

INSPIRING CHANGE

A message from Chief Executive Officer, Thomas Reynolds



Charles was the first shopper in line at the brand new SODO Community Market last summer. He arrived two hours before the grand opening and waited patiently for the free grocery store to open its doors in Seattle for the first time. Soon he was joined by a growing assemblage of neighbors anticipating the opportunity to be a part of Northwest Harvest's new venture.

Charles and I got to talking, and he offered me some advice, "Sometimes it's difficult to get around aisles in a shop with this walker," he told me, nodding to the maroon and steel colored contraption that assisted his journeys on foot.

"Why don't you use my walker and go around and make sure the corners are easy to navigate?" Charles suggested. What a wonderful idea I thought, and we did exactly that. We navigated the lines and aisles to measure space and ease of access. That suggestion made for a better start to SODO Community Market and to each day we've been in operation.

I don't subscribe to the idea that some people are "the haves" and other people

are "the have nots". Rather I think each of us have areas of abundance and areas of deficit. Life is about sharing—sharing what we have aplenty and seeking out what we need more of. Charles that day, had a deficit of food and an abundance of wisdom.

The sharing of abundance is precisely why Northwest Harvest starts with listening to the people we exist to serve for each new endeavor. Elders, Black, Indigenous, People of Color, mothers, fathers, caregivers—everyone has an experience to share, an opinion to offer, and wisdom to contribute to the design and operation of our work to eliminate hunger in Washington.

Charles' name is written on the whiteboard in my office to remind me where great ideas come from—they come from abundance, and abundance can be found everywhere.

Best regards,

UNPRECEDENTED NEED, UNPRECEDENTED RESPONSE

The world has changed since March. As tempting as it may be to try and return to "business as usual," this isn't an option. The only way to meet the varied needs of our community is to innovate and explore new strategies. Since the crisis began, Northwest Harvest has rapidly adjusted our programs to get food where it's needed most and to advocate for policies that leave fewer empty dinner tables in the first place.

This winter, Northwest Harvest will keep putting everything we have into meeting the needs of our state. We are partnering with KING 5 and Safeway for the 20th anniversary of Home Team Harvest. This campaign was originally launched as a community response to the 9/11 attacks, and 20 campaigns later, we will come together again to meet another crisis head on.

What can you do to help us meet the unprecedented need? How will you give hope to a mother who feels overwhelmed with the dual pressures of maintaining a job and ensuring her children learn and are nurtured? Consider renewing your gift today to support Northwest Harvest at northwestharvest.org/donate, or by sending your gift in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

"Thank you so much for coming out and delivering our food to us for a couple of weeks while our transportation was down a driver. Without your support we would not have been able to get food from Northwest Harvest those two weeks. THANK YOU! Being a smaller food bank we really depend on the food we get from Northwest Harvest to provide to our clients!"

—Plateau Outreach Ministry, King County

FOLLOW US ACROSS THE STATE!

To stay in the know about volunteering and other opportunities in Central and Eastern Washington, "like" our regional Facebook pages—[@NWHarvestYakima](https://www.facebook.com/NWHarvestYakima) and [@NWHarvestSpokane](https://www.facebook.com/NWHarvestSpokane)!

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“COVID has affected the amount of folks we see in the evenings for dinner. Individually packed items help.”

—REST, King County

CHERYL THOMAS, DONOR AND VOLUNTEER WHO MADE COMMUNITY HER WAY OF LIFE

Earlier this year, we received notice of an estate gift from Cheryl Thomas. Cheryl learned how to generously be there for others from her parents. As a child, she saw how they often opened their doors to those in need of support.

Following in her parents’ footsteps, Cheryl helped start Gifts from the Heart food bank in Coupeville on Whidbey Island 17 years ago. She was also a key volunteer of the Admiralty Head Lighthouse giftshop. Through this work, she learned about Northwest Harvest’s efforts to deliver healthy food to 375 food banks throughout Washington state.

Cheryl started out as an elementary school teacher and always had a deep love for children. She also spent many years working for Sears Department Store in Phoenix and in the Chicago area. After retirement, she settled in Coupeville. In addition to her love for children, she had a passion for food and became a first-rate cook in retirement.

While we were not able to ask Cheryl what motivated her support for food banks and Northwest Harvest, it is easy to imagine that the combination

of valuing good food and seeing how children with poor nutrition were affected in her classroom impacted her deeply.

Supporting communities is a consistent motivation behind decisions to leave a legacy gift to Northwest Harvest. Support from legacy donors is critical to ensuring food justice in Washington, now and long into the future. Your gift means that Washingtonians—no matter where they live, their race, income level, or country of origin—can sit down to a meal that is nourishing for their bodies and spirits.

Cheryl’s legacy gift is to be funded through her IRA. More donors are remembering Northwest Harvest through their IRAs in their estate plans. Contact Anne S. Knapp, Northwest Harvest’s Senior Planned Giving Officer at 206.390.6094 or annek@northwestharvest.org with questions about IRAs and estate planning or for a copy of our suggested legacy wording for wills and trusts.



