

C O N N E C T I C U T F O O D N E W S



SUMMER/FALL 2013

CONNECTICUT
food bank

A PARTNERSHIP TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 2



WORKING PEOPLE IN NEED OF FOOD ASSISTANCE

Record numbers of employed people are hungry

The subject line in Connecticut Food Bank's email inbox was just two words, *Need Help*.

It was from a working mother asking if she could attend the mobile pantry distribution in Middletown that week. "I am out of food for the week but still have some gas left. We don't have any fresh food, dairy or grains. We don't qualify for any assistance, have jobs but can't make ends meet anymore. Please let me know."

It was signed, *Humbled in East Lyme*.

This email could have been from anywhere in Connecticut, as the number of employed people who are having trouble making ends meet continues to escalate.

This is not a surprise to Connecticut Food Bank, as results

(continued on next page)

"TOGETHER WE CAN SOLVE HUNGER"

September is Hunger Action Month – Wear orange September 5



Connecticut Food Bank, with the support of the Citizens Bank Foundation, is presenting Hunger Action Month in September. With the theme "*Together We Can Solve Hunger*," millions across the country are taking action to bring attention to the problem of hunger – including many right here in Connecticut.

Looking for a way to get involved? Here are a few suggestions:

- **Wear** orange as part of a nationwide effort to raise awareness about hunger on Thursday, September 5, and take a photo of you or your family, friends or coworkers and email it to cfb@ctfoodbank.org. We'll post them on our website or Facebook page. Also Tweet photos to [#ctfoodbank](https://twitter.com/ctfoodbank) [#hungeraction](https://twitter.com/ctfoodbank).

- **Find** Connecticut Food Bank on Facebook, www.facebook.com/ctfoodbank and "like" us, or follow us on Twitter, www.twitter.com/ctfoodbank.
- **Organize** a virtual food drive to benefit Connecticut Food Bank or a food/fund drive to benefit your local food pantry, soup kitchen or shelter.
- **Volunteer** at Connecticut Food Bank or your local food pantry, soup kitchen or shelter.
- **Experience** the SNAP (Food Stamp) Challenge and see firsthand what it's like to live on \$4.50 a day for food.
- **Share** a hunger fact with your friends online.

In addition, Connecticut Food Bank is honoring its "*Hunger Action Heroes*" on Sunday, September 22, at 1 p.m. as part of Hunger Action Month. The event recognizes the individuals, businesses and organizations who work to alleviate hunger and help us advance the fight against hunger in Connecticut.

Look for more information on www.ctfoodbank.org in the coming weeks.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Giving voice to hunger

Outrage. It's a word I've used countless times – more often now than I ever have before – to describe my feelings about potential cuts to federal programs that would take food from the refrigerators and kitchen tables of the most vulnerable.



In Connecticut, there are approximately 427,000 people who rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps). While the status of the Farm Bill and potential cuts to nutrition programs are constantly changing, it's important to remember that the programs are about providing a nutrition safety net to the unemployed and underemployed as they strive to feed their families.

SNAP is targeted at our most vulnerable: 76 percent of SNAP

households include a child, elderly person or disabled person, and 91 percent of benefits go to households with gross income at or below 100 percent of the poverty line. SNAP benefits average less than \$1.50 per person per meal and more than 90 percent of benefits are spent by day 21 of the month, leaving

many families to turn to local charities to make ends meet.

Those who rely on the Connecticut Food Bank network include households who earn too much to qualify for assistance but who still struggle to feed their families. In addition, there are SNAP participants whose benefits are inadequate to get them through the month. If deep cuts are made to SNAP, Connecticut Food Bank and our member food-assistance programs would not be able to meet the increased need.

If you, too, are outraged by this attack on our most vulnerable neighbors, there are ways you can help.

Give voice to the men, women and children who are struggling with hunger. You don't have to be a member of the food-assistance network, or even a member of Congress, to speak out. Attend one of Connecticut Food Bank's free showings of *A Place at the Table*, a documentary that details the experiences of people who struggle with hunger in America. Consider taking part in Hunger Action Month this September, including wearing orange – the color of hunger relief – on September 5, 2013, to help raise awareness. Visit ctfoodbank.org for more information on these and other ideas.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission to provide nutritious food to people in need. We know we aren't alone in our outrage – *Together We Can Solve Hunger*.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Carrington".

