

Working Full-Time But Her Kids Still Face Hunger

STACI'S STORY

A single mother, Staci works full-time as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) but still can't afford all the nutritious food her young daughters need to stay active and healthy. Each month, she joins almost 400 other struggling families to receive fresh produce and other nourishing foods at GBFB's School-based Pantry at the Connery School in Lynn.

This is Staci's story.

"I've never not had a job. Since I was 16 years old, the only time I ever took off was a few weeks after each of my daughters was born. Even while I was studying to get my CNA license, I worked. But it's not easy – especially when the prices keep going up, but my pay stays the same – and no matter how hard I work, I can't seem to get ahead. Once you get down, it's very, very hard to get back up.

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CONNECTING THE DOTS BETWEEN HUNGER AND HEALTH:
New Director of Public Health and Research Joins GBFB

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

Bridging Hunger and Health

Dear Friends,

GBFB significantly enhanced our capacity to provide healthy food to those facing hunger in eastern Massachusetts with the recent hire of Kathryn Brodowski, MD, MPH, as our first Director of Public Health and Research. The move is a direct result of a study done last year by Harvard's T. H. Chan School of Public Health that gathered the views of a broad range of community stakeholders on how we might work together to acknowledge and address the critical relationship between food and health.

The researchers' final recommendation: That GBFB should work with healthcare providers to foster collaborative thinking and initiatives that increase access to nutritious foods to ameliorate chronic health challenges tied to poor diet, such as diabetes and heart disease. Dr. Brodowski, whose background is in food insecurity, will lead this groundbreaking work, and is already building partnerships with medical centers serving low-income patients to create a bridge between those at risk and the foods they need to stay healthy. Her focus is unique among food banks, positioning GBFB as a leader and innovator in nutrition advocacy and programming.

Our attention in this arena is no accident, but a response to the growing needs of individuals and families in our community who are struggling to make ends meet. Imagine working full-time, perhaps even more, and still not being able to provide enough healthy food for you and your family. With what we know about the impact of food insecurity on children (e.g., poor health status, behavioral and psychosocial problems, lower academic performance), working parents in this situation face an intolerable burden. In some cases, they're being forced to choose between paying for healthy foods and providing critical medical care for their son or daughter.

The families we serve are always more stressed during the summer, when they can't count on school meal programs to feed their kids. We see a distinct up-tick in the numbers visiting our member agencies who receive most of their food from GBFB, and we're working harder – and smarter – than ever to help ensure they have the foods essential to their healthy growth and development year round.

GBFB's vital and innovative programs wouldn't be possible without the generosity and dedication of our volunteers and supporters. Together, we are making a difference, and we must continue to do so.

Thank you for playing your role in ending hunger in eastern Massachusetts.

Sincerely,



Catherine D'Amato
President and CEO

ENDING HUNGER IN FRAMINGHAM: DANIEL'S TABLE JOINS GBFB



Daniel's Table, a non-profit that's been providing meals to children and families in need since 2013, joined GBFB last year as one of more than 500 member agencies (e.g., local food pantries, community meal and other hunger-relief programs) that receive most of their food from us. This partnership has enabled Daniel's Table to significantly advance its ambitious mission to end hunger in Framingham.

The genesis of Daniel's Table began with an exchange between David Blais and his wife, Alicia. In 2011, the couple had opened their breakfast and lunch restaurant, Foodie Café, in Framingham. Relatively new to the area, they were deeply moved by the obvious issues of homelessness and poverty they witnessed around them.

"We make food for a living," David remembers as they discussed how they might care for their struggling neighbors. "What if we solved hunger here, just in Framingham?" The simplicity of that goal, led them to start contributing their own money and labor to deliver simple meals to low-income neighborhoods, through a food truck model. Very quickly, their efforts grew. With community financial and volunteer support, they were soon preparing and delivering over 2,000 meals each month.

"But Framingham has a population of 70,000," David explains. "We had a great model. We just had to scale up to reach each person facing hunger here. That's now happening through our partnership with GBFB. When we started out, we were providing meals that cost about \$1.25 each to deliver. Now that we purchase our food from GBFB, those costs have dropped to about 35 cents per meal. It means we can use our precious resources to expand our operations and provide healthier options to those in need."

Within the next year, Daniel's Table plans to put three more food trucks on the road in Framingham. Each of the customized "restaurants-on-wheels" will have food storage and meal preparation capabilities to provide 3-4,000 healthy meals daily. The new trailers also allow David and Alicia to produce more diverse and healthy meals using the broad range of high nutrient foods GBFB provides.

"I understand what it means to a hungry kid – to know that we'll be there with a meal, because of my own experience growing up in poverty," David concludes. "Alicia and I are also moved to action by our son, Daniel, who died at birth in 1995. We feel that the work we're doing, named for him, honors his life and memory."

Photo courtesy of Daniel's Table



STACI'S STORY (Continued from p. 1)

"Every parent wants to be better than their parents were, but I have felt like I couldn't give my kids everything they need and deserve. It's a very stressful feeling in the bottom of your stomach, when you know that you want to do something for them, or you want to give them something, and you can't.

