

Table Matters

MAY 2015

Eastern Illinois Foodbank

www.eifoodbank.org



Eastern Illinois
Foodbank

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Would you donate your birthday to EIF?



We had the pleasure of following Kim Lareau on her month-long birthday celebration this past March. Inspired by a friend's birthday challenge, Kim set a goal of raising \$1,000 for the Eastern Illinois Foodbank in honor of her 30th birthday. To build momentum during the month-long drive and as an incentive to donate, Kim performed a dare for every monetary milestone she hit. After

raising \$25 she wore a wig to work for a day. At \$300 she got a pie in the face. After 31 days, Kim completed 14 dares and raised **15,900 meals** (\$2,650) for our community. We can say without a doubt that Kim is truly an inspiration and we are incredibly lucky to have her as a supporter. Here is what Kim had to say about her 30th birthday challenge:

Eastern Illinois Foodbank: How did you first become involved with EIF?

Kim Lareau: In 2013 I attended a few repack events, but I wasn't able to help out as much as I would have liked. Last summer I volunteered for Operation Orange with my fiancé and a friend of mine, and we had a blast! I loved being able to share that experience with them. I find it incredible how much can be done with just a few dollars in donations. The kind of buying power EIF has makes it so easy to reach so many people with meager donations from people like me.

EIF: What inspired you to follow through with this challenge?

KL: I work for the Urbana School District, and I know a high percentage of our students receive free and reduced meals. It's heartbreaking to think that there are kids in the community who won't eat on the weekends when the school isn't offering breakfast and lunch.

EIF: What were the logistics behind your drive?

KL: To be honest, I was having a really hard time with the idea of turning 30 this year. I have found that doing things for others really does put things in perspective and gives me a brighter outlook on life. I also thought a lot about why people would donate to my fundraiser over others. That's where I came up with the idea to do challenges along the way. I knew a number of my friends and family would donate just because they're lovely, wonderful people. I also knew that more of my friends would be inclined to do so if it meant I did something silly to encourage their donations.

The hardest part of the whole thing was finding dares to perform when I hit the milestones. I solicited advice from friends and family, but suggestions would only be considered if they met the following criteria:

- No touching or otherwise harassing strangers.
- No eating weird food - including animal food.
- Nothing that was cost prohibitive, like skydiving or a dunk tank.

“...I had no idea how generous people would be, or how meaningful it would be to me. This has truly been the best birthday ever.”

EIF: Did you receive any unexpected donations?

KL: What I found most unexpected was the number of people who made larger donations. I expected a lot of people to donate \$5 or \$10 just to see me get hit in the face with a pie or wear a silly outfit to work. I did not expect the number of donations of \$50, \$80, \$100, or more. Seeing those donations come through brought me to tears on a number of occasions. I LOVE celebrating my birthday, and to be quite honest, I LOVE receiving presents. I was excited to donate my birthday to EIF, but I had no idea how generous people would be, or how meaningful it would be to me. This has truly been the best birthday ever.

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MISSION ♥

THE EASTERN ILLINOIS FOODBANK EXISTS TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER IN EASTERN ILLINOIS.

The Hires Report



Dear Friends,
I sit down to write this note during National Volunteer Week 2015. Volunteers are such a vital part of what we do here at Eastern Illinois Foodbank. Last year, 1,477 volunteers logged over 11,000 hours – the work of 6 employees! Wasn't Kim's story on the front page remarkable? We simply couldn't accomplish our mission of alleviating hunger in eastern Illinois without the help of volunteers like Kim and their incredible support. As we like to say around the Foodbank – volunteers put the *heart* in our cart!

“ Last year, 1,477 volunteers logged over 11,000 hours – the work of 6 employees! ”

Feeding America just released their results from *Map the Meal Gap 2015*, which details the startling rate of food insecurity across the country. For us here in eastern Illinois, the results hit particularly close to home. The food insecurity rate for our 14-county service area jumped to 15.6%, significantly higher

than the statewide figure of 13.6%. More troubling, *Map the Meal Gap 2015* revealed that food insecurity affects the most vulnerable populations in our area, including 23.4% percent of the population – 26,020 children. We've got our work cut out for us as we work to nourish stronger communities.