Nancy L. Carrington
President & Chief Executive Officer

(continued from front page)

from the 2013 *Map the Meal Gap* research released by Feeding America in June show almost half of Connecticut residents who are food insecure do not qualify for federal food assistance (such as SNAP, formerly known as food stamps). These families rely on Connecticut Food Bank, its 650 food-assistance programs and other charitable organizations for help. (See separate article on page 3 about *Map the Meal Gap's Child Food Insecurity rate*).

Among them are Annette and Todd of Branford. Annette works full-time as a medical office receptionist. Todd lost his construction job six months ago. Because he is collecting unemployment benefits while looking for work, they earn just a bit too much to qualify them for assistance for their family of five. They turn to the Branford Food Pantry for help so they can put food on the table for themselves and their three teenage children.

And then there is Penny. When she separated from her husband last year, Penny moved to Orange from Northwestern Connecticut to be closer to relatives. She's also a construction worker who is having a tough time finding full-time work. Although she does qualify for assistance between temporary jobs, she continues to have financial difficulty.

These situations are typical, according to the Storehouse Food Pantry in Milford. Pantry workers there recently told us they served approximately 40 families when they opened 10 years ago. Today, they assist more than 300 families each month. Many of the people who turn to the pantry for help are working. Some are earning minimum wages and working two jobs.

Although the country's unemployment rate is lower than when the recession began in 2008, many of the jobs being offered are lower-wage jobs. As we go to press, underemployment (people who are working part-time but want full-time work, and discouraged workers who are no longer looking for work) is on the rise.

One report shows that workers who lost their jobs in the recession can expect to earn up to 11 percent less than people with similar jobs who remained employed during the recession. It will take the families who experienced unemployment many years to catch up to where they were financially before the recession began when they re-enter the workforce. They are a strong reminder that it is not just the unemployed, but also people who work, who are in need of food assistance.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Quota International of New Haven

Quota International of New Haven is Feeding America's National 2013 Group Volunteer Service of the Year Award recipient, which is no surprise to Connecticut Food Bank. Since 2006, members of the organization have played a significant role in helping to alleviate hunger in Connecticut through their efforts with the Kids' BackPack and Mobile Pantry programs.

The Club's relationship with Connecticut Food Bank began as a simple volunteer effort where once a month, members came to the East Haven warehouse to pack bags of healthy, child-friendly food for 287 students that were enrolled in the

"We loved starting the BackPack program and now feel with the Mobile Pantry that the service we do three times a month feeds not only a great need, but our pledge to give to others."



Kids' BackPack Program. As the program grew to serve 1,700 children by the end of 2010, so did Quota Club's involvement. Members volunteered three times a month until the program grew too large and was moved to the food bank's Fairfield warehouse. In all, Quota members contributed more than 1,300 hours of service and packed an estimated 64,000 bags for children. Today, more than 2,600 children in more than 100 schools participate in the Kids' BackPack Program.

With the Mobile Pantry Program as their current venture, Quota members now can be found sorting and bagging fresh fruits and vegetables three times a month in the East Haven warehouse. No matter if it is 100 degrees or 55 degrees, Quota members are there in the warehouse picking through produce and repacking it into manageable quantities for low-income families who lack access to adequate nutrition. With their

help, five separate communities are receiving fresh, healthy food each month. In total, they are directly helping more than 800 households each month.

"We loved starting the BackPack program and now feel with the Mobile Pantry that the service we do three times a month feeds not only a great need, but our pledge to give to others," said Doris Dewees, Quota International of New Haven Board Member and the organization's 2013 Volunteer of the Year.

In addition, Quota Club members participate in Connecticut Food Bank's Greater New Haven *Walk Against Hunger* each spring and serve as volunteers at other events throughout the year – for a grand total of more than 2,100 hours of volunteer service to Connecticut Food Bank to date.

