

THE DISH



FALL 2024



PARTNER
FOOD BANK OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**



RIISING TO MEET THE NEED: THE FOOD BANK'S NEW FACILITY

On June 2nd, Food Bank for the Heartland publicly kicked off the Capital Campaign for our future facility on 84th & L in Omaha, but the decision to find a new space was made more than three years ago.

Food Bank for the Heartland is serving more than 4x the number of households compared to 2018. The unprecedented need for food, paired with ongoing economic uncertainties and the limited structure of our current facility, led us to broader discussions several years ago on how to serve our neighbors more equitably, efficiently, and responsibly.

This move is imperative for the future of the Food Bank and the 93 counties we serve. It will allow us to expand upon our mission—setting the stage for innovative solutions to alleviate hunger.

A critical improvement is increased storage capacity for cold and frozen food items to support more produce, protein, and dairy. A larger Protein Repack Room will allow us to source and process much-needed protein, providing greater nourishment for

neighbors in need. We are one of nine Food Banks—across Feeding America's Network of 200—to have a Protein Repack Room.

Our new Protein Repack Room will be 4,300 square feet—a 614% increase from our current space. Not only will it provide us with more space to better serve neighbors, but it will also deliver potential opportunities to be a regional protein partner, providing this service to other food banks.

The Food Bank's overall footprint will grow by 41%—providing increased volunteer project space to maximize the generosity of our community, allowing more volunteers to repack more food, and increase parking stalls by 90%—for an enhanced volunteer experience.

Our mission is to eliminate hunger by providing consistent access to healthy foods through community partnerships. To do that as well as possible, we need a larger and more efficient facility. We look forward to growing with donors, like you, on our side!

"My involvement with the Food Bank has opened my eyes to the extraordinary need. As Co-Chair of the Capital Campaign Advisory Committee, I look forward to working with our community to support Heartland families for years to come."

— Paul Maass, CEO of Scoular



Help us build a healthier Heartland! Right now, all gifts made to our Capital Campaign will be matched up to \$1,000,000 thanks to the Scoular Foundation.

BuildAHealthierHeartland.org

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

"It's a great time to be a Food Banker," is a line I'm constantly sharing with our team, because I truly believe it. Right now, that statement is particularly evident. As you may have read on the front cover, we have publicly launched our Capital Campaign for our new facility. Words cannot express how proud I am of our team, Board of Directors, community partners and donors for their dedication to bringing this moment to fruition.



Members of Food Bank for the Heartland's Board of Directors at the Food Bank's Groundbreaking Ceremony on Sunday, June 2nd, 2024.

As the need for food assistance across the Heartland has grown to unforeseen levels, the Food Bank continues to operate out of a building that greatly undermines our ability to deploy our mission. We know that our neighbors—who are making unthinkable decisions—deserve better, which is why we found ourselves at a crossroads. How do we balance the

urgency to grow with the need to do so responsibly? That question has led us to years of thoughtful research, arduous planning, and honest conversations with various stakeholders at the Food Bank, as well as those within the food security industry.



Brian Barks addressing the crowd at the Food Bank's Groundbreaking Ceremony.

As steadfast stewards of your support, we are pursuing this opportunity with the goal of providing higher quantities of healthy food to more people, more quickly—to ultimately build a healthier Heartland. It has been an exciting, and at times complicated journey, but I'm beyond thrilled to commemorate this vital step forward in the fight against hunger.

I invite you to learn more by visiting our new Capital Campaign website BuildAHealthierHeartland.org. You'll find details on the timeline, renderings, and more on why this facility is needed—for the Food Bank—and our neighbors in need.

Brian Barks
President & CEO

FY 2024 COMMUNITY IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



1,565,449 INDIVIDUALS served across the Heartland. In our service area, currently **1 in 8** people is facing hunger, including **1 in 5** children.



384,317 MILES driven by the Food Bank fleet, covering our **78,000**-square-mile service area.



383 MOBILE PANTRY EVENTS distributed **2,687,108** meals.



52,497 VOLUNTEER HOURS donated to the Food Bank. That's the equivalent of more than **26** full-time employees.



18,263 SNAP APPLICATIONS submitted through our Nebraska & Iowa SNAP Outreach teams and their partners.

COMMUNITY CORNER

Ready to be a difference maker? Check out the upcoming opportunities to take a stand in the fight against hunger this fall.



