

Keeping Seniors Active and Strong

ANDRE'S STORY

Every week, 82-year-old Andre picks up healthy food from the Franciscan Food Center in downtown Boston that receives most of its food from The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB). He is like so many other seniors in eastern Massachusetts living on fixed or limited incomes, and unable to afford enough nutritious food to avoid hunger. This is Andre's story.

"I grew up in Haiti, and worked as an elementary school teacher for 19 years. When my father died, it was me who took care of my mother and younger sisters and brother. But it was hard. I had to work, work, work!

"Soon, I had my own family to support, and I stayed working hard all the time. It wasn't easy. Then, my little sister who I'd helped to raise came to live in Dorchester, and I came for a visit. Right away, I knew my family would have a better life here, so we immigrated to this country.

Continued on p. 3



**inside
harvest:**

feature stories

- CSFP Ensures Healthy Food to Seniors in Need
- Boston Area Gleaners Grows with GBFB
- Weymouth Food Pantry Goes Mobile
- GBFB Partners with Boston Public Market

JOIN OUR HOLIDAY MEAL DRIVE! JUST \$20 PROVIDES 5 HEALTHY HOLIDAY MEALS.

in every issue

- Catherine's Message
- Faces of Hunger
- Spotlight Stories and Latest News
- Events and more!

A New Year

Dear Friends,

The holiday season is upon us, and at The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) this is our busiest time of the year. Our distributions will exceed normal averages, our trucks will travel extra miles and our warehouse will be full of more nutritious food for holiday meal distributions.

During the holidays, the power of community is impressive and all around us. We see community members come together, ensuring that those who can't afford a holiday meal can enjoy this tradition. Each year, I am moved by the generosity that makes all of this possible.

And, with 2016 around the corner, we are focusing on our goals for the New Year. This past year, GBFB distributed 54 million pounds of nutritious food throughout eastern Massachusetts, bringing us closer to our strategic objective of providing One Meal a Day to everyone in need. Currently, we're 83% of the way there, and have even met or exceeded this goal in some counties.

Yet, it's not just about the numbers. Reaching our goals and having the greatest impact possible also requires innovation, the efficient use of resources and sustainable solutions. How are we doing this?

Our focus on fresh and healthy food will continue. We plan to increase our volume of fresh produce from 25% of our distribution to 35%, purchasing from local farms when possible. Equally as important, we'll continue our nutrition education efforts to promote sustained healthy lifestyles.

We will help our member agencies keep pace with us by continuing our Capacity Building Grant program. Member agencies will have the opportunity to apply for capacity grants to support infrastructure improvements. Last year 36 agencies benefitted from these grants and we hope to see more in the coming year.

Technology will be a priority. Specifically, we will maximize our sophisticated mapping software to identify and target the communities where food insecurity is highest, making sure that we're reaching those who need it most, especially our most vulnerable populations such as seniors, children and veterans.

It won't be easy. Rising costs also impact our work, which means we'll have to operate smarter than ever before. During this time of giving, we hope you will continue to play your role. As always, your generous support is greatly appreciated and puts healthy food on the tables of those in need.

Sincerely,



Catherine D'Amato
President and CEO



Ensuring Healthy Food for Seniors in Need

Last August, GBFB began rolling out a new federal program for seniors that provides the critical high-nutrient foods they need to stay active and healthy. Funding through the USDA's Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) will enable GBFB to expand programming to reach an additional 2,400 low-income seniors, 60 years and older, every month. This program will supplement our Brown Bag Program, by providing seniors with 30 pounds of shelf-stable foods, including cereals, grains, cheese, shelf-stable milk, canned fruits and vegetables, 100% fruit juice, and a variety of proteins.

GBFB is using census-based, advanced mapping technology to identify distribution sites in areas where seniors are at greatest risk. Sites are familiar and accessible locations such as senior centers and Council on Aging locations.

