

Giving Thanks

TOGETHER WE CAN END HUNGER

“

Before we started coming to Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina, there were plenty of days where my kids' only meals were the ones they got in school.”

— Kassondra



MY CANCER DEVASTATED MY FAMILY

I never in a million years thought this would happen to me.

Three years ago, I was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Right away, I was fighting for my life. Chemotherapy and radiation, eight hours a day, five days a week, for four months. I ended up losing my job in home healthcare, and then losing my house.

I went from living in a four-bedroom house with a two-car garage to living in a single room in a motel. I used to see homeless people when I'd drive down the street, but I never thought that could be me.

We lived in that motel room — me and my five children, ages 8 to 18 — until I recovered enough to look for a job. Now I work 20 hours a week as a cook, and that's my only income. We're now in a small house, but after I pay rent, there's not much left.

My cancer is in remission, but I still struggle with the after-effects of the chemotherapy and radiation. I'm still in chronic pain, so I can't work more than part-time.

Before we started coming to Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina, there were plenty of days where my kids' only meals were the ones they got in school. They often went to bed hungry.

That's why I'm so grateful for the Food Bank. I don't know what I'd do without them. I don't know what my kids would do. Thank you!

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HALF A MILLION NEIGHBORS LIVE IN POVERTY

Your donation stays

Local

helping North and South Carolinians
in and around your community

Every \$1

donated provides 4 meals

97%

of your gift goes directly to
life-changing programs

More than

150,000 backpacks

filled with food go to
children every year

We serve

19 counties

in our region of North and
South Carolina

We distribute more than

50 million pounds

of food and non-food items per year

Along with poverty comes widespread hunger. To meet the need, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina annually distributes food and other household items throughout the service area.

YOUR SUPPORT GOES A LONG WAY AND EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS. THANK YOU!



A MESSAGE FROM OUR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Fresh fruits & veggies — all part of the plan . . .

Spring is coming, and that gets me excited and thankful for a number of things . . . including fresh produce.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are a vital part of any nutrition plan, and here at Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina, we make those things a high priority.

Benefits of fresh produce include:

- more fiber
- natural nutrients
- less sugar and salt
- more energy
- fewer cavities

(Learn more in the story at right.)

Many of our clients live below the poverty line, and fresh produce can be quite expensive. So we want to make sure they get plenty of it.

Thanks to you, we're able to include plenty of fresh fruits and veggies in our food distribution plans!

That's why I hope you'll support the **2017 Annual Fund Drive to Fight Hunger in Metrolina**. We've set an ambitious goal of raising \$127,000 by May 5, but with your generous help, I'm confident we can reach it.

Hungry neighbors are counting on us — and that includes you! Thank you in advance for helping us reach that goal.

With gratitude,

Kay Carter

OUR ONLINE MAKEOVER!

Take a moment to check out our new and improved website — and see all the good you're doing with your support!

secondharvestmetrolina.org



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WHY FRESH PRODUCE MATTERS SO MUCH

Fresh fruits and vegetables are a life-giving part of any nutrition plan. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends filling half of your plate with fruits and vegetables at each meal. Here are four reasons why:

Nutrients in Vegetables: Veggies are rich in vitamins A and C, folate, fiber, and potassium. Folate (found in bell peppers, tomatoes, spinach) helps form red blood cells. Vitamin A (sweet potatoes, carrots, butternut squash) keeps skin and eyes healthy.

Nutrients in Fruit: Fresh fruit is low in fat, sodium, and calories, and rich in potassium, fiber, vitamin C and folate. Fiber in fruit helps to protect against heart disease and helps lower cholesterol, and vitamin C helps with wound healing and immunity.

Disease Prevention: Eating produce can cut your risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes and protect against various forms of cancer. Potassium-rich foods (like bananas and potatoes) can help reduce blood pressure, decrease bone loss, and prevent development of kidney stones.

Weight Management: Most produce is low in calories compared to other foods, so filling up on these foods can aid in weight loss or maintenance. Fruits and veggies are excellent substitutes in different recipes. For example, use fresh applesauce instead of oil in muffins or cookies.

Source: <http://healthyeating.sfgate.com/>



IT'S A BIG HELP

When your income is just \$14,000 per year, it's hard to buy groceries.

Gary and his wife had it made when they both had jobs back in Connecticut. He was well paid as a machinist, and she earned almost \$100,000 a year working at a medical school.

Then life happened. Gary had a few strokes, which made him unable to work. Their son here in Charlotte developed a serious chronic illness, so they moved here to be closer to him, and his wife hasn't been able to find work since.

So now their only income is about \$1,200 a month in disability payments. It just doesn't stretch far enough.

"Not with all the bills and every other little



thing that happens," says Gary. "First it was the air conditioning, a \$500 repair. Now the refrigerator is on the fritz, and that will be another \$600 or so. My van won't start, and I don't know how much that will cost. It's really hard."

Gary has been coming to Second Harvest to receive food for about two years, and says "it's a big help. I don't know what we'd do without it. It's a lifesaver."

VERNA HAS PEACE OF MIND, THANKS TO YOU!

"I had to swallow a little pride," Verna says, reflecting on the first time she visited the food pantry. "I sort of prided myself that I had been self-sufficient all my life, you know. Never had to ask for help."

But now retired and helping care for her 89-year-old mother, Verna is at peace with receiving monthly assistance from the food pantry. The two women live in a modest home and struggle to make ends meet with their Social Security income.

"There are utilities, then mom's insurance is about \$400 a month, and her medications are not all completely paid for," Verna says. "I thank God for the Food Bank. I really do."

Through the support of compassionate friends like you, Verna and her mother are receiving the food they need, and they are so grateful. Thank you for your continued support to help them and other neighbors in need!



2017
Annual
Fund Drive

We need to raise \$127,000 by May 5 to keep up the fight against hunger in our community. **PLEASE GIVE TODAY!**

Ways to Give

The only way to end hunger in Metrolina is by working together to get food to our struggling neighbors. Here are three simple ways you can help hungry people in our community.

To learn more about how you can donate time, money or food, visit secondharvestmetrolina.org



DONATE MONEY

Every \$1 you give provides 4 meals for men, women, and children in need! Just think of all the lives you can change with your generous gift.



DONATE FOOD

Your donations of nonperishable, nutritious foods are always welcome. Or call us to schedule a pickup of perishable items such as fruits and vegetables.



HOST A FOOD DRIVE

Bring your co-workers, neighbors, or friends together to host a food or fund drive. We can help you have fun and help a great cause. Call us for more details.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina

(704) 376-1785

500-B Spratt Street, Charlotte, NC 28206

secondharvestmetrolina.org



Financial information about this organization and a copy of its licenses are available from the NC State Solicitation branch at 1-888-830-4989 and the SC Public Charities Division at 1-803-734-1790. These licenses are not an endorsement by either state.

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