

SPRING 2020

food  
bank  
of the Southern Tier

# the Harvester

Working Together To Build And Sustain  
Hunger-Free Communities Throughout The Southern Tier



## JUST SAY YES!

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## KIDS' FARMERS MARKET

Just before winter break, children flooded the hallways at Enfield Elementary School in Tompkins County with handmade t-shirt bags loaded with produce slung over their shoulders.

Kids in Taura McMeekin's third-grade class gathered in a circle and dumped their vegetables on the classroom carpet. They pored over their haul as if it were Halloween candy.

**As part of a Food Bank Kids' Farmers Market (KFM) pilot program, every student went home with a bag of potatoes, carrots, apples, onions, and other fresh produce.** Students also had a hand in re-purposing t-shirts as reusable shopping bags and sorting the produce.

Taura and fifth-grade teacher Jill Browne coordinate the KFM. **"Providing produce for all students removes the stigma of need for**

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**food bank**  
of the Southern Tier

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Stories and photos by  
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Health starts in our homes, our schools and work places, our neighborhoods and communities.

**Conditions in the places where people live, learn and work affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes.** These conditions are known as social determinants of health. Among them are access to food, transportation, adequate housing, living wage jobs, child care, medical care and education.

We know that poverty limits access to these things and the differences in health are striking in communities with unstable housing, low income, unsafe neighborhoods, or substandard education.

**As healthcare costs rise, so does community investment in Medicaid, Medicare and private health insurance premiums.** The healthcare industry, as well as federal and state governments, are looking to lifestyle improvements and preventive care to decrease the need for long-term medical care.

Nutrition is a top component of that prevention. **At the Food Bank, we have seen how access to enough**



**healthy food can not just fill bellies but change lives, creating better health outcomes and improved lifestyles.**

We are excited to enter this new territory with our healthcare partners. **The Food Bank is committed to creating a future without hunger, where access to healthy food by all is recognized as fundamental to the well-being and success of individuals and the foundation of a strong vibrant society.**

In partnership,

Natasha R. Thompson  
President & CEO

## JUST SAY YES!

Before the start of a recent Mobile Food Pantry in Broome County, a group of about 15 is gathered around vehicles at the Colesville Volunteer Ambulance Company to taste a recipe for a pinto bean salad.

Elisa Rocks, one of the Food Bank's two registered dietitians, mixes ingredients together, answers questions about substitutions, and encourages the use of dietary fiber.

**"That was really good!" says Beverly Maine, of Chenango Bridge. "That will be on our table."**

The Mobile Food Pantry (MFP) visitors leave with recipes, nutritional magazines, and a complimentary measuring cup from the Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables program (JSY).

**Using nutrition education workshops and food demonstrations, JSY helps low-income families eat nutritious foods, make the most of their food budgets, prepare foods in a safe manner, increase physical activity, and drink healthier beverages.** The goal of JSY is to prevent obesity and reduce

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Download the recipes at  
[www.foodbankst.org/jsy/#recipes](http://www.foodbankst.org/jsy/#recipes)

# ON Community Impact 2019

**In the Southern Tier, 1 in 8 adults and 1 in 5 children are living at or below the federal poverty line and are at risk of food insecurity.** An estimated 68,000 individuals across Chemung, Steuben, Broome, Tompkins and Tioga counties may not know how they will provide their next meal.

In 2019, the Food Bank distributed 10.9 million meals, serving 22,000 requests for food each week through our partner network and direct service programs. **Food banks have long used “pounds distributed” and “people served” to measure outputs, but we know the real impact of our work is in “outcomes” like health, stability, social capital, academic performance and feelings of belonging.**

So, we are changing how we view the impact of our work, focusing on the following areas: Feeding Our Future — Youth Programs, Increasing Access, Data & Technology, Health & Nutrition, and Advocacy & Education.

The Food Bank achieved a major reorganization in 2019 when we separated our Health & Nutrition department from Agency Services so our team of nutritionists can focus more on creating partnerships within the healthcare industry. **Nutrition is a key component in achieving health and wellness, and poverty presents a barrier to**

**getting enough nutritious foods.** We are working together to help vulnerable populations access the healthy food they need to thrive.

Agency services now fall under the scope of the Community Impact Department. The Food Bank has added a Programs & Partnerships Coordinator to build relationships in each county; an individual who is coordinating hunger relief efforts to find gaps in services and better meet the unique needs of county residents.

**We are conducting surveys and working with data analysts to measure the impact of our work in measures beyond pounds distributed and people served.** Together, we are finding ways to chart our impact on the communities we serve as we envision a future without hunger.



