

Food for Thought

The Newsletter of The Food Bank of Siouxland, Inc.

FALL 2023



FOOD BANK



OF SIOUXLAND INC.

Leading Siouxland in the fight against hunger.

DISTRIBUTION PARTNER OF
FEEDING AMERICA

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Check us out on
Facebook, Instagram,
and LinkedIn!



Dear Friends,

What do you think of when you think of a food pantry distribution? As I began working at the Food Bank of Siouxland 10 years ago, I imagined bags of canned goods containing items like chicken noodle soup, canned corn, and spaghetti noodles. This notion was not far off: In 2013, the top three categories for distribution included canned fruit, canned veggies, and soup. Over time, the Food Bank staff worked with food pantry partners and guests through surveys to see what items they wanted. These surveys said the Food Bank needed to find more peanut butter, produce, dairy, and protein (including eggs). By 2019, produce became a top three category for distributed product (pushing out soup). By the end of 2020, protein and dairy also hit the top three with produce. **Canned items remained a staple, yet the focus on fresh and perishable items was a key turn for the Food Bank and pantries throughout Siouxland.** Dairy, produce, and protein remain strong in donations, while canned items are lagging. Growing season troubles keep fruit scarce. Metal used in canning remains expensive which hampers the available fruit and veggies.

What can we do to support increases? The Food Bank staff is working with donors on sustaining levels of product we are receiving. Staff is also working on increasing the frequency of local

food drives to capture more canned items. As produce and dairy remain strong, the staff is working on getting grants for agencies to get more equipment to store these products, including refrigerators, to expand capacity. Further, working with our partner food bank in Omaha, we added a Food Sourcing position to help work with donors on creating sustainable increases in food categories.

You are in a vital role to affect the reach of food throughout Siouxland. With your continued donations, the Food Bank staff can purchase these items. Additionally, support food drives this fall when you see them. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram for the latest information on fundraising events. Call the office to schedule a time to volunteer to sort food to get it to agencies and neighbors quicker. Your past donations were greatly appreciated; your continued future donations will be even more appreciated.



Gratefully,

Jake Wanderscheid

Jake Wanderscheid
Executive Director
of the Food Bank
of Siouxland

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Four Ways to Take Action During Hunger Action Month

Food should not be an impossible choice. Individuals should not have to choose between a daily meal and other crucial needs, like medicine, electricity, and childcare. Unfortunately, millions of Americans have to make these hard choices every day. September is Hunger Action Month, making it the perfect time to get involved and support individuals experiencing food insecurity in our community. There are many ways to take action during September. Read on to learn how you can be part of the fight against hunger in Siouxland!

1 Participate in or Host a Food Drive

Participating in a food drive is a great way to help in the fight against hunger. Food drives can be held at any point throughout the year because the necessity for food is always prevalent for food banks. Food drives benefit the community, but also the environment. Food donated during food drives reduces the waste going into landfills and helps to nourish those in the community experiencing food insecurity.

If you or someone you know is interested in hosting a food drive, contact **Devyn Reilly** at devyn@siouxlandfoodbank.org or **712-255-9741, ext. 7**, for more information.

2 Participate in the 20th Annual Food Bank of Siouxland Golf Classic

Do you like a little friendly competition served with a side of ice cream? How about playing golf with your friends or coworkers? If this sounds like something you would enjoy, join the Food Bank of Siouxland for the 20th Annual Golf Classic on Monday, September 11, 2023 at Whispering Creek Golf Club, sponsored by Wells Enterprises. During this event, prizes for first, second, and third place will be awarded. We hear that the Wells' Blue Bunny may be hopping through the hills, bringing ice cream treats to happy golfers again this year!

Contact **Sidney Marks** at sidney@siouxlandfoodbank.org or call the office at **712-255-9741, ext. 6**, to register or learn more about sponsorship opportunities today! Teams are filling up quickly and you won't want to miss this.

3 Attend Celebrate Our Friends

Celebrate Our Friends will be on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 1 p.m. at the Wells Visitor Center and Ice Cream Parlor in Le Mars, IA. This event is hosted by the Food Bank of Siouxland to highlight individuals and organizations who have aided us in our mission of feeding our communities. The event begins by highlighting the Volunteer of the Year award, which goes to an individual who has dedicated their time and efforts to have a significant effect on fighting hunger.

At the Food Bank of Siouxland, many agencies work with us to distribute food to the communities we serve. During this event, we award two agencies the Agency of the Year Award, one from the Sioux City metro area and another from a rural area. Without our Agency Partners, the Food Bank of Siouxland would just be a warehouse with a lot of food in it. The agencies we work with ensure that those in need of food in our community are able to access it. Agencies presented with this award have shown exemplary work in providing those facing food insecurity with much-needed sustenance and household items.