"Most people don't realize that just because you're going to a food pantry, it doesn't mean you're not working, or unwilling to work, or didn't get laid off. It doesn't mean something happened so you just can't work! It just means you need help.

"The Connery School Pantry makes it a little easier on me. And it's better for my girls because they wake up in the morning and they know there's something for breakfast, because we get whole grain cereals and bread from the pantry. They can come home from school and know there are snacks that are good for them. They know at dinnertime, there will be meat as well as some kind of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Compared to when we didn't have the school pantry, I've noticed a positive difference in their grades at school. In addition to the healthier foods, I think it's because I'm not as stressed about everything, so they're not as stressed about everything. It all works in some strange way, that it helps everybody.

I honestly don't know what I would do without the school pantry."

Connecting the Dots Between Hunger and Health:

NEW DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND RESEARCH JOINS GBFB



As a specialist in preventive medicine and GBFB's first Director of Public Health and Research, Kathryn Brodowski, MD, MPH, is passionately committed to "connecting the dots" to solve health problems. After seeing many patients diagnosed with chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, lung disease, depression, and obesity, she chose to focus on the bigger picture. "What struck me was not only the volume of patients facing chronic health issues, but the number who returned to the hospital for exacerbations of their illness. I realized 'Band-Aids' aren't enough." She explains, "I wanted to get at the root causes of my patients' poor health, and that's when the world of food insecurity opened up to me. I saw that access to nutritious foods played an important role in preventing or helping to treat their disease."

A 3-PRONGED APPROACH

At GBFB, Dr. Brodowski is working with our new Food Security Task Force, to bridge the connection between hunger and health. Dr. Brodowski is forging partnerships with community health centers to address food insecurity through a 3-pronged approach. First, she is leveraging GBFB's powerful logistical and distribution capacities to provide community health centers and their low-income patient populations with onsite Mobile Market fresh produce distributions. Participating patients choose from a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, and receive

healthy recipes and nutrition information. To maximize impact, these Mobile Markets are being piloted in communities with high levels of food insecurity as identified by GBFB's hunger mapping technology. Secondly, she is encouraging community health centers to implement Hunger Vital Sign™ screening, originally developed by Children's HealthWatch, a simple 2-question method to identify patients struggling with food insecurity. Finally, she wants to empower providers with practical steps they can take when a patient screens as food insecure. She is developing a 'tool kit' to connect food insecure patients with the food sources and community resources that are vital to their health. Instead of existing in silos, medical and community organizations can collaborate and contribute to patients' overall health.

HEALTHIER LIVES, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

It is an opportune time for GBFB to be furthering our work to bridge hunger and healthcare. The Affordable Care Act's (ACA) emphasis on quality of care and lowering treatment costs for chronic health conditions are putting pressure on the medical field to collaborate with organizations like GBFB to address the underlying issues causing or contributing to disease. Our belief is that healthcare and hunger-relief organizations are natural allies. By working together we can further each other's mission – to End Hunger Here and improve health.

We're particularly focused on vulnerable populations, like seniors and children. "Research tells us that kids who don't have access to nutritious foods have poor overall health and are at higher risk for behavioral and psychosocial problems," concludes Dr. Brodowski. "Hunger and its associated stress have life-long, negative impacts. Parents can face unthinkable decisions when they can't afford medical treatment and healthy food for their child. An ounce of prevention with consistent access to healthy foods

may go a long way towards stabilizing chronic health conditions and preventing costly trips to the emergency room.

Prior to joining GBFB, Dr. Brodowski served as chief preventive medicine resident at University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS), where she drafted food insecurity policy recommendations, worked as a nutrition instructor for low-income families, and tested her ideas through a "Food Insecurity Clerkship."

DID YOU KNOW?

The health-related costs in the U.S. attributable to food insecurity have been estimated to be greater than \$160 billion over the course of one year.

"A recent survey found that 85% of physicians point to unmet social needs, such as lack of access to nutritious food, as directly leading to worse health. Addressing those needs is vital," notes Dr. Brodowski. "But doctors and nurses need training and support to help identify food insecure patients and to connect them with needed resources. GBFB's community health center Mobile Markets represent expanding and deepening clinical-community linkages."



1 - With help from volunteers and in partnership with Charles River Community Health Center in Brighton, GBFB held its first community health center Mobile Market produce distribution in April. The market served health center patients which included 96 households (including 91 children and 39 seniors) with nearly 4,000 pound of fresh potatoes, cucumbers, oranges, apples and more. Additional community health center Mobile Markets will be launched throughout the year.

2 - Serving the first recipients was Dr. Vin Gupta, a member of GBFB's Board of Advisors, and who is also on the board at Charles River Community Health.



