Hungry neighbor gives back
Pantry provides stability and place to pay it forward

Community rallies in Lake County
Moraine Township opens larger client-choice pantry
Fueling hope this holiday season

Dear Friends,

There’s something about the holiday season that reminds me of being a child. The magic of sledding down a hill of fluffy snow. The twinkle of the lights. Plates filled with special holiday treats.

But for many of our neighbors, the holidays may not be so magical. Roughly 36 percent of those we serve in Northern Illinois are children—children whose families are struggling to keep food on the table.

In this final 2018 issue of THE FULL PLATE, we round out a year of celebrating our neighbors is working toward solving hunger in Northern Illinois—solving hunger across Northern Illinois—we certainly couldn’t do it without your generosity and spirit of giving.

Thank you for your partnership in solving hunger across Northern Illinois—wishing a magical holiday season to you and yours.

President & CEO

Julie Yurko
President & CEO

Northern Illinois Food Bank is working toward solving hunger in Northern Illinois for our neighbors in need. Look for the following icons throughout this issue of THE FULL PLATE accompanying stories that highlight the five pillars of our strategic plan:

- Provide More Meals
- Build Healthy Communities
- Ignite the Community
- Strengthen Leadership
- Be Trusted Financial Stewards

Mobile pantry provides positivity in times of need

Patrick’s Story

Patrick is the kind of person who immediately draws your attention in a crowded, from his height to his broad shoulders to the smile lines etched around his mouth and eyes. As a former firefighter and EMS medic who recently retired after 31 years of public service, Patrick receives a small pension from the government. However, that pension doesn’t move around quite like he used to. Today, he’s glad to be taking home staples like milk and bread, along with several nutritious options for the man who says he doesn’t move around quite like he used to. Today, he’s glad to be taking home staples like milk and bread, along with several nutritious options for the man who says he doesn’t move around quite like he used to. In fact, your support can go even further down a hill of fluffy magic of sledding being a child. The market and optimism in times of need. Today, he’s glad to be taking home staples like milk and bread, along with several nutritious options for the man who says he doesn’t move around quite like he used to. Today, he’s glad to be taking home staples like milk and bread, along with several nutritious options for the man who says he doesn’t move around quite like he used to.

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You were heard!

Hunger Relief Fund Tax Checkoff

Thank you to everyone who called the Governor’s Office and made your voice heard regarding this Hunger Relief Fund tax checkoff (SB 2868). Senate Bill 2868 amends the Illinois Incomes Tax Act by creating a Hunger Relief Fund checkoff. When filing 2018 state income taxes this spring, you will have the option to donate at or a portion of your refund to support Illinois’ Hunger Relief Fund. Contributing to the Fund will support hunger relief efforts of food banks across Illinois and create an additional funding source from which to feed more hungry neighbors in communities statewide. Together we are solving hunger.

YOU were heard!

Grocery shopping

Oil change

Donate tax refund to the Food Bank

Laundry

Provide More Meals

Ignite the Community

Build Healthy Communities

Strengthen Leadership

Be Trusted Financial Stewards

For more information about the Hunger Relief Fund and how to contribute, please visit www.SolveHungerToday.org

Wishing a magical holiday season to you and yours.

Julie Yurko
President & CEO

Holiday cheer...and a message from the president

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“Food is not cheap, [but] this helps close the gap,” Patrick says of the mobile pantry distribution. As a self-proclaimed creature of habit, he shares that he now comes exclusively to the mobile pantry for food assistance, after a friend gave him the initial recommendation to visit. He loves the meat options offered at each distribution, especially the bratwurst and Polish sausage that pop up from time to time.

Today, he’s glad to be taking home staples like milk and bread, along with several different kinds of produce – all healthy and nutritious options for the man who says he doesn’t move around quite like he used to. But as Patrick loads a cart full of healthy groceries into the trunk of his car, he’s focused not on the negative, rather how thankful he is for the mobile pantry—the food it provides, and the positive impact it has on his health, his home, and his everyday life. His parting words are accompanied by his trademark smile: “A big, huge thank you!”
Moraine Township Food Pantry
600 Central Avenue, Highland Park
(847) 432-3240

Distribution Hours
Tuesday & Thursday
9am-12pm
Wednesday
1-3pm

A bigger space to meet a bigger need

Just three months ago, Moraine Township Food Pantry opened the doors to its new 4,600 square-foot location on Central Avenue in Highland Park. Attached to the township office, the new space is quite the departure from the pantry’s previous location in the basement of a nearby building. With welcoming mint green walls, the new and improved pantry resembles a modest neighborhood grocery store – complete with shopping carts, checkout counter and aisles of food with signs overhead. Even true to the grocery store experience is the pantry’s switch to the client-choice model, which provides guests with the freedom to choose what food they take home. This enables them to shop based on their family size, health needs, dietary restrictions and personal preferences.

