

THE DISH



FALL 2023



Rev. Roy Phillips



Shane & his daughter

“Coming here gives me hope that you have people who really care about you.”
—Shane

DELIVERING HOPE AT A CRITICAL TIME

Reverend Roy Phillips pulls into All Saints Episcopal Church at 6:30 a.m. on a warm Saturday in July. He's there to help unpack pallets of food for the Food Bank's mobile pantry—a program delivering fresh and shelf-stable food to communities in need. This has been Roy's routine for the last twelve years as the church's Mobile Pantry Coordinator.

With each interaction, Roy offers kindness, support, and respect to anyone seeking food assistance. “We get a lot of people that will thank us for what we're doing. I've had people break down in tears. Some of them say, 'I really hate to do this,' and I say, 'Don't worry, that's what we're here for.'”

Roy believes no one should be treated differently because they need extra help. “You come through the line, and we treat you like you're one of us, because you are one of us.”

Shane and his eight-year-old daughter appreciated that kindness as they pulled into the pantry for the first time. Shane opened up about his current situation and the toll it has taken on him. “I've been struggling financially. I recently got laid off and I've not been able to find work, so I'm behind on rent.”

Despite the challenges, Shane is beyond grateful for the support from his community. “This is my first time here and it means the world to me.”

As Heartland neighbors continue to navigate economic hardships—we urgently need your continued support. All Saints Mobile Pantry is just one of more than 500 Network Partners tirelessly serving our neighbors across Nebraska and western Iowa. In FY 2023, the Food Bank distributed more than 22.2 million meals. This work can only be accomplished through the help of generous donors like you.

We know that the impact of a meal goes well beyond feeding our bodies. When neighbors are fed with healthy food, futures are nourished and individuals—like Shane and his family—can go from just living to truly thriving.

Scan the QR code or visit FoodBankHeartland.org/donate to support the Food Bank's hunger-relief programs and help provide hope for a better tomorrow.



OUR MISSION

To eliminate hunger in the Heartland by ensuring consistent access to healthy foods through community partnerships.

A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

I want to take this moment and share my gratitude for each of you. I am in awe of your compassion for the Food Bank's mission.

Stories of hope continue to permeate our community—like Rev. Roy Phillips and his commitment to serve with equity and respect.

Or our friends at Omaha Steaks, who recently made one of their largest donations to date—nearly \$400,000 worth of food. That food was distributed across our network of partners including Heart Ministry Center in Omaha, where Ashley—a pantry recipient—was overwhelmed with gratefulness. “If someone took this away, I would be heartbroken. I see the steaks here and think they go above and beyond their duty.”



Todd Simon, President & CEO of Omaha Steaks & Brian Barks

I also want to highlight the owners of Rocco's Pizza, who took a wild idea, and turned it on its head to help people facing hunger across the country—and here in the Heartland. What started as a fun Jell-O shot competition during the College World Series, resulted in more than \$47,000 for Food Bank for the Heartland. Those funds provided more than 141,000 meals to neighbors in need.

As we enter a season of gratitude, I want to end with a thank you. Thank you for joining us to create a healthier Heartland. When you feel overwhelmed this season, look for the helpers. If you look close enough, you'll find them everywhere.



Brian Barks
President & CEO

FY 2023 COMMUNITY IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



1,517,962 INDIVIDUALS

served across the Heartland. In our service area, **1 in 11** people is facing hunger, including **1 in 9** children, **1 in 6** Hispanic individuals and **1 in 3** Black individuals.



26,757,685 POUNDS OF FOOD

distributed to neighbors in need. That includes **6,800,223** pounds of fresh produce.



22,298,071 MEALS

distributed across **93** counties in Nebraska and western Iowa.



403 MOBILE PANTRIES

distributed **2,466,061** meals.



339,975 MILES

driven by the Food Bank fleet, covering our **78,000**-square-mile service area.



39,800 VOLUNTEER HOURS

donated by individuals, corporations, and civic groups. That's the equivalent of nearly **20** full-time employees.



18,679 SNAP APPLICATIONS

submitted through our Nebraska and Iowa SNAP Outreach teams.

