

FEED THE NEED | NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR
IOWA STATE CAPITOL | DES MOINES, IOWA

APRIL 17, 2014

HUNGER IS A REAL STORY.
THE IOWA FOOD BANK ASSOCIATION CAPTURES THE
STORIES OF YOUR NEIGHBORS, WHO STRUGGLE WITH
HUNGER RIGHT NEXT DOOR.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Waterloo, Iowa— April 14, 2014, 395,620 Iowans are food insecure. This means they do not have dependable access to enough food to sustain a healthy life. More than 137,000 of them are children. The Iowa Food Bank Association (IFBA) is a collaborative effort of the eight Feeding America food banks in Iowa that serve all of its 99 counties. Association members include: Food Bank of Iowa, HACAP Food Reservoir, Northeast Iowa Food Bank, River Bend Food Bank, Food Bank for the Heartland, Food Bank of Southern Iowa, Food Bank of Siouxland and St. Stephen's Food Bank.

Together, the food banks serve over 1,000 non-profit organizations serving ill, infant or needy individuals. These organizations include food pantries, emergency meal sites, congregational meal sites, emergency shelters, and other sites that provide food to clients. As an association, the organization is coordinating efforts to alleviate hunger by supporting Feeding America food banks that serve Iowa. IFBA will work to support the food banks that serve Iowa in the areas of advocacy, food and fundraising, disaster relief and collaborative efforts to allow food banks to become more efficient and effective in serving hungry Iowans.

“Advocating on behalf of the food banks that serve Iowa and in support of the thousands of families struggling every day is a responsibility we take very seriously,” says Cory Berkenes, Executive Director of the Iowa Food Bank Association, “we recognize that there is no one face of hunger – it exists all around us – and raising these voices for everyone to hear is critical in our effort to mobilize state action.”

A partnership with Molly Rogalla of MRogalla Photography (Indianola, IA) was formed to create this year's hunger awareness campaign, Feed the Need : Nourish Your Neighbor. The project brings light to the stories and faces of Iowans who struggle with hunger each and every day.

Hunger isn't visible. It isn't something most people talk about. You won't hear it in everyday conversation. But it exists. Everyday hunger lives next door. It may affect you, your neighbor, the friends that your children hang out with, it may even touch your co-workers or someone in your church.

Hunger begins with a NEED. An adult working two jobs to support two children; or someone caring for a family member between shifts. Many times barely making enough money to get by. Those who know hunger ask, “buy medicine, or buy food this month?”

A NEED is met with purpose and compassion. Our programs provide nutrition to help children do well in school. We give energy to keep pushing forward, so parents can provide for their families; nourishment to help the elderly live longer and compassion that offers hope in the most desperate moments.

Volunteers who dedicate time they don't have just to make sure someone else doesn't have to go hungry. The generosity of an anonymous donor who has seen first hand how powerful their impact can be. A farmer who plants a few extra acres so that he can donate fresh produce to local feeding organizations. ***THIS IS THE FACE OF HUNGER IN IOWA.***

One family we interviewed from the Southern Iowa Food Bank service area says, “ We struggled so hard to just find a place to live that we could afford. And, after our only car broke down shortly after moving, we just thought, this is the end of our lives, there’s nowhere to go. All we had was SNAP. At least we could eat. We are only able to eat right now because of our SNAP benefits. I have hope that eventually we will be able to get out of this hole; my children are healthy because I am able to adequately feed them with SNAP benefits.”

Another family, from the Food Bank of Iowa service areas says, “ We don’t only need help when we are down, but when we get back on our feet, it’s tough because all the help we were getting is just cut off. Even if we are only \$3 over the threshold. A few more weeks on assistance to get us to the first paycheck would be helpful.”, and “It’s really hard to acquire fresh produce when you have diet restrictions. If it wasn’t for the programs at the food bank we would have to choose between medications or foods that keep us healthy. We often times choose between buying healthy foods or buying medications, doing laundry, or putting gas in the car.” To see more of the stories we encountered, and how we can end this struggle together, visit the Feed the Need: Nourish Your Neighbor event at the State Capitol Building, April 17, 2014.

Let us hear your voice April 17th, 2014 in the rotunda at the State Capitol in Des Moines, Iowa. At ten o’clock in the morning we invite all Iowans who have felt the impact of hunger in their lives to join the IFBA in our fight against food insecurity ,with a special presentation of the Feed the Need : Nourish Your Neighbor display. Visit the display and see for yourself the action you can take to make an impact in your community! Help us Nourish your Neighbor and turn hunger into hope!

Community members can support the Iowa Food Bank Association’s Feed the Need : Nourish Your Neighbor project by making monetary donations to www.iowafooddrive.org. Donations are distributed to Iowa’s eight Feeding America food banks to support their growing programs and partnering feeding organizations. Call (319) 234-0776 or visit www.iowafba.org for more information.

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Iowa Food Bank Association



mrogalla
lifestyle portrait artist

