

**FOOD BANK OF THE SOUTHERN TIER
STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEETING
August 28, 2023 2:00PM-4:00PM**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89185603622?pwd=R1o4eHF2aFpuSFVwZFFyU3pOVUh1QT09>

AGENDA

TOPIC	FACILITATOR	ACTION	TIME
1. Welcome & Check-in	Erin Summerlee	Discuss	5
2. Approve April Minutes	Erin Summerlee	Decision	5
3. Diaper Bank Program Center Deep Dive	Randi Quackenbush	Discuss	50
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress to date• Future plans• Successes and challenges			
BREAK			10
4. Feeding America Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Grant Overview	Kathryn Miller	Discuss	20
5. 2024 timeline and project priorities	Randi Quackenbush	Decision	20
6. Next Steps	Randi Quackenbush	Decide	5
7. Wrap-up / Adjourn	Erin Summerlee	Discussion	5

Next Meeting
October 23, 2023 2-4 pm
RSVP



Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2023 2:00-4:00pm

Member Name	In Attendance	Unable to Attend
Erin Summerlee (Chair)	X	
Tess McKinley	X	
Jamila Michener	X	
Kathy Rasmussen	X	
<i>Ex-Officio</i>		
Andy Fagan	X	
Mary Pat Dolan	X	
<i>Staff</i>		
Randi Quackenbush	X	
Sarah DeFrank	X	
Amanda Palme	X	
Jen Bertron	X	
Matt Griffin	X	
Kate Paterson	X	

1. Welcome and Check

Chairperson Erin Summerlee began the meeting at 2:02 pm.

2. Approve January 2023 Minutes

*Kathy Rasmussen made a motion to approve the January 23, 2023 minutes.
Erin Summerlee seconded. None opposed. Minutes approved.*

3. School Food Center Deep Dive (Randi Quackenbush)

An overview of Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) projects and timelines were reviewed. The SIFs are now moving into the future planning and growth phase.

The progress to date of School Food Centers was presented. SFCs overcome key barriers of times open and transportation. The ‘theory of change’ is to move the backpack program to School Food Centers to reduce stigma by making it part of the school culture and allowing more choice. The outcomes of the SFC model are good food, increased access and community empowerment, and less stigma in the later school years that should carry over to young adults.

The rollout of the SFCs was very heavy in Broome County because of early funding from Assemblymember Donna Lupardo. Many new sites came on board in 2023. The onboarding process is streamlined, and the team is nimble. Limitations to the program expansion are more about funding. We need to make sure we have enough funding to keep going.

Distribution of backpacks has gone down, but overall cost has gone up. It is hard to compare backpack food with School Food Center foods because it is ‘number of meals’ versus pounds. Meals-served numbers go up with SFCs but cost also goes up drastically. This is partly because they

rely on wholesale food. The cost per household is up 4 times but much more food is going out with School Food Centers.

The school receives an initial \$10K per calendar year of start-up funds. Budgets are run every two months to make sure schools are on target. If overspent, the school must pay the balance. Larger groups will get proportional funding. Backpack programs can be phased out. There was discussion of the location of backpack programs and whether they can be served by SFCs if the backpack program is phased out. It must work at the school district level. Getting data from school districts is vital.

Family and Site coordinator surveys were opened in February 2023. The response was limited but overall positive. Those who responded were satisfied with food quality, variety, type and quantity. Some areas to watch are: meeting special diet needs, ensuring choice and food costs. Students are mostly bringing food home with only 18% of family members picking food up themselves at the school.

Expansion of the FSC program is a concern because of the cost. There is complexity in not being able to swap out the backpack program. Whether School Food Centers can be a substitute for going to a food pantry is a conversation happening throughout the country (<https://foodbanknews.org/why-feeding-tampa-bay-dropped-its-backpack-program>).

4. Matrix Mapping Discussion (Randi Quackenbush)

The Matrix Mapping process was reviewed. The steps are: identify what you want to evaluate, determine profitability (which is defined as revenue minus expenses), determine impact, map profitability & impact, and determine strategic imperatives based on the map.

