

# TABLESETTER

Foodbank®  
St. Louis Area Foodbank

## We'll Get Through This Together (Again)!

By Meredith Knopp, President & CEO

It is hard to believe that we are nearly through the first quarter of the calendar year. It has been a busy start to the year in a very challenging time.

When we were faced with COVID-19 in early 2020, we had no idea how we were going to get through that challenging time. The world was shut down and the need for food was not only still there, but it multiplied as people were unable to work in some cases, schools were shut down so kids needed to get their meals all from home, etc. Times were tough but the Foodbank persevered as a result

of the support of our donors, volunteers, and the innovation and commitment of our team.

Fast forward to today. The impacts of high inflation and rising costs continue to have a significant effect across our region. The St. Louis Area Foodbank has not been immune to these challenges.

Recent analysis shows our

corporate food donations down 16%, our food drive donations down 20% and our cost to purchase food to meet the needs of our partners and neighbors up 144% all while the need continues to increase.

We are committed to doing whatever is necessary to continue to serve our neighbors across our 26-county service area. Just like we did when facing COVID-19, we will make the tough decisions, we will innovate and work tirelessly to action creative solutions, and we will do everything we can to meet the needs of our neighbors.


We invite you to join the mission and help us ensure that each neighbor in our community receives the food and resources they so desperately need. *Together, we will (once again) come out stronger than ever.*



NEWSLETTER • MAR. 2023

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- *We'll Get Through This Together (Again)!*
- *What Does the Foodbank Grow?*
- *Fiscal Year 2022: Annual Report*



### Save the Date!

- Friday, May 5, 5:00-9:00pm
- Chesterfield Amphitheater
- Tickets \$10 each  
*(kids 12 and under are free)*
- Live Bands, Food Trucks, and Food Drive
- For more information, visit:  
**bitly/SLAFB-RockOut2023**

Thank you to the following organizations  
for their tremendous support:



# WHAT DOES THE FOODBANK GROW?



BY **TIM MORRISON**  
LEAD VOLUNTEER

I've been here a little over four years. I really became very active before the height of COVID happened, and we had very few volunteers here. The volunteers that came in – many of them had lost their jobs, they were laid off, they were young people that couldn't get hired at the time. There were people that were forced into retirement. But we had a lot of work to do. I was humbled by people's willingness to reach out, and give of themselves out of hardship.

But that was not my first experience volunteering with the Foodbank. My first experience with the Foodbank was as a coach and a teacher, when I first moved to St. Louis. There were food drives organized within our school.

The students were going to be awarded; whatever class collected the most food would receive donuts in the morning for breakfast, or something like that. But, a freshman surprised me. He stood up, and said, *"My family is a recipient of this food. I am not going to be the object of somebody's competition."* This changed the entire essence of what those drives became for us. He stood with courage up for his own personal dignity. The young man became a starting

quarterback for me his junior and senior seasons – one of the best leaders I've ever had in the football program. But what I remember most is he understood we as a society are only as good as our weakest link.

Fast forward. I was out in the community representing the Foodbank, especially this past summer with all the area flooding. I was humbled by the people coming to our distribution.

One gentleman brought a rollaway suitcase. He emptied the food box into the suitcase. Later, as I was leaving that day, I intersected him more than a mile away from where he picked up the food. He was just arriving at his home.

I encountered another family – a mother with her disabled child, and a father who was physically challenged. They traveled all the way to the food distribution to get food via public transportation. That is no easy challenge.

***"The Foodbank is many things to many people. But to me the essence of the Foodbank is that it grows dignity."***



All of these experiences lead me to reflect. What does the St. Louis Area Foodbank grow? I sincerely mean, what do they grow? I know the Foodbank provides meals and nutrition. That's critical to one's physical and mental health. The Foodbank is many things to many people. But what does the Foodbank grow?

It grows dignity! It builds and restores dignity for a strong, viable community! Without dignity, community fails. Our community is as strong as its weakest link. In restoring or feeding dignity in others, we create a thriving, healthy community. We need that more today than ever. When our community thrives, we look to reach beyond St. Louis into the Missouri-Illinois region. We embrace the needs of those beyond us.

The success of our community is a collective emerging outcome. I've seen families, neighborhoods, corporations, organizations come out to the Foodbank. They form community. It starts within first. What happens outside of here? Volunteers go out and they extend their community. They



invite their friends, their neighborhoods, the people they work with.

I've seen many individuals come in as volunteers. They leave with a will to do good. That goodness extends far beyond the walls of this building. It plants roots in the region and spreads from Missouri throughout Southern Illinois. This goodness grows to feed a hunger for dignity. This goodness raises us, it lifts us all up.

Like that student years ago and the volunteers and staff today, I'm committed to standing up for the dignity of others. My work at the Foodbank makes that possible. And that's why I'm here. That's why it's good to have you here too! See you soon!

**2X**

**MATCHING  
GIFT  
CHALLENGE  
MARCH 2023**



*Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous friend, your gift to the St. Louis Area Foodbank today can be matched — dollar for dollar — up to \$50,000, providing twice as much food to our neighbors experiencing hunger.*

**This 2X Matching Gift Challenge** has come at a most meaningful time. The cost of food and housing continues to impact those struggling to make ends meet across the bi-state. Hardworking people, loving parents, people just like you and me, are faced with the impossible choice of paying their bills and putting food on the table.

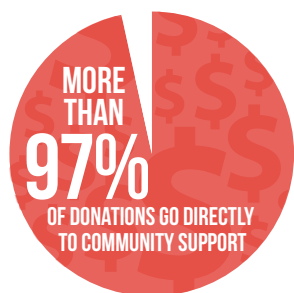
**If you give by March 31, your gift will be doubled to provide food for twice as many families.**

**Scan the code to make a donation today!**



# FY 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022



**LESS THAN 3% OF DONATIONS  
GO TOWARD ADMINISTRATION  
AND FUNDRAISING**



**POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED LAST  
YEAR AT NO COST TO THE NEIGHBOR**



**FOOD TO 419,117  
INDIVIDUALS  
THROUGH OUR  
INNOVATIVE MOBILE  
DISTRIBUTIONS**

**FOOD TO 7,700 PEOPLE THROUGH OUR SCHOOL MARKETS**



**Foodbank®**  
St. Louis Area Foodbank

70 Corporate Woods Drive  
Bridgeton, MO 63044  
314-292-6262 | [STLFoodbank.org](http://STLFoodbank.org)



This Institution Is An Equal  
Opportunity Provider