DEAR FRIEND,

Spring has sprung with flowers blooming, birds singing, and much-needed rain showers. Each season brings change, hope, and warm memories. As I reflect on the past several months, there has been a great deal of change for those the Food Bank serves. SNAP supplemental benefits have significantly been reduced, inflation continues to put pressure on senior citizens and families who are trying to make ends meet as well as seeing more people at our Mobile Food Pantry seeking assistance. Even though the pandemic is officially over the need to provide food to our neighbors continues to be elevated.

While hunger is a silent, unseen, and routine occurrence for many, more and more families are in transition and seeking temporary assistance. We’ve heard numerous stories of individuals and families who have recently moved to the area or are between jobs. With your help, the Food Bank and our partners will continue to fill this gap by providing healthy and nutritious food.

We’re very blessed to have dedicated volunteers and generous donors who are faithful in fulfilling our vision of “hunger-free communities”. So, during this season of rebirth, I encourage everyone to make this also a “season of giving” by giving your time, your voice, and your treasure to help feed those in need.

Blessings!

Gratefully,

David O’Neil
CEO

JANI SHARES WITH NEIGHBORS, THANKS TO YOU

There’s rarely a day that goes by when Jani isn’t making sure people have enough to eat. From working for a meal delivery service to picking up food for her neighbors when she visits a Food Bank Mobile Pantry, Jani enjoys helping.

Thanks to generous friends like you, Jani also has nutritious food to fill her own family’s table.

Jani lives with her husband and uncle. Her husband works on extrusion towers in Olney, but when there’s a storm, his work is shut down — and less income comes in.

Jani works for a meal delivery service to help make ends meet, but the household budget still sometimes comes up short.

That’s why Jani is grateful to visit Wichita Fall Area Food Bank’s City View Mobile Pantry when the family’s income doesn’t stretch far enough. She can still bring home nutritious groceries even if a trip to the grocery store isn’t in the budget.

And, as a bonus, Jani is always grateful to be able to pick up food for her neighbors who can’t get out of the house as easily. She shares that some of her neighbors don’t have vehicles, and she’s happy she can help.

Thank you for helping make sure everyone in our community has vital access to nutritious food this summer. You’re helping make this a more vibrant, healthy community for us all!
Many food-insecure children receive free breakfast and lunch at school during the week. The problem arises on weekends when kids may not have enough food at home. That’s where our PowerPak 4 Kids program comes in. We partner with more than 60 area schools to offer the PP4K program, placing a bag of nutritious supplemental food into the backpacks of participating students on Fridays. In 2022, we served over 1,558 children each month through our PowerPak 4 Kids program, providing a total of 56,088 bags of nutritious, supplemental food. Thanks to PowerPak, children were able to return to school on Monday with energy to participate, concentrate and thrive!

Kids Cafe is one of the key ways we fight childhood hunger in our community. Studies show that children who face hunger often experience poorer health than their peers, difficulty learning, shame, and social alienation. Our Kids Cafe program ensures students have enough to eat. We partner with 7 agencies to ensure children have access to a warm, nutritious meal at the end of the day both after school and during the summer.

Food deserts and lack of reliable transportation are two of the biggest issues when it comes to local hunger. The Mobile Pantry is exactly what it sounds like—a large truck with storage and refrigeration that allows us to provide food where and when it’s needed most. Sponsored by United Regional Health Care System, the Mobile Pantry allows us to bring nutritious food boxes to 8 sites in Wichita Falls and 1 in Electra. Thanks to your generosity, we distributed 591,065 lbs of food in 2022!

Volunteers are critical to our hunger-relief efforts. In 2022, 967 volunteers donated their time to help sort incoming donations, process, and organize items for distribution and assisted with community education programs and events.
Justin never forgot the kindness his family received at an especially critical time — it’s part of what propels him to give his time as a volunteer with the Food Bank today.

Justin and his wife are the proud parents of Jameson, 3. Jameson was diagnosed with autism and hearing loss, so the family drives to Fort Worth regularly for treatment.

During the pandemic, the perfect storm occurred when the family was having to make the drive and pay for medical bills — all while paying on a new home and new vehicle. Then, Justin’s work tapered off.

That’s when the family turned to a Food Bank partner agency for help.

“We first came during Thanksgiving and received a turkey and a meal for the family,” Justin says.

“Once the family got back on its feet, Justin made the decision to pay your generosity forward by volunteering — just as he had witnessed on his first visit to the food pantry. Now, he’s been volunteering for six months and plans to continue.

“What you do makes a huge difference in so many people’s lives,” he says to donors and volunteers just like you. “Keep it up. It is very much appreciated.”

Nutrition Education for All

Here at the Wichita Falls Area Food Bank, we give you the knowledge and tools needed to take your health into your own hands. Did you know that The Wichita Falls Area Food Bank is committed to teaching the community about health and nutrition? We offer classes in nutrition, cooking, shopping on a budget, and physical activity to the youth of our community, adults and seniors alike. If you or a friend would like to know more about what classes are available, you can contact our Nutrition Service Director, Timothy Dawson at 940-766-2322 or email him at timothy.dawson@wfafb.org. If you are an organization that would like to schedule group classes, you can download our nutrition services request form at www.wfafb.org/nutrition-education.

Having good nutritional knowledge and skills are paramount to keeping a healthy community. We hope to see you at one of our classes soon!
Jennifer couldn’t be prouder of her three children. Ages 12, 14, and 16, each child is excelling in school and dreaming of bright futures — and Jennifer is thanking you for helping fuel those dreams.

“All of my kids are in A.P. classes and are on A and B honor roll,” Jennifer says, noting her oldest daughter is already dreaming of being a veterinarian. “I am very proud of them.”

We met Jennifer on her first visit to the food pantry at Trinity United Methodist Church, a partner agency of the Food Bank.

Jennifer recently moved with her kids to Wichita Falls after her family’s world was turned upside down when her fiancé tragically passed away from heart complications. Jennifer decided to move closer to her parents for help.

Though Jennifer’s fiancé was the primary provider for the family before, she’s working for a meal delivery service now to support her kids. Her oldest daughter also works a few hours to help when she isn’t in school.

Still, keeping up with the high cost of living can be challenging, which is why Jennifer was so grateful to discover the food pantry.

“It’s a true blessing,” she says. “Thank you...it helps a lot.”

You’re doing so much to help families keep nutritious food on the table this summer, and all year long! Your generosity is truly inspiring.