Eating high-nutrient foods is critical for older individuals to maintain good health, including their bone and muscle strength. But too many cannot afford these foods – especially those living on a fixed income. GBFB's Nutrition Team includes recipes and information about the importance of healthy eating to help maximize the food they receive.

When CSFP is fully implemented, GBFB will be providing 60,000 additional meals each month to seniors. Brittany Mangini is GBFB's Manager of Federal Food Programs (pictured above, fourth from the left), and responsible for CSFP's rollout, which involves launching two sites each month through December.

"The groceries we provide through CSFP is making all the difference to older individuals whose limited food budget runs out long before each month does," she said. "They know they can count on these healthier foods coming to them every month – so they can budget accordingly and avoid having to make hard decisions, like whether to buy groceries or fill a prescription."



ANDRE'S STORY (Continued from p. 1)

"We were so grateful to be in Massachusetts, where my daughters could get a good education, and grow up safe and successful. I gave up teaching, and found work at the hospital – in housekeeping and in the kitchen, and as a nurse assistant. Those were hard jobs, but I was proud to be able to provide for my family.

"When I turned 65, I had to stop working because I was just too tired! My income is small, so I moved to Unquity House in Milton and started going to St. Anthony's Shrine in downtown Boston. At their exercise class for seniors, I learned about the food pantry at the Franciscan Food Center. Since then, I've been coming every Thursday to help supplement my grocery budget. I love the Franciscans! Thank God for them.

"What I like about the pantry is that I can choose the foods I want, and the volunteers help me pick out healthier foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables. Having that food during the holiday season means a lot!

"I visit the pantry every week because it helps keep me strong and healthy. I'm still an acolyte, contributing and staying active in my church. I turned 82 in late September, but I don't look it!"

Boston Area Gleaners Grows with GBFB

Boston Area Gleaners (BAG) is a natural partner for GBFB. The growing non-profit organizes volunteers to glean surplus crops from 50 local farms. Since 1998, BAG has delivered gleaned, high-quality produce to GBFB at minimal cost, helping to ensure at least 25% of the foods we provide are healthy fruits and vegetables.

“We’re responding to two trends,” explains Laurie “Duck” Caldwell, BAG’s Executive Director. “First, the increasing demand for fresh produce and second, the growing awareness that high-quality food is being wasted because of the unpredictable and risky farm economy. A price plunge or bumper crop – or any of a thousand reasons – is BAG’s opportunity to prevent waste while providing fresh and healthy food to people in need.”

Critical to BAG’s strategy is a deeper partnership with GBFB to increase focus on the harvesting aspect of their mission. This past summer, GBFB became a central delivery point for BAG-gleaned produce which we distribute to our 550 agency partners throughout eastern Massachusetts. High quality



Photo above courtesy of Boston Area Gleaners.

BAG produce is also regularly included in GBFB’s direct distribution programs, such as Mobile Markets, Senior Brown Bags and School-based Pantries.

GBFB’s partnership with BAG, as well as other organizations in the local farm economy, are critical to realizing our vision for healthy lives and healthy communities. Together, we are ensuring our vulnerable neighbors have the high-nutrient food they need to stay active and strong.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



For more information about volunteering at GBFB, visit GBFB.org/volunteer

HUNGER ACTION MONTH/ DUNKIN’ BRANDS OFFSITE

To do their part for Hunger Action Month, employees of Dunkin’ Brands volunteered to pack Family Packs – more than 50,000 pounds of healthy food provided by GBFB for distribution to families in need. The September 15th event was held at Dunkin’ Brands’ headquarters in Canton, MA, and included a friendly competition in which teams vied to create the most packs of non-perishable food items. In total, Dunkin’ employees packed enough bags, which included items like 100% juice, canned soup, fruits and vegetables, to provide 43,840 meals.



Weymouth Food Pantry Goes Mobile

When the Weymouth Food Pantry, who serves 450-600 families each month, learned that its headquarters of 28 years was being sold, the organization sprung into action to find a solution. Their goal was to ensure that their critical service to community members in need would not be disrupted or sacrificed. Yet, finding space with the right operational requirements in an expensive real estate market proved to be challenging. Looking to think “outside the box”, they turned to GBFB. And, GBFB was happy to help.

