

SPRING 2024

AT THE TABLE

NEWS FROM THE HUNGER SOLUTION CENTER AT FOOD LIFELINE



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



Grow
Your Gift
on page 8

“Sometimes you need things, and sometimes you have time to give, to help. So, it’s very good.”

— Yen, Renewal Food Bank Client

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TELETHON RAISES HUNGER AWARENESS IN THE NORTHWEST



KOMO AND FOOD LIFELINE TEAM UP TO TACKLE HUNGER

KOMO News and Food Lifeline teamed up February 9th to raise nearly \$50,000 to help our neighbors facing food insecurity in Western Washington. 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 studios, where volunteers staffed phone banks to take donations from the public.

Many thanks to the sponsors of our special event with KOMO Tackle Hunger, BECU, and Seattle Hyundai and Seattle Jeep. BECU matched caller donations with a **\$25,000 donation** and had volunteer teams sorting food at Food Lifeline's Hunger Solution Center, and answering phones at KOMO's studios. Seattle Hyundai and Seattle Jeep sponsored a food drive at their dealerships, collecting over 800 pounds of food that was then delivered to Food Lifeline.

The food and funds come at a critical time, as the rate of food insecurity in our region surged dramatically over the past year with the end of pandemic supports and the rising cost of living. Over 1.6 million neighbors in Western Washington sought food assistance last year. KOMO's coverage of food insecurity in Western Washington has helped to bring public attention to the critical state of hunger in the Puget Sound.



FRED MEYER/ QFC DONATION SUPPORTS 1.5 MILLION MEALS



FRED MEYER/QFC DONATES 1.5 MILLION MEALS TO FOOD LIFELINE

During the recent holiday food drive, QFC & Fred Meyer customers purchased a \$10 Virtual Bag of healthy and nutritious food. The funds raised allowed the grocer to source and distribute \$330,752 in highly desired nutrient dense food. Delivered on February 15, 2024, our receiving and volunteer production team quickly got to work sorting and repacking this donation for distribution to our 296 network partners throughout Western Washington, providing our neighbors facing hunger with the equivalent of more than 1.5 MILLION meals.

“In our last fiscal year, we saw the need spike dramatically as we served more than 1.6 million neighbors across Western Washington with food assistance”, says Chief Development Officer Ryan Scott, “As cost of living continues to stretch our local families’ budgets, we rely on the significant support of our friends at Fred Meyer/QFC and are extremely grateful for their generous gift.”

Casey Crane, Food Resources and Volunteer Production Director, says **“this donation provides 5 truckloads of nutritionally dense food that not only directly supports our community members experiencing food insecurity, but in turn reduces the volume of quality consumable food that often ends up in landfills and increases carbon emissions.”**

Food Lifeline is grateful to Fred Meyer/QFC for investing in the mission to end hunger both in food and environmental stewardship. **“Fred Meyer/QFC is on a mission to end hunger in the places we call home,”** says Tiffany Sanders, manager of corporate affairs for Fred Meyer and QFC stores. **“There is a fundamental absurdity in our food system: 35% of the food produced in the U.S. is thrown away, yet an estimated 42 million Americans struggle with hunger.”**

This donation is a continuation of Fred Meyer/QFC’s deep commitment to ending hunger. During 2023, Fred Meyer/QFC directed a record one-year total of 2.1 million meals to local food banks to fight food insecurity and hunger in the state of Washington. At the same time, Fred Meyer/QFC associates have rescued 594,000 thousand pounds of wholesome food from stores, food processing plants and distribution centers, meaning 460,257 meals provided by reclaimed food.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF OUR NEIGHBORS FACING HUNGER

“There are people here who are not lazy, they’ve just had an unfortunate set of circumstances, and they are struggling.”

—Ana, Renewal Food Bank Client



Ana

It’s noon on Wednesday, and the West Seattle Food Bank already has a line outside that wraps around SW Morgan Street. Stephanie and Jeremy patiently wait in this line, with their winter coats and a handful of reusable bags.

After they do their shopping, they kindly agree to share their experience with us.

The couple have been coming here for more than a year now, picking up food that helps nourish both themselves and their teenage son. Stephanie was recently laid off from Amazon, and Jeremy’s business has been slow. While there’s some money coming in, it’s not enough to ensure the family has the food it needs.

