

Our mission is leading the fight for hungry people statewide to have access to nutritious food while respecting their dignity and promoting good health.

## The Beginning of a New Journey

A message from Chief Executive Officer Thomas Reynolds



Hello. My name is Thomas Reynolds. I joined Northwest Harvest this past June as the new CEO. I come here with over twenty years of experience in nonprofit leadership – focusing on fighting poverty, hunger, and other forms of injustice that affect people across the globe. Most recently, I served as Vice President of Program, Partnerships and Learning at CARE where I was responsible for designing, implementing, and resourcing a broad range of anti-poverty programs across 95 countries. I am very excited to come home and apply what I've learned across the globe to the state where I grew up.

### Wanting to Make a Difference

I came to Northwest Harvest for three primary reasons. First, hunger is painful, and I recently learned it grips one in seven Washingtonians.

Secondly, I saw how Northwest Harvest recognizes the value of dignity, choice, and healthy foods for everyone. Across the state, our distribution centers are moving fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy grains and critically important protein like salmon or chicken to food banks in Spokane, Port Angeles, Tacoma, Yakima, and Seattle—and in nearly every county across the state. There are no restrictions on who can access this food; there are no demeaning “tests” to prove you are poor. There are no requirements to demonstrate any religious affiliation, no minimum or maximum age requirements. This is so important. We are all Washingtonians. We all belong here. We all deserve to put healthy, appealing foods on the table for our families and for ourselves.

Finally, it was clear that Northwest Harvest understands there is more to do, because the food system isn't

working quite right. I believed my experiences working on food and agricultural systems in dozens of countries over the past ten years could be put into action in the community where I grew up. After working in Asia, Eastern Europe, and covering the Middle East and Africa for the past decade, I really wanted to come home and make a difference right here in Washington. While Washington is one of the most agriculturally abundant and diverse geographies in America, there are still high levels of food-insecure people and families in our state. The food system produces abundance, but distribution and access constrain low-income people from accessing a healthy, diverse diet. This especially affects children, members of ethnically diverse communities, and our senior populations.

Northwest Harvest occupies a unique position in Washington. It's the only statewide organization that works to alleviate hunger through policy change, food distribution, and direct access to people who experience hunger. We have cherished our long-term relationships with farmers and growers. Farms all across the state—especially in the Yakima Valley and other parts of Central and Eastern Washington—are so generous. They share harvest surpluses with us to distribute to food banks across the state. We are linked to hundreds of food banks, food pantries, and schools that provide access points for food distribution.

### Healthy, Nutritious Food Is in High Demand Across The State

At Northwest Harvest, we are asking two questions: “How can we get the most nutritious foods to the

## HUNGER STOPS HERE!

Your gift to Northwest Harvest already makes a big difference—and now there's a special opportunity to DOUBLE your impact!

As part of the **Hunger Stops Here Challenge**, your gift will be matched dollar for dollar between now and October 31. A \$25 gift becomes \$50 and provides 75 nutritious meals for a family of three.

In commemoration of our 50th Anniversary, we have set a big goal of raising **5 million meals** during this year's challenge! We need your help to achieve our goal and make a difference in the lives of our neighbors across Washington.

Kids should be able to focus on learning, not on where their next meal will come from. Families shouldn't have to choose between eating a nutritious meal or paying a bill. Seniors shouldn't go hungry because they have no family to help them.

Food is a right, not a privilege. Be the difference to a child facing the thought of no meal on the dinner table after coming home from school. Be the difference to your neighbor, who is relying on meals from a food bank to get their family through a hard time.

**The gift of a nutritious meal makes a difference.** Please make a gift today and double the impact. **Our neighbors all across the state are counting on us!**

To take advantage of the match, donate



by October 31. Here are two simple ways to give:

- **Online:** [northwestharvest.org/hshc](http://northwestharvest.org/hshc)
- **Mail:** Use the enclosed postage paid envelope to mail your gift. Or, send your gift to the address below, then give the envelope to a friend and challenge them to make a gift!

Mail donations to Northwest Harvest, PO Box 12272, Seattle, WA 98102. (Please note HSHC on the memo line.)

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## Northwest Harvest Board of Directors 2017-18

*Diana Axness, Chair  
Community Volunteer*

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Social Security Administration*

## CEO Message

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people who need it most across Washington?" and "Why are people hungry and what needs to change?"