The final award given at the event is the Linda Scheid Legacy Award, which goes to an individual or organization that has supported the Food Bank over many years in a remarkable way. We see their dedication through the three Ts: time, talent, and treasure. These groups go above and beyond the call of duty and provide support in a number of ways for the Food Bank and the greater Siouxland community.

This event allows us to highlight some of our biggest supporters and thank everyone who has aided our mission over the years. To attend or live stream the event, please watch our social media for more information and join us in congratulating the individuals and organizations that have had a major impact on the fight against hunger in Siouxland.

4 Advocate for Hunger Action Month

There are many simple ways to advocate for those facing food insecurity! One of the easiest ways for individuals in the community to advocate for Hunger Action Month is by wearing orange during the month of September. Send us a photo of you, your friends, and/or your coworkers wearing orange to sidney@siouxlandfoodbank.org and we will share on our social media! Another way to advocate during Hunger Action Month is by volunteering at a local food bank or food pantry.

One of the most important ways to advocate for our friends and neighbors is to stay educated on hunger in America and to start conversations. Talk about food insecurity, share our posts or emails with those you care about and let others know how widespread it really is. **With one in ten people in our community facing difficult times, you probably know and love someone that is struggling to secure their next meal.** If individuals within the community remain educated on this topic, we can all continue to make a difference within our communities for individuals experiencing food insecurity.

Incoming: Changes to SNAP Benefits

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (also known as SNAP and previously known as Food Stamps) is a program that provides food assistance to low-income individuals and families. These funds help those using the program to buy basic items to supplement their grocery trips and food bank visits, ensuring that everyone on the program has nutritious food essentials. In Iowa, you may have heard about the changes presented to the SNAP program through SF 494, which will tighten the eligibility requirements for those applying for SNAP benefits.

For a good portion of this spring, Food Bank of Siouxland board members and staff advocated against the tightening restrictions by writing to legislators and speaking at the Capitol during a hearing on April 4, 2023. The bill, which was signed into law on June 1, 2023, states that those receiving SNAP benefits have an asset limit of \$15,000 per household, with the exception of two cars, one of which must be worth less than \$10,000. In addition to asset limits, the bill requires that all recipients reapply quarterly within ten days of notice. With the new changes, applications will require more supplemental paperwork than it takes to apply for a mortgage.

The fraud rate of the current program is .08% and current SNAP benefits, which are federally funded, provide an additional \$550,000 a year to businesses in the Food Bank of Siouxland's service area. The current program keeps federal funds in-state, which helps fuel our local economy. An estimated 2,800 people

will be taken off of SNAP benefits and the bill will also remove an estimated 8,000 people from Medicare. While the two may seem unrelated, the removal of individuals from Medicare will have a major impact on the finances of many, pushing them to rely on food banks for assistance as their budgets become even tighter.

Unfortunately, this bill will not only take funding away from Iowans and Iowa businesses, it will cost \$7.5 million to implement, about *four times* the current annual cost of the program. It will place a heavy strain on food banks, who are already overwhelmed from the increased need over the last three years. The program, which has roots in promoting self-sufficiency, is now making it more difficult for individuals and families to make their way out of poverty and placing a heavier load on non-profits to make up the difference.

When forecasting what the next few years will look like here at the Food Bank of Siouxland, we expect to see significant increases due to these new changes. Your help is needed now more than ever! **Visit our website at siouxlandfoodbank.org or call our office at 712-255-9741 to find out more about how you can join us in the fight against hunger!**

Board Member Spotlight: Tracey Akins

Meet Board Member Tracey Akins. Tracey grew up in Calgary, Alberta, Canada and came to the Siouxland area to attend Briar Cliff College in Sioux City, Iowa. Growing up, she was very active in sports, playing golf, softball, and field hockey. Sports gave her the opportunity to attend Briar Cliff College on a golf scholarship. Upon graduating from Briar Cliff with Business & Accounting degrees, she continued her education and received her MBA from Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska.

While attending Briar Cliff College, Tracey was a part of the student organization, BC Cares. This program further instilled her belief that each person has an opportunity to make a difference in the world.

"The Food Bank of Siouxland does just that for our local area and as a member of this great Board, I get to help in their success," Tracey said.

With friends and family working in education, she is passionate about FBS's Backpack Program: *Food for Kids.*

"There are so many students who benefit from this and it drove my passion to join the Board of Directors of the Food Bank of Siouxland," she says.

