

INSIDE SCOOP



Eastern Illinois
Foodbank



"I VOLUNTEER BECAUSE..."

More than 1,600 volunteers donated over 8,200 hours of their time last fiscal year. That's the equivalent of four full-time employees. The Foodbank is grateful to be a part of such a giving community. EIF's volunteers come from all walks of life and backgrounds, but it's clear that their passion for helping those struggling in our community and the Foodbank's mission of alleviating hunger connects them.

Jennifer and Grant Robbennott have been volunteering with their sons, Dale and Jake, since 2010. The family donates their time repacking bulk food product in our warehouse and distributing food on Foodmobiles. They have also served as Repack Captains during EIF's 12-hour food repack, Operation Orange. Jennifer describes why her family started volunteering at EIF and how their volunteer experience has positively impacted her family:

"Food is a fundamental need. The way volunteering is structured at EIF makes it possible to understand the way in which the work you are doing translates into an impact on people's lives."



We had volunteered at a food bank and at food pantries where we lived prior to moving to Champaign-Urbana. Shortly after we moved here, we toured EIF with a church group. Instantly, we knew we wanted to continue doing that kind of work here.

We started volunteering because food is such a basic need and food insecurity is such a widespread problem. And it is the kind of problem that often seems to be under the radar, but at the same time, it connects to a lot of other concerns, like education. It is hard to learn when you are hungry.

Volunteering at EIF is a good way to do volunteer work that matters and spend time with each other at the same time. With lots of demands on our time from our jobs, school, sports and other activities, it is nice to be able to multitask in that way. Even when our boys were little, they could scoop rice or sort granola bars at a repack.

Depending on the particular food we are repacking, we can work independently, together in pairs, or in assembly line fashion. But no matter the configuration, we get to talk and catch up with each other while we work. The kind of work involved in repacks also allowed the boys, even at a young age, to see the impact of their work in multiple ways.

In the abstract, it can be satisfying to see that the group was able to repackage multiple huge bins of cereal into family-size packages within the span of a couple of hours. But more importantly, we were able to talk about the number of meals that will be able to feed other families, which is satisfying in a whole different way. Now that the boys are teenagers, we continue to do repacks, but we have also had the opportunity to go out with the Foodmobile Program to distribute food directly to families. That gives them an additional sense of how their work matters — to see the food going to the people who need it, to talk with them and to be able to participate directly in that aspect of the mission.

We volunteer at EIF because we think that the work that EIF does is important. There are tangible tasks and each of us can contribute. We get to meet other people in the community and we know that our work makes a difference in people's lives.

OUR CURRENT volunteer needs include:

- Volunteers to help distribute emergency food via our Foodmobile Program. Foodmobiles are single-day mobile food distributions throughout our service area. Volunteers meet our truck at the designated distribution site, set-up, distribute food and tear down at the end of the distribution.
- Day-time warehouse volunteers are needed for sorting and palletizing product.

The following volunteers hit milestones last fiscal year. Thank you for your service!

1000+ HOURS

★ Laura & Glenn Morrison

800+ HOURS

★ Fred Fechtmann
★ George Roth

300+ HOURS

★ Gail Hueting

If you or your organization is interested in volunteering with the Eastern Illinois Foodbank, contact Kristen Costello at kcostello@eifoodbank.org or visit www.eifoodbank.org, click on "Take Action" and "Donate Time".

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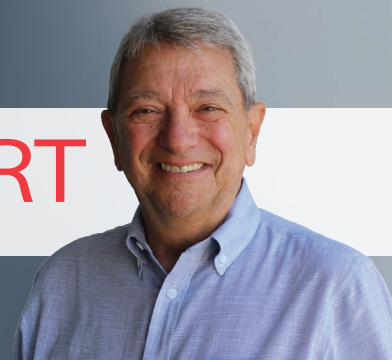
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Eastern Illinois
Foodbank



THE HIRES REPORT



Think about your last meal. Was it a family dinner? Lunch at your desk? A bite in the car while running from here to there? Now imagine you couldn't recall the last time you ate a proper meal.