Eastern Illinois Foodbank is excited to announce the opening of our first elementary school pantry with the McKinley Pantry at Garden Hills. After opening in February, they've already served 55 individuals and children. Read about their success on page 4 of **Table Matters**. With the addition of McKinley Pantry at Garden Hills, EIF now has 6 school pantries that work to provide youth the opportunity of a healthy future. School pantries have a direct impact on the high food insecurity rate among children in our area, as we work for more efficient ways for kids and families to access food.

I appreciate your ongoing commitment to Eastern Illinois Foodbank.

Best Wishes,

Jim Hires , President & CEO

How the Foodbank Works

from
EIF



to an EIF
emergency
food
program



to a
person
in need



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DAY of GIVING

December 2, 2014

The Eastern Illinois Foodbank launched its first-ever 14-county wide food and funds drive – Day of Giving – in December 2014. Schools, businesses and organizations across our service area truly made an impact in fighting hunger right here in our community. With their help, we set a record, raising **\$110,000** and collecting an additional **7,600 pounds** of food. Combined, that's equivalent to **over 666,333 meals** for local families in need!

By supporting the Day of Giving campaign, our community helps to ensure that reliable food sources are available for local individuals and families struggling with hunger. After receiving food from one of our programs, a child wrote, **"It made me feel like someone cares."** It's a simple but powerful statement that would not be made possible without local support.

If your school, business or organization would like to give back this holiday season, mark your calendars for this year's Day of Giving on **December 1, 2015**. An online drive registration will be available on our website at www.eifoodbank.org in November.

Prom Benefit for Hunger Relief 2015

If you weren't able to attend the Prom Benefit for Hunger Relief, here's what you missed:

- Victor Fuentes and Amy Burns (pictured) were crowned Prom King & Queen!
- This year's Prom Court broke yet another record, raising over \$26,100 in "votes".
- Best of all, thanks to the many sponsors, guests, donors, volunteers and Prom Court candidates, Prom Benefit 2015 raised over \$50,400 --- that's 302,400 meals for our neighbors in need!

"Like" Prom Benefit for Hunger Relief on Facebook for Prom 2016 plans!



Would you donate your birthday to EIF? *Continued from page 1*



EIF: How does it feel to have raised almost 16,000 meals for those struggling with hunger in our community?

KL: I don't think 30 would feel this good if I hadn't done this. It's completely overwhelming to think of the number of meals EIF can provide because of this fundraiser. I'm from a small town of about 5,000. We could feed my entire hometown for a day, all because I asked nicely while wearing head-to-toe pink.

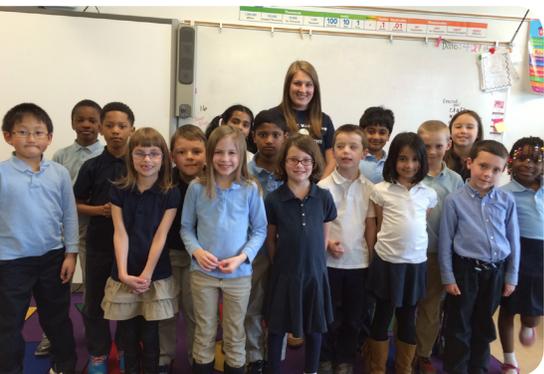
Kim wears a giant paper mâché head of The Muppet Show character Dr. Bunsen Honeydew for raising \$500.

5 Easy Steps to Start Fundraising for EIF!

If you would like to donate your birthday, wedding or other special day to the Eastern Illinois Foodbank here are a few steps to complete:

- First, we suggest you take some tips from Kim:
 - **Plan ahead** – "I did a lot of planning before announcing my fundraiser. I was careful to choose dares that were somewhat out of my comfort zone (or COMPLETELY out of my comfort zone for \$750!) or that would be interesting and exciting for donors."
 - **Know your target audience** – "If I had done something like this when I turned 20, I wouldn't have been able to raise as much because my friends were all college students."
 - **Don't be afraid to be silly** – "I am happy to act a fool all month if it means more donations for EIF."
 - **Be grateful & thank your donors** – "I keep reminding myself that I'm not really doing anything here. I'm just putting on silly wigs or mildly inconveniencing myself for the day. It's really all my donors who are doing something special. The first thing I do each time I update is thank my donors. Without them, this truly would not be possible."
- Determine how you want to collect your donations.
 - Online platforms such as GoFundMe and Crowdrise are a great way to launch an online fundraising campaign. Drive organizers can cast a wider net and reach out to family, friends and other supporters locally or nationally through social media or email. Keep in mind that these platforms keep a percentage of donations to operate their site.
 - Donations may also be collected in-person. This is a good option for those holding a single day event that potential supporters will attend. The drive organizer can also give supporters the option to donate food or toiletries.
- Set a goal – and don't be afraid to raise it. Kim's original goal was to raise \$1,000. She quickly met her goal so she decided to double it.
- Tell EIF your plans. Visit www.eifoodbank.org/action/fundraise.html and complete the "Holding a Drive or Fundraiser" form. EIF can provide you with drive materials, up-to-date facts and figures and will help promote your drive.
- Invite your family, friends and potential supports to donate to your cause! Utilize the method that works best for you – email, social media, word of mouth, etc.