HUNGER ACTION MONTH

You still have time to make a difference in September! Thanks to the Michael & Michelle Berlin Family Foundation and David & Jane Offutt, all **donations will be matched up to \$65,000** through the end of September to make twice the impact on Heartland communities.

GET READY FOR THE HOLIDAYS WITH THE FOODIES

The Foodies is an organization of volunteers dedicated to supporting the Food Bank through exciting fundraising events throughout the year. Join the group on Oct. 23rd for their annual wine-tasting event, *A Generous Pour*, where you can purchase wines at special prices. Visit FoodBankHeartland.org/Foodies to purchase your tickets.



FEAST & FEATHERS

Help neighbors in need while getting active. Mark your calendars for the annual Feast & Feathers run—benefiting the Food Bank—on Thanksgiving Day. Register now at FeastandFeathers.com.

SHINE THE LIGHT ON HUNGER

Championed by Conagra Brands Foundation and entering its 18th year, this vital campaign helps support Heartland families and individuals during the holiday season. It kicks off in mid-November and runs through December 31st. Be sure to visit our website for the latest information on how you can double your impact thanks to a generous match!



We want to recognize the **Cozad Haymaker Grand Generation Center**—one of the Food Bank's Network Partners—who recently celebrated its 40th anniversary with a special fundraiser. The event raised \$10,000, which they graciously donated to the Food Bank. Thank you for helping the community of Cozad access healthy food and working with us to alleviate hunger.

CALLING ALL ADVOCATES!



Become a Food Bank advocate today!

FoodBankHeartland.org/advocacy

The Food Bank is committed to eliminating hunger by advocating for sustainable ways to provide nutritious foods to our communities. We are calling on you to stand alongside us as we build a broader movement to end hunger and become a Food Bank advocate.

Receive updated information on how you can affect change in your community and take action to stop hunger in its place. Your voice is imperative as we work together to find food security solutions for our neighbors.

CELEBRITY CHEF ANNOUNCEMENT!

For the first time ever, Food Bank for the Heartland's annual Celebrity Chef fundraising event will not only feature a national Celebrity Chef, but also a culinary cook-off between some of Omaha's top chefs!

Mark your calendars for the Food Bank's largest and most anticipated fundraiser on **Thursday, March 6th** at the CHI Health Center. Your support will help the Food Bank provide **2.1 million meals**—at a time when food insecurity levels have never been higher across the Heartland.



This year's Celebrity Chef is an eight-time James Beard Award-winning chef, owner of Crafted Hospitality, author, producer, social justice advocate, and current judge of Bravo's Top Chef—**Tom Colicchio**!

The chefs below have revolutionized Omaha's restaurant scene and include **Tim Nicholson**—Executive Chef of Boiler Room and four-time James Beard nominee, most recently named a 2024 finalist for Best Chef Midwest, **Nick Strawhecker**—chef and owner of Dante, Omaha's first restaurant specializing in Neapolitan pizza, and **David Utterback**—chef and owner of Yoshitomo, Koji and a James Beard Award first finalist (and previous three-time semifinalist) for Best Chef, Midwest. Yoshitomo was also a 2024 national semifinalist for Outstanding Restaurant.



Tim Nicholson



Nick Strawhecker



David Utterback

Also new this year, the evening will feature guest judges! Our judge panel includes long-time Omaha food reporter **Sarah Baker Hansen** and Advanced Sommelier and General Manager of V. Mertz, **Matthew Brown**.

You won't want to miss this exclusive event. Table sponsorships and tickets are on sale now. For sponsorship information, please contact Erin Burke at Eburke@FoodBankHeartland.org. We can't wait to see you there!



Visit FoodBankHeartland.org/CelebrityChef today!

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Two new members have been appointed to Food Bank for the Heartland's Board of Directors. **Janel Allen**, Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer at Children's Nebraska, and **Paul Cech**, COO of Woodhouse Auto Family. These individuals were thoughtfully selected for their expertise, community leadership, and passion to find creative solutions in the fight against hunger.

The Food Bank's board is comprised of 22 driven leaders committed to providing healthier outcomes for children, families, seniors, and veterans experiencing food insecurity in Nebraska and western Iowa.

We also want to express our gratitude to the departing board members whose terms have ended. Board service is a challenging volunteer role, and these community members embraced their duties with dedication, grace, and integrity. Thank you, **Eric Arneson** from Lindsay Corporation and **Matt DeBoer** from HDR for your commitment and effort to improve the overall health of our communities.



10525 J Street Omaha, NE 68127
402.331.1213 · FoodBankHeartland.org