

The Feeding Frontline

2022 SPRING NEWSLETTER



MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

LINCOLNFOODBANK.ORG



We Moved!

We are thrilled to announce we are now operating from our new location in northwest Lincoln.

You can reach us at:

Address: **1221 Kingbird Road, Lincoln, Nebraska 68521**
Phone: **(402) 466-8170**

To see additional photos of the new facility, visit us on social media and at lincolnfoodbank.org.

"This move to our new facility — during our 40th anniversary year — signals a celebration of service to our neighbors. We remain focused on the work to provide all our neighbors with equitable access to nutritious food and to alleviate hunger in Southeast Nebraska. We are grateful for every dollar of support given to help us Raise Our Response to Hunger. Talent and hard work from a multitude of industries made this dream a reality."

—Michaela Kumke, President & CEO



**Progress photos at the time of print.*

THE FOOD BANK MISSION

Alleviate hunger
in Southeast Nebraska.

OUR VISION

Nourishing our communities
to end hunger.

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A Letter From the President & CEO

In the excitement of recruitment and the enticement of possibility, what might get overlooked is the reality of transition. The note below from a mobile food distribution guest was an important reminder about how we can welcome new neighbors.

"I recently moved to Lincoln for a new job, and with all of the costs associated with moving and getting a new place, I kind of ran into a tough spot while waiting for my first paycheck. I have never been in a place like this before financially and ended up using your services today in Lincoln. I just wanted to say thank you SO MUCH for the food and generosity. I'll be back on my feet in a week or two and you really helped me get through the weird transition of moving to a new state. I will be sure to pay it forward in the near future, whether it be donating or volunteering. Thanks again." -J.M.

Last fall, Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts unveiled a \$10 million marketing campaign intended to draw new residents and professional talent to our state. Nebraskans who have left the state and other people who may be seeking a change of pace and a better quality of life are the targets of this national marketing campaign, "The Good Life is Calling."

Most major life changes come with some level of risk and a period of adjustment. While some hardships can be anticipated and pass quickly, others can rattle, rock and crumble a person or a family for extended periods. The Food Bank sees and serves neighbors who experience both ends of this spectrum.

As an organization, our move into a new facility is a firsthand take on what it means to have the encouragement and support of others. For about the same price tag as "The Good Life is Calling" campaign, you have helped us dream, design, construct and operate in a place with a strong foundation and a bright future. We'll use it for years to come to ensure our 1 in 8 neighbors — including 1 in 6 children — who face hunger and food insecurity here in Southeast Nebraska can have equitable access to healthy food and to do our part to welcome new Nebraskans, like J.M.

With gratitude,



Michaela Kumke
President & CEO
Food Bank of Lincoln



It's Give to Lincoln Time!

Give to Lincoln has begun, and we are grateful for the outstanding support the event has provided for the Food Bank of Lincoln and so many of our partners since 2012. Every donation makes a bigger impact on Give to Lincoln because nonprofits get a proportional share of a \$500,000 match fund. This means your gift will help even more neighbors facing hunger in Southeast Nebraska. Donations made now through May 26 are eligible for matching funds.

To donate online or for information about ways to donate offline, visit givetolincoln.com. Thanks to our friends at the Lincoln Community Foundation and this year's generous sponsors for making this possible. If you have any questions, please contact John Mabry at jmabry@lincolnfoodbank.org or (402) 466-8170.





Core Values Spotlight: Education

We aspire to educate our community, stakeholders and ourselves about issues that create hunger, and about programs that alleviate hunger. We will seek new solutions.

During the 2022 Nebraska Legislative session, the Food Bank of Lincoln advocated for Legislative Bill (LB) 1201, which requested a portion of our state's funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) be designated for hunger relief and developing innovative solutions that strengthen the food security system. Through this process, we had the opportunity to educate lawmakers about food insecurity in Nebraska and the ongoing need for food support.

Thanks to advocates across the state, like you, LB 1201 advanced out of the Appropriations Committee and reached the legislative floor for debate. We are grateful to all who submitted letters and comments in support of this bill and helped increase awareness of hunger in our community.

**Debate was ongoing at the time of print. For the results of LB 1201, visit our social media pages.*

A Volunteer For the Decades

A radio interview in 1982 started it all for longtime volunteer Frank Condello, who was intrigued by a request for food donations to the local food bank. Having recently moved from New Jersey, Frank was unfamiliar with the concept of food banking. To be fair, most of Southeast Nebraska was, too. The organization was new to the area and calling community members to help.

A call to which Frank quickly responded.

"My wife and I looked at all the food in our pantry, threw away the expired foods and took a bunch of things ... I called the Food Bank to donate it and they said to bring it out."

Out, as in our first location at 36th and Adams — a facility about the size of a small garage.

He came to deliver his donation and tour the operation. He left a Food Bank advocate.

