

YOUR IMPACT in 2018

Healthy Food.
Whole Lives.
Strong Communities.

WORCESTER
COUNTY
FOOD
BANK 

Creating a hunger-free community

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA** 

Dear Friends,



Your neighbor. We'll call him Dan. Name changed at his own request. His story appears on page 7.

He, and we, wanted very much to share it with you.

It's an illustration of how deeply your contributions – your gifts of funds, food, time and talent – matter to those in our community struggling with hunger. And it's a powerful motivator to continue in our work toward a community in which all of our children, parents, grandparents, friends, and neighbors have enough to eat today and always.

Dan is just one of the **81,000** neighbors – people of all ages and abilities – whom your contributions helped to nourish this year.

Thanks to you, **6.5 million pounds of donated food** (enough for 5.4 million meals, over half of it proteins, fruits and vegetables) reached neighbors who needed it. WCFB Partner Agencies – food pantries, community meal programs, and shelters across the region – provided **33% of that food to children.**

And that's not all. Our collective advocacy proved more important than ever.

WCFB participated in 17 different local, state, and national coalitions working to address some of the root causes of hunger. Together, we helped advance a \$15 minimum wage, secured funding for the Healthy Incentives Program, and expanded school breakfast programs by three school districts. That means **improved access to nutritious breakfast for an additional 2,000 students** in Worcester County.

Plus, **we conducted five advocacy trainings across the region, mobilizing over 80 people** (including some of you) to speak up about hunger and become more active in advancing change through the legislature. As we enter our 37th year, we continue to be humbled by your generosity, your kindness, your commitment – and we remain steadfast in our dedication to engaging, educating, and leading Worcester County in creating a hunger-free community.

In gratitude,

Jean G. McMurray,
Executive Director

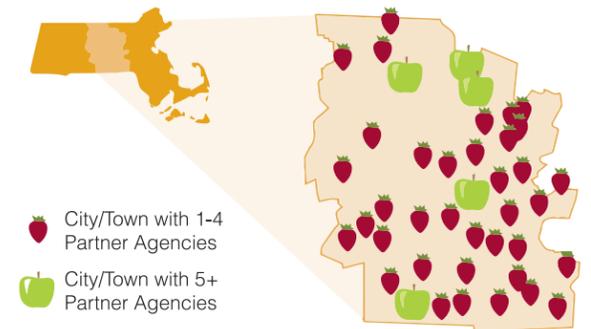
Robert Pulda,
Chair, Board of Directors

WCFB ENGAGES, EDUCATES, AND LEADS WORCESTER COUNTY IN CREATING A HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITY

Last year, WCFB volunteers gave over **4,300 hours** – almost 6 months of work – mostly to sorting and inspecting food...



And our network of **118 Partner Agencies** distributed it. Food included:



A total of **6.5 million lbs of food:**
14.4 times the weight of the Statue of Liberty



Enough for **5,400,000** meals.

THROUGH ADVOCACY

WCFB also works to address the root causes of hunger, championing policies and programs aimed at reducing hunger and improving access to healthy food.

More than food: WCFB Partner Agencies provide health, hope

St. John Paul II Food Pantry, Southbridge



It looks less like a church basement, more like a grocery store, with aisles of refrigerated and frozen foods, fruits and vegetables, cereals, canned goods, and pastries - food supplied, in part, by Worcester County Food Bank. Patrons push shopping carts, browse for their family's favorites.

"My grandkids love yogurt," said Nick.* "I never ate this stuff as a kid, but they love it."

On a Tuesday in June, he's one of nearly 30 visitors to the St. John Paul II Food Pantry in Southbridge: a retired grandfather with disabilities raising two grandchildren on a fixed income.

Pantry Co-Director, Roberta Watson, walks alongside him, pointing out what's new. "Ever try these, Nick? They're healthy, and they're wicked good." He eyeballs the granola-based snack. He hasn't tried them, he said, but he will. "They look good to me, too," said Nick.

A few minutes later, Watson asks if he needs any peanut butter or jelly. "No, I got some the last time. I'm not going to take anything I don't need. Leave it for somebody else." He reaches for a box of cereal. "This, though. I'm going to get this. We're out."

Watson said Nick is typical of pantry visitors in that way. "People don't go for what they don't need." The pantry,

which operates on a "client choice" model, empowers people seeking food assistance to be directly involved in the selection of grocery items they need for their family. "Instead of handing people a box and saying, 'Here,' instead of giving them things they don't need or want and might waste, we have a range of things people can choose from. And they really do choose."

Watson said the pantry volunteers' role is to help visitors understand both how much of each item they can receive, to help them find what they're looking for, and to transport groceries out to their cars when visitors need a hand. Watson walks Nick outside, offers to take his cart back across the long parking lot. Along the way, they talk about his favorite foods, the weather, his grandkids.