Moraine Township Food Pantry

In the church basement where Abiding Love Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen is located, you’re sure to see Colleen greeting each and every person with a wave, a handshake, or a hug. With a broad smile and booming laugh, she is energy in motion.

“I know a lot of these people [on] a first name basis,” she says, “I’ve earned a personal friendship with some of [them]. I love everyone so dearly.”

A pantry regular for the past five years – first as a client and now as a volunteer – Colleen is no stranger to the kindness that accompanies the food at Abiding Love. She shares that during her past struggles with substance abuse, it wasn’t only the groceries she took home every week that helped see her through her personal “dark world,” but also the compassion and care she received from pantry volunteers and clients alike.

“When you’re going through hard times, you’re not always in high spirits,” she acknowledges. “But a little bit of kindness goes a long way.”

Now, while she still needs a small bag of groceries to put dinner on the table for herself and her husband Dave on occasion, Colleen is as thankful as ever for Abiding Love’s continued help – and determined to pay it forward by brightening the lives of everyone she encounters at the pantry, no matter what challenges they face.

Above all, Colleen says she’s amazed by the work Abiding Love does to serve the needs of its clients, whether through nutritious groceries, a kind word and smile, or the compassion and care she received from pantry volunteers and clients alike.

“This quality and the product that come in here [are] amazing,” she says. “Thank you, of course, I couldn’t say thank you enough.”

Colleen’s Story

Moraine Township

Township Food Pantry

Colleen’s Story

Kindness and food go hand-in-hand at Abiding Love

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“When you’re going through hard times, you’re not always in high spirits,” she acknowledges. “But a little bit of kindness goes a long way, it really does – and that’s what people need.”

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Nearly 200 golfers joined us August 21st at Cantigny Golf and made our 20th annual Hunger Scramble presented by West Suburban Bank one to remember! In total, we raised more than $100,000, which helps provide more than $800,000 worth of groceries for our neighbors. What you do truly makes a difference! Thank you!

The weather might have been a bit dull and dreary, but spirits were high as foursomes putted their way through the day (and stopped for an occasional air guitar break featuring the All-Tech Decorating team)!

Be sure to save the date for next year’s Hunger Scramble on Tuesday, August 27. See you on the green in 2019!

Our 6th annual Stars & Cars event, held at Steve Foley Motors in Northbrook raised more than $171,000, which helps provide more than $1.37 million worth of groceries for hungry neighbors. We’re grateful for your generosity—what you do matters year after year!

One of the foursomes from West Suburban Bank takes a break on the green for a quick photo.

The FONA International foursome takes the green at their sponsored hole at Cantigny. Staley enjoys mingling with event attendees before the program begins.

Dave Murphy, from presenting sponsor Walmart, welcomes attendees and shares brief remarks with thanks.

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ONGOING

Host a virtual Food or Fund Drive this holiday season!

Make your Thanksgiving celebration extra meaningful this year by asking your guests to bring a food item to donate to the Food Bank along with their side dish, or consider making a financial donation in their names. Every $1 helps provide $8 worth of groceries, which will help fill tables for our hungry neighbors this holiday season. Either way, you’ll be giving the gift of hope and a much-needed holiday meal for a family in need. For more info or to setup your food or fund drive, visit www.SolveHungerToday.org/FoodandFundDrive or contact Andrew Palmer at (630) 443-6910 ext. 196.

DECEMBER

Order your holiday cards now!

Looking for unique but meaningful gifts to give this year? Make a donation to the Food Bank and receive a specially-designed 5x7 holiday card to give your loved ones. Make your tax-deductible gift by December 10 to ensure delivery by December 22. Cards will be mailed weekly. Visit SolveHungerToday.org/HolidayCard to place your order!

JANUARY

Friends & Family Volunteer Day
Saturday, January 19 – 9-11:30am
South Suburban Center, Joliet

To celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, bring your friends and family to a special food packing shift at our new distribution center in Joliet! For more info or to register, contact Julia Jones at jjones@northernilfoodbank.org or 630-443-6910 x166. Must be age 8+.

See our complete calendar of events at www.SolveHungerToday.org/events