

SUMMER 2019

# the Harvester

food  
bank  
of the Southern Tier

Working Together To Build And Sustain  
Hunger-Free Communities Throughout The Southern Tier



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## OUR VERY IMPORTANT VOLUNTEERS

Any given Tuesday or Thursday, you'll find volunteer Frank Bohman, of Pine City, hard at work — with a smile for everyone — in our warehouse.

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“Like clockwork,” says Volunteer Coordinator Jen Harris, “Frank arrives every Tuesday and Thursday for morning volunteer shifts.” Frank has volunteered at the Food Bank for four years. In 2018, he logged 200 hours sorting and repacking food.

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Frank is among the 4,000 volunteers who donated more than 43,000 hours of their time to the Food Bank in 2018 — the equivalent of 24 full time positions. The Food Bank relies on our vast volunteer network to support

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**food bank**  
of the Southern Tier

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Our tax ID number is 20-8808059.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

Anywhere I travel in the Southern Tier, I cross paths with someone who is touched by the Food Bank network. At the gym recently, I met an elementary school principal who told me about the value of our Snack Program in her school.

She said children who come to her office for a disciplinary referral are first greeted with a snack, which she says can diffuse a difficult situation on the spot. I frequently say, "Food brings people together." In this case, a snack — such a small way to nurture and support a child — brings student and staff members together to work toward conflict resolution.

My heart is filled daily with these kind of exchanges which come from our partnership with so many programs and organizations serving people in need. The Food Bank serves six counties across the Southern Tier and our team members live and work throughout the region. The connections we make daily inform our knowledge of hunger in our collective communities and move us toward solutions to barriers that prevent our neighbors from accessing enough healthy food.



Together with our network of 163 agencies, 41 school districts and many other community partners, **the Food Bank distributed 9.5 million meals last year.**

All this work happens because of the amazing relationships we've built with people like you who share our commitment to building and sustaining hunger-free communities. **Thank you for your commitment to our common goal. Together, we can solve hunger.**

In partnership,

Natasha R. Thompson  
President & CEO

## DRIVING OUT HUNGER

School bus drivers across the country take responsibility for our children every day, transporting them to and from school safely. **In Painted Post, they are going the extra mile to make sure families have enough to eat.**

On the last Saturday of each month, the employees of Birnie Bus on Victory Highway host a Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry (MFP) truck inside the bus garage, serving more than 80 families. The MFP provides frozen meat, fresh produce, dairy products, breads, and more.

Last year, the Food Bank distributed more than 3.1 million pounds of food at 773 MFP distributions. More than 700 volunteers gave their time to distribute food at 90 MFP sites across the six counties we serve.



Drivers and staff at Birnie Bus in Painted Post volunteer to staff a Mobile Food Pantry distribution once a month.

Birnie Bus has been hosting the site and volunteering for a year, says Sylvia Hamilton, Birnie Bus General Manager.

"My son works at the Food Bank and he called and asked if it might be possible to have a Mobile Food Pantry here," Sylvia says.

Earl Leonard, Sylvia's son and our Production Manager, says the facility — with its large open bus bays — was a perfect spot for an MFP. Many MFPs are held in open lots and the garage offers shelter in cold or rainy weather.

"A lot of drivers thought it was a great thing to try. They really like to get involved in the community," Sylvia says. "I am really hoping we will keep pursuing it here."

MFP distributions serve everyone regardless of income or place of residence.

"Our drivers don't get rich from this job," she adds. "Even they can go through the line after the clients, and that helps them, too."

**Driver Tom Weber says drivers see poverty and need on each and every bus route.**

"I hope the MFP is helping everyone. Although, I know there are many who need help but won't take it," he says. **"Every driver sees the need at every stop and we mention the food truck to people who need it."**

# VOLUNTEERS

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warehouse operations, food distributions and special events. We simply could not achieve our distribution of 9.5 million meals without these volunteers who play a critical role in our work.

**“I volunteer at the Food Bank because I like knowing where my efforts are going. It’s a good fit for me,”** Frank says. “I like meeting the people; so many good people volunteer here. And I like the BackPack Program, which is essential unfortunately. I love the mission to feed people who don’t always have any choices.”

Frank received top honors as our Volunteer of the Year at our annual Very Important Volunteer Awards (VIVAs) event during National Volunteer Month in April. He earned a special reserved parking space at our facility, with signage donated by AARP Chapter 276 in memory of longtime volunteers Ron and Nancy Rehner.

Jen says Frank has become an integral part of our volunteer crew. “He is lighthearted and fun to talk to. He is reliable, easy going and has a knack for getting the job done.”

**Thank you to Frank and all our very important volunteers!**



2019 VIVA winners from left: Barb Powell, Bill Powell, Ron Rehner Jr. and Michelle Giacchino on behalf of Ron Rehner Sr. (deceased), Julie Monahan (First Heritage Federal Credit Union), McKenna Kagle, Lorri Thornton (Repsol), Natasha R. Thompson (Food Bank President & CEO), Frank Bohman, Barb Richardson, Mel Winton, Jennifer Harris (Food Bank Volunteer Coordinator).



