



OFF THE SHELF

FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER

Driving Toward a Healthy Future

The Foodbank recently updated its mission and created a vision statement to emphasize the importance of having access to healthy foods and developing awareness of and solutions for food insecurity.

One step toward achieving this mission is the creation of a new program that will help bring more fresh produce to children and their families. In the 21 counties we serve, one in five children doesn't know where they will get their next meal.

On June 28, the Foodbank announced it had received a \$50,000 grant from the Morgan Stanley Foundation to purchase equipment for a new produce delivery program. This pilot program allows volunteers to deliver produce to sites where food insecurity is above average rates.

In conjunction with this grant, Isringhausen Imports donated a pre-owned van. Funds from the grant were used to retrofit the van with refrigeration to keep the produce and other perishable goods at optimal temperature to ensure maximum freshness.

Morgan Stanley staff, from the Springfield office, spent the morning and afternoon of the grant announcement volunteering at the Foodbank. They bagged produce and helped with deliveries to SIU Center for Family Medicine and Central Counties Health Centers.



Representatives from Morgan Stanley, Isringhausen Imports and the Foodbank attend the grant announcement on June 28.

The Foodbank plans to use this new program to develop a comprehensive strategy for working with schools and other organizations to help provide more access to fresh produce and other healthy foods in the community.

Through funds from a previous grant, the Foodbank delivers fresh produce to youth organizations and schools, such as Matheny-Withrow Elementary School in Springfield.

"Getting weekly fresh produce deliveries has been a great help in the classrooms. Teachers are able to use the apples and oranges as snacks during times where students are less productive due to hunger," said Michelle Morris, parent educator for District 186. "These deliveries have also helped our relationships with the families. Teachers are able to use the deliveries as a way to communicate with families."

Volunteers will be an integral part of the program's success. Anyone who is interested in learning more about the available opportunities should contact Elaina Albrecht at 217.522.4022 or ealbrecht@centralilfoodbank.org.



Morgan Stanley staff unload fresh produce at SIU Center for Family Medicine.

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DIRECTOR'S DISH

by Pam Molitoris
Executive Director



About a month ago, we dropped our son off at college. Since then, I've been reflecting on how he has changed. When I joined the Foodbank, he was a toddler and life was pretty simple. If he had food, sleep, and pots and pans to play with, he was pretty happy. Needless to say, our lives are not quite so simple anymore.

The same holds true for the Foodbank. We have transitioned from a fairly simple operation that distributed dry and canned goods, to one that focuses heavily on produce and perishable goods. In addition to working with our traditional partners, we have expanded our reach to youth programs, health centers, housing partners and others who work with us to not only distribute nutritious foods but also provide access to other services.

As we have been developing our new strategic plan, it occurred to us that our mission statement no longer reflects all that we do. The 23 words explained how the Foodbank operated - **our past and present** - but didn't touch upon where we want to go - **our future**. That's where our new mission comes in. While it's slightly shorter, it's more focused and so are we.

We want to work with the community to develop awareness of food insecurity; but, we don't want to stop there. We also want to develop creative solutions that go beyond food. Thinking outside of the box and a willingness to try new things keeps the Foodbank growing forward. Fresh produce and nutritious perishable foods are our future and making sure our neighbors are able to access them is one of our highest priorities.

While there will always be new ideas and opportunities, we are committed to following our core values - **Partnership, Accessibility, Integrity, Respect, Stewardship, Resiliency** and **Inclusivity**.

While my husband and I still aren't quite sure about our only child leaving the nest, we know that this is part of his life's journey. Similarly at the Foodbank, we need to continue to bring new ideas and friends to the table in order to reach new heights. I can't wait to see the wonderful things I'll be reflecting on this time next year.

Pam Molitoris

VISION

Access to and Awareness of Healthy Food for All

MISSION

**To provide food, and develop awareness of
and creative solutions for food insecurity.**

Summer Hunger: What happens when school is out?

This summer, the Foodbank partnered with 9 community sites to offer free meals for children through the Summer Food Service Program. This program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture and is administered by the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Foodbank sponsored three sites for the Springfield YMCA: Downtown, Kerasotes and Camp Wa Kon Tah. While the Kerasotes branch was a new addition this year, all three sites combined served over 3,000 breakfasts and 4,500 lunches this summer.