2013 MAP THE MEAL GAP: NEARLY 20% OF STATE'S CHILDREN AT RISK OF HUNGER



The 2013 Map the Meal Gap study released by Feeding America shows 19.8 percent of Connecticut's children don't always know where their next meal is coming from. Of those children, 42 percent do not qualify for federal assistance (such as SNAP, formerly called food stamps) because their families earn over the income limit.

Perhaps the most disturbing fact is that the number is rising, even as the economy is reported to be recovering. 157,550 Connecticut children are now hungry, compared to 151,530 last year. They live in every county and every town in Connecticut. You probably know one or more of them.

COUNTY	CHILD FOOD INSECURITY RATE	NO. OF CHILDREN
Tolland	14.2	4,400
Middlesex	14.4	5,100
Fairfield	15.4	34,890
Litchfield	15.5	6,420
New London	17.5	10,450
Hartford	18.5	37,960
New Haven	19.2	37,250
Windham	20.9	5,560

For more information about Map the Meal Gap or childhood hunger, visit www.ctfoodbank.org.



2013 WALKS AGAINST HUNGER RAISE MORE THAN \$260,000

Connecticut Food Bank's 2013 Walks Against Hunger in Bridgeport, New Haven, Waterbury and Norwich once again raised more than \$260,000 for hunger-relief efforts in Connecticut.

The dollars raised will enable Connecticut Food Bank to transport, warehouse and distribute more than \$1.3 million worth of food at wholesale value for local community agencies such as soup kitchens, shelters, food pantries and adult and child day programs.

"We are grateful to the hundreds of walkers, donors and sponsors for continuing to make the *Walk Against Hunger* such a successful event," said Connecticut Food Bank President & CEO Nancy L. Carrington. "It is especially critical as more and more men, women and children are relying on our food-assistance network. Once again we are overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from individuals, businesses, schools, food pantries, civic groups and clubs."

NEW HAVEN'S TOP INDIVIDUALS:

- First Prize:** Jacqueline Foreman
- Second Prize:** Ben Sauberman
- Third Prize:** Barbara Kelley

NEW HAVEN'S TOP TEAMS:

- First Prize:** Wiggin & Dana
- Second Prize:** Community Baptist Church
- Third Prize:** Slightly Over Prime

NEW HAVEN SPIRIT AWARDS:

- Best Team Name:** Trinity Trekkers
- Best Team Costume:** Keeping Diane's Dream Alive (Temple Beth Shalom)
- Best Team Spirit:** Fellowship Steppers (Fellowship Place)

BRIDGEPORT'S TOP INDIVIDUALS:

- First Prize:** William & Joan Snell
- Second Prize:** Dorothy Brown
- Third Prize:** Victoria Daniels

BRIDGEPORT'S TOP TEAMS:

- First Prize:** Calvary Lighthouse
- Second Prize:** Sheryl Summers Memorial Walk for Hunger
- Third Prize:** Brooklawn Servanthood – Salt & Light

BRIDGEPORT SPIRIT AWARDS:

- Best Team Name:** Hunger Haters
- Best Team Costume:** The Faith Walkers (Fresh Start Program Food Pantry)
- Best Team Spirit:** Bishop Jean Williams Food Pantry (Park City Initiative Corp)

WATERBURY'S TOP INDIVIDUALS:

- First Prize:** Clifred Walker
- Second Prize:** Javier Roman
- Third Prize:** Debra-Sue Klingerman

WATERBURY'S TOP TEAMS:

- First Prize:** Bread of Life
- Second Prize:** Type "W" Walkers
- Third Prize:** The Bible Church

WATERBURY SPIRIT AWARDS:

- Best Team Name:** The Brooklyn Bagels (Salvation Army)
- Best Team Costume:** Sea The Food Harvest (Waterbury Baptist Ministries)
- Best Team Spirit:** Hunger Knows No Season (Torrington Soup Kitchen)

EASTERN CONNECTICUT'S TOP INDIVIDUALS:

- First Prize:** Nancy Cowser
- Second Prize:** Tara Borden
- Third Prize:** Haley Hinton

EASTERN CONNECTICUT'S TOP TEAMS:

- First Prize:** UCFS
- Second Prize:** Fountain-Timmons Team
- Third Prize:** God's Angels of FCCP

EASTERN CONNECTICUT SPIRIT AWARDS:

- Best Team Name:** Team Haggis
- Best Team Costumes:** The Community Cooks
- Best Team Spirit:** God's Angels of FCCP



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thanksgiving for All Events

November is just around the corner, and that means we're already planning special events and food drives for Connecticut Food Bank's annual *Thanksgiving for All* campaign.