How to define “profitability” was discussed. It will require working with Development to determine how much is coming in through grants and other means. It doesn’t include leveraged costs in terms of what the school district is contributing. Matrix maps are a nice way to break down complex decisions into a neat box. It is important to make sure our information gathering is capturing enough information. Because each SIF has its own cost center, those costs are already broken out. Indirect costs would need to be looked into.

The logic and appeal of this system is that it gets you towards a systematic way of decision making. However, it is important to remember that when you systematize this kind of information, you can leave off other kinds of information. Make sure to include other inputs that might give other outcomes and produce a red flag. Think about ways to use this but not make it the singular way of making these decisions.

There is a tradeoff – if all programs land in the ‘blue heart’ quadrant, you can’t fund them all. May still need to look at how each program measures up against the mission. The Matrix Map forces you to get the data you will need to make a decision. One of the most critical parts is that you can be responsive to the people that gave you \$1M. We will never have it perfect to quantify things that can’t be quantified. Reasonable consistency across our platform is what more funders and collaborators expect (though not the whole story).

In summary, the group likes the Matrix Map as a foundational piece but not as the only tool to be used in SIF decision-making.

5. SIF Extension Proposal (Randi Quackenbush)

The proposal to extend the timeline for the Client Driven Services SIF from 3 years to 5 years was discussed. Staff expressed the sense that the work is just starting. This is a new and different kind of work that will take time to evaluate, and it is important to give time for it to be measured. Randi doesn't see an opportunity cost to extending, particularly for staff, who feel rushed. Staff will go through the process of evaluating other SIF projects that might be high cost but low impact so can be eliminated.

The benefit of written SIF narratives to provide historical information for those who come later was noted. It will create work for someone, but no one can go through years of committee minutes to find that information. Jen has been working on capturing these narratives. After Action Reports and Hot Washes look at internal workings and provide a good system for tracking and documenting.

*Erin Summerlee made a motion to recommend the cost extension for the SIFs.
Jamila Michener seconded. None opposed. Motion passed.*

6. June Board Strategy Session (Andy Fagan)

The June BOD meeting has historically been a strategy session, and updates on SIFs would be beneficial. However, as we are in the middle of a CEO search and a strategic alignment with Catholic Charities, it may be necessary to focus on other issues at the June BOD meeting. Staff will prepare two versions of SIF reports -- the short version reporting data only and a second option providing for a more detailed discussion.

7. Next Steps (Randi Quackenbush)

Randi will get out Q1 reports and continue to look at SIF project information. Randi will get approval from the Finance Committee about an extension of the SIF funding timeline.

Chairperson Erin Summerlee adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting

August 28, 2023 2-4 pm

RSVP to Kate Paterson (kate.paterson@foodbankst.org)