## 10.9 MILLION MEALS DISTRIBUTED

PEOPLE



**21,702** requests for food each week



**41%** of people served are children



**18%** of people served are seniors



**1 in 8** adults is food insecure



**1 in 5** children is food insecure

PROGRAMS



**157** partner agencies distributed food



**3.4 million** pounds distributed through Mobile Food Pantries



**102,032** packs of food given to kids in the Backpack Program



**2.8 million** pounds of fresh produce distributed



**2 BOCES** School Food Pantry sites



**3,200** children served at 24 Kids' Farmers Markets

## FEED NEIGHBORS. FEED HOPE.



### Our Community

supports our acquisition of food from manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers and farmers through individual, corporate and community partner donations.



### The Food Bank of the Southern Tier

inspects, sorts, safely stores, and distributes food through 157 partner agencies and direct service programs like the BackPack Program, Kids' Farmers Markets, Mobile Food Pantries and School Food Pantries.



### Our Network Partners

include food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, youth and senior meal programs, churches, and other hunger-relief organizations across six counties.



### Clients

Each month, more than 94,000 individuals are served by network partners and Food Bank programs.



Every day, people across the Southern Tier go hungry. Children go to school with empty bellies, trying to hide the pain. Hardworking parents struggle to put food on the table, often going without so their kids can eat. Seniors on fixed incomes are forced to choose between paying utility bills or buying groceries. But thanks to you, our neighbors in need are not alone. Because you care, children, families and seniors can count on the meals you help provide every day to nourish their bodies and spirits.

# YOUR INVESTMENT MATTERS

21,648

GIFTS

\$136

AVERAGE GIFT

348

CIRCLE TO FEED HOPE  
DONORS (>\$1,000 ANNUAL)

# WE DEPEND ON VOLUNTEERS

## Impact

 Volunteer hours equivalent to **11** full-time staff

 Packed and sorted **1.8 million** pounds of food

 Volunteers gave **20,698** hours of time

## Activities

 Filling packs for children in our Backpack Program

 Sorting donated food into categories

 Repacking bulk food into smaller packs for distribution

# PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORT

Your support helped us serve as the bridge between available food sources and families who are struggling to put food on the table.



**3,573** children served in Backpack Program



**108,443** requests for food at Mobile Food Pantries



**3,189** children served at Kids' Farmers Markets



**5,059** individuals served at College Mobile Food Pantries



**214** households served at School Food Pantries

You helped us provide direct food assistance, nutrition classes, and promote wellness and healthy lifestyle through many collaborative partnerships.



**2.8 million** pounds of produce distributed



**1,009** individuals attended Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables Classes



**246** Chemung County residents pre-screened for SNAP

You helped us develop and implement strategies to end hunger through policy, education, community organizing, and community development.



**11** graduates of Speakers Bureau



**29** elected officials engaged in our work



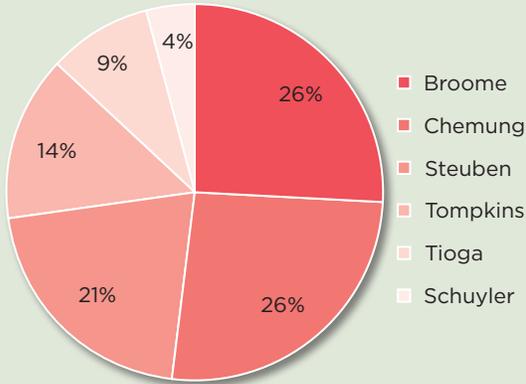
**678** individuals participated in Hunger Education



**7,641** children served through USDA Summer Food Service Program



## WHERE DID THE FOOD GO?



## THE NEED

County	Total Pop.	Food Insecure People
Broome	196,124	25,180 — 12.8% (of total pop.)
Chemung	86,883	10,880 — 12.5%
Schuyler	18,112	2,060 — 11.4%
Steuben	97,539	11,280 — 11.6%
Tioga	49,322	4,780 — 9.7%
Tompkins	104,415	13,980 — 13.4%
<b>Service Area</b>	<b>552,395</b>	<b>68,160 — 12.3%</b>

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

### Support & Revenue

	2019	2018
Food-in-Kind Assistance	\$9,440,299	\$7,075,263
Program Fees	869,347	753,203
Grants & Contracts	2,194,387	2,086,934
Contributions	2,696,598	2,579,516
Other Income	74,035	95,706
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>\$15,274,666</b>	<b>\$12,590,622</b>

