



FOOD for Thought

idahofoodbank.org

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**WORKING TO SOLVE HUNGER IN
IDAHO SINCE 1984**

Lewiston Couple Committed to Meeting the Need In North Central Idaho

The Idaho Foodbank depends on the generosity of its donors and volunteers. That generosity is what has enabled The Idaho Foodbank to meet the needs of hungry Idahoans for better than 30 years. From donations of funds and in-kind products to donations of time, Idaho is packed with some of the most giving people in the country.

Fortunately for us and the communities in north central Idaho, two of those people reside in the same household. And when Joanna and Nathan Alford found out about the needs of hungry Idahoans, they jumped at the chance to help.

“I was pretty blown away. I had no idea of the need in our community and what The Idaho Foodbank does,” said Joanna. “I was asked to help and from there, I’ve made it a cause close to my heart.”

Joanna recently joined a board of concerned north central Idahoans who are helping increase awareness and expand the reach of the Foodbank in the area. Shortly after joining, she enlisted her husband Nathan, the editor and publisher of the Lewiston Tribune, to help in the effort.

“Joanna is the muscle and the mind behind our contributions,” Nathan said. “I’m simply the means along with the Lewiston Tribune.”

Beyond their donations in time and funds, Nathan helped raise awareness through donating advertising space at no charge to The Idaho Foodbank. With more than 58,000 readers every day, the Lewiston Tribune is



helping to educate Idahoans about hunger in the region and the role the Foodbank plays in providing a solution.

“We place a high value on people in north central Idaho and south eastern Washington,” Nathan said. “If there’s anything we can do to improve the lives of people in our circulation area, we’re on board.”

For the many working families, children and seniors in need, the Alford’s commitment is making a very real difference by ensuring food today and hope for tomorrow. 🍏

Exciting News for Our Spring Campaign!

This year’s Annual Spring Campaign promises to be the best ever thanks to a generous match offered by Albertsons and Wells Fargo.

See page 8 for details or visit our website at idahofoodbank.org.

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Hunger In North Central Idaho Isn't Abating As The Economy Gets Better

In some north central rural areas, hunger is as bad as it was during the worst of the recession. The Idaho Foodbank is working hard to get food to the most remote communities—and not just any food, but lean and nutritious products.

Helping lead that effort is Douglas Nash, a cattle grower, volunteer and supporter of The Idaho Foodbank. After learning about the Foodbank's Beef Counts program, Douglas got more involved. He learned that many ranchers and beef growers like himself didn't know there was a more effective way of helping than even giving straight cash dollars.

"Pretty uniformly, everybody thinks (giving beef) is a great idea, especially cattle growers," Douglas said. "Some have had contacts with other food banks and they were told to just sell the beef and give them the money. That wasn't The Idaho Foodbank. If they make a

donation of the beef, the value of the beef through Beef Counts and the matching donation by Agri-Beef, that's a huge impact. It's a full beef, plus a 50% match."

The Beef Counts program enables people to donate beef to a participating sale yard, and have a donation sent to The Idaho Foodbank. Agri-Beef matches those donations with their own roasts and beef chubs. The program means more lean and healthy beef protein in the bellies of Idahoans who cannot otherwise afford it.

"It's a huge benefit," Douglas says. "Beef growers like that. They like to support the Foodbank. They like to see where the support goes."

So, Douglas got to work in north central Idaho. He's worked to build relationships with beef growers as well as sale yards in the communities near Lewiston, enabling more donations to

The Idaho Foodbank, and more importantly, to the people in the local towns and cities who need it most.

Earlier this year, Douglas succeeded in getting the first Beef Counts donation in north central Idaho.

"This program is important," Douglas says. "The numbers are clear. One in every 6 Idahoans is suffering. More than one kid in every five isn't knowing where they'll get their next meal. Go in to a class at a school in your community and see 20 kids, and know that four of them are hungry. That's heartbreaking."

Luckily for those in need, the program is growing because of the kind hearts of people growing cattle around our state. 🍎

Beef Counts donors gave The Idaho Foodbank nearly \$80,000 worth of beef in 2014.