For too many in our community, that unconscionable thought is a reality. **When the Foodbank took on the counties of Livingston, McLean and DeWitt in July 2015, the number of food-insecure people in our service area increased to nearly 157,000.**

We're in an election year so I hear lots of conversations regarding the issues of poverty and unemployment. It is one thing to hear discussion but another to deal with the reality of food insecurity. Champaign County has a poverty rate of nearly 23%, which is fourth highest in the state. **The food insecurity rate is over 17%.** Ironically, the unemployment rate is slightly lower than the statewide statistic of 5.1%.

All these figures and statistics tend to blur together.



**But what
do 157,000
food-insecure
people really
look like?**

What does a poverty rate of 23% mean? It means that there are still many people — families, children and seniors — who are struggling and in need of our support. It means that every day **one in every seven people** faces the dilemma of not knowing where his or her next meal is coming from. **One in five is a child.**

Yes, economic conditions across the county are improving, but not for everyone. The need is a real and constant fact. We see it daily. In the teary eyes of a senior whose trunk is being loaded with groceries at a Foodmobile. In the grateful look of a parent whose trip to the food pantry will put a full dinner on the table for the kids.

At Eastern Illinois Foodbank, we've worked hard — with your continued support — to become a vibrant, sustainable community organization. But our work continues. Through the generosity of our community, together, we will continue the fight against hunger in eastern Illinois.

This holiday season, please remember Eastern Illinois Foodbank and those in need in our community. Thank you and happy holidays!

Jim Hires

Jim Hires
President & CEO

HELP US RECOGNIZE

Teola Trowbridge joined Eastern Illinois Foodbank's Board of Directors in 1994, where she served for 22 years. Teola stepped down in June 2016.

She joined the Board as the Operations Director at Kraft Foods and came at a critical time — when the organization was struggling with aging and inadequate space, financial instability and lack of wide-spread recognition. Teola's leadership helped steer the Foodbank on a path of growth and success. Teola served as Chairman of the Board on three different occasions, led several committees and, of course, logged countless hours of time on behalf of hungry people in eastern Illinois. Her devotion, leadership and belief in our mission helped EIF get to where it is today.

Here, Teola shares how she came to serve on our Board and what kept her involved for all those years.

"Food has been part of my world since I can remember. I grew up on a farm and have been growing and cooking with my

mom and Grandma since I was a little girl. I always enjoyed it and still do some canning in the summer time.

When I was transferred to Champaign from the Kraft Foods plant in Wausau, WI, the Foodbank requested a staff member to sit on their board. My plant manager asked if I would be interested — and of course, I said YES!

The need to deliver more food, more efficiently, continues to increase. When I look at what EIF has done since I joined the Board, I am truly amazed! When a community and our wonderful staff and volunteers come together, anything can be accomplished!

We still need the community's support. As we continue to grow, volunteer support and donations become increasingly more critical. No one should be hungry!"

Thank you, Teola, for your passion and service to Eastern Illinois Foodbank.



PARTNERS OF THE YEAR

Food Donor of the Year:



Walmart has joined Eastern Illinois Foodbank in the fight against local hunger, more than doubling their donation from a year ago. Last fiscal year, 16 Walmart stores in our service area donated nearly **1.5 million pounds of food — over 1 million meals** — to EIF. That's 15% of our total product intake and a 55% increase over fiscal year 2015!

Through their state giving program, EIF has also been granted funds to purchase two trucks, along with a \$50,000 donation to purchase and install a freezer and cooler unit, which improved our ability to store nutritious product by 60% and increase distribution of frozen product by 25%. Additionally, Walmart is a member of our Retailers Against Hunger Program, which ensures food doesn't go to waste and is distributed as quickly as possible.

Business Partner of the Year:



Common Ground Food Co-op was named EIF's 2016 Business Partner of the Year. Common Ground Food Co-op has supported Eastern Illinois Foodbank for nearly a decade. Their efforts, including the popular 'Round up for Good' campaign and ice cream social, have provided **160,000 meals** to hungry children, families and seniors in our community.

In addition to their direct support of the Foodbank, Common Ground offers a "Food for All" program that features recipes and classes to demonstrate how shopping at the Co-op, eating healthy and sustainable food can be affordable to those on a limited budget. They also offer grants and have a discount program for Co-op owners who qualify for SNAP or are facing a financial setback, furthering EIF's vision of making healthy food available to all.