Like many people who struggle with food insecurity for the first time, coming to the food bank was a hard decision for the couple. But the realization that this could happen to them, was even harder to ponder.

“You go to college, you go to work, and you keep moving up,” says Jeremy. “You never think that in your mid-forties that you’re going to struggle. Struggle to the point where you’re going to have to make hard decisions.” With rising food prices, those decisions have become a harsh reality.

“\$100 at the grocery store doesn’t get us anywhere near the amount of food it used to,” says Stephanie. “So, we either spend more money or pay the gas bill and keep the heat on.”

While Jeremy does the families cooking, he says the food they receive here is making a huge difference in their lives.

“We get eggs, vegetables, meats, and canned goods. It really helps supplement the food that we’re able to afford at the grocery store.”

Stephanie tells us she’s just had a job interview a few days before, and thinks she has a good shot at getting the job. Jeremy says he expects his business to pick up in the Spring. For what they lack in income right now, they more than make up for in hope. And the comfort of having somewhere to turn when life gets hard.



Jeremy and Stephanie



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.



The White Center Food Bank has been providing food, hope, and compassion to those experiencing food insecurity in their neighborhood for nearly fifty years. There has been much to celebrate over those years, but nothing as big as finding their forever home.

The food bank recently moved into its new home on 16th Avenue SW. Not only is the location closer to public transportation, and twice the size of their old building (10,000 square feet), but it's theirs - both the building, and the land.

“It’s huge to own our own property,” says Heather Crandall, White Center Food Bank’s Volunteer Manager. **“We don’t have to be worried about being displaced. Displacement has been the story of our neighbors here. Now, we’ll be here as long as the community needs us.”**

The White Center Food Bank is open four days a week, offering nutritious food and baby supplies to nearly 11,000 families. This includes 600 families served offsite through home delivery, satellite pantries, and partnerships with organizations like Sea Mar Community Health Centers.

But what makes the White Center Food Bank truly unique, is the variety of different cultures the organization serves.



“If you take a walk around White Center, you’ll notice that everything - restaurants, grocery stores, and small businesses - are remarkably diverse.” Says Crandall. **“From the Asian cultures to the Hispanic and Arabic cultures, White Center represents them all. I think speaks to what White Center has always been - a working class neighborhood with diversity.”**



That diversity poses a unique opportunity to the 15 staff members and 536 volunteers that run the White Center Food Bank. Their team speaks nine languages and they hope to bring in more language capacity to provide increased ability to communicate.

“Customers love being able to communicate in their first language, and volunteers and staff love sharing their language skills to make customers feel at home,” says a smiling Crandall.

Moving forward, the White Center Food Bank is working to source more culturally relevant foods, creating new partnerships with food growers and suppliers, and is currently working on a new strategic plan that will drive deeper connection with the community.

HUNGER ACTION DAY

"I am grateful for the opportunity to meet with legislators to share how communities like South Park can benefit and thrive through funding in anti-hunger bills."

—Raina Anderson, Food Lifeline Advocate



WASHINGTON HUNGER ADVOCATES GATHERED IN OLYMPIA FEB. 1 TO LOBBY FOR ANTI-HUNGER AND ANTI-POVERTY POLICIES

Hunger advocates from across the state filed into the pews of the United Churches of Olympia early on the morning of Feb 1, filling the building to capacity and creating a sea of orange with their scarves. They were there for Hunger Action Day, the Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition's annual lobby day when food banks, community organizations, and other advocates join forces in Olympia to meet with their representatives and advocate for policies to reduce hunger in Washington.

The annual advocacy day felt especially critical this year, given how significantly food insecurity has surged in the past year. Advocacy efforts centered on urging legislators to invest in free school meals, expanding the Working Families Tax Credit, adopting a more flexible Temporary Aid to Needy Families, creating a basic income pilot program, and encouraging food donation investments that reduce waste and increase available food for food relief agencies across the state.

"It's absolutely unacceptable that there are people who are hungry in this country and I am committed to making sure that we get everyone the food that they need, that we get everyone the basic needs that they need... I'm passionate about making sure that everyone has a home, everyone has food, high-quality childcare. We can do this. It does take money, but I'm also committed to raising the revenue and the progressive revenue that's necessary to make investments that help everyone thrive."

- Representative Emily Alvarado (D-34, Seattle)



"We're grateful to Rep. Tina Orwall (D-33, Seattle) for taking the time to listen to our concerns. Her willingness to listen and empathize created an environment for our community to come up with creative solutions that directly benefit the people on the front lines fighting against hunger in the 33rd."

