

YOUR HELPING HAND...

There for Anne's Family



America's family farmers were having a tough time even before the pandemic. Since 2015, many were having to sell their milk for less than the cost to produce it.

Every day during 2019, an average of nine dairy farmers closed their businesses. Even household names like Borden struggled. Then came 2020.

Midwest farmers struggled to meet the costs of raising crops and livestock because demand for their goods decreased suddenly and dramatically. Third-generation Indiana dairy farmer Charlie Carter said many farmers couldn't pay their bills and that in northern parts of the state, some were forced to dump milk because "they had nowhere to go with it."

Anne Lee's family became caught in this downward spiral. For years, she and her husband had been relying on income from their dairy cows to make ends meet for their family. But suddenly, the money they were making from their dairy cows wasn't nearly enough to keep food on the table.

For the first time ever, the family needed a little extra help; they turned to a local food pantry. "My mom's voice kept going through my head," Anne said. *"Take the helping hand when you need it, and give back when you don't."* The pantry changed everything for us."

Your generosity to the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana helps us stock more than 100 pantries and meal programs across Lake and Porter counties — lifting up families like Anne's.

The pantry helped Anne and her husband feed themselves and their three children. And without having to worry about food, the hardworking couple was able to focus on shifting their farm's operations. "We opened a butcher shop on the farm," Anne said. "That's going really well. We're now supporting ourselves without any help for the first time in over a year."

What's more, they're working on ways to donate to the pantry that helped them, just like Anne's mother always said. **"We wouldn't be where we are today without the pantry,"** Anne said. **"The least we can do is give back to say thanks."** ♥

Names and photos have been changed to respect our clients' privacy.

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MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

From Hunger Action to Holiday Hope ... and Beyond

Wrapping up Hunger Action Month, I extend the Food Bank's deepest thanks to hundreds of generous friends who have **volunteered, donated, hiked, ridden, delivered, shared, prayed**, and in other ways assisted NWT's hungry neighbors in September. The pandemic has brought out the most generous side of folks fortunate enough to be able to share their time, food, and money. And it will continue to take this type of community-wide effort to truly tackle food insecurity in the Region.

As the holidays approach and we prepare for the cold winter ahead, the reality that tens of thousands of vulnerable individuals face not knowing where the next week's meals will come is a harsh reminder of the work to be done. For those living on the margins of society, enjoying a big family feast on Thanksgiving is a wish, a hope, a dream. But hardly a given. It makes me even more committed to **find new and better ways to end hunger in Northwest Indiana** once and for all.

There are many ways in which you can join us in this vital work. One way is to become a Three Square Society member. Established monthly gifts provide reliable funds that we can leverage to best aid both short and long-term needs of growing healthy families and a stronger Region. Please find more information about this giving circle on the back of this newsletter.

Financial donations help most because they can be leveraged in various ways to fight food insecurity from more angles, yielding short-and long-term benefits. They are investments that can do more to grow healthier families and a stronger Region.

There's much more on the horizon for 2022! We look forward to sharing more news after the holidays. Please continue your partnership with us so we can create even more sustainable solutions for food access and together benefiting thousands of neighbors in need.




Victor A. Garcia
President & CEO

Your Support Gives Hardworking Mom Help and Hope Her Family Needed

Jasmine Chandler-Winston had been working for years in special education when the pandemic hit.

"I was a reading intervention specialist, and things got really hard. I wasn't being paid for the level of work I was doing. I needed to make a change to better support my family."

One day, Jasmine clicked on an online ad for a program called "Level Up." This job training program is a partnership of Lake Area United Way and the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana. Jasmine applied and received valuable training onsite at the Food Bank, as well as food boxes and a stipend. She graduated at the top of her class, gaining valuable experience in warehouse logistics while making sure her family could make ends meet while she pursued permanent employment.

"I absolutely loved my time working at the Food Bank," Jasmine says. "Mari was the best trainer! She taught me everything from forklift techniques to palletizing." Through tears of joy, she adds: **"All the things I prayed for — to earn enough and get my credit score up so we could one day buy a home — were starting to happen."**

In mid-August, Jasmine's Level Up training helped her land full-time work at Albanese® Confectionery Group in Merrillville. The position pays significantly higher than her previous job.

"I'm a machine operator in packaging — 12 Flavor Gummi Bears, that's me!" Jasmine says. "It's a really interesting job. It's fast-paced, but the training isn't easy, so I ask a lot of questions ... I know God's giving me hard tasks for a reason. My next goal is to become a team leader!"