### Expenses

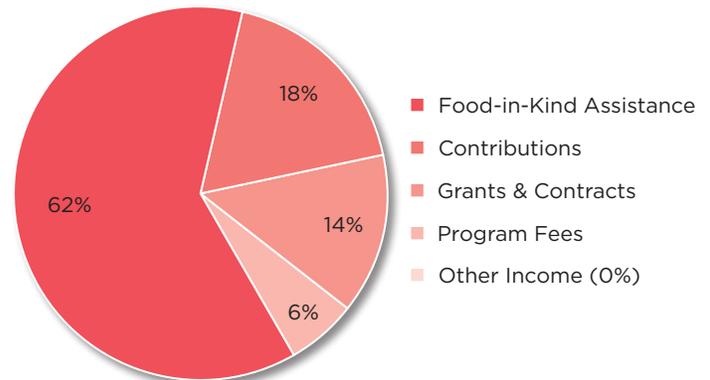
Program	\$14,004,659	\$11,695,060
Management & General	576,714	665,957
Fundraising	811,613	834,939
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$15,392,986</b>	<b>\$13,195,956</b>

### Changes in Net Assets

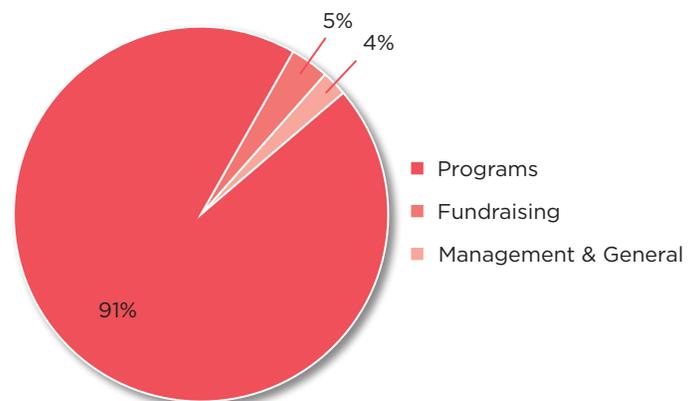
Excess (Def.) of Revenue Over Expenses	(\$118,322)	(\$605,334)
Restricted Contributions	-	69,114
Investment Income (Loss)	294,156	(114,159)
Disposal of Property	-	3,500
<b>Total Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>(\$175,834)</b>	<b>(\$646,879)</b>

**TOTAL NET ASSETS**      **\$7,117,734**      **\$6,941,900**

### REVENUE BY SOURCE



### OPERATING EXPENSES



# KIDS' FARMERS MARKET

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**some children who won't take home food in other ways,"** Taura says. With 78 percent of students qualifying for free or reduced price school meals, all children at Enfield receive the benefit.

"The need is high in our community," Taura says. **"Having bags of produce go out to all students gives the idea that everyone gets hungry and healthy food is for everyone."**

Sixteen percent of Enfield residents are living below the federal poverty level. That's 10.5 percent higher than the state-wide average. **Last year, the Enfield Food Pantry distributed more pounds of food than any other partner throughout our six-county network of 157 agencies.**

Randi Quackenbush, Food Bank Director of Community Impact, said Enfield Elementary has taken a holistic approach to integrating nutritious food. **Enfield recently received a state Farm-to-School grant to get more local produce into school meals.** Students also help grow a community garden at school and learn about agriculture, food systems, and nutrition.

Principal Keith Harrington heard about kids "shopping" for free produce at KFM at Summer Meals sites and after-school programs. He reached out to the Food Bank to develop a plan to make a KFM available for all Enfield students.

Research has shown that a new vegetable must be offered 12 times before a child will eat it willingly. **Letting kids pick out a new food has also proven successful in encouraging their enjoyment of it,**



*Students at Enfield Elementary sort and trade produce from a KFM.*

**making KFM an empowering experience that also gets fruits and veggies home to families who may not have access to fresh produce.**

Tim Maxson, dad to third-grader Owen, thinks the KFM for all students is a great idea, whether kids get a favorite item or produce they haven't tried before.

"Some kids get their best meals at school," he says. "And produce is plentiful in the summer, but it can be harder to get during the school year."

**Enfield will have seven KFMs this year.** Several times, the available produce will be used in cooking demonstrations by Cornell Cooperative Extension, and kids will go home with recipes for the foods they try.

Students from Cornell University's Master of Public Health Program have created an evaluation process that will help determine the impact of the Food Bank's KFMs and the Farm-to-School grant on Enfield kids and their families.

