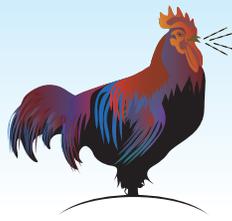


C O N N E C T I C U T F O O D N E W S



WINTER/SPRING 2015

CONNECTICUT
food bank

VOLUME 24, NUMBER 1

A PARTNERSHIP TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER



THE COST OF CHILD HUNGER

Harmful effects include poor health and academic performance

Joseph walked into the school cafeteria and quickly sat down at a table as he watched his sixth grade classmates fill their meal trays in the lunch line. He ate some crackers, hoping no one would notice he did not have anything else to eat. Joseph's family had very little money left over for food after paying monthly expenses like rent and utilities.

While many would agree that Joseph looks like all the other kids, his teacher recognized the signs of hunger. Joseph showed a lack of interest in class, had frequent absences and a declining academic performance. Once his parents were told Joseph was eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch at school, the boy participated more often in class and his attendance and grades improved tremendously.

In Connecticut, there are more than 155,000 children like Joseph, who are hungry and suffering from its harmful effects.

(continued on next page)



**REGISTER TODAY
FOR THE 2015
WALK AGAINST
HUNGER!**

Enjoy a beautiful spring day and help feed our hungry neighbors by registering for the *2015 Walk Against Hunger!*

The dollars raised will enable Connecticut Food Bank to transport, warehouse and distribute nutritious food to local soup kitchens, shelters and food pantries that are combating hunger in 127 cities and towns throughout the state.

Visit ctfoodbank.org/walk and enroll your team, sign up individually or become a virtual walker and raise funds online! Join the hundreds of participants who are ready to make a real difference to those in need throughout our state.

There are four locations to choose from!

**6th Annual Greater Bridgeport
Walk Against Hunger**
Sunday, April 26, 2015
Seaside Park, Bridgeport

**10th Annual Greater Waterbury
Walk Against Hunger**
Sunday, May 3, 2015
Library Park, Waterbury

**39th Annual Greater New Haven
Walk Against Hunger**
Sunday, May 17, 2015
(Note new weekend in 2015)
College Woods Pavilion at East
Rock Park, New Haven

**3rd Annual Eastern Connecticut
Walk Against Hunger**
Sunday, May 17, 2015
Chelsea Parade, Norwich



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Partnerships are the key to success in fighting hunger



The Connecticut Food Bank and its network of nearly 700 local feeding programs have partnered to build an extraordinary foundation for fighting hunger in Connecticut. Every day, Connecticut Food Bank distributes enough food products to make 46,000 meals in support of our mission to provide nutritious food to our neighbors in need.

This is an exciting time at the Connecticut Food Bank, as we are changing to meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens and going beyond just distributing

food. As a critical community convener that helps strengthen our state's vital social service safety net, we are exploring new ways

to respond to the growing number of Connecticut residents who depend on our partner food-assistance network as a lifeline to nutritious food.

We know there are unlimited possibilities to offer a broad range of critical nutrition and education programs that help meet the needs of our community when we establish strong partnerships with donors, volunteers, food industry partners and anti-hunger advocates.

Thank you for your passion for feeding our neighbors and for being an important member of the team that is making a significant difference. By investing in the health and well-being of your own community, you are positively impacting the lives of so many.

I look forward to sharing our successes in the fight against hunger in the months ahead and how together, we can make a brighter future for hungry Connecticut residents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Levine', written over a light-colored background.

Rob Levine
President & Chief Executive Officer

(continued from front page)

According to the Center for American Progress and Brandeis University, and Feeding America, the annual cost of hunger for Connecticut's youth is \$500 million. This includes hunger-induced costs such as lost economic productivity, rising costs of poor educational outcomes, undermined lifetime earnings, avoidable health care costs and the cost of the charitable response to keep families fed.

"It's unacceptable for any child to go hungry," said Rob Levine, Connecticut Food Bank's President & CEO. "That is why Connecticut Food Bank is leading the way to develop innovative programs and partnerships to support families and improve outcomes for children."

"Thank you for the cereal I don't have at home and for the Friday snack because we get to have food to eat and get to be healthy too."

Connecticut Food Bank and its nearly 700 critical, local feeding programs are committed to helping children learn, thrive and grow through regular access to healthy food.

Thanks to a grant from Our Family Foundation by Stop & Shop, Connecticut Food Bank's GROW Up with Good Nutrition Initiative (see back page) provides nutrition education and healthy food to 1,000 children at preschools,



daycares and Head Start programs. In addition, more than 3,000 children enrolled in the Kids' Backpack Program are given a bag of nutritious food to take home on the weekend, when they do not have access to school meals.

