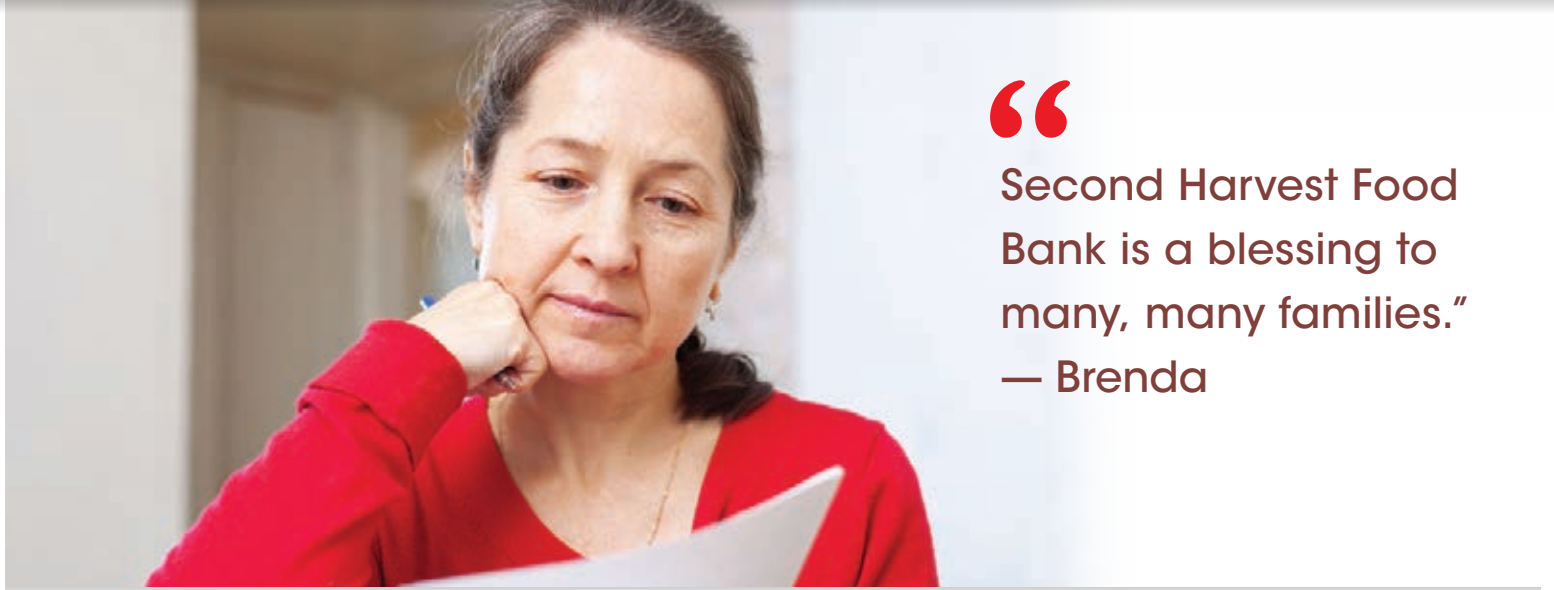


Giving Thanks



“

Second Harvest Food Bank is a blessing to many, many families.”

— Brenda

When Brenda Lost It All, You Were Her Safety Net

Brenda, at 60 years old, holds two master's degrees. Decades ago, she completed an internship with the United Nations. By any standard, she's an impressive woman. She never expected to go hungry.

“It can happen to anyone,” Brenda says. “When it happened to me, I struggled with pride. People kept telling me, ‘Go to Second Harvest Food Bank. Go there.’ I wouldn't listen, though. I hit some hard times. My marriage fell apart. Soon after that, I lost my job.”

Brenda kept searching for a new job, but found herself overqualified for the entry-level positions that were readily available. In the meantime, she began skipping meals. Even when she did manage to land a job, it was part-time without health benefits.

The Strength to Start Again

Then the unthinkable happened: Because Brenda couldn't afford food, utilities, a mortgage payment, and her various medical costs, something had to give. Her home went into foreclosure.

“Soon a new owner will be there,” Brenda says. “I'll hand him the key, and he'll take my stuff.”

Finally, Brenda's hunger won out over her pride. She came to Second Harvest Food Bank and immediately found a reliable source of wholesome, nutritious food.

“Second Harvest Food Bank is a blessing to many, many families,” she reports. It's just what Brenda needs to gather strength for life's next chapter.

Brenda requested that we pass along this message, especially for generous friends of the Food Bank like you: “Thank you! You're bringing food to people who need it — and that truly matters. This is a blessing. Please, don't ever stop.”

Your generosity provides life-sustaining food for hungry neighbors like Brenda when they need it most. Thank you for your ongoing support of Second Harvest Food Bank!

Making the Grade, Thanks to You!

With just a few months remaining in our fiscal year, we wanted to take a look back at last year's report card. As you'll see in the table below, your support boosted our hunger-fighting performance in a big way and we will strive to do even more in fiscal year 2017-2018.



GOAL	Performance in 2016-2017
Pounds Distributed	54,068,572
Refrigerated Pounds*	21,408,819
Volunteer Hours	265,304
Programs to End Child Hunger	210
Pounds from Food Drives	5,965,713
Mobile Pantries Conducted	489
Senior Programs	8

*Refrigerated pounds includes produce, meat and dairy

Upcoming Events

- **April 15-21:** National Volunteer Week
- **April 28:** AIA CANstruction
- **April 28:** Moo & Brew Fest
- **May 12:** Stamp Out Hunger Letter Carriers' Food Drive



**A MESSAGE FROM OUR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

A fresh start for hungry neighbors

Spring always reminds me of new beginnings. You can see it in the fresh fruits and vegetables that are just starting to grow across our 19-county service area. And you can see it right here at Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina.