As a community, our response to hunger matters. Financial inequality is on the rise. With so much abundance here at home, I reflected on Matthew Rykoff's (UK Ambassador to the UN) statement: "How a society treats its most vulnerable—whether children, the infirm, or the elderly—is always the measure of its humanity." Across Washington, Northwest Harvest joins with citizens who function as volunteers, donors, advocates, and spokespersons who are actively giving back to society in tremendously meaningful ways to reduce the pain of hunger.

Northwest Harvest is not bound by a prescriptive process. There are so many opportunities to be dynamic and expansive—opportunities to

test new ways of adding value into the network of food bank operators and the potential to innovate and renew within the purpose of truly ending hunger in Washington.

I am so excited to begin my journey with this organization and start actively working with this amazing state-wide network of farmers, distributors, food banks, schools, volunteers, donors, and clients that we serve and engage with every day. Thank you so much for all the support you provide Northwest Harvest. I look forward to collaborating with you as we tackle the scourge of hunger in Washington.




*Conference speakers at work. Above left, Florence Clemmons performing morning inspection before the Foodlink Curbside Market truck heads out. Tito Romero teaches a group of elementary school students about his experience raising goats.*

## Closing the Hunger Gap 2017 National Conference

*Hosted by Northwest Harvest*

Northwest Harvest is excited to be hosting this year's national Closing the Hunger Gap Conference on September 11-13 in Tacoma, WA.

Closing the Hunger Gap (CTHG) is a network of food banks, anti-hunger advocates, and food justice activists from across North America working to engage food banks and their constituents in expanding their efforts beyond food handouts, toward community-based empowerment initiatives that effectively network with broader food security work. The network formed in 2012 and is guided by a Leadership Team composed of representatives

from food banks and partner organizations across the United States.

This year's conference brings together more than 500 attendees representing emergency food providers, farms, and nonprofit organizations focused on health, education, and food justice.

People who face injustice have long found ways to build solidarity and support each other through movements, through community, and through activism. Northwest Harvest joins in solidarity with the partners of our Hunger Response Network and those we serve as we work to find ways to end hunger and root out injustice and indignity in the food system across the country.

The 2017 conference will be a vibrant, diverse, and inspiring event where attendees have ample time to learn new skills, discuss innovative programs, and network with their peers.

As communities come together to discuss ways to forge a more inclusive and more equitable food system, the current environment in the United States provides a setting that compels decisiveness beyond consideration and action beyond observation. Now is not the time for inaction.

Northwest Harvest is proud to support the work of community-based efforts like Closing the Hunger Gap in our shared goal of ending hunger.

## Why Focus on Focus Groups?

During the summer months, Northwest Harvest takes to the road, gathering stories from around the state for our annual **Focus on Food Security** report. The report, published every January, brings the life experiences, photos, and recommendations of food bank clients before lawmakers. It's a snapshot of hunger in Washington communities, brought into the halls of Olympia and DC, to inform and influence policymakers of the real-life impact of their policy decisions.

Every year we choose five food banks from our statewide network of partners. We strive to find representation of north, south, east, west, and central Washington; rural, urban, and suburban communities. Our most recent visits were to programs in the communities of Nespelam, Ocean Park, Clarkston, Sedro-Woolley, and Sunnyside. We ask these programs to recruit up to 20 of their program clients for a focus group during which Northwest Harvest's policy and Hunger Response Network staff ask questions about

their barriers to nutritious food access, housing, health care, transportation, and other services. Every year, we find that the settings and the faces may change, but the experiences of hunger and poverty have common themes and solutions.

Our focus groups inform our public policy agenda: participants help us identify barriers to basic needs services and help us connect the dots to common sense solutions and budget investments that can help struggling families have the necessary resources and support in place so that they don't have to skip meals to scrape by.

The focus groups also inform Northwest Harvest of the day-to-day realities of hunger—what causes it, who is hungry in Washington, and where in Washington hunger may persist with deeper roots because of a lack of community resources. This allows us to develop new programs, services, tools, and best practices to strengthen local food banks so that we can help fill in the gaps and strengthen resources for community programs that are on the frontlines of fighting hunger.



But most importantly, our focus groups and subsequent published report, provide an opportunity to document and share the experience of hunger. Each voice—from the farm worker who must rely on the food bank when jobs are scarce, to the struggling mother who skips meals so that her children have something to eat—is documented and shared with those who hold the power to end hunger by supporting and enacting the public policies that help strengthen a household's ability to attain self-sufficiency.

