Northern Illinois Food Bank’s Strategic Plan includes a focus on four key areas: more meals with purpose, heightening awareness of the issue of hunger across our service area, engaging the community in our mission, and developing our staff and the leaders of the food pantries and feeding programs that serve our neighbors in need.

More Meals
Our goal is to provide every meal, every day, for every hungry neighbor by the year 2020. We will do this by pinpointing areas of need and identifying the programs and services necessary to reach our hungry neighbors where they are. This includes working with our network of food pantries and feeding programs to help build these programs’ individual abilities to provide additional food to the community and find innovative ways to serve areas where brick and mortar food pantries may not be viable.

Ignite the Community
Only when people believe hunger is real in their community and take action will we be successful in solving hunger. Throughout the next five years, we will work to heighten awareness of the issue and encourage more people to get involved in our mission as the solution to solving hunger in northern Illinois by donating food and funds, volunteering and advocating.

Strengthen Leaders
Our strategic plan will challenge our staff and our feeding partners to become more efficient and to think more creatively in our approaches to feeding our hungry neighbors. We are committed to providing opportunities for both our food bank staff and our food pantry and feeding program staffs to develop the skills they need to become strong leaders in our vision that no one goes hungry in northern Illinois.

Build Bridges
The Hunger In America 2014 study reiterates that hunger never stands alone. One of the fociuses of Northern Illinois Food Bank’s strategic plan aims to build relationships with other local social service agencies in each of the 13 counties we serve to help collaboratively establish regional solutions to hunger. Additionally, these relationships can help our network feeding programs provide referrals to our hungry neighbors for services, such as job training, rent and utility assistance, and health services, that can bring stability and hope to the lives of our neighbors in need.

Dear Food Bank Friends,
Fiscal Year 2014 was a year of growth and reflection for your Food Bank staff. As we look back at the Food Bank team’s accomplishments, we are grateful for the commitment of our food donors, financial contributors and our volunteers who helped us distribute a record 50 million meals to our hungry neighbors.

While that is a great accomplishment, sadly, data tells us that we need to do more. Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap study indicates that every year across our 13-county service area our hungry neighbors are at risk of skipping at least 70 million meals simply because they do not have enough food for three meals each day. Also this year, Feeding America’s Hunger in America 2014 study confirmed what we had been hearing from our network: our hungry neighbors are living pay-check-to-pay-check and making difficult choices about how they spend their little discretionary income.

So in FY14, we asked ourselves, how do we measure success? Cross-departmental teams were formed; ideas were raised and challenged; tactics were outlined for creating success, not just for the Food Bank, but for our hungry neighbors. The result is an ambitious strategic plan with a goal of solving hunger in our community by meeting the meal gap by the year 2020. How will we meet our #75MillionMealGoal? We’re strategically looking at Hunger Study and census data, county by county, census track by census track, to identify where our hungry neighbors live. We’re overlaying that data with maps of our services — where our food pantries, soup kitchens, and youth and senior feeding programs are located — and the meals we collectively serve. This analysis will allow us to pinpoint where we need to step up our distribution to ensure that our hungry neighbors have access to food in their time of need. Because helping our network provide 75 million meals annually is not enough. We need to do more with purpose. We need to ensure that obtaining food needed to provide basic nutrition is conveniently available where and when our hungry neighbors need it.

The Food Bank team realizes this is an audacious goal, and that it won’t be easy. But, with the support of community members like you, we believe we can reach it.

You have our commitment: we won’t stop until we’re providing every meal, every day, for every hungry neighbor.

Warmly,

Julie Yurko
President and CEO
Northern Illinois Food Bank

Jeff Burdeaux
Northern Illinois Food Bank

Craig Sessman
Northern Illinois Food Bank

Lydia Sausmann
Northern Illinois Food Bank
OUR DONORS

The Circle of Hope is a group of dedicated organizations committed annually to providing the financial leadership needed to feed our hungry neighbors. FY14 members (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014) are recognized below.

NOURISHER $100,000+

Anonymous (2)

GATHERER $25,000-49,999

Bank of America

Harvester $50,000 - $99,999

The Christopher Family Foundation

Prairie State Bank & Trust

Harvester $10,000-24,999

Abbott

GROWER $10,000-24,999

Anschutz Foundation

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PAULA

“If it wasn’t for the food pantry, we wouldn’t eat because I simply can’t afford it,” said Paula, a mom of two preteen girls and a student at a local community college with aspirations of becoming a nurse. “Between expenses for school, gas money and sometimes child care, there is barely any money left over. All of my social security money goes for the rent and monthly bills like the car payment and insurance.”

For Paula, KCCSI Food Pantry in Kankakee represents more than just a place to receive food. She recently completed a life skills class through KCCSI, and the organization also helped her enroll for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

8% of people who use the Food Bank’s services have a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma.
75 percent of our hungry neighbors are age 60 and older.

Fred enjoys visiting with friends during weekly meal at Common Table in Lombard and appreciates those who support such programs that help seniors like himself. “It’s not just the money, it’s the people, who invest their time and effort. They like people. They care about their neighbors.”

"I appreciate the food, the people and the entire idea that you don’t really have to starve in America because you got old," said Fred, age 70, a lifelong DuPage County resident who retired at age 76 from a professional career but lost his pension when the company went bankrupt. Fred told us he relies on local soup kitchens to survive.
71,500 PEOPLE

weekly rely on Northern Illinois Food Bank

75 MILLION MEALS

were distributed in FY14, the equivalent of 59 million pounds of food.

76
20% of those who responded to the Hunger in America 2014 study faced housing, job training and medical needs.

Providing hungry neighbors with proper

LAMONT

“ar I wasn’t able to come to places like this literally would have starved. If I wasn’t able to come to places like this, I literally would have starved. I know many people are grateful for this resource, and I take my hat off to the volunteers. You can have the food, but without the organization and the people helping, this wouldn’t be possible.

Our feeding programs help hungry neighbors gain access to food. When food is not in question, our hungry neighbors can focus on the other challenges that often accompany hunger—housing, job training and medical needs.
It helps, really does. They give you a good, hot meal and they take good care of you. They’re here for the neighborhood,” said Reginald, a hungry neighbor who visited Sacred Heart Soup Kitchen in Joliet. As an assistant on landscaping and home remodeling projects, work is often hard for Reginald to find during the winter months.

Three-quarters of the households we serve have a member who has worked for pay in the past 12 months, however, their incomes are not enough to make ends meet.

66% of households have incomes that fall at or below the federal poverty level.
90,361 GALLONS
of milk provided through our Milk2MyPlate Program

23 MILLION MEALS
were provided through our Retail Recovery Program
of households reported they had to choose between paying for food and utilities in the past 12 months.
NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD BANK

FY2014 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

OPERATING EXPENSES

- Food bank operations.......................... 17%
- Management and general...................... 1%

SOURCE OF FOOD RECEIVED

- Donated.......................................... 91%

SOURCE OF FUNDING

- Contributions...................................... 58%
- Program service fees........................... 25%
- Government funding and grants............ 17%

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FY2014

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