The men, women, and children we serve come from a multitude of backgrounds. They all share a hunger for wholesome food and a desire to improve their lives. Your tireless support of the Food Bank makes it all possible.

Take Brenda's story, from the front page of this edition of Giving Thanks. A highly educated woman with decades of job experience, Brenda expected to retire in comfort. Now, at age 60, she's lost everything: her marriage, her job, and even her home. She's been forced to start again, one life-sustaining meal at a time. You've given her that precious chance.

Brenda's not the only one you're helping to start again this spring. Far from it. Thanks to your kind support of our Mobile Pantries and Emergency Food Assistance Program, we're reaching more hungry families than ever before. All told, our Mobile Pantry program delivered over 5 million pounds of food last year. Much of it was fresh produce.

This spring, and all year long, your generosity keeps our hunger-fighting programs humming along at full strength. Thank you for continuing to create new beginnings for hungry families, seniors, children, and veterans in our Carolina communities.

With gratitude,

Kay Carter

Your Help Needed to Stamp Out Hunger

On May 12, USPS letter carriers across the country will collect boxes and cans of nonperishable food items to feed hungry Americans. It's the largest single-day food drive in the nation!

To participate in this year's NALC Stamp Out Hunger National Food Drive, just place a box or bag of nonperishables next to your mailbox before your letter carrier delivers mail on May 12. The carrier will do the rest. The food is sorted AND delivered to an area Food Bank — like Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina! — and made available for families in need.



Your Generosity Inspires Single Father to Give Back



The smile on Francis' face hints at his determination. The single father of 18-year-old twins, he knows how difficult it can be to keep the refrigerator stocked.

"We're happy, even though we've never had much," Francis says. "But you can't make do without food. That's been our problem lately."

From the time he was 15 years old, Francis performed backbreaking manual labor. "I was doing stucco," he says. "I was doing plaster work, drywall, concrete.

That's what it took to provide for his kids, so Francis got up each morning and faithfully went about his business. He did it all with a smile . . . right up until the day when his knees gave out.

A Reason to Smile

"Now I'm on disability," Francis says, "but it's not enough to make it through the month." Thankfully, Francis learned about Second Harvest Food Bank from some of his church friends. He stops by a mobile pantry that partners with the Food Bank once a month to supplement his family's nutritional needs.

"If it wasn't for this Food Bank, people would be in bad shape," he says. "The people here want to help you. Their kindness reminds you to be thankful for what you've got. That's what I tell my kids: 'Always be appreciative for the roof over your head and the food in your belly.'"

Your compassionate support of Second Harvest Food Bank recently inspired Francis to give back. Spurred on by your compassionate support, he's started volunteering at a local pantry.

You've Given Me A New Sense Of Purpose

By Carol

I used to be a banquet captain at a country club. That meant decorating for fancy events and serving expensive food with a smile. I was grateful to have a job that paid the bills.

When they eliminated my position, I didn't know what to do with myself. Working made me feel useful. Without it, I felt lost. Getting hired as a part-time server at a local restaurant helped some, but I still needed help getting through the month.

Then a friend from church told me about the Food Bank. I could barely afford to pay my bills, so the food I received here meant more than I could ever express.

Even better, I started volunteering — doing food distribution. Working those old banquets never brought me the joy I experience here every day. My favorite is handing out healthy food and toys to children. I'm giving back to the place that's helped me so much. Now it feels like I'm right where I belong.



Photo has been changed to protect the privacy of the client.

Reduced to Tears by Your Kindness

Vickie spent her working life as the treasurer of a local orphanage. Tallying assets and expenses was her stock in trade. So she could tell right away when her own household budget wasn't adding up.

"Two or three weeks into the month, we simply run out of money," Vickie says. Chronic medical issues — diabetes, back pain, and rheumatoid arthritis — forced her into early retirement. And while her husband owns his own business, it hasn't been profitable in years.

"Between the mortgage payment, utilities, and all the other things you need to live, we're wiped out," Vickie says. Desperate and running low on options, she asked a friend about local resources for families in need. The response? Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina.



"The first time I came to the Mobile Pantry, I broke down and cried." —Vickie

Making It Through the Month

"The first time I came to the Mobile Pantry, I broke down and cried," Vickie says. "Once I sucked up my pride and asked for help, I felt much better."

A Food Bank worker helped Vickie dry her eyes and collect herself. They've since struck up a friendship. Vickie returns every few months — just taking enough good, wholesome food to last through the lean times.

Vickie couldn't be more thankful for the role you've played in feeding her family: "Food Bank donors will never know how much this means. I'm just so appreciative."

Thank you for your ongoing support of Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina. Remember: Every \$1 you give provides 4 meals for hungry neighbors like Vickie!

Photo has been changed to protect the privacy of the clients.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina

500 Spratt St Ste B, Charlotte, NC 28206-3235 | (704) 376-1785

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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I want to help fight hunger!

YES! I want to ensure my neighbors get the nourishing food they need.

Here's my gift of:

- \$35 to provide 140 meals
- \$50 to provide 200 meals
- \$150 to provide 600 meals
- \$_____ to help as much as possible

- I prefer to give by credit card (see reverse side).
 - MasterCard VISA AMEX Discover
- Please make this a monthly gift.
- I have included Second Harvest Food Bank in my estate plans.



Together We CAN End Hunger



Mail: Return this completed form with your gift
Phone: (704) 376-1785
Online: SecondHarvestMetrolina.org

ACCOUNT NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____

NAME _____ SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

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