GBFB worked with Weymouth Food Pantry’s leadership on a strategic operational re-design aimed to increase the pantry’s reach and impact. GBFB’s Agency Relations Team shared best practices, and connected the organization with peers to learn about different distribution models. As a result, the Weymouth Food Pantry decided to transition from a single building location, to operating mobile markets through a series of weekly “pop-up” pantries. Sites would be selected using GBFB’s mapping technologies to identify areas with the highest food insecurity rates.

To help make the project happen, GBFB awarded a capacity building grant of \$4,215 and assisted in applying for a grant from BJ’s Charitable Foundation to purchase the new trucks needed to transport food to each pop-up pantry site. The new operational model is expected to increase Weymouth Food Pantry’s annual food distribution by 25%.

“We reached out to the GBFB during a challenging time of transition for our organization and were met with encour-

agement, skill, and the assistance we needed to make high-impact change in our community,” recounts Cas Casados, Executive Director of Weymouth Food Pantry. “Our new mobile operation will grow over the next three years to bring food to the farthest corners of our small city, where many people have limited to no access to transportation.”



PHOTO: (Top) GBFB Senior Manager of Community Initiatives Jonathan Tetrault and Weymouth Food Pantry Executive Director Cas Casados partner up at a mobile distribution in Weymouth. (Bottom-inset) courtesy of Weymouth Food Pantry) Pantry volunteers unload fresh produce for families in need.



GBFB Partners with Boston Public Market to End Hunger Here

TALKING ABOUT NUTRITION

GBFB is educating the broader public about the importance of eating more nutritious foods by participating in a lunchtime “brown bag” series at the Boston Public Market presented by Let’s Talk About Food. Together, we’re engaging the community to discuss how we eat, think and talk about food, and exploring critical issues such as sustainability, food insecurity, school nutrition, the pros and cons of food labeling, and easy ways to prepare healthy meals.

Visit bostonpublicmarket.org/kitchen to learn more and for a schedule of events.



PHOTOS (Top, L to R): Chef Jody Adams of Ri-alto/Trade, GBFB President and CEO Catherine D’Amato, and Let’s Talk About Food’s Louisa Kasdon speak with attendees at the kick off of the “brown bag” series. (Bottom-inset): GBFB’s VP of Food Acquisition and Supply Chain Cheryl Schondek, second from the right, chats with local vendors at the opening of the Boston Public Market this summer.

Last summer’s opening of the long-awaited Boston Public Market (BPM) – with its 35 vendors selling fresh, locally sourced foods – offers a wonderful new opportunity for everyone to access and include more nutritious, farm-fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and poultry, eggs, dairy products, and baked goods in our diets. As a way to ensure that all members of the community can access these great products, BPM vendors accept SNAP (food stamps) and/or WIC benefits for eligible products.

To help realize BPM’s goal of bringing the community together, market managers reached out to GBFB to help make the new market welcoming to everyone, including our neighbors in need who are struggling to keep up. Our Nutrition Team is working closely with BPM to identify and produce educational materials designed to help shoppers navigate the 28,000 square foot market, while making the most of limited budgets. Materials will include tips and best prices, maps of the market for thrifty shoppers and recipes that are healthy and inexpensive.

GBFB is also working with BPM to help decrease their food waste by connecting vendors with GBFB’s nearby member agencies, e.g., New England Center for Homeless Veterans, Rosie’s Place and Pine Street Inn, to which they can donate unsold leftovers to help feed those facing hunger.

“GBFB’s evolving collaboration with the Boston Public Market aligns with our commitment to promote and provide healthy food to struggling families,” noted Adriene Worthington, RD, LDN, and GBFB’s Senior Manager of Nutrition. “Together, we’re making good

food more accessible to consumers at all income levels – an inclusivity that nourishes our whole community.”