Small Hands, BIG Hearts



Last October, Ms. Dunn's 2nd grade class at Booker T. Washington STEM Academy held a fundraiser to benefit the Eastern Illinois Foodbank.

Ms. Dunn brought the idea of philanthropy to her class after discussing their accomplishment celebration through the school's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Program. The program allows students to collect positive behavior slips and once a goal is met, the class can celebrate their achievements. Ms. Dunn's students wanted to throw a pizza party but didn't know how to pay for it.

Ms. Dunn explains, "I realized they didn't have much insight on how their food got to them and challenges that are faced by those who have to choose to pay for other necessities before food. This led to conversations about where food comes from, how much it costs, and just how people get it when they don't always have money for it."

The class set a goal of raising \$100 in one week. Each day the class completed a small math project by counting how much money they raised and the meal conversion total. At the end of the week the class raised 688 meals (almost \$115) for our neighbors in need.

In February, Ms. Dunn's class also toured EIF to better understand how their donation would be utilized to feed individuals and families in need. Students saw EIF's warehouse, repack room and walk-in refrigerator. The whole class was even weighed on the giant pallet scale. The experience clearly impacted the class as students continued to speak about the experience days after the tour.

Ms. Dunn and her second graders are a testament that no matter your age you can make a great impact in the lives of others – possibly even a fellow student. If you're interested in incorporating the issue of local hunger into your curriculum or holding a fundraiser, please contact our Development Department for resources at 328-3663.

"I felt happy to feed people who were hungry and proud of myself and my class."

– Lindsay, student

Program Spotlight

MCKINLEY PANTRY AT GARDEN HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The McKinley Pantry at Garden Hills Elementary School officially opened its doors in February 2015. The McKinley Pantry at Garden Hills is part of the Eastern Illinois Foodbank's School Pantry Program and is currently available to any family in need that has a child enrolled in Garden Hills Elementary School. The school was previously a part of EIF's BackPack Program and shifted focus to the School Pantry Program in order to serve more families. **The School Pantry is open to families every second and fourth Tuesday of the Month from 4 -7 pm.**

Being a part of the School Pantry Program has allowed The McKinley Pantry at Garden Hills to distribute an assortment of food and grocery product to families. Pantry items including fresh and canned fruits and vegetables, prepared meals (like macaroni & cheese), beans, peanut butter, pastas, rice, soups, canned meals (such as ravioli), bread, cereals and snack food items. The School Pantry also offers a different non-food item each month. Items include baby food, toiletries and cleaning products. Andrea Miller, McKinley Pantry at Garden Hills Coordinator, explained one family's reaction, "The parents were surprised and pleased that there were baby food items available and were so appreciative that the pantry included things for the whole family, not just the student who attends the school." She continued, **"It made me realize that this mission will embrace the whole family and help parents support not just their Garden Hills' student, but every member of the family."**

The Eastern Illinois Foodbank developed the School Pantry Program aimed at alleviating childhood hunger in EIF's service area through the provision of food to children and their families at school. School pantries are located on the grounds of a school, and are intended to provide a more readily accessible source of food assistance to low-income students and their families. Launched in 2012, the School Pantry Program has expanded to a total of 6 schools in fiscal year 2014. Last year, students made 2,070 visits to School Pantries in Champaign, Urbana, Charleston and Rantoul.



May is Older Americans Month

#SOLVESENIORHUNGER

In Fiscal Year 2014, Eastern Illinois Foodbank began in earnest to develop what has become our Senior Grocery Program. EIF surveyed and consulted with our partners regarding senior need, capacity and delivery systems. The Foodbank's first formal program was set up through the Food for Seniors Program in Champaign, and was designed to increase food distribution specifically related to healthy senior eating. During FY14 (July 2013- June 2014) this program served 4,652 seniors.

