

feeding MATTERS

2018 Winter Newsletter

Volunteer Story: Mike Turner

When volunteer Mike Turner built an overnight food depository for the Food Bank, he wasn't thinking about the best receptacle design for cans and boxes of food. His focus was on the bigger goal: getting food to hungry neighbors.

Mike's been a regular volunteer at the Food Bank for about 15 years. He spends Tuesday mornings sorting food alongside other wonderful volunteers. "Sometimes it's overwhelming when I think about the amount of food that comes through [the Food Bank]," Mike said. "When you really stop to think about it, it's not just a volunteer task. It's food for thousands of hungry people in Nebraska—it's really something."

"Through his craft, the after-hours donation box Mike constructed will offer another option for our community to connect people in need to food," said Kati Umberger, the Food Bank's Distribution Center Volunteer Coordinator. "This is something for which we are all grateful."

Mike's carpentry hobby was carved out of tradition. Growing up in a small town about an hour and a half north of Cincinnati, Ohio, Mike spent many hours at the retail lumberyard across the street from his home. From a young age, he began to learn the family trade. It provided lessons as well as a connection to his grandfather who died long before Mike was born. "I was about 10 or 12 years old when I started heading to the lumberyard with my Dad and Uncles. I learned a great deal by keeping

The after-hours donation box Mike constructed will offer another option for our community to connect food to people in need.



Volunteer Mike Turner demonstrates the easy-to-lift lid on the overnight food depository he built for the Food Bank.

my mouth shut and my ears and eyes open," Mike said. "Although I never knew my grandfather, I came to know him through my uncles' stories and comments." He laughed as he recalled a time when his uncles gave young Mike grief for using the handle of a screwdriver to try to drive a nail. It was a shortcut—his uncles were quick to point out—that his grandfather would not have approved. "As I grew older and heard different stories, I knew I wanted to live my life in a way that would make my grandfather proud," Mike said.

Mike has made cupboards, tables and now an overnight food depository. "When I think about the time I spend at the Food Bank and why I do it, it's really simple," Mike said. "If even one child can go to bed without being hungry, then it's all worth it. It's all absolutely worth it."

Special thanks to G.S. Guenzel Co. for donating sheet metal, Millard Lumber for discounting the plywood, and to Mike Turner for donating his labor on this project.

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2017 TAX INFORMATION

If you need a complete record of your 2017 donations to the Food Bank, please contact Development Director John Mabry at (402) 466-8170, ext. 110 or jmabry@lincolnfoodbank.org.



A Message From the Executive Director

David Weaver, the CEO at the Food Bank in Lubbock, Texas, passed along a saying to me several years ago that resonates on a daily basis at the Food Bank; "Success will go to those with the best questions, not those with the cleverest answers."

We have a lot of best questions at the Food Bank; How can we get better at feeding folks? Are we better this year than we were last year? How do we reach neighbors we are not currently reaching? The "best" questions serve as our roadmaps for some hoped-for right answers.

The most oft-repeated question we are asked when we are telling the Food Bank story in the community goes like this: "How do you know people in line deserve the food?"

Food Bank staffers shy away from the "cleverest" answers to this question. We address it in a variety of ways. My favorite answer is a passage from a book that has been invoked in this space in prior columns.

Sara Miles from "Take This Bread"; Derek pounced. 'How do you know they really need it?' he asked. I went through the basics: Most of our pantry visitors are working people with families, then need help making ends meet, it costs just a dollar to feed one family, we can feed about 250 families a week. Then I paused. 'You know,' I said, 'it's just really a drag being poor. You have to wait in line and fill out endless stupid forms, and people always try to make you prove you deserve it. None of us deserve what we have.'

None of us deserve what we have. Alleviating hunger in Southeast Nebraska is an active acknowledgement that many of us have received a great deal, while many others have not.

Thanks for your ongoing encouragement to ask the best questions.

We are grateful.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Young".

Scott Young
Executive Director
Food Bank of Lincoln

Why All the Mail

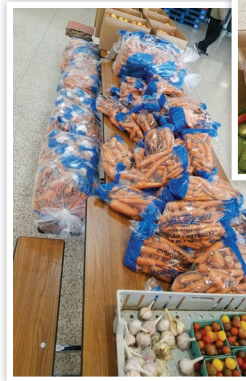
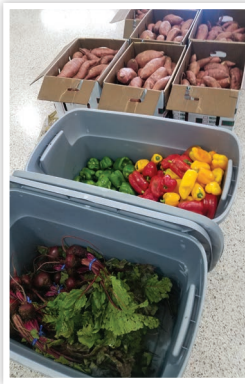
We do send you a lot of mail, in part, to **keep you informed**, with newsletters such as this one. And all of the mailings lead to hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations each year. **However, if you would like us to cut back on the number of mailings you receive each year, please give us a call or send a note to info@lincolnfoodbank.org.** Thank you.



Community Partnerships Produce Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

We all know how important it is to include fruits and vegetables in our daily diet but for some of our Southeast Nebraska friends, it's not always easy. The Food Bank of Lincoln Child Hunger Programs is working to increase access to fresh produce to our nearly 5,000 students and their families we serve through our programs each month. Currently, our Backpack Program recipients in Lincoln receive four pieces of fresh fruit every Friday during the school year. Typically, apples or oranges are added as they are the most durable for the walk or ride home in students' backpacks.