Tracey has worked at Wells Enterprises for the past 16 years in a variety of roles. Most recently, she is a part of the Shared Services team as the Director of Product Data Management, Accounts Payable and Payroll. Wells Enterprises is a dedicated supporter of the Food Bank of Siouxland and is the Presenting Sponsor for the 20th Annual Food Bank of Siouxland Golf Classic. Not only has Wells sponsored FBS events, they also volunteer their time during these events as well as in our warehouse, and assist in any Backpack Program needs.

Tracey made her home with her husband and three children in South Sioux City; their youngest just graduated high school this past spring. Summer is her favorite season as she is able to spend time outdoors, often on the golf course.



2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Tiffany Kissinger
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Sidney Marks
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Devyn Reilly
Internal Development & Communications Associate

Royce Atkinson
Driver / Warehouse Assistant

Brian Zimmerman
Driver / Warehouse Assistant

Tashli Green
Full-time Warehouse Assistant

Joe Thompson
Full-time Warehouse Assistant

Tom Kuchera
Part-time Warehouse Assistant

Devin Smith
Part-time Warehouse Assistant



Meet the Warehouse Q&A

We sat down with Royce Atkinson, a Food Bank of Siouxland Delivery Driver since 2022, to find out what a day is like delivering food to our 100+ agency partners across the region. We asked him some questions about his time here at the Food Bank and how it has made an impact on him, as well as our community.

Q: What does an average day look like in the Food Bank Warehouse?

A: It actually really starts the day before. We prepare orders the afternoon before and set the delivery schedule so we can get on the road right away the next morning. I spend the day delivering food on that day's route and picking up donations from stores along the way. Once I get back to the warehouse in the afternoon, I start preparing the orders for the next day.

Q: What are your favorite parts of your role here?

A: Probably delivering food to our agency partners, knowing that they will be excited to get the food and provide it to folks who really need it.

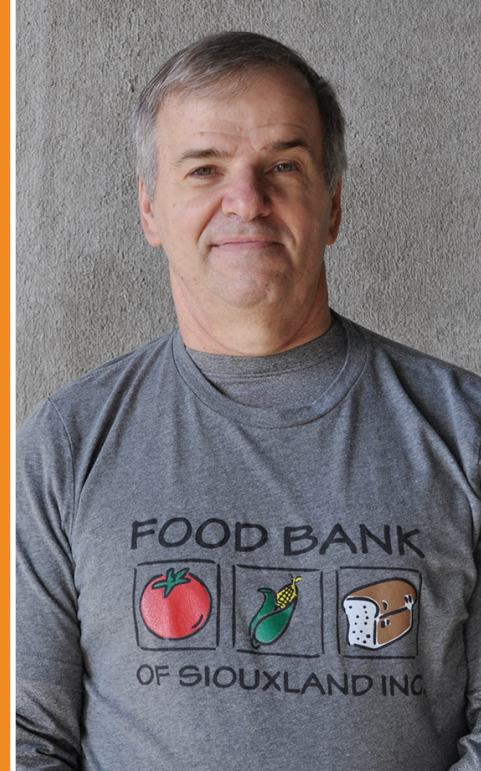
Q: Is there an aspect of delivering that you really look forward to?

A: Meeting with the folks at each agency and getting to know them. It's amazing to see all the work they do, especially since many are volunteers.

Q: Is there something you wish the community knew?

A: A lot of times the food is going to a lot of older folks and people from rural areas. Everyone has a unique situation and there are hungry people in small towns too, just as in urban areas. Also, how amazing our volunteers are and all they do to help our warehouse staff.

Thank you, Royce and the warehouse team, for ensuring all agencies within our 11-county service area receive the proper food needed to feed our neighbors.



Update and Upcoming!



THANK YOU to all who came and supported the Siouxland Food Festival on June 3rd! Between Malli's on Wheels' homemade burritos, Crumb. Bakeries' 7-layer bars, Fazoli's meatballs, Rebos' lobster mac & cheese, and so many more menu items, people left with bellies full and fun had.

We recognize the support of donors and volunteers who ensured this new event flourished. The Food Bank of Siouxland appreciates your dedication to our mission of ending hunger in Siouxland. Next year's event promises to tantalize your taste buds once again.



CELEBRATE OUR FRIENDS will be held on Wednesday, September 27 at 1 p.m. at the Wells Visitor Center and Ice Cream Parlor in Le Mars, IA. where we award individuals and organizations who have had a lasting effect on the Food Bank of Siouxland through service.

We invite you to join us in unveiling and congratulating these tremendous supporters of the Food Bank of Siouxland and all they do for our communities.