Planned Giving Legacy Society Gift: Roberta Thall

Roberta Thall has been a supporter of The Greater Boston Food Bank’s (GBFB) work and mission for over 20 years. Her understanding and involvement with the organization told her that a significant bequest to GBFB could have a measurable impact on those in need in our community. When her mother passed, a portion of her estate was designated for charity. Roberta gifted that portion to GBFB, which allowed us to establish the Sadye C. Thall and Abraham Thall Memorial Fund, the first gift to our Senior Hunger Initiative to help feed the 1 in 3 seniors at risk of hunger in eastern, MA. We are tremendously grateful for Roberta’s generosity, and hope that this is the start to an initiative that will feed seniors for a long time to come. If you would like to learn more about our Senior Hunger Initiative or discuss testamentary gift opportunities, please contact Catherine Spinelli at 617-598-5069.



1



2

1 - On September 18, over 250 supporters joined GBFB for its annual Women Fighting Hunger (WFH) breakfast. Pictured from left to right are Betty Burton, Volunteer Director of Serving Hands and WFH guest speaker; Judi Palmer, Director of Marketing and External Communications, Stop & Shop/New England Division and ex-Officio GBFB Board member; Deb Goldberg, MA State Treasurer and 2015 WFH honoree; Gail Graham, CMO at United Capital Financial Advisers, LLC and WFH Chair, and Catherine D’Amato, GBFB’s President and CEO. WFH raised enough funds to provide more than 270,000 healthy meals for those in need. 2 - On October 2, GBFB recognized some of its most dedicated supporters at the annual Partner Appreciation Day. Honorees included: EMC (Founder’s Award), Citizens Bank (Leadership Award), Boston Consulting Group (In-Kind Donor of the Year), Penske Corporation (President’s Choice Award), Bread of Life (Community Partner of the Year), Kettle Cuisine (Food Donor of the Year), State Street (Volunteer of the Year - Institution), Hieu Nguyen (Volunteer of the Year - Individual), and Senator Dan Wolf and Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante (Public Advocates of the Year). GBFB is thankful to all of our supporters who help to End Hunger Here.

\$20 = Five Healthy Holiday Meals

GBFB's annual Holiday Meal Drive helps to ensure that our neighbors in need can enjoy the tradition of a holiday meal, which they may not be able to afford on their own. The 2015 Holiday Meal Drive kicked off on Monday, October 19 with an increased goal of providing an additional 50,000 healthy holiday meals to struggling families in eastern Massachusetts.

Every year, thousands of citizens in eastern Massachusetts join together and give generously to help us achieve this ambitious holiday meal goal. For a donation of just \$20, GBFB provides a complete and healthy holiday meal for a family of five, including fresh fruits and vegetables, turkey or other high-nutrient proteins and other fixings. This means that donors at every level can have a meaningful impact.

"The holidays are a season for family and celebrations, and they are a time to come together to help the most

vulnerable members of our community. Nobody should be hungry on Thanksgiving or during the December holidays," stressed Catherine D'Amato, President and CEO of GBFB. "We're grateful to the many individuals, corporations, and community teams who give generously to make the holidays brighter for those in need."

It's easy to play your role in ending hunger this holiday season.

VISIT GBFB.org/holidaymeals

to donate and follow our progress with the Holiday Meal "tracker." Be sure to tell your family, friends and others in your community about GBFB's Holiday Meal Drive and how they can help!



EVERY DONATION COUNTS

Donations large and small are needed to achieve GBFB's ambitious goal for the 2015 Holiday Meal Drive. GBFB encourages co-workers, students, family members and friends to come together, form teams, and set their own goals to provide meals to those in need. Some teams hold friendly competitions, seeing who can provide the most healthy holiday meals toward our 50,000 meal goal.

2014's top five corporate teams are listed below. They'll no doubt be working even harder this year to top their extraordinary generosity.

Shire	5,570 meals
Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company	1,871 meals
Slalom Consulting	1,838 meals
Digital Lumens	1,585 meals
Hullabaloo BBQ	1,577 meals

