

Food for Thought

The Newsletter of The Food Bank of Siouxland, Inc.

FALL 2022



FOOD BANK



OF SIOUXLAND INC.

Leading Siouxland in the fight against hunger.

DISTRIBUTION PARTNER OF
FEEDING AMERICA

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Dear Friends,

The word “normal” is going out the window here at the Food Bank of Siouxland. A “normal” summer would see the Food Bank distribute less pounds to agencies and agencies would see fewer guests or households. In 2019 (and before), summer in northwest Iowa and northeast Nebraska brought elevated economic activity. These increased economic activities include farming, construction, road work, transportation, and/or increased manufacturing. This summer, several things are holding these gains back. I am feeling them just as I bet you are — increased gas or diesel prices, higher than expected grocery bills, a warm start to summer means running the air conditioner more, and the end of increased SNAP benefits. With all these factors, I am glad the Food Bank is capable of helping the Siouxland community eat.

Food Bank agency partners (food pantries, meal sites, senior pantries, backpack distributions, etc.) record the number of individuals they serve. In April and May 2022, agencies saw an increase of 2,900 more individuals than in 2021. Further, agency staff and volunteers report a heightened number of first-time patrons, most of whom have jobs.

They are experiencing strains on their budget and using food to stretch their budgets. Most households have children and are struggling to provide enough food for their children or are made to cut down on the portions of food they eat so their children are fed. A smaller, and just as important group of individuals, are elders who no longer work. Seeing prices climbing faster than retirement income can keep up, they turn to food pantries for support.

The Food Bank staff, agencies, volunteers, and I are working to provide nutritious, healthy food until hunger is no longer a challenge. This cause is a marathon task, not a sprint. **Are you willing to help provide a meal for an elder? Are you willing to help feed a child during their school year? Do you want to see Siouxland (and the Food Bank) return to “normal”? Consider donating today!**

Gratefully,

Jake Wanderscheid
Executive Director
of the Food Bank
of Siouxland



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Six Things You Didn't Know About Your Local Food Bank

By Payton Miller, Tyson Summer Community Intern

From the outside looking in, it is easy to see organizations like the Food Bank of Siouxland as a simple operation; an organization that brings in food through donations and distributes it back out to community members in need. Many people in the community have donated or participated in a canned food drive at some point. Even during my short time working with the Food Bank, corrections have been made to many of the misconceptions I had in my mind about what this non-profit does. Here are some of the things that I have learned during my first week at the Food Bank of Siouxland:

1 Food Bank vs Food Pantry/Agency

In the minds of many, a food bank and a food pantry are the same thing but this is not the case. Food banks are a much larger operation than a food pantry. A food bank acts more as a storage facility and distribution center used to keep the food until it is ready to be sent out to food pantries in the community. Food pantries/agencies act as a grocery store does for individuals and families in need. They work to hand out portions of the food to the public. In some cases, a food bank can have a pantry inside where community members can come and collect food, but at the Food Bank of Siouxland, they are two separate entities.



2 Perishable Food Items

Some of the most known programs that the food bank puts on are their food drives at schools and in some workplaces. Because of this, I always assumed that food banks worked mostly with dried and canned goods like cereal and canned vegetables.

When you actually take a step inside a food bank, you'll come to find that they have both perishable and nonperishable food items available, including dairy, meat products, fresh fruits, and fresh vegetables. They work to not only provide a meal to individuals in the community that need them but provide one that is nutritious and healthy.



3 Household Necessities

While it is not their main focus, food banks do often carry household products such as toilet paper, paper towels, and even feminine hygiene products for those who need them. As part of the mission to fight food insecurity, these items are up for grabs to lessen the stress for people who may not be able to fully



provide for themselves in every way that they need. In some cases, people may have to choose between paying for electricity OR paying for basic necessities like food, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, etc. The food bank works to lessen the burden that comes along with making those choices.



4 You Can Donate Food from Your Own Garden

During the summer months, the Food Bank of Siouxland accepts fruits and vegetable donations from local gardens. So, when your harvest is bigger than expected and you don't want your extra food to go to waste, you can bring in what you have to the Food Bank of Siouxland. Your hard work in the garden all summer won't go to waste, and you will be giving back to your community in the process.

5 The Many Ways to Get Involved

When I think of a non-profit organization, I think mainly of donating money which may not be a realistic option for most people. There are many ways to get involved that don't require a monetary donation:



- Donate any canned goods that you may have around the house that you can spare.
- Donate your time to the many programs that the Food Bank of Siouxland has to offer. There are endless opportunities to serve including programs like the Backpack Program: *Food for Kids*, food sorting in the warehouse, helping at a fundraising event, or even giving your time to a local pantry.
- Advocate: Follow their social media and interact with their posts. The more people know about food banks and how they operate, the more people may take advantage of our resources or be willing to help out.

