for systemic changes and key legislation to ensure no military families go hungry, including the passage of a federal Military Family Basic Needs Allowance in 2021.

We thank Delta and the Seahawks for their recognition of our work around military and veteran hunger and their investment in helping us advance this important advocacy work.



# HELPING TO SOLVE HUNGER ONE NEIGHBORHOOD AT A TIME

*“When I first came here, I was so ashamed. I felt so bad. And they made me feel welcome. They learned my name, and that made me feel so good.”*

**—Angela, Providence Regina House Food Bank client**

It’s just before noon at the Providence Regina Food Bank in South Park, and the line out front is already wrapping around the street corner. Neighbors in this South Seattle neighborhood are chatting, children are bundled up against a recent cold snap, and there’s a sense of community among those who come here every Thursday for a week’s worth of nutritious food.

Inside, volunteers move with a sense of purpose as they fill long tables with fruits, vegetables, and pantry staples. Angela

Mork is stacking loaves of bread at the far end of this converted fire station. She’s been a volunteer here for a couple of years but first arrived as a guest in 2018.

**Angela** - *Angela volunteers at the food bank every week and then takes home*

*nutritious food to her husband and teenage son.*

**“When I first came here, I was so ashamed. I felt so bad. And they made me feel welcome. They learned my name, and that made me feel so good.”**

Angela comes here to help keep food on the table for herself, her husband, and her teenage son.

**“Rents started to go up a few years ago, money got a little tighter, and coming here was a way that I could help ease that burden on my family with what they provide here.”**

Even though her husband works full-time, the family struggles to afford the food they need to thrive. With rampant inflation and food costs rising nearly 30% in the past two years, shopping at traditional grocery stores has become a luxury they can’t afford.

**“At the grocery store, it’s now \$600 for what you used to get for \$300. It got to the point where I needed to pay other bills, but I also needed to figure out how to feed the family, so I came down here.”**

Mercedes, a mother of five, is also here for similar reasons. Originally from the Dominican Republic, she and her husband work full-time, yet they still can’t afford the food they need.

**“My son was sick, so I went to the grocery store to get ingredients for a soup. For one chicken, it was \$13. For the whole soup, it was \$35. Just the chicken and the vegetables.”**

**Mercedes** - *Mercedes relies on the fresh fruits and vegetables her food bank provides her as grocery prices continue to rise.*



Angela



Mercedes



Providence  
Regina House  
Food Bank

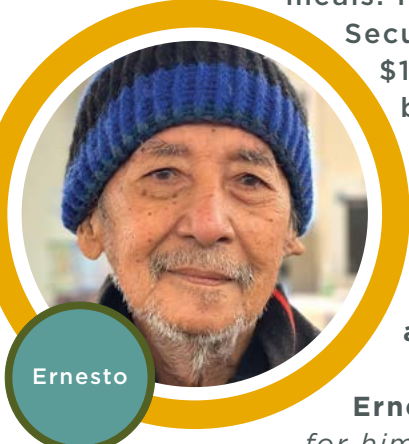


Hue

Mercedes also struggles because the South Park neighborhood is economically depressed and doesn't offer her anywhere to shop.

**“There are no grocery stores here, and I have to go a long way to get to one. This food bank is in my neighborhood, and the food is so very good.”**

Ernesto is an 83-year-old retired construction worker with bright blue eyes and a warm smile. Every week he picks up food that will help him create nutritious meals. He lives on Social Security and receives \$110 monthly in SNAP benefits,



**“It’s hard living on so little money. The food stamps help, but the food bank really makes a big difference.”**

Ernesto

**Ernesto** - *Ernesto cooks for himself every day, and the food he receives at the food bank helps keep him nourished and strong.*

It's not just the amount of food that Ernesto receives, it's the types of food. Today, Ernesto will take home his favorite.

**“I’m Filipino,” says Ernesto. “And we eat fish in our country, so it’s good to get the fish here that I like.”**

**Hue** - *“Social Security is not a lot of money. It’s hard. And we don’t get food stamps.”*

As the line begins to move through the food bank, volunteers greet the guests with smiles and hellos. They know most of them by name. A retired hospitality worker named Hue makes her way to the tables with fresh fruits and vegetables.

**“I like the apples, the oranges, all the things to make salads. These things have become very expensive.”**

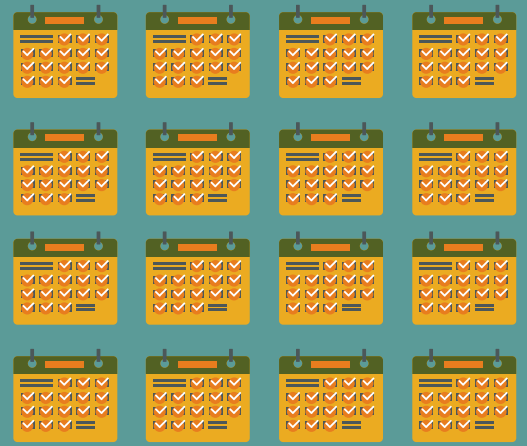
Food Lifeline has sourced these foods from the Amazon Fresh donation program, and according to Angela, they are quite popular with the guests.