**"Our community partners are doing excellent work with nutrition education," Randi says. "It's a good way for us to learn how we can integrate the Food Bank's fresh produce with the programming our partners are providing."**



*Dietitian Elisa Rocks gives samples at an MFP.*

## JUST SAY YES!

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long term chronic disease risks through the promotion of increased fruit and vegetable consumption.

**JSY is one of New York State Department**

**of Health's nutrition education services available to low-income families who are eligible for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) funds.** Led by food banks, a statewide network of nutritionists delivers comprehensive nutrition education activities primarily in food pantries and soup kitchens.

**Each workshop provides practical nutrition information using USDA-approved lesson plans, cooking demonstrations, and recipes for fruits and vegetables.**

"They are great. Very educational," says Beverly, who attends JSY classes frequently. Today, she brought her daughter Jennifer Maine. Both women also volunteer at other area MFPs.

**"Too many people say, 'What do you do with this?' My family are farm people; we know what to do with vegetables. But so many people don't," Beverly says.**

Clients can locate and sign up for JSY classes at [www.foodbankst.org/find-food](http://www.foodbankst.org/find-food)

Food Bank dietitians also spearheaded a recipe card initiative last year, providing pantries with seasonal recipe cards using healthy foods found at pantries and mobile sites. **This year, the cards will be available at MFP locations, and families can pick up kid-friendly recipes at Kids' Farmers Markets.**



# PARTNERING FOR HEALTHIER OUTCOMES

Jessica Renner, Regional President of Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, and her staff are at the forefront of community

our mission - affordability, quality and access. That allows us to run lean and not have to worry about dividends to shareholders."

**Because access to healthy food is so critical to maintaining good health, Jessica says partnership with the Food Bank just makes sense.** Excellus of Central New York Southern Tier Region closely aligns with the Food Bank's six-county service area.

The company participated in the Food Bank's Leader of the Pack corporate packing challenge, sponsored our recent Truck Upgrade Project, granted a Community Health Award to support our Kids' Farmers Market, and has been a sponsor of the Selfless Elf 5K.

**"Working with the Food Bank helps Excellus delve further into its mission and the Food Bank has helped provide a model for client-centered service," Jessica says.** "The Food Bank has really been out there in the forefront of understanding that you've got to meet clients where they are, and that's what Excellus aims to do, too."

collaboration on healthcare and the social determinants of health.

**"We are in a new era of coming together with community agencies and healthcare providers to focus on healthy outcomes for the people we serve,"** Jessica says. "There's really been a movement to focus on the social determinants of health. And access to healthy food is right there at the top of the list," Jessica says.

The company has developed a strong partnership with the Food Bank over the last three years and Jessica serves on the Food Bank Board of Directors.

**A healthier community means a healthier bottom line for health insurers, who have found it much less costly to keep people healthy than to treat illnesses that can be avoided with a healthier lifestyle.**

"New York has been a mostly non-profit healthcare state," Jessica says. "That really allows us to focus on



## IMPROVING NUTRITION, IMPROVING HEALTH

Patricia Roe looks over the produce, frozen meats and dairy projects on folding tables in the community center at North Shore Towers apartments in Binghamton at a recent Senior Mobile Food Pantry.

"I think it's wonderful," she says, putting fresh apples and pears in her big re-usable shopping bags. **"I only take what I need to get me through the month. Usually by this time, the cupboards are bare."**

Sue Murray, registered nurse and Community Home & Healthcare Manager, says that's the case for many of the residents. The Visiting Nurse Services of Ithaca & Tompkins County (VNS) has had nurses imbedded at North Shore for three years to help with a variety of health needs.

**When nurses found that many clients were without access to proper nutrition, VNS reached out to the Food Bank to provide a monthly Senior Mobile Food Pantry for 60 residents, as well as Welcome Boxes for residents who need food after returning from hospital or nursing care.**

"It's been a blessing for people here," Sue says. "The nutrition the Food Bank brings is exactly balanced."

"A lot of people I've talked to have said their food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP benefits) have gone down as of January. The mobile pantry really helps," says Barb Nezelek, supervisor of the senior center.

Funded by the Care Compass Network, the VNS project is working to improve health outcomes among Medicaid participants at North Shore. **Goals include decreasing emergency room use and hospitalization, medication compliance and use of a personal health record.**

The Mobile Food Pantry has also reduced social isolation for many senior and disabled clients. Residents volunteer to check-in and distribute food to their neighbors. It also provides a common meeting time for education program and activities.

"We're not a nursing home," says Benay Rodriguez, Senior Housing Unit Manager for the Binghamton Housing Authority. "But a lot of people here don't have family. **This is the community they have.**"



Working together to build and sustain hunger-free communities throughout the Southern Tier

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