The Foodbank utilized funds from the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois to expand the program and in FY15 we were able to add three additional sites:

- Washington Square Senior Grocery Program, Champaign, IL
- Mattoon Community Food Center's Senior Feeding Program, Mattoon, IL
- Faith United Methodist Church Senior Feeding Program, Champaign, IL

So far this fiscal year, these four sites have served nearly 8,300 individuals.

Increasing awareness of senior hunger and developing these pantries specifically to feed seniors allows us to care for a generation who find themselves facing the no-win choice between medication or food. During Older Americans Month, we ask for your help to spread awareness of the issue of senior hunger in eastern Illinois. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to "like" and "share" our **#SolveSeniorHunger** posts.



Map the Meal Gap 2015

The 2015 Map the Meal Gap study, which details the startling rate of food insecurity experienced by community members in our 14-county service area, results reveal that food insecurity affects the most vulnerable populations in eastern Illinois, including **23.4% percent of the population – 26,020 children.**

The lead researcher is Dr. Craig Gundersen, professor of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois, executive director of the National Soybean Research Laboratory and member of Feeding America's Technical Advisory Group. Map the Meal Gap 2015 is supported by the Founding Sponsor Howard G. Buffett Foundation, as well as the ConAgra Foods Foundation and Nielsen.

This data is vital to understanding the issue of hunger and is the first of its kind to identify hunger at the local level. Local key findings include:

- Food insecurity rate for our 14-county service area jumped to **15.6%**, significantly higher than the statewide figure of 13.6%.
- Champaign and Vermillion counties have **food insecurity rates of 17.2%**, some of the highest in state.

Visit map.feedingamerica.org to view national and local results.

Looking for other meaningful ways to give?

Consider an honorary gift to EIF to recognize that special person in your life. A donation to Eastern Illinois Foodbank is the gift that gives twice: it offers monetary support to a beloved community organization and provides the donor with feelings of comfort and hope.

Longtime donor Paul Selvin did just that. **In March, Paul made a \$2,500 gift to partner on a foodmobile with the Foodbank in memory of his parents.** Paul's generous gift covers costs associated with our Foodmobile in Georgetown on May 30.

Paul wrote: *"This gift is in loving memory of Manny and Miriam Selvin, the parents of Larry, Eric, and Paul Selvin. Our parents were permanently affected by growing up during the Great Depression, where 'wasting' a nickel to go to the movies was reason to feel guilty. This gift is a small way that their sons, who had many of the essentials in life, have not forgotten that life can be difficult for some. Especially in the U.S., it is an abomination that some people go hungry while the rest of us are well fed."*

A mobile food pantry, Foodmobiles visit rural sites throughout our 14-county service area, distributing food to neighbors in need. Last year, Eastern Illinois Foodbank offered 44 Foodmobiles, **providing over 439,000 pounds of food to 13,714 individuals and children in rural areas.**

To make a gift to Eastern Illinois Foodbank, visit: eifoodbank.org.



Eastern Illinois
Foodbank

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Phone: (217) 328-3663

www.eifoodbank.org

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

Visit www.eifoodbank.org to stay up-to-date on our upcoming events. Contact the Development Office at 328-3663 ext. 217 for more information on specific events.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May: May is **Older Americans Month**. Help us provide hope to seniors and families in need and **#SOLVESENIOR HUNGER**. Like and share our posts on Facebook and Twitter to help spread the word!

September: September is **Hunger Action Month**, a time to learn about local hunger and the needs in your community. Stay tuned for more details!

CURRENT PROMOTIONS

June: Visit **Common Ground Food Co-Op** during the month of June and round up your purchases to benefit the Foodbank! Remember \$1 is equivalent to 6 meals.

Midas: As part of Project Feed More, visit Midas in Champaign and they will donate \$1 from every oil change to Eastern Illinois Foodbank.

Outnumber Hunger: Purchase specially marked General Mills products and enter codes from these packages by visiting www.outnumberhunger.com. Each code you enter will help Feeding America secure **5 MEALS for the Eastern Illinois Foodbank**. It's that easy!

Subway: Stop in to your local Subway this weekend! For every 1% increase in weekend sales from **April 15 to August 31**, Subway® restaurants will donate **\$3,000** (up to a total of \$15,000) to the Eastern Illinois Foodbank. (Participation may vary)