Our Food Markets, which are now located in 14 schools, provide a variety of fresh produce for students and their families. Some of the fruit and vegetables students and families have enjoyed this year include: oranges, mangoes, apples, cucumbers, carrots, peaches and bananas. The Food Bank purchases most of this produce, although



some does come through donations. A portion of the purchased produce is possible thanks to grant support, including significant funding from the Community Health Endowment (CHE). Since 2010, CHE has provided more than \$100,000 in support

for Food Bank programs, including the Backpack Program, School Food Markets and Bridges Out of Poverty. A key initiative funded by CHE is fresh fruit at our School Markets. Healthier food means healthier kiddos.

This year, we've also had a great partnership with Community Crops that helped provide a variety of vegetables, such as kale, turnips, peppers, chard and carrots at the monthly Food Market at Park Middle School. It was a big hit and a great example of community collaboration.

We are on pace to provide 77,310 pounds of fresh produce through our Food Markets for the 2017-2018 school year. We're grateful for the partnerships that help us bring more food to more students and families.

Go Big Red and Help those Huskers

UNL is home of the NCAA champions in volleyball and another winning effort at the Nebraska Union – **the Huskers Helping Huskers Pantry** for students who struggle to afford food and personal care items. The pantry provides free items to students in need, and all they have to do is show their NCard.

For more information, or to make a donation to help this cause, please contact John Mabry at jmabry@lincolnfoodbank.org or (402) 466-8170, ext. 110.

Go Big Red!

Thank You, Lincoln CAN Sponsors and Participants



LINCOLN CAN

a new community event modeled after an event called Cans Around the Oval, hosted by the Food Bank for Larimer County in Fort Collins, Colo. We call our event Lincoln CAN.

The Lincoln CAN partnership joins student efforts of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Center for Civic Engagement and the feeding efforts of the Food Bank of Lincoln. The drive is a month-long food and fund drive involving businesses, student organizations on college and university campuses in the Food Bank's 16-county service area and civic and faith-based groups.

Community events allow us to bring greater attention to the Food Bank's work. Often, they are excellent opportunities to grow our Food Bank friend base of individuals to corporate partners while gathering food and funds to support our mission. In 2017, we introduced a

In its inaugural year, we had 40 different groups participate in Lincoln CAN, and the effort resulted in the equivalent of 104,269 meals for hungry neighbors in Southeast Nebraska. The top three financial donors were: Sandhills Publishing, Molex and Lincoln Housing Authority. The top three contributors of food collected were: Neogen-GeneSeek, Cornhusker Bank and Schoo Middle School.

We're especially grateful to Sandhills Publishing and Molex for their significant sponsorship support of this first-time event.

The 2018 Lincoln CAN event is slated for Friday, Sept. 28 and once again will be held on the UNL campus.

If you would like to learn more about sponsorship or participation for this event, please contact Corrine Gernhart at (402) 466-8170, ext. 121 or email her at cgernhart@lincolnfoodbank.org.



Staff Profiles

Jami Gordon, Front Office Specialist

Jami moved to Lincoln 12 years ago from Iowa and has come to love "the Good Life." At the Food Bank, Jami is primarily responsible for recruiting and scheduling Food Bank volunteers.

Although her role as the front office specialist is part-time, she has demonstrated a full-time commitment to the mission.

"I enjoy working for the Food Bank of Lincoln because I know that I am a part of an organization that is doing something good for the community," Jami said.

She has a growing interest in the Food Bank's Agency Partner activity and enjoys getting to meet Agency Partner representatives when they stop to pick up orders at the Food Bank.



Nick Harral, SNAP Outreach

Spend just a small measure of time with Nick and you will soon believe he believes in putting more "good" out into the world.

Nick's role allows him to get out into the community and educate clients at mobile food distributions and at various Food Bank Agency Partner sites, like Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach. "I enjoy getting to know the clients and answering their questions. I like being able to help."

"I had worked with families facing different kinds of difficult situations, but I had no idea until I started working here that there was such a need for the Food Bank's services in our community," Nick said. "My favorite thing about working at the Food Bank is that everyone here is on board with the mission."



The 16th annual Empty Bowls event will be here before we know it! The event will be held **Tuesday, May 29, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Embassy Suites in downtown Lincoln. Tickets are \$25 each and go on sale Tuesday, March 20.** You

can get them on our website www.LincolnFoodBank.org or by calling us at (402) 466-8170.

Spring Events



April 9-20

State Campaign Against Hunger

April 28

11th annual Backpack Extra Mile Walk at Lincoln East

May 12

Postal Drive (Stamp Out Hunger)

May 29

16th annual Empty Bowls Luncheon at Embassy Suites

May 31

Give to Lincoln Day

Volunteers Needed!

We have a fantastic opportunity for students, families, Scout Troops, and church or civic groups to spend a few hours on a Saturday morning collecting food that donors leave by their mailbox as part of Stamp Out Hunger on Saturday, May 12.

We're also looking for one or two volunteers to cover afternoon shifts (1-4 p.m.) in our front office, helping to answer phones and occasional filing and other tasks.

If you want to learn more about these and other volunteer opportunities at the Food Bank, please contact Jami by phone (402) 466-8170, ext. 124 or email jgordon@lincolnfoodbank.org, or Kati at (402) 466-8170, ext. 112 or kati@lincolnfoodbank.org.



MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

HOURS

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

LOCATION

4840 Doris Bair Circle, Suite A
(next to Doris Bair softball complex)

MAILING ADDRESS

Food Bank of Lincoln
4840 Doris Bair Circle, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68504

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