On June 19, Senator Dick Durbin visited the Downtown Springfield YMCA to chat with kids who use the Summer Food Service Program.

"The summer is a particularly vulnerable time for kids who rely on free or reduced-price meals during the school year," said Angie Sowle, chief executive

officer of the Springfield YMCA. "At the Y, we know that children who receive daily nutrition are set up to succeed."

The Springfield Urban League operates a site at Brandon Court, which served nearly 900 breakfasts and over 1,600 lunches this summer.

"The families at Brandon Court appreciate and take comfort in knowing that their children can always stop in for breakfast and lunch and receive a healthy, balanced meal," said Lazell Logan, program manager of the Springfield Urban League. "The children enjoy sitting together at meal time and sharing stories over corn dogs, burgers and they especially love the fruit!"

Additional sites the Foodbank sponsored include: Boys & Girls Club of Central Illinois, Springfield Park District - Nelson Center and Erin's Pavilion, Rochester Elementary and Junior Police Academy.

ACCORDING TO A RECENT REPORT PUBLISHED BY THE FOOD RESEARCH AND ACTION CENTER, NATIONALLY, ONLY 15% OF CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE LUNCH DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR RECEIVE A SUMMER MEAL THROUGH THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM. IN ILLINOIS, THAT NUMBER DROPS TO 11.6%.



Sen. Dick Durbin visits the Springfield YMCA Downtown on June 19 and chats with kids about their favorite foods.

BY THE NUMBERS

2018 - OVER 17,700 MEALS SERVED

*Number of meals served at sites sponsored by Central Illinois Foodbank.

10th Annual Agency Conference

Over 80 agencies attended the 10th Annual Agency Conference held on April 26. Thank you to the 6 volunteers who helped make this event such a success. We want to give special thanks to Westminster Presbyterian Church for hosting this event.

Agency representatives attended sessions on a variety of topics, including The Emergency Food Assistance Program (USDA Commodities), Summer Food Service Program, Mental Health Awareness, Trauma Informed Care and Food Safety for food banking.





Spotlight on Hunger

Tanzania has a busy schedule. In addition to raising her children, she also works two jobs.

Summertime can be a stressful time for parents, like Tanzania, since kids are not in school. Keeping them happy, healthy and engaged can be a challenge.

Tanzania's children are able to attend summer camp through a partnership between the Springfield YMCA and the Matthew Project. They can go swimming, play sports and receive guidance from District 186 teachers. They also receive two nutritious meals per day since the Springfield YMCA is a Summer Food Service Program site sponsored by the Foodbank.

"I'm very appreciative because most kids just stay home, not catching up on anything educational or friends or sports," Tanzania said. "The Y provides a lot that tremendously helps me."

Making sure her children have access to nutritious meals, and fresh produce, is important for their growing bodies and minds.

"It's very important even though some kids don't like their veggies," she said. "It helps that we have people who support being healthy and making sure kids get the right nutrition."

Erion, her oldest son, currently helps out as a junior counselor at the Springfield YMCA. He enjoys teaching the kids sports, especially basketball. He recently started helping little kids with swimming lessons. If he continues to work hard, he can become a youth counselor in a few years and start earning his own money.

While Erion enjoys pizza rolls and his younger brother, Vernon, prefers chicken nuggets and burgers, there's no debate about the family's favorite vegetable.

"Definitely corn. It's a big deal in the house. They love it. I try to mix it in for them to eat," Tanzania said. "I make it fun and they'll eat it."

As a parent, sometimes it's hard to admit that you need help. Still, she continues to work hard and be a role model for her children

"It's very difficult. I wouldn't say it's the easiest



Tanzania and her sons, Erion and Vernon, love fresh produce, especially sweet corn.

thing in the world but it gets me by. It keeps me motivated to strive harder," she said. "I definitely want to provide them with a good future."

Tanzania is currently working to obtain her GED. She's already passed two of the tests and has scheduled the remaining ones.

In the meantime, Tanzania is also learning new life skills that will help her accomplish her goals. She meets with a credit coach weekly to discuss topics like budgeting and how to establish good credit. Since meeting with her coach, she has already set up a bank account. Once she receives her GED certificate, she will continue working with her coach to find a full-time position.