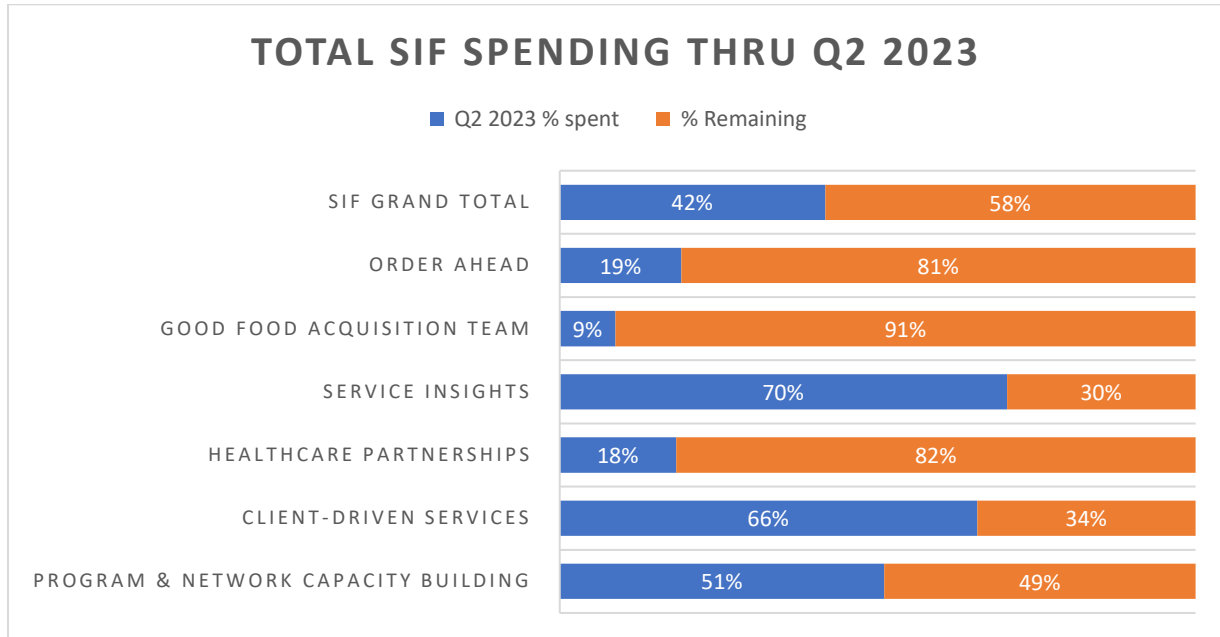


Food Bank of the Southern Tier Strategic Investment Fund 2023 Q2 Progress Report

Full SIF project budget: \$3,610,327

SIF funds spent through June 2023: \$1,507,7792

SIF Balance: \$2,102,535



[Good Food Acquisition](#)

[Agency and Program Capacity](#)

[Client Driven Services](#)

[Order Ahead](#)

[Healthcare Partnerships](#)

[Service Insights](#)

[Evaluation Progress](#)

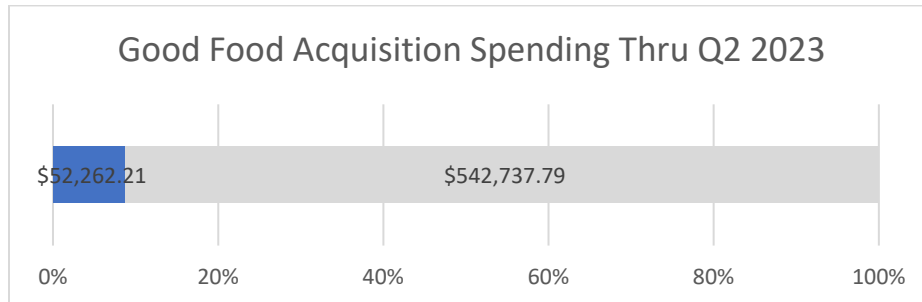
Good Food Acquisition

Original project budget: \$595,000

Money spent thru June 2023 \$52,262

Project balance \$542,738

Project Timeframe: April 2022-March 2025



Q2 Progress:

- 631,927 pounds of produce distributed, which is 128,092 more pounds than this time last year
- 4 different IQF vegetables, 2 Tuna packs/Pouches with rice or quinoa, Broth, Orange Juice Blend
- Sourcing from 2 new local farms: Reeves Farms, Wandercreek Farm
- 11 Kids Farmers' Market sites, 28 distributions, 22,687 pounds of produce distributed to 2364 duplicated children
- 33 schools participated in the School Snack program



Strawberries from Reeves Farms – a new local sourcing partner

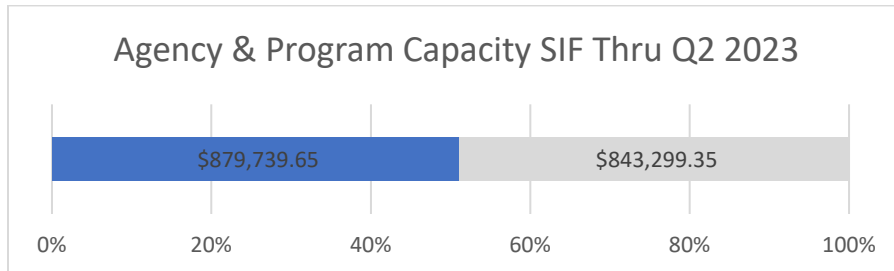
Agency & Program Capacity

Original project budget: \$1,723,039

Money spent thru June 2023: \$879,740

Project balance: \$843,299

Project Timeframe: July 2021-June 2024



Q2 progress:

Programs:

- Onboarded 8 new School Food Center sites: Elmira City, Elmira Heights, Watkins Glen High School, Ithaca High School, Groton, Susquehanna Valley, Binghamton High School, West Learning Center
- Distributed 296,051 total diapers: 266,075 child & 29,976 adult
52 partner agencies (36%) are part of the Diaper Bank and 39 of these partners ordered diapers in Q2.
17 FBST programs also provide diapers: 11 MFP Senior, 5 SFC & Kitchen Stork

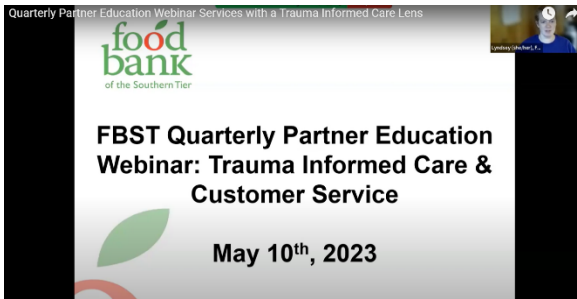
Agency Trainings

- Quarterly Partner Education Webinar in May on Trauma Informed Care ([recording here](#))
- Partners have begun taking Leah's Pantry training

Agency Capacity Initiatives

- 15 Impact Grants requests, 14 awarded for \$102,061
- 19 Emergency Cold Storage Grant requests, 19 awarded for total of \$108,976
- \$5713 distributed in agency incentives (agencies going above and beyond to reach our outcome goals), \$3550 awarded in Leadership Funds (agency partners serving in a leadership role)

Photos / Stories of Impact:



May Partner Education Webinar on Trauma Informed Care ([YouTube link](#))



Turning Point - Hornell about their recent Emergency Cold Storage Award: "Thank you for the opportunity to help expand our cold storage. This refrigerator will help us keep the refrigerated items cold that we hand out on Mondays and Fridays. This will ensure proper temperatures for cold items, and with the see-through doors shoppers will be allowed to see what they want before opening to help conserve energy. The application process was extremely easy, and all the employees at the Food Bank are quick to respond if there are any questions."



Note from St. Michael's Community Meal about their recent Emergency Cold Storage Repair Award: "We are so grateful to have this cooler up and running again! It is used for cold storage for our Community Meal program for fruits, vegetables, dairy, etc. Having it back up and running means we can house more of these items from week to week for our meals and for our clients. Thank you The picture is the brand new compressor!"



Delivering to Union-Endicott School Food Center



Elmira City School Food Center opened and offered online ordering

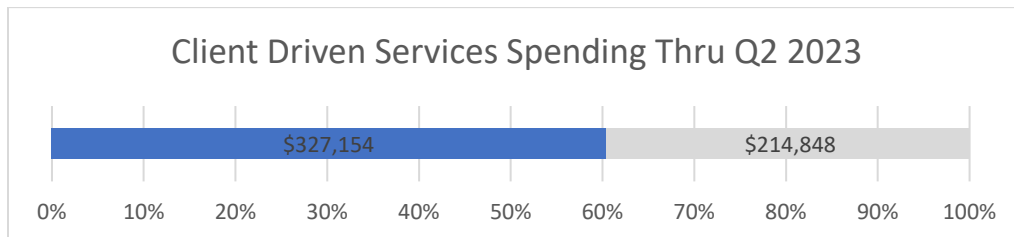
Client Driven Services

Original project budget: \$327,154

Money spent thru June 2023: \$214,848

Project balance: \$112,306

Project Timeframe: July 2021-June 2026 (project extended for 2 years to allow for full development and evaluation)



Q2 updates:

Community Advocates Program

- 2 cohorts of Community Advocates Training (CAT) finished, one online and one in person. Began with 14 members, 9 CAT members officially finished the program
- 2 Community Advocates attended Anti-Hunger Policy Conference in DC in May, met with 2 Senate and 2 House offices
- Congressman Molinaro attended CAT Celebration and [shared his story](#)
- 5 mentors engaged with new CAT cohort