Local civic and religious groups, charitable foundations, businesses, media and supermarkets host and sponsor events and food drives to make *Thanksgiving for All* a reality for Connecticut residents who don't always know where their next meal is coming from.

Star 99.9 Food for Friends

November 21, 2013

KC 101 Stuff- a- Bus Food Drive

November 22 & 23, 2013

"Fill the Bowl" at Yale Bowl - Yale vs. Harvard

November 23, 2013

Check our online [Events Calendar](#) - accessible from our home page, www.ctfoodbank.org - for the latest information.

WE THANK OUR 2013 WALK AGAINST HUNGER SPONSORS:



Big Dipper Ice Cream
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Coca-Cola
General Mills

ShopRite of Waterbury
TeaRiffic Ice Cream
The Bulletin
Thurston Foods, Inc.
Whole Foods
Wiggin & Dana





Hearst Corporation honors memory of Sandy Hook teacher

Connecticut Food Bank's Kids' BackPack Program recently received a \$50,000 donation from Hearst Corporation in memory of Lauren Rousseau, one of the six Sandy Hook Elementary School educators who were killed last December.

Lauren's mother, Teresa Rousseau, works as a copy editor at the News-Times in Danbury, which is owned by Hearst. At the presentation ceremony, Teresa spoke about her daughter's willingness to help others, especially children.

Connecticut Food Bank President & CEO Nancy L. Carrington and Board Chair James Augur were on hand for the check presentation and thanked Hearst Corporation for helping feed children served by the Kids' BackPack Program, which provides more than 2,600 children with nutritious meals on weekends when they lack access to school meals.

More than 157,000 (or one in five) children in Connecticut do not always know where their next meal is coming from.

THANK YOU...

To the following individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations that made gifts of \$5,000 and more from November 16, 2012, to May 31, 2013.

Anonymous (6)
 AARP Foundation
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 Claude & Jennifer Amadeo
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 The Walmart Foundation
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YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Meet three amazing young people who are helping put food on the table for people across the state who struggle with hunger.



Jeremy Rosa of Bridgeport surpasses his goal

How many 7-year-olds have a day proclaimed in their honor? Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch proclaimed Jeremy Rosa Day in the city after Jeremy raised nearly 1,000 pounds of food for Connecticut Food Bank in just 19 days!

When Jeremy learned about families who were in need, the young man quickly jumped into action. He created *Jeremy's Food Drive* fliers and handed them out to friends and family; displayed a sign on his bicycle when he rode around his neighborhood; and contacted local businesses in an attempt to reach his goal of 100 food items. Little did he know that people would have such a positive response to his caring personality and good nature that his goal would be surpassed by hundreds!

Jeremy was all smiles when he and his family delivered the much-needed food to Connecticut Food Bank's Fairfield warehouse. He's gearing up again for another successful food drive this September during Hunger Action Month. Make sure to check our Facebook page to see how you can support Jeremy's efforts!

Sonya Stanczyk of Newtown is *Feeding the Need*

While working on a youth leadership project with a homeless shelter in Danbury, Newtown High School junior Sonya Stanczyk saw a need to provide food for the area's homeless. She thought of a solution: She reached out to her own high school to involve the 200 culinary arts students in the preparation of meals for local feeding programs. But when she and classmate and culinary arts student Matthew Baldino created *Feeding the Need*, they had to overcome the challenge of accessing food items to prepare the meals.

When Connecticut Food Bank's Chief Operating Officer Paul O'Leary was approached, he helped partner the students with local grocery store donors. Now each week students receive fresh food and meat from Connecticut Food Bank and the Monroe, Newtown and Southbury Stop & Shop supermarkets.