6 The Face of Food Insecurity

One in every 10 individuals in the Siouxland community faces food insecurity. Being food insecure does not necessarily mean that a person is homeless or that they look like they are struggling. Before coming to work at the Food Bank of Siouxland, I thought I had an idea about what a food insecure person looked like. That was quickly proven false. Often, people who you would never suspect are struggling. It can look like someone in your office, your child's best friend, or even your favorite teacher at school. In most cases, you wouldn't be able to spot a food-insecure individual out of a crowd.



Board Member Spotlight: Kelli Meister

Meet Board President, Kelli Meister. Kelli joined the Food Bank of Siouxland's Board of Directors in 2020, moving to the Vice President's role in 2021 and becoming President in 2022. Kelli joined Seaboard Triumph Foods in 2019 with over 11 years of finance experience within hospitality, public accounting, aerospace, and government contracting. She is the Director of Accounting and Finance at Seaboard Triumph Foods making her a part of the Executive Leadership Team at STF. As a dependable team member and a critical thinker, Kelli is motivated to create a culture at STF that makes it the best place to work. There are multiple things Kelli loves about her job with STF including the opportunity for community involvement. "When the opportunity arises to work with the community, we all step away from our daily routines at STF to do what we can to help out." Seaboard Triumph Foods has been the Presenting Sponsor of the Food Bank's annual Empty Bowls event for the last 3 years. Kelli has personally given her time and talent to our event ensuring its success. Kelli and STF have also volunteered to pack sacks of food for our Backpack Program: *Food for Kids*.

Kelli graduated with a bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, MN. She also has a Master's Certificate of Accounting from Pennsylvania State University. Always a hard worker, Kelli's first job was mowing lawns. She moved to working in restaurants to meeting the right person at the right time to influence her career in accounting. Advice Kelli lives by: "Your life is what you make of it, so why not make it great? Never be too proud to take that entry-level job mowing lawns, waiting tables, or working production. In life, you never know where these opportunities will take you. It may just take you to Sioux City, IA, to work on the executive team for one of the largest pork-producing plants in the Midwest working in an office with a very nice window view." In her free time, Kelli enjoys playing sports with her family and spending time with friends.

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Summer Warehouse Assistant



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Employee Spotlight: *Tiffany Kissinger*

This month we are highlighting Tiffany Kissinger as the Food Bank of Siouxland's Spotlight Employee! Tiffany is our Program and Administrative Manager and is well known at the Food Bank of Siouxland for being helpful and friendly.

Tiffany has worked at the Food Bank of Siouxland for four years and her main duties include supervising the Backpack Program: *Food for Kids*, processing incoming payments, and being our database guru. Her love of golf also makes Tiffany a wonderful advisor while planning our annual Food Bank of Siouxland Golf Classic. "My grandfather taught me to play, and it is a sport we enjoyed playing together, good for business and a lifelong sport," she said. Tiffany lives in Sioux City with her husband, Davey, and their 18-year-old cat, Penny. She enjoys golfing, working out and spending quality time with her friends and her grandma, Darlene.

On working at the Food Bank, Tiffany stated, "Until I started working with the Backpack Program, I didn't realize how many children were going hungry or not having a nutritious meal at home and the only thing to eat was a bag of chips and a can of soda for dinner. I'm glad we are able to help provide some nutritious food outside of school meals for kids on the weekends."



Save the Dates



19th Annual "Food Bank of Siouxland Golf Classic"

September 12, 2022 at Whispering Creek Golf Course

Join the Food Bank of Siouxland for the 19th Annual Golf Classic, presented by Wells Enterprises on Monday, September 12, 2022, at Whispering Creek Golf Course. With prizes for first, second, and third place, your entry fee entitles you to 18 holes of golf, with cart along with a box lunch and dinner following the tournament. Compete for pin prizes and try your luck with door prizes and drawings.

Back by popular demand: Speed Hole. Quickest Team to finish the hole wins a prize!

Register your team of 4 at one.bidpal.net/fbsgolf2022 or become a sponsor! Be recognized as a Golf Ball, Beverage Cart, Scorecard, Contest, or Hole Sponsor with appropriate signage and promotional materials. Custom sponsorships are available. Contact Associate Executive Director, Valerie Petersen for more information on registration and sponsorship opportunities.

Proceeds from this event benefit the Food Bank of Siouxland in our mission of leading Siouxland in the fight against hunger.



Siouxland Food Festival

Saturday, February 4, 2023 at Siouxland Expo Center

The middle of winter can be tough, but we have something new for you to look forward to! Join the Food Bank of Siouxland on Saturday, February 4, 2023, for The Siouxland Food Festival! This new event will take the place of Empty Bowls and will be held at the Siouxland Expo Center. The event will showcase local restaurants, caterers, and food trucks, and is a great event for the whole family! The Siouxland Food Festival will also include activities for kids, live music and more! Proceeds will benefit the Food Bank of Siouxland. More information including sponsorships, ticket prices, and vendors to come!