-Torrence Dixon, Take Me There Foundation



SAVE THE DATE



@ FOOD LIFELINE

GET INVOLVED! • ATTEND • DONATE • VOLUNTEER • ADVOCATE

JOIN US FOR SAVOR APRIL 20, 2024

Join us as we partner with some of the region's finest chefs to end hunger in Western Washington! Come together with your guests and fellow Food Lifeline supporters to enjoy an unforgettable dinner in the beautiful Cedarbrook Lodge. You'll hear how we are responding to rising food insecurity in our region, and how we need you to be involved. To learn more and to purchase tickets visit foodlifeline.org/savor

GIVE BIG! MAY 7 - 8, 2024

Double Your Donation through GiveBig! Support your favorite charity during the largest two-day donation drive across Washington state. We combine your donation with a generous match pool to double your impact!



To donate visit foodlifeline.org/givebig

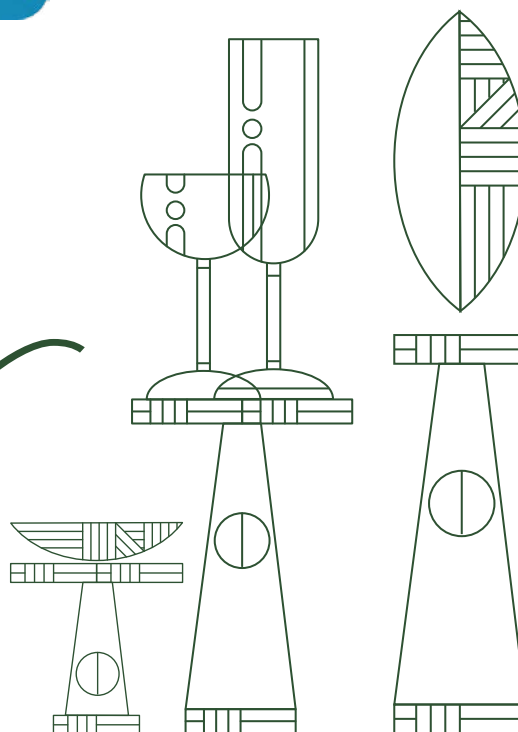
STAMP OUT HUNGER MAY 11, 2024

It's the biggest single day canned food drive across the country! Fill your donation bag and leave it by your mailbox for your letter carriers pick up. There are also volunteer opportunities for anyone ages 16+ to help load donated bags of food at a local post office for our drivers to bring back to the Hunger Solution Center. Check our page for volunteer sign ups! To learn more visit foodlifeline.org/stampouthunger



FOOD LIFELINE savor

SAVOR THE EXPERIENCE.
SUPPORT ENDING HUNGER.



APR
20th
2024

GROW YOUR GIFT FOR GOOD



The past year has been a challenging one for the neighbors we serve—and for all of us. The high cost of living in Greater Seattle and Western Washington, and declining assistance programs have created a significant surge in demand for food assistance. In the face of this daunting community need, Food Lifeline persists in our efforts to nourish our neighbors by providing food assistance today and working toward changing the policies and systems that foster and perpetuate food insecurity. As we enter the

spring growing season, we are reminded that just like a garden, each year we must renew the soil and provide proper nourishment to establish strong roots for our mission to thrive.



“Sometimes we get chicken we get beef, and even vegetables. It helps so much. I come here once a week, and it’s enough food until the next week.”

—Yen

And each person engaged with Food Lifeline is part of this dynamic, healthy, root structure. From staff and volunteers, to advocates, community partners, and financial donors, together we create the healthy root system necessary to help our neighbors in Western Washington living with hunger. At Food Lifeline, we take even the smallest financial contribution and **GROW THAT GIFT FOR GOOD.**

From every donation, we turn pennies into dollars of buying power, helping to stock the shelves of our food bank partners throughout 17-counties in Western Washington while advancing public policy initiatives at the local, state, and federal level designed to reduce poverty, and uplift the more than 1.6 million neighbors we served in the last year. Here’s where you come in. By giving a greater gift, together we can achieve greater good. We invite you to help meet the growing demand for food assistance in Western Washington. By stretching your donation, we can reach even more individuals and families in need. Please give as generously as you can.

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 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: _____

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- 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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