Your gifts to the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana support hunger prevention by empowering people like Jasmine to achieve long-term financial stability through program partnerships like Level Up. Thank you! ♥





Sheila B. (left) thanks Food Bank volunteer Sandra Johnson-Alleyne for delivering grocery assistance boxes to her home.

NO CAR, NO STORE, NO FOOD:

Delivering a New Solution to Seniors Facing Hunger

What if you can't leave your spouse alone while you go get groceries? What if you have no car and the nearest food store or pantry is several miles away? What if you live alone and are afraid to go out of your home?

This is the daily reality for many low-income senior citizens living across Lake and Porter counties. Without a safety net of family or friends or community support, hundreds live at risk for hunger.

Sheila B. is one of them. This Gary, Indiana, neighbor lives in a household of four members — all of whom have significant medical problems and struggle to make ends meet. In their zip code, nearly 4 in 10 residents live in poverty. Their neighborhood is occupied by empty, overgrown lots and shuttered businesses due to a dwindling population and Covid. Modest dwellings dot the streets here and there. There's no grocery store or food pantry nearby.

But thanks to generous gifts from good friends like you, the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana is expanding its care for elderly neighbors like Sheila by adding **home delivery of nourishing groceries** for those most at risk for hunger.

Food Bank volunteer Sandra Johnson-Alleyne recently began dropping off monthly supplemental food boxes and fresh produce to Sheila's home.



"Gary touches my soul because I see the poverty," Sandra says. "When I first came to Sheila's place, it was clear the food I was bringing wouldn't last long enough. So now I deliver extra fresh produce, meats, and eggs, when the Mobile Market pantry is nearby. I know what it's like to be hungry, to struggle. And I may be the only person they see to tell them they are loved."

Sheila says Sandra has "gone way above and beyond for us. These deliveries have meant everything ... our van is down and with money being tight, it's taking a long time to get fixed. This saves us from tons of hurt. It's hard to get out — and if I get Covid, I will probably die."

Home delivery began especially in response to isolation from the pandemic. It is not only bringing essential nutrition right to elderly neighbors' doorsteps — it also delivers much-needed encouragement through friendship and hope!

Adding healthful, nutrient-dense fresh foods to the shelf-stable commodities serving over 600 seniors each month is possible because volunteers like Sandra, and donors like you, **care.** ♥



Become a Member Today

Saying YES to the Food Bank's monthly credit card giving program will make a BIG impact — a little at a time. Every dollar you donate as a **new member of the Three Square Society** provides one hungry neighbor with three square meals. You'll also enjoy exclusive benefits of membership, including special updates about specific ways you're making a difference.



Members find scheduled gifts a convenient way to do good all year round. It's no wonder why we're up to 188 dedicated donors who collectively give over \$9,000 every month!

For more information, visit:
foodbanknwi.org/threesquare
or contact Amy B. at
abriseno@foodbanknwi.org
or **219.980.1777 x315.** ♥

Mark Your Calendar!

TUESDAY, NOV 30 | 9AM – 3PM | FBNWI

#GIVING^{FOODS}TUESDAY™

Corporate, local business and community service teams are invited to pack food assistance boxes for Mobile Market distributions throughout the holiday season. **Build camaraderie while lending a hand!**

Visit **foodbanknwi.org/giving** or contact Amy B. at **abriseno@foodbanknwi.org** or **219-980-1777 x315.**

THURSDAY, DEC 9 | 4 – 6PM | FBNWI



Bring your family to pack grocery boxes to feed the 25,000+ NWI children facing hunger this season. Enjoy refreshments, games, crafts, music, pictures with Santa and more.

Preregistration required. Free-will donation encouraged. Sign up at **foodbanknwi.org/pack** or contact Amy at **amcdunn@foodbanknwi.org** or **219.980.1777 x313.**



YES, here's my October gift to help heal the hurt of hunger today while expanding ways to end food insecurity tomorrow:

☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$_____

For more information about donating, visit **foodbanknwi.org**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

I would like more information about:

- ☐ Volunteering ☐ Donating food or hosting a food drive
☐ Giving a gift to Food Bank of Northwest Indiana through my will
☐ Receiving occasional email updates

My email is _____

☐ I would like to pledge a monthly gift of \$_____. My first **Three Square Society** gift is enclosed.

☐ Charge my gift to:
☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ Discover ☐ AMEX

CARD NO. _____

EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

Please make your check payable to:

Food Bank of Northwest Indiana
6490 Broadway, Merrillville, IN 46410

Please call 219.980.1777, ext. 311, to charge your gift by phone, or visit **foodbanknwi.org/give** to make a gift online. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law.