A Kids' Backpack Program school coordinator recently shared that when she was quietly wheeling the bags of food to a designated area, one little girl who happened to be in the hallway ran over to the cart, picked up a bag and began to hug it tightly. At the same time she said, "I have been waiting for this." Another child wrote, "Thank you for the cereal I don't have at home and for the Friday snack because we get to have food to eat and get to be healthy too."



MOBILE PANTRY DELIVERS HEALTHY FOOD TO SOUTHURY

“It’s very hard to go shopping to buy fruits and vegetables because I can’t afford them,” explained Klara from Beacon Falls, while waiting in line alongside 100 others on a biting cold December day. “But since I’ve been coming to the Southbury Mobile Pantry, I have all the things I couldn’t afford before at the store.”

That’s the significant impact the Southbury Mobile Pantry is having on hundreds of western New Haven County residents every month, come rain or shine: bringing nutritious, fresh foods to those who would otherwise go without. And despite the monthly promise that this outreach program provides, people are still making tough choices each month.

“But since I’ve been coming to the Southbury Mobile Pantry, I have all the things I couldn’t afford before at the store.”

“I do without some things,” Klara stressed when discussing the sacrifices she makes. “But I feel blessed because I have a roof over my head, food in my belly, clothes to wear – even though I buy them at a thrift store – I’m happy. I don’t ask for much out of life!”

Charles of Watertown visits the Southbury Mobile Pantry to get food for himself, as well as for neighbors who are unable to join him, and believes the Pantry is a vital outlet for those in the community. “The line is always 100 people or more, and sometimes there are 200 people waiting,” he said. “If Connecticut Food Bank’s Mobile Pantry wasn’t here, it would be a hardship... and put a dent in people’s budgets – maybe some of them wouldn’t eat!”

Southbury is just one of 30 locations the Mobile Pantry visits each month, providing healthy food to struggling families, right in their neighborhood. For a complete schedule of distribution sites, visit www.ctfoodbank.org.



CUT CALORIES AND HELP FEED OUR NEIGHBORS



Does supporting the Connecticut Food Bank by making healthy food choices sound too good to be true? Well, thanks to the **Foodtweeks** app, you can do exactly that!

The app shows you how to trim calories from the foods you eat, and for every calorie you remove Foodtweeks will make a donation to the Connecticut Food Bank.

Foodtweeks is free and available in the Apple App Store and Google Play. Don’t forget to use the promo code CTFB when signing up – it automatically doubles the donations!



FOOD OR MEDICINE? WHAT WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Hunger in America 2014 study reveals difficult choices

Imagine having your work hours cut in half when you need to pay for medicine for a sick child. To make matters worse, your car needs hundreds of dollars in repairs and the rent is due. Do you pay for medicine, car repairs, housing or food?

For thousands of Connecticut residents, these are the tough decisions that they are making on a regular basis, according to the 2014 Hunger in America study conducted by Connecticut Food Bank in partnership with Feeding America.

The study results revealed what many in the food-assistance network already know: Hunger touches every community across the state – even Connecticut’s most idyllic-appearing rural areas are hard hit by hunger.

“We’ve seen a large increase in the number of new families applying for help,” said Helen Donovan of the Wolcott Food Pantry. “The increase is across-the-board among seniors, families and individuals. Our families are being forced to make hard decisions on whether to buy food or pay heating bills.”



HUNDREDS SHOW SUPPORT DURING HUNGER ACTION MONTH



Supported by the



Thanks to all who helped shine a light on hunger in Connecticut during September’s Hunger Action Month. Their overwhelming support helped raise awareness for the nearly half a million Connecticut residents, including 1 in 5 children, who are hungry.

All events were supported by the Citizens Bank Foundation.

Hundreds of anti-hunger advocates throughout Connecticut participated in National Wear Orange Day on September 4, including individuals, sports teams, corporations, food pantries, college students, and even pets who showed their support!

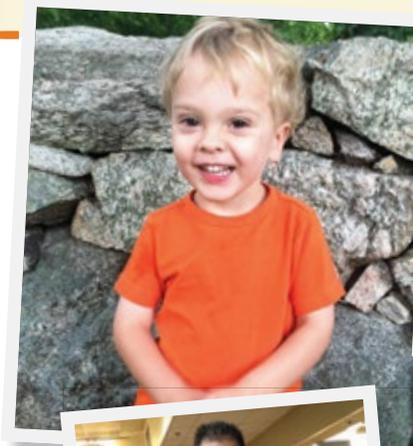
We kicked off the month with New Haven Mayor Toni Harp, who volunteered at the New Haven Mobile Pantry. Orange lights illuminated the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Monument at New Haven’s East Rock Park, Waterbury’s City Hall, Kent storefronts and the Wolcott town gazebo!

