

THE DISH



SPRING 2023

MEET CHASE

Declining resources for students, inflation, and limited part-time job opportunities are all contributing factors to the rising issue of hunger on college campuses. Chase, a college student in Omaha—can attest to these hardships. “I was using COVID-19 grants to pay for tuition, but I still couldn’t afford books, everyday necessities and groceries.”

After his first quarter in college, Chase received assistance through The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP

is the largest anti-hunger program in the country, helping thousands of Nebraskans and lowans afford high quality food. While temporary SNAP benefits helped Chase fill a critical gap—he quickly realized he needed more support. “Part of the reason I’m in this position is because of how high everything is. Simple items like chips are close to \$6. If you want to watch a movie with friends, even bringing snacks is expensive.”

Chase recently visited one of the Food Bank’s Network Pantry

Partners for additional help. He encourages others not to feel ashamed about needing assistance. “None of us are perfect. And sometimes we need to ask for help, and that can be a very healthy thing to do.”



THREE REASONS COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE STRUGGLING TO AFFORD FOOD

- 1. Rising tuition costs.** Adjusted for inflation, the cost of college increased by more than 25% in the last 10 years.
- 2. College meal plans are expensive.** The average meal plan costs about \$4,500 per year for a three-meal-a-day plan. Many colleges require students to have a meal plan if they live on campus.
- 3. The “traditional” college student is changing.** Students are delaying college. 1 in 5 students is caring for a child and many are single parents.

Food Bank for the Heartland is committed to ensuring that our neighbors in need—including college students—have consistent access to healthy food. The Food Bank partners with Metro Community College in Omaha, and looks forward to working with additional colleges in the future to help alleviate food insecurity among college students across our two-state service area.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD ON SNAP LEGISLATION

We need your help ensuring Nebraskans and lowans can easily apply for and access SNAP benefits. At both the federal and state levels, there are legislative bills addressing SNAP-related issues. Scan the QR code below or visit FoodBankHeartland.org/Advocacy for more information on the bills and resources on how you can get involved. Together—we can create a healthier Heartland—one voice a time.



Click me!
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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

April is my favorite month of the year.

Winter is over, golf season is here and it's National Volunteer Month. At Food Bank for the Heartland, volunteers play a crucial role in helping our neighbors in need gain consistent access to nutritious food. With their dedication, thousands of community boxes and more than 8,300 BackPacks are packed each week—helping Heartland neighbors and students thrive. It's because of our committed volunteers that events like Celebrity Chef are a huge success for our organization.

I had the pleasure of touring our facility with Chef Marcus Samuelsson prior to our event. Besides being a world-renowned chef, Marcus is also a philanthropist and food activist, working to raise awareness of food insecurity across the world. I've met many well-known chefs over the years, but I have never met one so passionately tied to our cause. Samuelsson—who struggled with hunger as a child—uses his past hardships to provide a brighter future for those in need. He was astonished by the Food Bank's operations, our vast service area, and the dedication of our volunteers.

Thank you to all volunteers who donated their time for our Celebrity Chef event. Your support was a tremendous help in making this one of our most successful fundraisers. **We appreciate each of you for supporting our mission: to eliminate hunger in the Heartland by ensuring consistent access to healthy foods through community partnerships.**



Brian Barks
President & CEO



CHEF MARCUS SAMUELSSON LEADS LARGEST CELEBRITY CHEF FUNDRAISER

Nearly 1,000 guests gathered at the CHI Health Center for Food Bank for the Heartland's 22nd annual Celebrity Chef event with acclaimed chef Marcus Samuelsson. With the public's generous support, the Food Bank exceeded our 2.4 million meal goal—raising more than 2.8 million meals and counting! Funds will be used to provide nutritional meals to thousands of children, families, seniors, and veterans across the Food Bank's 93-county service area.

Thank you to everyone who played a role in making this event a huge success—whether you purchased a table or ticket, bid on or donated an auction item, were a sponsor, volunteered, or made a gift to "Feed the Need," you made a lasting impact on our most vulnerable neighbors. We are grateful for your steadfast support and your dedication to the fight against hunger.

Click the QR code to view and download photos from the event.



HAPPY NATIONAL VOLUNTEER MONTH

April is National Volunteer Month, and we want to say THANK YOU to our dedicated volunteers. We appreciate everyone who has generously given their valuable time to support our mission.

Volunteers are critical to Food Bank for the Heartland's mission. Without their commitment, we would not be able to provide consistent access to healthy food to the 1 in 10 people—including 1 in 7 children struggling with hunger across the Heartland.

Among other activities, individuals, families, businesses, and civic groups package non-perishable items for our mobile pantries, and Backpack meals for children five days a week. In FY 2022, our volunteers donated more than 33,000 hours—the equivalent of nearly 16 full-time employees!

Every volunteer hour provides hope to Heartland neighbors for a better tomorrow. Interested in volunteering or organizing a group to volunteer? Click the QR code today.



HELP STUDENTS SUCCEED

The Backpack Program is one of many programs the Food Bank supports to alleviate childhood hunger—providing weekend meals for children whose families have limited resources. Each week during the school year, 8,381 packs of easy-to-prepare or ready-to-eat nutritious food are distributed to children in 253 schools across Nebraska and western Iowa. In portions of the Food Bank's service area, the Backpack Program is the only food assistance option to which families have access.



Thanks to the generosity of Woodhouse Auto Family, you can make an even larger impact in the lives of Heartland children. Any gift made will be matched—dollar for dollar—up to \$500,000 providing twice as many Backpack meals across our service area.

A \$164 donation will sponsor 1 child for the entire school year.

Your gift will nourish Heartland students, enabling them to thrive personally and academically. Click the QR code to make a difference today.



HONOR LOVED ONES WITH A TRIBUTE GIFT

When you make a memorial or tribute gift to the Food Bank, you are honoring a loved one's memory or thoughtfully celebrating a special person or occasion—while providing urgently needed meals across Nebraska and western Iowa. The person you are honoring (or another designated individual) will receive a colorful card by email or postage mail notifying them of your gift in their name. With Mother's Day and Father's Day just around the corner, this is a fitting tribute opportunity. No gift is too small. All donations benefit neighbors struggling with food insecurity across the Heartland. Click the QR code to learn more about memorial and tribute gifts.



APRIL 2023

Do Good Days: Mark your calendar for Share Omaha's Do Good Days! The campaign—which coincides with National Volunteer Month—kicks off on April 19th and runs through Saturday, April 22nd. There are a variety of ways to get involved and make a difference in our community. Visit the Food Bank's website for more information.



POWERED BY
SHARE Omaha + SHARE Iowa

JUNE 2023

Strike Out Hunger: Fight hunger with your coworkers! Is your company ready to step up to the plate? We're gearing up for our annual Strike Out Hunger campaign this June. Summer can be a challenging time as children no longer have access to free and reduced lunches, creating additional anxiety for low-income families.

Your organization can make an impact on thousands of Heartland neighbors facing hunger this summer. More details will be announced on our website in May. If you have questions in the meantime, please contact our Strike Out Hunger umpire at jswiatlowski@foodbankheartland.org.



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