

Food for Thought

The Newsletter of The Food Bank of Siouxland, Inc.

FALL 2021



FOOD BANK



OF SIOUXLAND INC.

Leading Siouxland in the fight against hunger.

DISTRIBUTION PARTNER OF
FEEDING AMERICA

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Dear Friends,

Summer in Siouxland has several constants. Things like weather that changes in minutes, construction season and fun activities like baseball or swimming. There's also another constant: the Food Bank of Siouxland remaining open. After a long year with COVID-19, I know I am excited to experience summer with these welcomed activities. As I am writing this, the COVID-19 positivity rate is low and nearly the entire community has access to a vaccine. Most businesses are ramping up, restaurants are re-opening, and swimming pools offer a cheerful respite to the heat. I am excited to spend time lounging by the water or spending time on the golf course. The Siouxland area (northwest Iowa and northeast Nebraska) is heavily invested in farming, construction, and roadwork. Typically, the Food Bank sees a small decrease in distribution as employment is full. This is supported by low unemployment numbers in our service area counties.

Though there is a lot to be optimistic about, the Food Bank of Siouxland is still needed.

The Food Bank is needed by those who are retired or whose new job does not provide the same level of benefits as their previous job. It is still needed by those who had a prolonged time off from a job due to a COVID complication (having COVID or taking care of someone with COVID). The Food Bank is needed by those who live paycheck to paycheck but experienced a major car repair bill or saw reduced hours and need to catch up on bills. The Food Bank staff and I want to run the whole race: the marathon, not the sprint. Supplying food every month, day by day, the Food Bank is there to ensure no one has to go hungry throughout the Siouxland area.

Donors, volunteers, and participating agency organizations all play an important part in helping those in need of food in Siouxland. This spring, donors stepped up to the plate and helped meet two matching donations from Modern Woodman and Soho Kitchen and Bar. Food drives by the Dunes Surgical Center brought in needed cereal and the Akron-Westfield High School National Honor

Society supplied the warehouse with "birthday bags" for distribution. Milligan Farms donated four hogs, totaling over 1,200 pounds, that were processed into ground pork. A big thank you goes out to volunteer groups who help sort food so it can be distributed to the food insecure. Midtown Family Pantry, Siouxland-placed LDS missionaries, and Sioux City North High students make these volunteer activities hum along. Thank you to agency organizations for remaining flexible as they return to in-person distributions.

In the warehouse, the Food Bank staff is preparing for the fall. This requires cleaning and organizing products. The staff has to purchase items that clients want now, as well products that clients want for back-to-school time and year-end holidays. This includes getting much-desired protein and produce. These two items are vital for agencies and clients as they are an important part of a well-balanced diet but are expensive to purchase in grocery stores. These items are also expensive for the Food Bank to purchase. I know as you read this newsletter, you will see where you can help the Food Bank.

There are three easy ways to help: First, donate your time to the Food Bank warehouse. Second, be an advocate for hunger relief; talk about how important it is to eliminate hunger in Siouxland. Third, monetary donations to support purchasing.

A little goes a long way as \$1 provides five meals! The Food Bank organization is thankful for your support in community effort!

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jake Wanderscheid".

Jake Wanderscheid
Executive Director of the Food Bank of Siouxland



Program Spotlight: Backpack Program: *Food for Kids*

Being an adult is tough. There's no arguing it and sometimes we may wish that we could go back to being a kid. The idea of playing for hours, not having (many) responsibilities, and make-believing can sound pretty great. To be back in that more carefree time in life may sound ideal some days. So, let's get back there and take a moment to make believe together.

Pretend that you have a desk job. For some, this may not be too far from your real life. You have to be at said job for six hours each day, five days each week, and you get a couple of breaks during the day to stretch your legs. You're given lunch, and possibly breakfast, if you get there on time. Not so bad, right?

Well, there are a couple of caveats. The first is that you can't drive and don't have a car, so that breakfast we mentioned earlier? It's not promised because getting there on time is not in your control. Hopefully there's something at home. Guess what? That isn't in your control either. The next caveat is you're required to be at your job, but it doesn't pay you anything ... That's not ideal. There's more. If there's nothing for breakfast, there's a good chance there might not be much for dinner either. In addition to that, it's Friday, and getting groceries for the weekend isn't in your control without a car or money.



If you aren't at your job Saturday and Sunday, you might not be getting lunch those days. If there isn't much for breakfast or dinner at home, there probably won't be much for lunch either. Luckily, your roommate does get paid, but unfortunately they have to work a lot to make ends meet, and there isn't much leftover once the bills are paid. When and how do you plan to get your next meal? How hungry do you think you'll be on Monday morning, and how will you perform to the best of your ability with such an empty stomach?