Client Communications and Engagement

- New [Find Food](#) page launched on website
- Myth busting document finalized and added to website (link)
- What to expect when visiting a pantry video progress
- 245 clients completed client survey, 12 participated in interviews
- 12 client stories published

Public Education

- 1 Advocacy 101 workshop with 12 participants trained
- 2 Hunger 101 workshops with 30 participants
- Racial Wealth Gap Simulation on Juneteenth with 12 participants

Community Advocates lobbying during the national Anti-Hunger Policy Conference in DC in May.



In person Community Advocates Training with mentors



[Community Advocates Training Celebration Media Coverage](#)

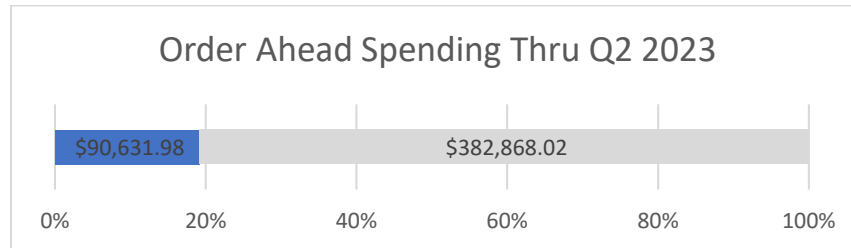
Order Ahead

Original project budget: \$473,500

Money spent thru June 2023: \$90,632

Project balance: \$382,868

Project timeframe: April 2022-March 2025



Q2 Updates:

- Hired Order Ahead Specialist, Skyler Carlson, who has fully transitioned to making all deliveries being made by OrderAhead for Kitchen Stork
- 53 Kitchen Stork participants, increased capacity to 60 participants in Q3
- Very positive feedback on delivery interactions. Conducting optional interview sessions that participants are reimbursed for providing in-depth feedback.

Program Feedback and Impact:

From April data (n=14):

- 100% reported increased ability to make healthy food choices
- 67% reported setting healthy eating goals for themselves
- 90% reported making meals at home 5 or more times per week
- Participants reported that Kitchen Stork removed the following barriers: transportation, financial barriers, access to healthy foods, and increased knowledge of healthy recipes
- Participants reported additional recipes as an additional support that would be helpful
- 92% reported that their needs were completely or mostly met by the freshness of perishable foods offered
- 100% reported that their needs were completely or mostly met by the taste/texture of nonperishable foods offered
- "Kitchen Stork has been a savior to our family. Has lessened the financial burden of food and baby items, delivery has been so helpful as we do not have a vehicle"
- "Have been learning to make new healthy recipes. helped a lot since I had gestational diabetes"
- "Relived so much stress. helped me because I'm now better able to manage finances"



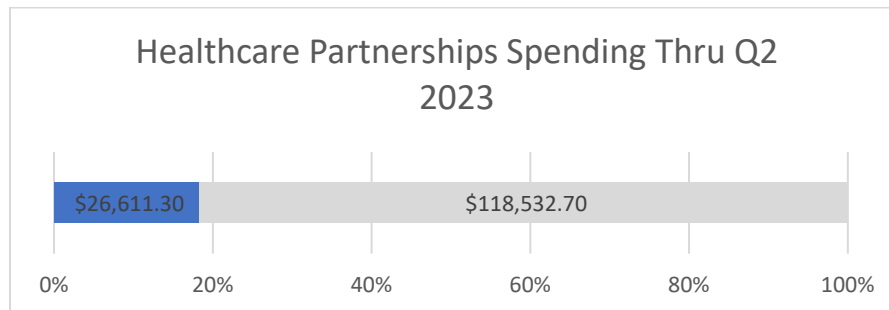
Skyler Carlson, new Order Ahead Specialist hired



Kitchen Stork volunteers treated to lunch

Healthcare Partnerships

Original project budget: \$145,144
Money spent thru June 2023: \$26,611
Project balance \$118,533
Project Timeframe: July 2021-June 2024