Learn more about Beef Counts at idahofoodbank.org/beefcounts

Growing Partnerships

LDS Church Orchard Gives Big



In 2014, about 75 percent of the food The Idaho Foodbank distributed was frozen or refrigerated at some point. That means a whole lot of fresh vegetables and fruits were finding their way from Idaho farms and orchards to Idaho families in need.

Luckily, The Idaho Foodbank has partners who are growing these nutritious foods and donating them to help fight hunger in our state. Take the Caldwell orchard for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for instance. The orchard donated more than 700,000 pounds of produce in the last season, enabling the Foodbank to distribute those fruits as part of food boxes and mobile pantries from Lewiston to Boise to Pocatello and everywhere in-between.

We all know that a stomach can be full, but still leave a person hungry for nutrition. Thanks to the LDS Church Orchard for stepping up and helping us make sure the right types of foods are getting to the people who need them the most! 🍎

**Interested in donating your harvest?
Go to idahofoodbank.org/give
for information.**



Solving Hunger from the Ground Up

The Idaho Foodbank doesn't just rely on kind donors in agriculture to provide the healthy and nutritious produce they distribute. We also grow our own food, with the help of volunteer farmers.

The land for this project is just outside the prison in Boise, where prisoners can earn time tending to the land with good behavior. Each year, the program is expanding with more produce than the year before.

In the 2014 growing season, Idaho's hungry were helped with a yield of more than 330,000 pounds of potatoes and winter squash. That's nutritious food from an unlikely source that's heading straight to the tables of the people who need it most! 🍎

Our Vision

A hunger-free Idaho.

Our Mission

To help feed, educate and advocate for Idaho's hungry through collaborative partnerships to develop efficient solutions that strengthen individuals, families and communities.

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Dear Friends,

Another winter is behind us, and while many of us are focusing on the beautiful budding tree branches and flower beds, thousands of Idahoans are still struggling, left without an answer as to how they'll provide dinner for their family tonight.

We—all of us—are that answer.

The word "we" is important here, and it's why this newsletter is focused on partnerships—from the donors who provide important funding for our programs, to those that provide the nutritious food we distribute, or to the kind volunteers who give of their time to help our operation pass 93 percent of all donations directly to the programs helping Idahoans.

Too often, when winter leaves us, so does the attention to those in need in our state, our communities and our neighborhoods. This year, we're hoping to change that.

Albertsons and Wells Fargo want to help raise attention and have offered to match donations received during our Annual Spring Campaign that runs from March 16 through April 30. This will double the donations we receive this spring, which doubles the meals we can provide. It means a \$20 gift from you today won't just help us provide the food for 80 meals, it will be matched with a \$20 gift from these organizations, turning your donation into food for 160 meals.

And your donation does more than provide meals. It also helps us deliver educational programs like Cooking Matters - teaching healthy cooking to youth, seniors and young families so they can better utilize the nutritious food we distribute.

At The Idaho Foodbank, our goal is to "solve" hunger. While the first step is providing access to nutritious food, there's more required in order to stabilize lives and interrupt the cycle of hunger. It requires working with our clients to understand the causes behind their hunger, and exploring what can be done to reduce or prevent this from occurring. For example, we know that medical costs are a leading cause of debt, economic hardship and food insecurity. That's why we're actively engaged with healthcare providers to explore increased access to services for better management of health conditions, and a reduction in costly emergency room visits.

For more than 30 years, we have worked with all of you to serve Idahoans in need. This spring, we're counting on building on those relationships in order to better serve our communities. Together, we can solve hunger.

Thank you,

Karen Vauk

Karen Vauk, President/CEO

Partnerships

Pocatello Partner

When leaders from the Community Dinner Table in Blackfoot began trying to find a location for a food pantry, they struggled to get a location that fit the needs of a weekly pantry. But, after hearing about grants offered by ALSCO, they were able to string together some grant applications that yielded nearly \$25,000 to build in a warehouse that had been offered to them. Now the organization has 2,000 square feet in two separate rooms, creating a client waiting room, including education materials. Added with a new walk-in freezer and three new refrigerators, the Blackfoot community now has more access to healthy emergency food than ever before. They credit the community for making it all happen, helping them serve an average of 200 clients each week. Together, we really can solve hunger. 🍏



Mobile Pantries

Mobile Pantries Make a Difference



Mobile pantries provided 35 communities and as many as 11,656 individuals with food each month last year.