**“The food we receive from Amazon is amazing. The produce is so fresh, you can really taste the difference! It is really good.”**

Providence Regina House Food Bank will serve more than a hundred neighbors today. Afterward, volunteers will begin putting away food, sweeping the floors, and turning out the lights, knowing in their hearts that they have once again made a difference in the lives of those around them. And that's a good thing.

*Supporting neighborhood food banks is critical to Food Lifeline's mission of 'feeding people experiencing food insecurity today while working to end hunger for tomorrow.' By learning the needs of communities, understanding the root causes of hunger, giving voices to those experiencing food insecurity, and building a movement to end hunger, we can end hunger in our lifetime.*

# COST OF LIVING IN WESTERN WASHINGTON DRIVES SURGE IN FOOD INSECURITY



## WORKING- AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES FEEL THE STRAIN OF RISING PRICES

Every year Food Lifeline compiles our hunger relief impact data from our network of agency partners. For fiscal year 2023, analyzing the data proved to be sobering. Neighbors seeking food assistance in Western Washington grew by 63% to more than 1.6 million. There is only one way to interpret this news, **food insecurity is heading in the wrong direction.** And while our food bank, shelter, and meal program partners are experiencing this surge in need, our friends at The University of Washington's School of Social Work are reinforcing the frontline reality. The UW recently published a report titled "Overlooked and Underfunded" which found the cost of basic life necessities grew by \$16,000 in a single year for a family of four. In a separate article published by Seattle Times, reporter Danny Westneat states, "the Seattle area ranks as the place with the fastest growing prices in the United States...The cost of living is escalating faster here than anyplace else." And most of this increase is due to three things - food, housing, and child care.

Through this lens, the true picture of hunger and food insecurity begins to come into focus. 35% of people facing food insecurity make above 185% of the federal poverty line - making them ineligible for public nutrition assistance programs. And the nutrition assistance provided by SNAP, WIC, and supports in the farm bill are inadequate to meet the needs even of the population that qualifies. We are serving more working families, BIPOC communities, single-parents, infants & toddlers, and older adults than every before.

Yet, even in the current environment, Food Lifeline is undeterred in our belief that food insecurity is solvable. The urgency of the need cannot be overstated, and the clarity that it requires both government support and private philanthropy together cannot be overlooked. We must meet people's food needs today while crafting long-term policy solutions that will end hunger for good. Read on for ways YOU can join in this effort to end hunger.



# END HUNGER IN 2024



## 10 WAYS YOU CAN HELP

1. **Sign up** for our advocacy team and help us win policy proposals in this upcoming legislative session that end the root causes of hunger: [foodlifeline.org/advocacy](https://foodlifeline.org/advocacy)
2. **Set up** a group volunteer session at Food Lifeline or your local food bank. (And make sure you check to see if your company offers **volunteer grants!**) Register at [foodlifeline.org/volunteer](https://foodlifeline.org/volunteer)
3. **Volunteer** at the source: Help with a harvest at the Food Bank Farm, which delivers hundreds of thousands of pounds of field-fresh produce to local food banks every year: <https://www.facebook.com/VeggiesforFoodBanks>
4. **Host a food drive**—online or virtual--for your work/school/organization.
5. **Write a letter to the editor** for your local paper in support of **policies that will alleviate hunger**, such as a **strong Farm Bill** (which includes SNAP), **Universal Free School lunch**, or a **wealth tax**.
6. If you're never faced food insecurity, **challenge yourself to buy food for the day with \$5.89**, which is the **daily average budget** for someone receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in Washington state.
7. College hunger is often overlooked, yet nearly 40% of students don't get enough to eat. The University of Washington Food Pantry **reported** that the number of students it serves doubled this year and its inventory is running low. Consider donating, volunteering, or advocating for your local college food pantry.
8. **Stay informed** on critical hunger-related issues by choosing some food justice publications and organizations to follow this year on social media, such as **FRAC**, **Civil Eats**, or one of our **Community Food Sovereignty Fund Grant Partners**.
9. **Encourage** your employer to partner with us, either as an **advocacy partner**, or as a **corporate partner**.
10. **Raise awareness** on the issue of food insecurity in Western Washington by following and sharing our posts on **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **Twitter**, and by **subscribing** to our **monthly newsletter**.

# FOOD LIFELINE SERVICE IMPACT FY 2023



We served **1,603,571** neighbors facing hunger through our partner network

A **63%** increase from FY22

We distributed **72,838,554** lbs of food, a **9.5%** increase from FY22

**14,160** dedicated volunteers provided **46,557** hours of service, representing the equivalent of **22** full-time employees

We served over **100,000** infants and toddlers aged 0-2, and over **300,000** adults, **55+**

We invested **\$695,000**

IN **17** Community Food Sovereignty Programs



This food assistance represents **60,698,795** meals

**233,457** MEALS nourish neighbors every day

We partner with **296** organizations at **402** locations throughout

**17** counties in Western Washington

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

WINNEWSFY24

## WITH YOUR HELP WE CAN RESOLVE TO END HUNGER

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 community-based solutions
- \$100 to help offset the high cost of food
- \$150 to help infants & toddlers thrive
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ to grow my gift for good
- Contribute By Mail

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

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
MY EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

### FOOD LIFELINE

- 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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FROM

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