- 4 Active Healthcare Partnerships / Programs: Health Meets Home, Kitchen Stork, Care Compass Network Social Impact Pilot Project, and Meals While You Heal

5 In Development:

- Eastside Clinic and Cayuga Health Systems – accepted Strategic Partnership applications, working on next steps
- CASA Trinity – submitted application in June for a pantry
- St. James Mercy Hospital - interested in opening nonperishable pantry, working with them on next steps and encouraging perishables/delivery/etc. before they apply
- UHS submitted application, has been working for quite a while on adjusting plan to expand their proposed services beyond just staff

Service Insights (Retired SIF)

Original project budget: \$346,490
Money spent thru June 2023 \$250,868
Project balance \$95,622 to be rolled into other projects
Project Timeframe: July 2021-December 2022

- 74% of service visits recorded in FreshTrak as of May 2023

Impact of Using Text 'Em All Technology:

A broadcast sent to 146 textable numbers for anyone who attended Hector FP in June '22 - June 20, 2023; plus Burdett, Hector, T-burg, etc. residents who attended Watkins MFP or Reynoldsville FP

during that time period. Agency response: "Kathryn, Your text was awesome! And Beth was able to collect a lot more textable phone numbers today so next month will be better! **With your texting, and our new extended hours, and our reach out to local migrant workers, we fed 100 families today(our normal is between 40-50)! Our volunteers are exhausted, our stores are really low and need replenishment, but we are so excited to have served such an awesome group of families! Thanks so much for your help!"**

Evaluation Progress

Emergency Cold Storage Grant (ECSG) evaluation findings: Initial findings show that pantries that receive ECSG specifically to expand their cold storage capacity – rather than simply replacing old or non-functioning ones – have nearly doubled the amount of perishables distributed per person. During the same time frame, pantries that did not receive ECSG saw only a 3.5% increase in perishable pounds.

To date, the primary use of ECSG has been to replace refrigeration units that have stopped working or are in poor working order. The Good Food Acquisition Team recently identified minimum and preferred goals for perishable pounds per person at pantries. Going forward, the evaluation team recommends identifying a strategy to increase perishable pounds per person across the pantries and using ECSG to support these increases, including through outreach to agencies that may not take the initiative to apply for ECSG otherwise.

School Food Center evaluation completed for the year: We faced two main challenges in the SFC evaluation. 1) Although 100% of site coordinators answered the survey, only a small number of clients responded to it. It is difficult to make any firm conclusions based on the small client sample size. 2) We also identified discrepancies in the way schools are reporting service statistics, which made it difficult to analyze the cost of SFCs versus their impact.

Overall, the SFCs are providing more meals per distribution as well as more perishable pounds of food per request compared to the Backpack Program. These were identified as weaknesses of the Backpack Program in past evaluations. Additionally, SFCs are meeting goals related to our strategy of increasing client-centered services like home delivery, weekly hours of operation, providing services beyond food and actively checking in with participating families about their needs and satisfaction with services.

Site Coordinators are also reporting that the benefits of the SFCs go beyond just food. As one Coordinator shared, *"It's obvious that food has been placed on the tables of many of our families that otherwise would be empty. But the distribution of food has done far more than feed people. It has brought together a school community. Friendships and connections that otherwise wouldn't have existed have been made. We've learned information about our kids and their home life that we might never have known. Students are feeling pride in helping others and making accomplishments. And the school food center has made us aware of our families' needs, such as furniture and clothing, and even employment."*



Food Bank of the Southern Tier Strategic Investment Fund 2023 Q2 Progress Report

We plan to reevaluate the SFCs in 2024, by which point we should have more accurate statistics and will also aim for a better response rate from clients. This year's evaluation provided FBST staff with constructive feedback and ideas about areas where more support is needed in the coming year, such as statistics tracking, staying within budget, and supporting special diet needs.

School Snack Program evaluation is in process and very close to wrapping up.

Diaper Bank evaluation is in process and will be shared with the FBST Strategy Committee in August.

Community Advocates Training evaluation is in process.

Agency Survey is in process.

Impact Grants evaluation is in process.