Mobile pantries are helping us reach some of the more secluded and hard to reach areas around our state. But they're also helping us distribute food quickly to as many people as possible. Here's a picture of one of those distributions in Lewiston, where we were able to serve hundreds of local families in hours, helped by the kind support of volunteers. Volunteers are the lifeblood of this organization! 🍏

Learn how to get involved at idahofoodbank.org/volunteer

Help The Idaho Foodbank go green this spring!

Want to stay informed but help us save some money for the costs of printing and mailing this publication? Sign up for the digital copy of the print newsletter.

All you have to do is go to idahofoodbank.org/newsletters and fill in your email address. The money we'll save will go toward helping solve hunger here in Idaho. Thanks for helping us make a difference!

A Conversation with a Rockstar Volunteer: Janelle Haag



Janelle Haag is a volunteer who has been helping solve hunger in Idaho for three years. Now, she helps in a supervisory capacity, training new volunteers and serving as a leader when major events need her expertise. We sat down with her to find out more about why she dedicates so much time to volunteering.

Why do you volunteer?

“I like to give back to my community. I used to be one of those people that would write the check and put the food out. With the change in the economy, I had to find another way to give back. It turned out to be more rewarding for me.”

What do you like most about volunteering?

“Seeing the impact that I have on the community and meeting a number of different people that have the same drive I do about giving back. I have the opportunity to work with a lot of kids and it’s nice to see parents instilling that at such a young age these days. I love the employees of the Foodbank. I was barely here a week before they treated me like their own. It’s just a warm place for people to come in to and help out.”

What’s the most touching moment you’ve had while volunteering?

“I was doing Drive, Drop and Donate and a lady pulled up. She was older. She handed me five dollars and said, ‘That’s all I can give you. It’s all I have left.’ She had tears in her eyes. It’s the little moments like that that make me happy to be a part of this community. The people here give so much.”

Would you recommend volunteering to others?

“I would highly encourage it. Go to the website. Use it. There are so many activities and groups to work with. There’s something for everybody. They’re very accommodating at The Idaho Foodbank. We can find something that you’ll love doing. Bagging fruit, making boxes, we’ll find a way to enable you to help!” 🍎

The Idaho Foodbank engages thousands of volunteers, who logged nearly 48,000 hours of service in 2014!

Give back like Janelle by going to idahofoodbank.org/volunteer

Helping Neighbors

Tiara Shares Her Story

Tiara Badgett's story may seem like one of struggle, but to her, it is one of success.

One month before the birth of her son Lucas, she was let go from a job with a local detective agency. Instead of looking forward to a promising career and a growing family, she was left jobless.

"They told me it would cost them to keep me on board," she said. "They told me they were sorry but they had to let me go. I wasn't fired. I wasn't terminated. I was just let go."



After being "let go", Tiara's family struggled to make ends meet. Her husband continued to work as a server for a local restaurant, but it wasn't enough to pay the bills. With three kids and two adults on one income, they turned to a pantry partner of The Idaho Foodbank for help.

"You feel like a failure," she said. "You wonder if there was something else you could have done. What do I do now?"



"But then (the pantry) takes you in. They want to make sure all your food needs are met. So, for that one thing, if for nothing else, the rock comes off your shoulders."

Tiara began working in a local garden to help grow food for her pantry. She volunteered and shared her story at a fund raising event to spread the word about the good work being done to solve hunger.

Her story is all too common at the Foodbank. A young family doing everything right encounters something unexpected, but because of the support of our donors, the family perseveres and gets back on track. Donors make a difference. The kind of difference that enables a young woman such as Tiara to view her story of struggle as a story of success.

"I am happy," Tiara says now. "It's not just a hand out, it's a hand up." 🍎



Meet One of Our Cooking Matters Dieticians

One of the people helping Cooking Matters students learn tips for healthy and money-saving food-preparing techniques is Registered Dietician Kelsey Ruszel, who started volunteering for The Idaho Foodbank three years ago.