Special thanks to Independent Outdoor and Barrett Outdoor for donating billboard space to help get the word out, and to Connecticut Food Bank’s Media Hero, WTNH News 8, for broadcasting live in front of Citizens Bank in New Haven with Tony’s Orangeside Donuts truck.

The month ended strong, with more than 100 individuals participating in a 12-hour Volunteer-a-Thon to sort fresh produce at our East Haven warehouse, and to pack Kids’ BackPack bags with healthy food at our Fairfield location.

Visit www.facebook.com/ctfoodbank to view photos of all the events!

We look forward to even more Hunger Action participation in 2015!



According to the study, among client households seeking food assistance in the last year:

73% reported buying the cheapest foods available, even when they knew it wasn't the healthiest option

68% chose between paying for food or medicine

63% decided between paying for food or housing

41% watered down food or drinks

35% pawned or sold personal property

“Our families are being forced to make hard decisions on whether to buy food or pay heating bills.”

For more information about the 2014 Hunger in America findings, visit www.ctfoodbank.org. The full national report is available on Feeding America's website, www.feedingamerica.org.



BAM



HUNGER ACTION HERO AWARDS

HUNGER ACTION HEROES HONORED

Connecticut Food Bank honored its **2014 Hunger Action Heroes** at a ceremony in September during Hunger Action Month. The Hunger

Action Heroes are individuals, businesses and organizations who go above and beyond to support us in our mission to provide nutritious food to people in need.

Mark Tuchmann, founder of BeavEx Delivery and Transportation Services, was presented with The Bill Liddell Award – the highest tribute paid by the Connecticut Food Bank to an individual, organization or corporation – in recognition of exemplary service, ongoing dedication and significant support of the Food Bank and its mission.

A resident of Cheshire, Mark has generously donated the equivalent of more than 410,000 Thanksgiving meals over the last 12 years for families who otherwise would go without.

The award was named after Bill Liddell, who supported the Food Bank by donating a total of 104 tons of fresh produce, as well as time and funds. He also spent six years on Connecticut Food Bank's Board of Directors.

2014 HUNGER ACTION HEROES:

- **Monette Ferguson, Action for Bridgeport Community Development:** *Advocacy Hero*
- **Morgan Stanley:** *Corporate Hero*
- **Lyman Orchards:** *Farm Hero*
- **United Natural Foods:** *Food Industry Hero*
- **Club Corvette of Connecticut:** *Fundraising Hero*
- **WTNH News 8:** *Media Hero*
- **Loaves & Fishes of New Haven:** *Member Program Hero*
- **Trumbull Academically Gifted Program:** *School Hero*
- **Josh Gold, Steve Salinger, Mike Sopchak and Tom Stone, our Mobile Pantry “Ironmen”:** *Volunteer Heroes*
- **U.S. Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound:** *Uniformed Hero*





COMMUNITY SUPPORT MADE IT A THANKSGIVING FOR ALL

Connecticut Food Bank collected a total of 20,919 turkeys and 416,985 pounds of trimmings to truly make it a *Thanksgiving for All*. Thanks to the volunteers, local civic and religious organizations, charitable foundations, businesses, media partners and retailers who helped make it possible.

In the days leading up to Thanksgiving, our network of nearly 700 local food-assistance programs collected the turkeys and trimmings to ensure thousands of Connecticut families could gather around the table for a Thanksgiving meal.

We appreciate all who donated and shared the #ThanksgivingForAll message online to help bring attention to those who struggle with hunger each and every day.



THANK YOU...

Thank you to the following individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations who have generously donated \$5,000 and more to further our mission to provide nutritious food to people in need from June 1, 2014, to November 15, 2014.

Anonymous
 A-1 Toyota
 AARP Foundation
 Harry & Manette Adams
 Aetna Employee Giving Campaign
 Alice Lawrence Foundation, Inc.
 Almira Family Foundation
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 Basil & Susan Anton
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 Facilities Authority

Doty Family Foundation
 Estate of Alois C. Prihoda
 Fairfield County's Community Foundation
 Feeding America
 Feeding America, thanks to Ahold USA
 Feeding America, thanks to BJ's
 Charitable Foundation
 Feeding America, thanks to
 Morgan Stanley
 Feeding America, thanks to Panera
 Bread
 Feeding America, thanks to Rachael
 Ray's Yum-o! Organization
 Feeding America, thanks to Unilever/
 Ahold Feed Our Families
 Feeding America, thanks to Walmart
 Foundation
 Feeding America, thanks to WellPoint
 Workplace Giving
 Alan & Betty Feldman
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 Garden Homes Fund