Read previous reports on our website at [northwestharvest.org/focus-on-food-security](http://northwestharvest.org/focus-on-food-security).

***"We are teaching people to use the products available through food pantries to make healthy, tasty meals. Using the products provided from Northwest Harvest allows us to keep the costs down for this project. THANK YOU!"***

—Martha's Pantry, Clark County

***"I've overheard clients exclaim that they 'knew what they were having for dinner tonight' several times. One fellow told his son how they were going to take the ground turkey, noodles, mushrooms and sour cream to make stroganoff that night. I love to hear how people utilize the food we give out!"***

—ROOF Community Services, Thurston County

## PARTNERS TAKING ACTION

*Here is an overview of some of the work that our partners have been doing to speak out against proposed cuts to basic needs services in federal budget appropriations and to keep the ball moving on our legislative issues. Thanks to our community of advocates for your efforts—keep up the great work!*

### **Federal Budget**

Together with the Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition, we've worked on a media campaign to generate opinion pieces for newspapers in key Congressional districts in response to the White House budget and urged Congress to propose responsible, bipartisan budgets. Our advocacy team recruited several partners

to sign off and submit pieces to their local papers. In some cases, our partners helped identify a contact with another organization in their community to help show the cross-section of organizations and issues impacted by these cuts. Several submissions have been published in regional newspapers including the *Auburn Reporter*, the *Chinook Observer*, and the *Whitman Gazette*.

### **State Legislature: Breakfast After the Bell**

Sue Potter of Nourish Pierce County (formerly FISH Food Banks) submitted a letter to the editor in response to an excellent editorial in the *Tacoma News Tribune* that urged state lawmakers to pass 1508, our Breakfast After the Bell/Hungry Kids Ready to Learn Act.

### **Story Collection Tool**

In our advocacy and coalition updates, we've been asking partners to help us collect stories from clients about the impact that safety net programs have made for them so that we can share their stories with lawmakers. Sen. Patty Murray used one of these stories in a floor speech on the importance of protecting Medicaid. This story came to us from Lisa in Spokane who said she also volunteers with Northwest Harvest. Watch the video at <https://youtu.be/kS-tYhSuFdl>.

We congratulate our partners on their great work and encourage others in our network to advocate. Find tools and resources to help at [northwestharvest.org/take-action](http://northwestharvest.org/take-action).

## The World, According to Mike

*Reflections on the fight against hunger from Mike Regis, who retires this month after 31 years at Northwest Harvest.*

As I wind down my long stint with Northwest Harvest, I've had the opportunity to sift through 31 years' worth of files and memories. I've been asked to re-cap a few highlights from these many years—favorite moments from one person's perspective:

September, 2001. At a time when the whole country was grieving, we responded by partnering with KING 5 to create the first ever Home Team Harvest event. It was conceived as a way to give a hurting community a chance to come together to help and support others in need. I was there to witness as people channeled the need for healing into tremendous efforts of generosity and compassion. What a beautiful thing. Thanks to the extraordinary outpouring of support from friends and neighbors, Home Team Harvest soon grew to be by far our largest event of the year and is still going strong—last year, it raised nearly 5 million meals for hungry families all across Washington.

Around 2004, there began to be rumblings that the Port of Seattle had plans to redevelop areas around the old armory building on Pier 91 that we'd used as our central warehouse space for two decades, and we needed to begin looking for a new home. We soon assembled a team of staff and partners to help us make this momentous move with the launch of a capital campaign, and we were off on a new adventure. It was no small challenge, but it motivated us to envision how much more we could accomplish in the fight against hunger with the aid of modernized resources.

2008 was a banner year for us. After 21 years at Pier 91, we moved into our new home distribution center in Kent to much fanfare. We promised the public we would increase our annual food distribution from 18 million pounds to 35 million pounds by 2016, and we have come very close to achieving that goal—providing 34 million pounds of nutritious food statewide that year.

In October 2015, I stood at the foot of the

hospital bed of Ruth Velozo, my friend, mentor, and the woman who ran this agency for 35 years. It was just two days before her passing. I remember the last four words she ever spoke to me: "I'm counting on you." To do what? I believe it was what she wanted from all of us: "Be a voice for people who don't have a voice." Thanks to the amazing talents of the team at this organization, I think we're meeting that challenge more than ever through efforts like our **Focus on Food Security** discussion groups, our amazing advocacy team, our Three Squares backpack program, and so many others.