Community Partner of the Year:



Sola Gratia Farm was named our 2016 Community Partner of the Year. Over the past four years, Sola Gratia Farm donated **more than 30,000 pounds of chemical-free produce** to Eastern Illinois Foodbank. The Farm also donates directly to Rosecrance's TIMES Center, Daily Bread Soup Kitchen and Courage Connection's women's shelters — all of which are EIF member agencies. Last year, almost 40% — roughly 12,000 lbs — of their annual harvest was donated to those in need in our community.

Sola Gratia Farm is committed to sustainable farming practices, community building and hunger assistance. A true partner of EIF's mission of alleviating hunger and nourishing stronger communities. Visit www.solagratiacsa.com for more information on how to donate.

MISSION IMPACT AWARDS

RATIO ARCHITECTS has sponsored the Letter Carrier's Food Drive, which helped bring in more than 70,000 pounds of food to the Foodbank, for the last two years. The firm also donates a workday to collect donations during our Day of Giving funds drive. Last April, with the support of RATIO Architects, Eastern Illinois Foodbank took over center court at Marketplace Mall with a large food display to highlight the issue of local hunger. RATIO designed and engineered the display, made entirely of canned food items. They donated time and expertise to the design and creation of the structure, asking for additional support from their colleagues in the construction industry.

MARK & CHERYL HOLDERBAUGH's work started with EIF in 2009 when they began volunteering at repacks. They quickly stood out as volunteers and were asked to serve as Foodmobile Captains, leading mobile food distributions. They've gotten their children involved with volunteering, along with Cheryl's employer – Carle – and Mark's employer – Yahoo!. Mark has served as an advocate for Eastern Illinois Foodbank on grants through the Yahoo! Employee Foundation. He's championed two applications for EIF, resulting in \$85,000 in grant funding. Their personal gifts are also extraordinary, having donated more than 70,000 meals in seven years. Mark and Cheryl's enthusiasm for Eastern Illinois Foodbank and our work towards alleviating hunger is second to none.

Since 2013, MONSANTO and their employees have raised nearly \$14,000 for Eastern Illinois Foodbank. They've sponsored employee give-back days and championed grant applications helping to support our Foodmobile Program. Last year, Monsanto gave \$5,000 to EIF, sponsoring two mobile food pantries. Those Foodmobiles served 520 individuals, including 157 children. 15,757 pounds of food were distributed, including over 5,000 pounds of fresh produce. Monsanto also donates thousands of pounds of fresh sweet corn each summer, giving our agencies access to one of the season's biggest treats.

TERYL PIGOTT has held an annual tea party to benefit EIF since 2008 and has raised more than \$30,000, roughly 152,000 meals for our neighbors in need! This event is so much more than a simple tea party. It's the coordination of dozens of women, sharing their passions and advocating for the less fortunate in our community. Teryl believes in that work and finding a unique way to support it. Because of her event each December, the Foodbank is able to fulfill our mission of alleviating hunger in eastern Illinois.

DAY of GIVING



Every year during the holiday season, we're presented with countless opportunities to give. But what if there was a day specifically designated to give hope to hungry neighbors in our community?

Last year, our community came together and donated **more than 850,000 meals** for our neighbors in need. With your help, we can raise even more meals for our community this year. We're calling on schools, businesses and organizations to take action against local hunger this season by organizing a food drive and/or fundraiser during the month of November.

You can help by dropping off your donation on **November 29** to WDWS (2301 South Neil) in Champaign. We'll be collecting monetary donations from 7am-5pm.

Help us celebrate **Day of Giving** — a day of generosity, a day that will change lives in our community.

Contact Kristen Bosch for more details at 217-328-3663 x 217.



Run (or walk) **MILES FOR MEALS** to help alleviate local childhood hunger. Donations raised for Team EIF through the Christie Clinic Illinois Marathon charity running program will be designated to our **School Pantry Program**. Walkers and runners will also receive a discount code for their Illinois Marathon registration.

The School Pantry Program is aimed at alleviating childhood hunger through the provision of food to children and their families at school. School pantries are located on the grounds of schools, and are intended to provide a more readily accessible source of food assistance to low-income students and their families. Last fiscal year, we fed nearly **8,000 students and their families** through our School Pantry Program.

If you'd like to run Miles for Meals, contact Kristen Costello at kcostello@eifoodbank.org or 217-328-3663 for info on how to register.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



/Eastern Illinois Foodbank



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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.