Watson assumed the role of co-director of the 20-year-old pantry last year. "Growing up," she recounted, "I came from a family that always loved good food but had limited resources. I had the kind of mother who could make a seven-layer cake without an egg." Watson - winding down a career that most recently included a decades-long stint as a special education instructor - said she answered a call to service.

"I was sitting in Mass, listening to the sermon and I thought, 'Well, this feels like the right thing to do at this point in my life.' That might sound funny, but it's true. I think people deserve to have a nice meal."

**Name changed*



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"...a 'client choice' model, empowers people seeking food assistance to be directly involved in the selection of grocery items..."
.....

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"I came from a family that always loved good food but had limited resources. I had the kind of mother who could make a seven-layer cake without an egg." - Roberta Watson
.....



The organizations profiled here are two of the 118 Partner Agencies – local pantries and community meal programs across the region – that WCFB works with to provide food assistance to neighbors struggling with hunger. Partner Agency volunteers provide compassionate, confidential support to individuals and families from all 60 cities and towns in Worcester County.

Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf, Oxford

Dan* has worked a number of seasonal jobs over the past few years. He does the best he can, he says, but his disabilities sometimes make it hard for him to keep the jobs he lands. He's out of work now, and he doesn't have enough food on hand to prepare something for dinner. When he has to (like tonight), he visits his local food pantry.

Pantry volunteer, Rosalie Allen, greets him. She knows him by name. He's been visiting the Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf for the past few years – and Allen, who's retired, has been volunteering for two of them, assisting "shoppers" like Dan to find the food they need, answering questions about what quantities are available and offering suggestions about what to do with the fruit or vegetable they've been curious to try but have never prepared at home.

Said Food Shelf Chair, John Kneeland, Jr., the pantry offers compassion and community to people who need it – and it exists because of its community's compassion. Operated by the Oxford Ecumenical Council – with representatives from Oxford's First Baptist, First Congregational, Grace Episcopal, Oak Hill Bible, St. Anne, St. Roch, United Methodist and Zion Lutheran churches taking turns volunteering during Thursday evening distribution – the WCFB Partner Agency was an early adopter of "client choice."

The pantry and its neighboring community garden serve residents of Oxford as well as those from surrounding towns who are members of an Oxford church. Said Kneeland, "We call our clients 'shoppers' for a reason. No money is being exchanged. The food is free. But people are going around deciding what they'd like for themselves and their families. We're not deciding for them."

Unlike the average grocery store patron, however, Kneeland acknowledged, "Nobody wants to be in a situation where they're turning to a food pantry, so we work hard to give people real dignity in whatever time they spend here." Volunteers get to know shoppers like Dan, take genuine interest, smile.

Dan puts two cans of his favorite soup in a cart while chatting with Allen about life. He shows her a picture of the façade of an old colonial, the boarding house where he rents a room.

"I love this house." Dan smiles as he tells her about it. It's the only home he's ever known apart from his mother's, which was sold when she died to cover her expenses. "I have housemates," said Dan. "And there are rabbits living in the back yard. Those rabbits are something!" He has pictures of the rabbits, too. Allen concurred: It's a very nice house.

"It's mine until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow," Dan said. "That's when the constable comes back." He's fallen behind in his rent payments, and he's being evicted. He isn't sure where he'll go next but, he reassures Allen, whose face wears her concern, "I'll be ok. I really will. I'll even come back to visit sometime."

As Dan organizes his cart to go, he reflects out loud, "Maybe it's silly I'm coming here tonight if I'm going to have to give some of this away tomorrow. I don't know if I can take it all with me." He motions to the carton of eggs.

Not silly, Allen reassures him. "You have to eat tonight, Dan – and you need your breakfast in the morning."

**Name changed*

.....
"...The pantry offers compassion and community to people who need it – and it exists because of its community's compassion."
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Food Shelf volunteers showcase a range of products available to pantry guests.

Advocacy in Action with Maydeé Morales

Catholic Charities, a Worcester County Food Bank (WCFB) Partner Agency, covers a lot of territory in the region, with area offices in Worcester, Leominster, Milford, and Southbridge. In each community, said Director of Area Services, Maydeé Morales, the organization is committed to decreasing hunger and improving access to healthy food. From food pantries to benefits outreach and education, Catholic Charities is actively engaged in the movement to create a hunger-free community.

We asked Maydeé about the partnership with WCFB, about advocacy, and her advice for aspiring advocates.



Maydeé Morales

Catholic Charities is a WCFB Partner Agency. What's been your experience as a Partner?

We're working in complete partnership with WCFB. WCFB makes food available to us, which we – in turn – provide to families. Through financial assistance from the Worcester County Food Bank Fund to End Hunger, administered through the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, we're enhancing "client choice" [a model of enabling people seeking food assistance to select the food they need for themselves and their families] at Catholic Charities' food pantries. We're incorporating more advocacy...working in collaboration with WCFB to get the word out to our families about pertinent issues, issues that directly affect their well-being.