Finally, in April of this year we marked 50 years of service to millions of people in our state with an eye toward the next 50 years. While we still work towards a day when we can rejoice in putting ourselves out of business because we are no longer needed, for now, we continue to seek greater awareness of the day-to-day struggles caused and affected by hunger and to amplify the messages of those we serve.

*Northwest Harvest is delighted to report that we and the community we serve will continue to benefit from Mike's experience, wisdom, and passion following his retirement in September as he becomes the newest member of our Board of Directors.*



*Top: Mike Regis (second from right) with longtime colleagues and hunger-fighting allies Jim Coates of Coastal Harvest; Shelley Rotondo, Steve Bauck, and former Executive Director Ruth Velozo of Northwest Harvest, and David Ottey of Emergency Food Network.*

*Above: Mike with former director Mel Matteson circa 1985.*

*Right: Mike makes a case for joining the fight at a community meeting.*

*Left: Community support at its finest for the first Home Team Harvest in 2001.*

*Below: The old warehouse filled to its maximum capacity with donations from the first Home Team Harvest.*

## EVENTS

WASHINGTON  
WESTERN | CENTRAL | EASTERN*More events and  
up-to-the-minute details at:  
northwestharvest.org***BANKERS CARE - SHARING IS CARING**  
SEPTEMBER 11-29

Bankers in Washington join together to make a difference for thousands of hungry people across the state. The 2017 Sharing is Caring campaign includes the participation of over 400 bank branches across Washington—from Seattle to Spokane and everywhere in between. The campaign builds on the individual efforts of many of the banks in their fight against hunger, increasing the impact by collectively helping the hungry in our communities. Donate at [bankerscare.com](http://bankerscare.com).

**YAKIMA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS GOLF TOURNAMENT**

THURSDAY, SEPT. 14

Northwest Harvest and the Yakima Realtors partner up once again at Apple Tree Golf Course to swing away hunger! Golfers get a chance to “Cheat for Charity” on the Northwest Harvest takeover hole. A donation to help hungry families will also help move golfers 150 yards closer to the pin and/or have a top junior golfer hit their drive! More information at [yakimaassociationofrealtors.com](http://yakimaassociationofrealtors.com).

**ALASKA AIRLINES HOMETOWN HANGAR**

SUNDAY, SEPT. 17;

SUNDAY, OCT. 1; TUESDAY, OCT. 17

Seattle’s game-day destination, the Alaska Hometown Hangar, is back! Join KZOK for the ultimate football party before the Hawks home games. Located across from the stadium’s southwest entrance you can watch football on big screens, listen to live music on



the Xfinity Stage, and quench your tailgate thirst in the Beer Garden. All proceeds benefit Northwest Harvest.

**SEAHAWKS TACKLE HUNGER**

SUNDAY, OCT. 1

Come out to CenturyLink Field and support the Seattle Seahawks as they host the 29th annual Tackle Hunger fundraiser, benefiting Northwest Harvest. Volunteers will be collecting money at all gates and inside Touchdown City three hours prior to the 5:30PM kickoff vs the Indianapolis Colts. Fans and supporters can also donate to this event by texting **TACKLEHUNGER** to **41444**.

**CARVE OUT HUNGER - YAKIMA**

SATURDAY, OCT. 14,

6 P.M. - 9 P.M.

SIPS. CARVES. BITES. Join Northwest Harvest at the Selah Civic Center for a fun, laid back, “wear your jeans” evening to help fight hunger! This annual event features a celebrity media pumpkin carving contest, local craft beer, wine, and delicious food and dessert sampling from local caterers. Tickets and more information at [northwestharvest.org/carve-out-hunger](http://northwestharvest.org/carve-out-hunger).

**KIMA KIDS FOR CANS - YAKIMA**

NOVEMBER THROUGH JANUARY

Yakima area schools compete in a food and fund drive challenge to benefit Northwest Harvest. For more information, email Community Engagement Manager Sheri Bissell at [SheriB@northwestharvest.org](mailto:SheriB@northwestharvest.org).