GE Capital Corporation
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 The Helen Breznicky Testamentary
 Charitable Trust
 David & Nancy Tillson
 Mark Tuchmann
 United Way of Coastal Fairfield County
 Walmart Foundation
 Watson Inc.
 Webster Bank
 Wings For Things Foundation

WHY I VOLUNTEER



Lighting up the lives of others

Christopher Donnell is the Founder of “That House in Milford,” an annual Christmas display boasting 50,000 lights, which has raised more than \$13,000 for Connecticut Food Bank since 2007. Christopher’s volunteer work reveals a man who is making a real difference to thousands of lives in Connecticut.

When you look up the word “volunteer” in the dictionary, it comes back with the following: “freely offer to do something; to help.” When I was 12 years old, I helped an elderly neighbor plant a tree in his yard, and to this day that tree stands. It has been more than 30 years since, and that warm feeling of knowing I made a difference continues to encourage me to help others.

As I continued to perform little acts of kindness throughout my life, I began volunteering with Connecticut Food Bank eight years ago; Thanksgiving Food Drives, the annual Walk Against Hunger in New Haven, and sorting fruit at the East Haven warehouse. My most memorable and special moment during my time with the Food Bank was being presented with the Hunger Action Hero award for fundraising.

I volunteer and raise money because I want to, and I never expect anything in return. To make a difference in someone’s life can take just an hour of your day. To quote Aesop: “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” I experienced a perfect example of this one year, delivering Thanksgiving food to a gentleman in Milford. I turned to leave when he asked: “Do you have to go so soon? Would you like to stay for a cup of coffee and talk?”

We talked about football games, the weather, Thanksgiving and my volunteer work. He just wanted to spend a little time with someone. He had no family. That half an hour I spent with him was probably the greatest gift I could have given. That is the feeling you get when you volunteer your time – the indescribable warmth inside when you unconditionally give to others.

For information about volunteer opportunities at Connecticut Food Bank, click the Volunteer button on www.ctfoodbank.org, or call 203-469-5000.

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JOIN OUR HARVEST CLUB

What is the Harvest Club? Harvest Club members give regularly so we can secure and distribute food to our hungry neighbors all year long. You can sign up to give monthly, quarterly or annually.

Why should I join? People who support us on a regular basis like the convenience of having their gift automatically charged to their credit card at regular intervals. At the end of the year, you will receive a receipt for tax purposes totaling your yearly donation.

Is it safe? Absolutely! You determine the amount of money and frequency to be charged to your credit card.

How do I sign up? Visit our Donate Now page at www.ctfoodbank.org and select a sustaining gift, or call the Development Department at 203-469-5000, or email cfb@ctfoodbank.org.



GROW UP WITH GOOD NUTRITION INITIATIVE NOW REACHES 1,000 CHILDREN

One year after Our Family Foundation by Stop & Shop awarded a grant of \$250,000 a year for three years to start Connecticut Food Bank's GROW Up with Good Nutrition Initiative, we take a look back at the impact this program has had during its opening year.

Connecticut Food Bank's GROW Up with Good Nutrition Initiative officially launched in January 2014 and has since served an unduplicated number of approximately 1,000 children through more than 21 distribution sites. A total of 134 distributions were made across Greater Bridgeport and Greater New Haven in its first year of operation.

The goal of the GROW Up with Good Nutrition Initiative is to increase the nutritional content of low-income households with children enrolled in early childhood, preschool daycare and Head Start Programs.

The GROW Truck is a crucial component of the initiative, as it works like a food pantry on wheels. The truck is fully customized and refrigerated to stock food items such as fresh apples, grapefruit, oranges, low-fat milk, ground beef and fish.

In addition to food distribution, Connecticut Food Bank works with several community partners to offer nutritional workshops for families to promote healthy eating and also promote eating together as a family. Before boarding the

GROW Truck, families participate in short workshops such as "Enjoy Healthy Food That Tastes Great," "Quick, Healthy Meals and Snacks" and "Eating Healthy on a Budget."

Each distribution serves between 20 and 40 families with young children and supplies each household with an average of 40 pounds of fresh produce, lean meats and other nutritious groceries.

"It's really been a big help to provide good, healthy food for our whole family."

A participating mom with two young children from West Haven praised the program for its focus on health and making her family more aware of what they put into their body. "It opened my eyes; I never looked at labels before, but now I do," she said. "We are a family of four and my husband is the only one working. So it's really been a big help to provide good, healthy food for our whole family."

CONNECTICUT
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A PARTNERSHIP TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER

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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.