For over 2,000 five to 11-year-old children in Siouxland, this is their reality. That job is school. How can these kids perform to their highest potential when they are worried about finding their next meal? How can they focus on their schoolwork when all they can think about is their growling stomach? This is where the Backpack Program: *Food for Kids* comes in.

Thanks to our army of volunteers, donors, and school district employees, the Food Bank of Siouxland is able to send students from 10 area schools home with healthy, easy-to-make foods, to help sustain kids over the weekend.

The sacks include all of the food groups and each item can be eaten with little to no preparation, making it easy for kids to make if their parents or guardians aren't there to help them.

Things are tough right now for so many in our community, but our future generations don't need to feel that way. They need a chance to succeed. The Backpack Program 2021-2022 starts soon! If you're interested in learning more about how you can help our program succeed, visit siouxlandfoodbank.org/programs-and-events.



18th Annual Food Bank of Siouxland Golf Classic



Our 18th Annual Food Bank of Siouxland Golf Classic, presented by Title Sponsor Wells Enterprises and Eagle Sponsor PREMIER Bankcard, was held on August 2, 2021. Following a break last year due to COVID-19, our staff, board, and golfers are happy to be back on the course to have fun and raise money for those facing food insecurity in Siouxland.

Many thanks to our sponsors.
As of July 21, this year's sponsors include:

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Food Bank FAQ

The Food Bank of Siouxland staff are frequently asked to explain how the Food Bank works. Especially in the past year, when food banks have become a more common topic of conversation, we are receiving more questions like: "Can I get food there?" "Where does the food at the food bank come from?" or "What are agencies?"

We can't tell you how all food banks operate since we're all a little different, but the most basic thing to know is that we are a warehouse, and we supply food to local pantries and agencies. Now you might be wondering, what is the difference between a food bank and a food pantry or agency? A food pantry or agency is a place where food insecure individuals are able to go to receive food. Most commonly in Siouxland, you can find pantries at churches, community resource centers, and schools. These locations are typically smaller, most are run by volunteers, and they do not have the storage and loading facilities that our warehouse has. A food bank has the capacity to house and distribute millions of pounds of food to food pantries or agencies. Some food banks have a pantry at their location, but the Food Bank of Siouxland currently does not.

So, where does the food come from? Our food comes from a number of different resources. We receive donations from local grocery and convenience stores. Some of our food is purchased from wholesalers for discounted prices. Some of our food items are part of state and federal commodity programs. Some of the food we receive is donated by local businesses and individuals. We are also a part of the Feeding America network, and we receive some food and funding through our partnership with Omaha's Food Bank for the Heartland.



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Board Member Spotlight: *Mike Gormally*

Meet Board Secretary, Mike Gormally. Mike was born in Sioux City, IA, in 1977. After graduating from East High School in 1996, he attended Western Iowa Tech Community College and graduated in 1998 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology. He started working with AC & R Specialists in 2001 and was recently promoted to the Service Manager position. He is greatly looking forward to serving the company in this capacity.

Mike has served on our board since 2019 and has held the Secretary position since 2020. He also serves on our Building Committee (2019-present) and Executive Committee (2020-present). He has been very instrumental in all of the heating and cooling needs of the Food Bank of Siouxland's building, always making sure his technicians check our heating in the fall and our AC units in the spring, as well as answering any other questions we may have. Mike, along with AC & R Specialists, played an integral role in the building and renovation of the walk-in cooler and freezers, completing this project just shy of 4 months. Mike is also one of the biggest supporters of our special events, taking the time to solicit auction items, promote our events to friends and coworkers, and encouraging others to get involved. Many thanks for your valuable service, Mike!

Mike married his beautiful wife, Christina, in 2006, and together they have 2 daughters: Olivia, 12, in 7th grade, and Amelia, 10, in 5th grade. In his spare time, he and his family enjoy volunteering with Noah's Hope Animal Rescue. His hobbies include woodworking and house renovations. Other interests include watching the Iowa Hawkeyes, attending his daughter's sporting events, and when the weather allows, barbequing.

"I am very appreciative for being a part of the Food Bank of Siouxland. It is a great organization with very hard working and dedicated employees. It is truly an honor to serve this organization that literally gives back to the community!" – Mike Gormally



Save the Date

Annual Empty Bowls Hunger Awareness Event and Fundraiser



The Food Bank of Siouxland's 18th Annual Empty Bowls Hunger Awareness Event and Fundraiser will be held on Friday, February 4, 2022 at the Sioux City Convention Center.

This event will be IN PERSON again in 2022! Tickets are limited and go on sale Thursday, December 16, 2021. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. To reserve your seats/tables (after 12/16), become a sponsor, or donate to the auction, please call or email Development Director Valerie Petersen at **712-255-9741** or **Valerie@siouxlandfoodbank.org**.