## TOUR DE KEUKA 2019

**Saturday, July 20**

Four great routes!  
**17-mile, 45-mile  
60-mile & 100-mile**

Ride starts and ends at  
**Hammondsport Fire  
Department**

To register, volunteer or  
donate to a rider's fundraising  
campaign, log on to  
**www.tourdekeuka.com**

## TDK Q&A WITH ANIS FADUL

Anis Fadul is Director of Marketing & Strategy for New Business Development at Corning Incorporated. He has volunteered for four years on the planning committee for Tour de Keuka, a charity bike ride through Keuka Lake wine country. He joined our Board of Directors in February this year.

### HOW AND WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THE FOOD BANK OF THE SOUTHERN TIER?

**A** I got involved because of Tour de Keuka (TdK). I had been riding TdK for several years before the event benefited the Food Bank. I had the opportunity to visit the Food Bank facility in Elmira when the Food Bank started to host the event. I was touched by the organization and its mission to end hunger. That is when I decided to step up my fundraising efforts to help the Food Bank and our community. It was love at first sight.

### WHY DO YOU DEVOTE SO MUCH ENERGY TO TOUR DE KEUKA?

**A** I'm part of the organization committee, and also a rider. Every year, I'm one of the top three individual fundraisers for the event. I dedicate my energy to TdK because fighting hunger in our community is an important and worthy cause.

### YOU ARE A BOARD MEMBER, VOLUNTEER AND DONOR. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU TO SUPPORT THE FOOD BANK IN THESE THREE WAYS?

**A** People contribute to charities in many ways and the Food Bank is no different. You can volunteer your time repacking food, giving money, or helping to steer the organization as a board member. I identify with the Food Bank's cause and want to help every way I can.

### DESCRIBE TOUR DE KEUKA AND WHY PEOPLE SHOULD PARTICIPATE!

**A** First of all, I love Keuka Lake and the Finger Lakes. Second, TdK is a unique and enjoyable ride. There is a ride for everyone, and you don't have to be a professional cyclist to join. I typically do the 45-mile route which is an easy rolling and scenic ride. The event is well organized with rest areas along the way so riders can stop to refill their water bottles and get a snack. There are also rescue vehicles that drive around the course to help bikers with flat tires or any other mechanical problems. People have fun while raising funds for an excellent cause. It does not get any better.

# SNACK TIME

Diana Iuzzini could tell there was more to her students' lethargy and irritability than sleep-deprivation.

"They were coming in here sleepy — not from lack of sleep but from lack of nourishment and lack of energy," she says.

Diana works with Newark Valley High School students four days a week as Youth Engagement Services (YES) Coordinator for Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga. Recognizing the importance of nutrition for growing bodies and minds, the program offers snacks during the school day and after school. In October, Diana started a lunch table where kids in the program could make a sandwich or fix noodles.

"I couldn't take it anymore, just watching these kids feel sleepy, exhausted, and short-tempered," Diana says. "I have seen a huge change in the kids since the beginning of the year."

Making sure kids have enough to eat fits in well with the mission of the YES Club, an academic support program that works to improve grades, minimize disciplinary issues of disadvantaged youth, and increase graduation outcomes. It offers workshops on life skills, including anger management, healthy eating and communication. But grant funding for Diana's snack program was due to end so she reached out to the Food Bank.

The Food Bank began responding in earnest to requests from our school partners last year, when we received a large load of donated snack foods. The Snack Program developed organically, as more schools and children's programs began requesting the snacks.

**"School and after-school program staff were asking for more and more snacks because they could really notice a shift in kids' behavior when they were hungry,"** says Randi Quackenbush, Director of Community Impact at the Food Bank. "No one is at their best when they're hungry. Educators saw that a box of raisins could really calm a kid down before talking with them about behavior issues. These small snacks can give a child some nutrition mid-day, before a long bus ride home, or at after school activities."

From the initial donation of snack foods, the fledgling Snack Program has taken shape with help from funders like the Park Foundation and food manufacturers. The Food Bank is now working



*Diana Iuzzini keeps a supply of snack foods on hand for students who need a pick-me-up.*

to develop new relationships with donors and other supporters to expand the Snack Program.

One in five children in the Southern Tier is at risk of food insecurity and may not know where their next meal is coming from. Children experiencing hunger are more likely to miss school and receive poor grades.

Hunger is also associated with stomachaches, headaches, depression, anxiety and a decreased ability to focus — all of which impact educational attainment and ability to thrive. Studies show children without access to proper nutrition also struggle socially and behaviorally.



**THEY WERE COMING IN SLEEPY — NOT FROM LACK OF SLEEP BUT FROM LACK OF NOURISHMENT.**

Although New York state law requires schools to provide lunch for students regardless of financial situation, Diana says many kids won't go through the lunch line if they know they have a negative balance.

"Hunger comes with embarrassment," Diana says. **"When I so much as put peanut butter and jelly in front of some of these kids, the difference is noticeable."**

Working together to build and sustain hunger-free communities throughout the Southern Tier

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