CELEBRATE 25 YEARS WITH RED SOX WIVES STRIKING OUT HUNGER ON JULY 8 & 9

Red Sox fans will be able to support The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) at games against the Tampa Bay Devil Rays on July 8 & 9. The Red Sox Wives and girlfriends will be at the 25th annual Strike Out Hunger fundraiser at Fenway Park, accepting \$10 donations in exchange for autographed photos of your favorite Red Sox player. We also invite you to enter our raffle for the chance to win a VIP Red Sox Experience, which includes tickets to see the Red Sox at Fenway!

ENTER THE RAFFLE AT

GBFB.org
/strikeouthunger

Increased Seafood Donations Provide Healthy Meals

When Cheryl Schondek, our Vice President of Food Acquisition and Supply Chain, thinks about the meals struggling families will make with the food GBFB provides, her primary focus is on the “center-of-the-plate” item. “It’s the protein – the all-important chicken, or pork, or beef, or even tofu and beans – that the meal is built around,” she explains. “It’s also usually the most expensive item, which many in our community just can’t afford.”

Over the past few years, GBFB has expanded its focus on “center-of-the-plate”

options to include frozen seafood. Our community members in need, who receive food from our member agencies and direct distribution programs throughout eastern Massachusetts, now have more of these options to choose from that are low in calories, low in total fat, easy to prepare and that they may not be able to access otherwise. Last year, we distributed close to 350,000 pounds of frozen seafood, an increase of more than 130% compared to five years ago.

A Seafood Sub-Committee comprised of representatives from the local and

global seafood community has been formed to advise and guide GBFB on the best approaches to increasing the volume and variety of the seafood we acquire and distribute.

“From Cape Cod to Gloucester, the Commonwealth’s fishing industry is huge,” continued Schondek. “A goal is to better support local fishermen while offering those in need a nutritious food item that is essential to their ability to avoid hunger and stay active and healthy. That’s a ‘win-win’ for all of us.”



Seafood, which is high in vitamins and minerals, has been shown to provide numerous health benefits, including prevention of chronic heart disease. It is also known to provide vision development and improvement, brain development and helps to build muscle tissue. Its essential nutrients are critically important for growing children and vulnerable seniors.

GBFB VOLUNTEERS PACK ON THE PROTEIN

Last year, GBFB distributed in excess of 1.2 million pounds of a variety of donated meat products to families in need in eastern Massachusetts, providing that critical “center-of-the-plate” item around which most meals are built. Our volunteers play an important role in making this possible by assisting us to inspect, sort and pack donated, frozen meat products. Their donated volunteer time is helping to ensure that our neighbors in need have access to the nutrient rich and protein dense foods they need to stay active and healthy.

“Helping us manage our donated meat inventory is just one of many special volunteer opportunities at GBFB, and a bit different from other volunteer ‘shifts’ which may involve sort-

ing and packing fresh produce and grocery products in even higher volumes,” explains Erin D’Loughy, GBFB’s Community Engagement Manager. “New volunteers sometimes seem a bit surprised that we provide these high-quality, frozen protein items, but when they think about it – and take into account how expensive meat can be – they understand its importance to families who can’t afford it.”

Last year, over 20,000 volunteers worked 65,000 hours to support GBFB’s work, a truly valued contribution. Learn more, and how you can volunteer, at

[GBFB.org/volunteer](https://www.gbfb.org/volunteer)

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- Erin D’Loughy, GBFB Community Engagement Manager



State Street is Model Corporate Partner

For over 25 years, State Street Corporation and its employees have actively supported GBFB's mission to End Hunger Here. Headquartered in Boston, State Street is one of the world's leading providers of financial services to institutional investors. Through corporate, foundation and employee contributions, as well as thousands of volunteer hours, State Street and its employees have enabled GBFB to provide millions of meals to those in need.

Indeed, all GBFB volunteers work in a sorting area named for State Street Foundation's generous donation to GBFB's capital campaign that allowed for our 117,000-square-foot Yawkey Distribution Center in 2009. Keeping up with this tradition and dedication to service, over 400 State Street employees and retirees contributed 1,158 hours volunteering at GBFB last year alone. Honoring this extraordinary commitment, the company was named Volunteer of the Year at last October's annual Partner Appreciation Breakfast.



State Street employees, led by Chairman and CEO, Jay Hooley (*top photo, right*) joined GBFB's President and CEO, Catherine D'Amato (*top photo, middle*) at the 2016 Greater Boston Food Bank Festival this past April. The event, which was chaired by Hooley, raised over \$1.1 million, enough to provide nutritious food for 3,360,000 meals for our neighbors in need in eastern Massachusetts.

This year, State Street was the Presidential-level sponsor of GBFB's "Festival," and its Chairman and CEO, Jay Hooley, chaired the annual fundraising event. "We bring our people together to support causes they believe in," he noted. "Whether fighting poverty, supporting human rights, promoting education, fostering sustainable development, or addressing hunger with GBFB, our employees donate their time, energy and money to causes that matter."

"State Street is a model of corporate responsibility and commitment to our community," acknowledges Suzanne Battit, GBFB's Vice President of External Affairs and Advancement. "Their combined donations and volunteer support are making a critical difference to GBFB's ability to respond to the growing problem of hunger in our community, and we are tremendously grateful for their partnership."