"At the time, nobody really knew about food insecurity," Frank said. "Once you get involved with the Food Bank you realize how much good it's doing, how important it is, and try to do as much as you can."

And he has. Frank taught his coworkers about the Food Bank and held workplace food drives. He collected personal care items and volunteered on-site.

After hours, Frank folded paper bags to insert in the Lincoln Journal Star. These bags held food donations that were placed in barrels at grocery stores. The folding had to be just right to fit the bag in the newspaper, a skill Frank perfected

by creating his own custom tool. The first year, he folded 500 bags. The second, 1,000. One year, Frank folded more than 2,500 bags himself — a hefty task for a man who claims he hasn't "done all that much."

As the former vice president of marketing and communications at Nebraska Book Company, Frank used his marketing know-how to collaborate with the Food Bank for promotions and outreach — the effects of which are still seen today. Frank and his wife, Nadine, developed the idea of the "Food Bank House." At the Home Builders Association Annual Home and Garden Show, attendees can donate canned goods in exchange for a reduced admission price. Since its origination in 2003, the Food Bank House has collected more than 87,400 pounds of food. Again, a lot of meals for a man who claims he hasn't "done all that much."

This year, Frank celebrates his 80th birthday, 60th wedding anniversary and a 40-year partnership with the Food Bank of Lincoln. We are grateful to Frank and all the volunteers who have been integral to our operations these past 40 years.

To learn more about volunteering opportunities, contact Lauren Ritta at lritta@lincolnfoodbank.org.



**This year marks our 40th anniversary and to celebrate, we are sharing 40 stories that highlight our history and some of the people who have helped shape the organization we are today. To read more pieces from this collection, visit lincolnfoodbank.org.*

Filling Empty Bowls for 20 Years

"Throwing" bowls is like making pancakes. It can take one or two attempts to work out the kinks, but once you're in the groove, the material evolves into something spectacular.

At least, that's how artist and pottery professional Kathleen Grossman describes it.

Every year since 2003, Kathleen and her students at Down Under Pottery in Lincoln have crafted and donated unique stoneware bowls for the Food Bank of Lincoln's signature Empty Bowls event — a total of more than 15,250 original pieces. Sometimes, she approaches the pottery wheel with a plan. Other times, she begins "throwing" and sees what happens.

"It's a wonderful challenge to make the bowls unique. I initially thought families would want sets, but that wasn't the case," Kathleen explained. "Some are artsy. Some are simple. They stretch my creativity and allow me to experiment."

On May 31, Kathleen's creativity — and another 1,000 bowls — will graciously be on display for the 20th annual Empty Bowls event. Each event attendee gets to select a bowl of their own; a keepsake that symbolizes the bowls that have been filled and the bowls that still need to be filled to help neighbors facing hunger in Southeast Nebraska. The event will also feature 15 different soups from Lincoln's finest restaurants.

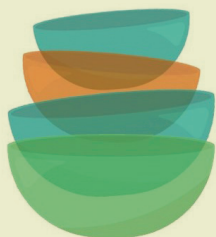
"I love watching people pick out bowls. We can't put them all out at once, so they'll look, go eat and then come back, just buzzing around the tables," she said. "It's the highlight of my year. I don't have \$20,000 to donate, but I can donate 1,000 bowls. It fulfills me to do something to feed people in my community."



When Kathleen was asked to share her artistry with the inaugural event two decades ago, the answer was an easy "yes." She had hosted a soup and bowl dinner to benefit the Red Cross following 9/11, and after seeing its success, had been looking for another similar opportunity. Not long after, former Food Bank Executive Director Scott Young called her. The timing was just right.

Twenty years later, Kathleen still expresses gratitude for the Empty Bowls event — a feeling that is certainly mutual.

"I'm so thankful to have this event. It's my meditation, my joy. I'm just appreciative of the opportunity to create and help the community."



Empty Bowls

A fundraiser benefiting the
Food Bank of Lincoln

Spoons Up!

The 20th annual Empty Bowls luncheon is Tuesday, May 31 from 11 a.m.–1 p.m. at Embassy Suites in downtown Lincoln. We hope you'll join us to enjoy soup from Lincoln's finest restaurants, select a handcrafted stoneware bowl from Down Under Pottery and help fight hunger in our community. This year's event will offer both a traditional in-person luncheon at Embassy Suites and outdoor drive-thru option at the Lied Center Box Office entrance.

Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased until May 20 at lincolnfoodbank.org. If you have event questions, please contact Corrine Gernhart at cgernhart@lincolnfoodbank.org or (402) 466-8170.



HOURS

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

LOCATION

1221 Kingbird Road, Lincoln, NE

MAILING ADDRESS

Food Bank of Lincoln
1221 Kingbird Road
Lincoln, NE 68521

CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