Kelsey focuses her classes on budgeting, creating meal plans and shopping for groceries efficiently. Those lessons can lead to better health and a thicker pocketbook in the long run.

"I like it when you see participants in class who really are excited about a new concept or something that they've learned and you know they're going to use it when they go home," Kelsey says.

That's one of the big assets of Cooking Matters. It enables people to learn easy tips to help change their lives, when they otherwise may have never known that was a possibility.

"I love it. I think that's part of why I got into being a dietician," Kelsey said. "I think a lot of people need that information and they aren't exposed to the good healthy-eating information. Giving people those tools really helps their health, their confidence in the kitchen and making good food choices for their families."

And to Kelsey, the tips her students learn help further our mission of not just giving food, but solving hunger in a broader sense.

"It's a big part of why I do the classes in the first place," she said. "You can't just give people food and think you've solved their problems. That's kind of a cover-up. A lot of times they need to learn those skills and how to budget and how to stretch a dollar without being stuck with the same foods every time." 🍎

Cooking Matters

Cooking Matters gets rave reviews

"I have found healthier, easy, quick meals, and they fit my schedule and my budget."
— Megan, Cooking Matters student



"This course has been amazing and has helped alleviate my fear and frustration with cooking and made it enjoyable and helped me to easily choose healthy mixtures of recipes." — Abigail, Cooking Matters student

"It taught me that cooking doesn't have to be hard or frustrating. I am more confident in myself and choices when I got to the grocery store. I had a blast! And learned a lot!" — Oshaleh, Cooking Matters student

"I think this is an excellent course for families. It is a great opportunity to learn and grow together, a great way to try out new recipes and sample new foods." — Pam, Cooking Matters student

Cooking Matters Recipe: Whole Grain Banana Crumble

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large bananas
- 2 cups mixed fresh berries
- Non-stick cooking spray
- 5 Tablespoons whole wheat flour, divided
- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ¼ cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 4 Tablespoons cold unsalted butter
- 2/3 cup nonfat plain yogurt
- 1 Tablespoon honey

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 °F.
2. Peel and slice bananas in half lengthwise.
3. Rinse berries and pat dry.

4. Spray baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. Place the banana halves flat side down in the baking dish.
5. Toss berries with 1 Tablespoon flour. Sprinkle berries over the bananas.
6. In a medium bowl, add 4 Tablespoons flour, oats, sugar, and spices. Stir to blend.
7. Cut cold butter into little pieces. Add to bowl. Using your fingers, quickly blend the butter into the dry ingredients until the mixture is crumbly.
8. Spread the crumbly mixture over the fruit in an even layer. Press down slightly.
9. Bake about 10–15 minutes, or until the crumble is firm and golden in color.
10. While crumble bakes, stir together yogurt and honey in a small bowl to create a lighter version of whipped cream.
11. When crumble is done, spoon 1 Tablespoon of the yogurt and honey topping over each serving.

Go to CookingMatters.org for more recipes like this one.

Here are some helpful tips to stay healthy this spring!



Fruits and Vegetables at Every Meal

- Top your whole grain breakfast cereal with fruit
- Chop up leftover veggies and add to quesadillas, scrambled eggs, or soup

Eating Smart When Eating Out

- Load your pizza with colorful veggies
- Ask for low-fat salad dressings or other sauces on the side. Use only half the dressing or sauce provided



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Exciting News for Our Spring Campaign!

It's that time of year! As warmer weather and blossoming trees come in with spring, the donations and awareness of hunger in our communities often drop off. Even though the attention to these issues dwindles during this time, hunger doesn't get a spring break.

For this year's Annual Spring Campaign we've teamed with Albertsons and Wells Fargo to offer a generous match to your donations between March 16 and April 30. Together we will be able to reach kids before and during final exams, families trying to make ends meet, and seniors with limited options throughout the spring.

Help us make this Annual Spring Campaign the best ever. **Go to idahofoodbank.org for more information about our campaign.**

Donate today!