Talk to us a little more about advocacy. You attended one of the advocacy trainings we held earlier this year. Why do you think advocacy is so important?

People should know about the [political] issues that directly affect their benefits. They're the ones who are impacted by changes and decisions. If people are given the tools needed to advocate for themselves, they can be most successful. Personally, too, I think it is important to utilize advocacy to ensure that those who cannot share their own voice have their voices heard. That's why I wanted to be involved in advocacy...to learn to be a better advocate for my clients across different initiatives.

Of course, people who aren't trained advocates can also speak up about hunger. From your perspective, where do they start?

Share information about the food pantries. Be that voice... break down the barriers and the stigma associated with using a pantry. Many think only homeless individuals come to the pantries for food, or that they're only for those who are without jobs. The reality is that a large percentage of the individuals that come through our food pantries are working folks whose SNAP benefits and the money they earn is just simply not enough to be able to put food on the table every night.

Want to learn more about advocacy at WCFB? Sign up for Advocacy Action Alerts at foodbank.org.

I have enough, but I didn't always: A Food Bank donor on his "why"

Paul gives, he says, because he knows what it's like. He's in his 50s now, but he still remembers the time his father was out of work. "My mom's salary just wasn't enough. We went from 'We're comfortable,' to 'We need help.' Our neighborhood food pantry was there for us. It was only for a couple of months that we visited that pantry on Wednesday nights (I'll never forget it), but – all these years later – the generosity of those people, the availability of that food when we were hungry...it's stuck with me."

Today, Paul has "enough, more than enough." So he gives funds and food as often as he can to help those who are struggling to provide for themselves and their families. "It's my turn to give."

We want to know: Why do you care about ending hunger? Your stories of hunger and hope really matter. They help us to grow awareness about the problem of hunger. They help inspire support. They drive action and make change.

Share your "why." E-mail us at communications@foodbank.org or mail to: Worcester County Food Bank, Attn: Communications Department, 474 Boston Turnpike, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.

In gratitude...

To these long-time champions and all our corporate and community supporters for your generosity to Worcester County Food Bank and your dedication to creating a hunger-free community.



FORD MOTOR COMPANY FUND



Financials Fiscal Year 2018

ASSETS:

Current Assets

Cash and equivalents	\$1,474,665
Accounts receivable	\$113,342
Prepaid and other assets	\$77,153
Total Current Assets	\$2,923,382
Investments	\$5,388,693
Property and equipment (net)	\$1,258,217
Total Assets	\$8,312,070

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$133,762
Accrued expenses	\$150,215
Deferred revenue	\$125,948
Total Liabilities	\$409,925

Net Assets

Unrestricted, designated	\$150,000
Unrestricted, undesignated	\$7,713,360
Temporarily restricted	\$38,785
Total Net Assets	\$7,902,145

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$8,312,070**

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Donated food and services	\$10,891,081
Operating support and revenue	\$3,186,680
Net assets released from restrictions	\$164,323
Total Support and Revenue	\$14,242,084

OPERATING EXPENSES

Program services	\$12,889,443
Management and general	\$368,661
Fundraising	\$531,063
Total Operating Expenses	\$13,789,167

Change in Net Assets **\$452,917**

Net Assets, beginning of year	\$7,410,443
Net Assets, end of year	\$7,863,360

HUNGER IN WORCESTER COUNTY

1 in 11 people



& 1 in 8 children



don't have enough healthy food to eat.

Last year alone,

81,000 people

turned to WCFB Partner Agencies – local pantries and community meal programs – for food assistance.

That's enough people to **fill Fenway Park 2.17 times.**



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Mary Aronson	Data Coordinator
Marguerite Cawley	Advocacy Coordinator
Kali Coughlan	Child Nutrition Coordinator
Amy Edlemon	Product Donation Coordinator
Derek Fraser	Operations Associate
Wade Gotham	Operations Associate
Susanna Hinman	Sales Manager, Food Hub
Sally Hodgermey	Development Coordinator
Paul Kunz	Operations Coordinator
Joni Kusminsky	Director of Communications & Development
Jaelyn Mayo	Development Coordinator
Clemente Orcel	Operations Associate
Shon Rainford	Senior Project Manager, Food Hub
David Reed	Agency Relations Coordinator
Alexandra Salcedo	Warehouse & Facility Manager
Kevin Shaughnessy	IT Coordinator
Liz Sheehan Castro	Director of Advocacy
Astha Shrestha	Development Manager
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Dexter Viator	Community Engagement Coordinator

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Thank you to our food and fund donors, volunteers, Partner Agencies, anti-hunger advocates, and other supporters for your ongoing commitment to creating a hunger-free community. Please follow us on social media for the very latest stories of your collective impact.



*To engage, educate
and lead
Worcester County
in creating a
hunger-free
community.*

**Learn more and get involved at
foodbank.org**

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Creating a hunger-free community