CALLING ALL DIFFERENCE MAKERS!

Looking to get involved with the Food Bank? There are a variety of upcoming opportunities to take a stand in the fight against hunger over the next several months. To learn more about all the ways you can make a difference, visit FoodBankHeartland.org.

HUNGER ACTION MONTH

There's still time to take action during September's Hunger Action Month! Visit our website to make a monetary donation today, and every gift will go twice as far. The Michael & Michelle Berlin Family Foundation, Neil & Elissa Hamill, and a friend of the Food Bank are providing a total matching gift of up to **\$70,000!**

SHINE THE LIGHT ON HUNGER

For the 17th consecutive year—the Shine the Light on Hunger campaign, championed by Conagra Brands Foundation—will kick off in November. This campaign invites the community to help support Heartland neighbors in need through December 31. We look forward to sharing more details soon on this important campaign.

GIVING TUESDAY

Join us on November 28 for Giving Tuesday—a global day of giving. This national campaign highlights the generosity of our region. You can support the Food Bank in a multitude of ways, providing hope and relief to neighbors across Nebraska and western Iowa who don't know how they'll afford their next meal. Stayed tuned to our website for more details.

PLUS

You can also get involved by joining The Foodies—an organization of volunteers dedicated to supporting the Food Bank. Learn more about this group and their annual wine-tasting event this November—A Generous Pour—by visiting our website.

Donating your time is another way to make a significant contribution to our communities. Sign up for one of our shifts at FoodBankHeartland.org today!

GIVE TODAY, NOURISH TOMORROW

Food Bank for the Heartland's Heirloom Legacy Circle is a thoughtful group of supporters who have included the Food Bank in their estate plan. This is a simple and impactful way to meet your financial planning needs while providing critical nutrition—for years to come. Food is a basic need, yet thousands of our neighbors are facing hunger. Making a legacy gift is a convenient way to create a lasting impact and feed future generations.

If you'd like to learn more, please reach out to our Director of Development, Joanne Kamppinen at JKamppinen@FoodBankHeartland.org.



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It is important to me to sustain the practice of providing critical meals across the Heartland—even when I am gone. If I can continue to help make lives better for others, I want to do so. Including Food Bank for the Heartland in my estate plan will make this possible.

— Stephanie Wernig, Ph.D and Heirloom Legacy Circle Member



An Evening with

GAIL SIMMONS

Thursday, February 15, 2024 · 5:30 – 9:00 p.m.
CHI Health Center · 455 N 10th St, Omaha, NE 68102

We are excited to announce that our Celebrity Chef for the Food Bank's **23rd annual Celebrity Chef event** is culinary expert, cookbook author, food writer, and television personality **Gail Simmons!** You may recognize Gail from Bravo's Emmy-winning series—Top Chef. Gail is also a huge advocate in the fight against hunger. She sits on the board of several nonprofits and philanthropic endeavors, including City Harvest and Hot Bread Kitchen in New York City.

Join us on February 15 and make a significant impact for thousands of neighbors facing hunger. Get your tickets today at FoodBankHeartland.org. We hope to see you there!



WELCOME, NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

Five new members have been appointed to the Food Bank's Board of Directors. Pictured from left to right, please welcome **Eva Roberts**, Director of Policy and Strategy at Front Porch Investments; **Alejandra Jimenez**, Program Manager, DEI Training & Development for the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce; **Ellie Barko**, Director of Construction Operations at Blair Freeman; **Shawn Bengtson**, EVP, Chief Risk Officer at WoodmenLife; and **Karen Black**, VP, Research & Development for Conagra Brands.

These individuals are joining the board at a critical time. Their expertise, community leadership, and knowledge will be invaluable as the Food Bank continues to navigate historic levels of food insecurity across Nebraska and western Iowa.

FY 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chad Werner, Chair
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska

Steve Wallace, Chair-Elect
PayPal

Susan Violi, Secretary
Baxter Auto

Brian Barks, President
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Ellie Barko
Blair Freeman

Jill Bazzell-Stenstrom
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Shawn Bengtson
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Karen Black
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