Sonya's idea to help feed people struggling with hunger is now a reality. An added benefit is that the culinary students have the real-life experience of preparing meals creatively with an ever-changing supply of food. Recent sample menu items included Punjabi chicken, mango barbecue shredded pork and vegetarian bean chili.

Among the food-assistance agencies that benefit directly from *Feeding the Need* are the Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen in

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McKayla Sturges of Bridgewater says *Let Them Eat Cake!*

Shepaug Valley High School senior McKayla Sturges combined her passion for baking with a required senior year project. She wanted to raise money for an organization that helps feed people in Litchfield County. After doing some research, she decided to support Connecticut Food Bank. Her project theme was *Let Them Eat Cake*.

McKayla organized three bake sales, sold T-shirts with the "*Let Them Eat Cake* to end hunger in Connecticut" theme and held two baking classes for high school students. *Let Them Eat Cake* raised nearly \$754 for Connecticut Food Bank – which equals more than 1,800 meals. McKayla is looking forward to a career in culinary arts and is currently enrolled in Johnson & Wales University.

PROVIDING NUTRITIOUS FOOD TO PEOPLE IN NEED

Fresh produce distribution up 40%



When you think of the food you'll find at a local food pantry, do you imagine fresh broccoli, squash, carrots, tomatoes, apples or peaches? A little known fact is that now one-third of Connecticut Food Bank's day-to-day total food distribution is fresh produce, reflecting our mission to provide nutritious food to people in need.

Fresh produce is often expensive and is frequently lacking from the diets of people who struggle with hunger. Low-income families often

eat food that is high in salt, sugar, calories and fat because it is typically more affordable and accessible. Consuming too much of these food items can cause obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other health problems.

Through a concerted effort to put more fruits and vegetables on the tables of low-income families, Connecticut Food Bank was able to increase its distribution of fresh produce by 40 percent last year.

The purpose of our **Mobile Pantry Program** is to address the transportation barriers that can prevent people from accessing healthy, fresh food. Since it was introduced in 2010, the Mobile Pantry has distributed more than 2 million pounds of fresh foods such as produce, dairy and whole-grain items. More than 4,000 households are served in 24 communities each month – with each site serving anywhere from 120 to more than 300 families.

Connecticut Food Bank's **Farm-to-Pantry Program** is currently a partnership with more than 30 local growers who arrange for us to pick up donated fresh produce, or allow us to organize volunteers to glean their fields for donations. What started out as 16 farm partnerships in 2011 has now doubled, with other growers partnering directly with soup kitchens, pantries or shelters. Last growing season resulted in donations of more than 193,000 pounds of locally grown agricultural products.

NEW TRUCKS ARE HITTING THE ROAD, THANKS TO CL&P

In an effort to provide Connecticut residents with greater access to nutritious food, Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P) awarded Connecticut Food Bank a \$1 million grant to help those who are served by our food-assistance network. The purpose of the grant is to strengthen our ability to meet the food needs of local residents, and to assess and strengthen Connecticut Food Bank and its network's capacity to respond to disasters.

Connecticut Food Bank acquired a new truck for each of its affiliated distribution centers: a new 14-foot box truck for The Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County in Stamford, and a mobile pantry for the Gemma E. Moran United Way/Labor Food Center in New London. In addition, Connecticut Food

Bank used the funds to add a new 26-foot box truck to its fleet of vehicles. "At CL&P we believe no one should go hungry in Connecticut and we're grateful for the work that Connecticut Food Bank does every day to serve our neighbors and customers," said Bill Quinlan, Senior Vice President of Emergency Preparedness for CL&P. "We're pleased to help expand the important efforts of the food bank across the state."



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Connecticut Food Bank welcomes questions, comments and ideas. All correspondence should be addressed to the Development Department. If your name is incorrect or you are receiving duplicate mailings, please call 203.469.5000 or email cfb@ctfoodbank.org.



Connecticut Food Bank is a partner of Feeding America, the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity consisting of more than 200 food banks, serving all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.