**KZOK ROCK THE HARVEST**THURSDAY, NOV. 2,  
7 A.M. - 7 P.M.

KZOK 102.5FM is proud to host the 20th annual Rock the Harvest radio-thon benefiting Northwest Harvest. Since 1997, the Rock the Harvest campaign has raised over \$850,000, and this year, we aim to raise over 1 MILLION dollars! Callers that donate \$67 or more will receive a commemorative **Rock the Harvest** t-shirt and other special prizes.

**SEATTLE'S LAST WALTZ TRIBUTE**

NOV. 24

STG Presents Seattle's Last Waltz Tribute at The Neptune Theatre. A Pacific Northwest All-Star Tribute to The Band's “The Last Waltz” featuring all local Seattle artists and musicians. All proceeds benefit Northwest Harvest. Ticket sales and more details coming soon. Watch for updates at: [www.thelastwaltztribute.com](http://www.thelastwaltztribute.com).

**THANKSGIVING IN WINE COUNTRY “TASTE TO FIGHT HUNGER”**

NOV. 25-27

Enjoy wine from 40+ of the best wineries Washington has to offer during this holiday weekend of fun! All participating Yakima Valley wineries collect food/funds to benefit Northwest Harvest. For more information, visit [wineyakimavalley.org/wine-events](http://wineyakimavalley.org/wine-events).

**THANK YOU, EVENT SUPPORTERS!**

*To everyone who contributed in any way, thank you for making a difference!*

**RUN FOR YOUR LIFE 5K**

*Thanks to the students at Pacific NW University of Health Sciences in Yakima (pictured) for their “Run For Your Life 5k” event in April that benefited Northwest Harvest! The event raised enough to provide support for one school in our Three Squares Backpack Program for 2 years!*

**FORD PEANUT BUTTER DRIVE**

*Northwest Ford Dealers and Ford Motor*

*Company Fund announced that the fourth annual Ford Peanut Butter Drive collected more than 75,000 pounds of peanut butter in May and June to help food banks meet the summer demand for nutritious, kid-friendly foods.*

*This annual campaign is a key part of Ford Focus on Child Hunger, a five-state campaign in the Pacific Northwest by Ford dealers to support their community food banks and to make sure no child goes hungry.*





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HUNGER  HERE

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### Looking for a meaningful way to honor your family, friends, or colleagues this holiday season?

A holiday card from Northwest Harvest is a heartfelt way to celebrate the season with those who are close to you. More importantly, your gift will provide nourishing food to children, families, and neighbors in need this holiday season. With your special donation to Northwest Harvest, you can place an order for holiday cards that you can personalize and give to neighbors, friends, family, and anyone else you'd like to honor.

Those that receive the cards will appreciate your thoughtfulness. These cards also serve as a reminder that together we are making a difference in our community.



We will be ready to accept orders and start mailing cards on November 1. If you have any questions or would like an order form, please email us at [greetingcards@northwestharvest.org](mailto:greetingcards@northwestharvest.org), or order online at [northwestharvest.org/greeting-cards](http://northwestharvest.org/greeting-cards).

Thank you for including those we serve in your holiday plans.

*“The Coalition Nutrition Meal Boxes program, our own Food-Bank-on-Wheels, runs on the power of volunteers. They prepare, pack and deliver nutritious boxes of food right to the door of our many school-age kids who often have no transportation during weeks away from school. These devoted volunteers develop a relationship with these families and really care how they are doing. Caring makes all the difference for both the families and the volunteers.”*

—North Mason CCC Food Bank on Wheels, Mason County

## WAYS TO GIVE

### DONATE

Whether your gift is cash, stock or loose change, your generous support makes a big difference. With our purchasing power, a gift of just 67 cents can provide a nutritious meal for a family of three!

### CREATE A LEGACY TO END HUNGER

You can name Northwest Harvest in your will, life insurance, living trust, or IRA. You can also make a difference with a gift of stocks and bonds, or even property. Contact Todd Girouard, Donor Relations Manager, at 206.923.7441 or [toddg@northwestharvest.org](mailto:toddg@northwestharvest.org).

### SET UP A RECURRING GIFT

Making a monthly or quarterly gift is easier on your budget and is a great way to provide sustained support for Northwest Harvest throughout the year. A \$10 monthly gift provides a meal a day for the entire year! To set up a recurring gift, visit [northwestharvest.org/recurring-giving](http://northwestharvest.org/recurring-giving) or call our Development Team at 206.923.7480.