Cheryl Thomas

VOLUNTEER SAFETY IS OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY

Thank you for your commitment to Northwest Harvest and your patience as we revise our volunteer efforts during the pandemic. Our focus continues to be the health and safety of our staff, our volunteers, and everyone who receives our food. Currently Washington’s National Guard is packing our food boxes at our Distribution Centers in Kent and Spokane, and this effort will continue until December 2020. Your presence in our facilities is missed, and we look forward to welcoming you back to our space as soon as we can safely do so. Your dedication—the dedication of our entire corps of volunteers—plays an integral role in our work.



CENTERING THE VOICES OF PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE HUNGER

At Northwest Harvest, we believe it is critical to center the voices of people who have lived experience of hunger when designing and improving our programs. Until you know what it's like to wonder where your next meal is coming from, or you struggle to put food on the table for your family, it is difficult to understand the way this challenge affects your life.

What's more, people who struggle with food insecurity often help to develop the most effective solutions. They intimately know the barriers to accessing food and how these barriers can be removed or circumvented.

Our Peer Support Groups consist of community members across the state who use emergency food services and are experiencing food insecurity. With COVID-19, we've moved these groups online and host weekly projects encouraging people to share their experiences in a private Facebook group. We are currently in the final weeks of the first cohort, and we are excited to share what we're learning.

For example, while 2020 has been a challenging year, people in our current cohort have positively remarked that many food banks across the state are dropping restrictive eligibility requirements for accessing food as a result of the pandemic—restrictions like living in a specified zip code or having to provide proof of limited income.

One participant described how easy it was to get food from their local food bank in comparison to their pre-COVID experience. They drove up, volunteers

placed a box of emergency food and some meats in their truck bed and they drove home. They didn't have to present identification or answer invasive or demeaning questions about how old they are, what their social security number is, or when they last used a food bank—a question that implies people are “taking advantage” of the system when often it is because of systemic discrimination that they need emergency food in the first place.

In the coming months, we will be publishing the findings from our first cohort as well as their recommendations for change. We look forward to sharing these insights with you on our website at northwestharvest.org.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION OF FOOD JUSTICE

Since opening our doors to SODO Community Market on June 24, 2019, we have served thousands of community members. Opening the

market was a significant moment for Northwest Harvest and those that we serve. However, there is still more work to be done to keep the market's shelves stocked with nutritious food, especially as we meet the increased needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

You can help us lay the foundation of food justice—literally! Purchase a

personalized brick to be placed in the SODO market courtyard. These bricks together ensure we have the resources to continue offering healthy food and life-changing programs throughout Washington. Your investment in Northwest Harvest is critical to our sustainability. To purchase your brick, visit: northwestharvest.org/SODO.



One of the ways you can support our efforts is to become part of the outdoor community courtyard with a personalized brick. Contribution levels are available at \$100, \$250, and \$500.

INNOVATING FOOD SYSTEMS FOR EQUITY

Northwest Harvest and our partners have long stood on the forefront of disrupting food systems in Washington state. We do this by creating innovative programs that put food choices where they should be—in the hands of the families most affected by food insecurity.

We're testing a new approach to increase equitable access to healthy food. We are planning to invest up to \$400,000 in the purchase and distribution of cash-equivalent cards across the state. These cards will be distributed evenly among 15 partner organizations that serve people of color, immigrants, or people who are undocumented.

We believe that everyone should be able to put food on their tables that nourishes their bodies and spirits. Along with continued distribution of essential foods, cash-equivalent cards can be

an effective method of addressing hunger, because they allow families to choose what they want and need to eat. Giving people the ability to choose the foods their families enjoy and find comforting isn't just a nice-to-have; it's essential for food justice and dignity.

Foods that are culturally relevant can be difficult for food distribution organizations and food pantries to acquire. Cash-equivalent cards will allow families to purchase groceries at local markets so they can buy what they need and want—from halal meats to spices from people's countries of origin. These cash-equivalent cards will also benefit small businesses and strengthen neighborhoods, as many local markets are owned and operated by members of communities most affected by food insecurity.

We look forward to sharing how this program increases equity by making it easier for families to meet their basic needs in communities across the state!



In many neighborhoods, community-based innovations like Little Free Pantries and produce stands offer hyper-local help.



UPPER VALLEY GLEAN

Harvest against Hunger holds an annual apple-harvesting event in Cashmere, Washington called Upper Valley Glean. This year, participants harvested 30 full Northwest Harvest-supplied bins of apples to be distributed among local food programs. A juicy thank-you to everyone who participated!

“We are starting a food pickup appointment system to go along with our weekly food distributions. This allows us to prepare the foods wanted quicker so people are in and out, allows us to buy needed items for special dietary needs, and lightens the load during regular food distributions for volunteers.”

—Community Food (CAC),
Whitman County

“One success we have had is being able to provide lemon bread to all of our clients. The clients really appreciate the extras that we are able to provide.”

—People for People Meals On
Wheels, Yakima County

EVENTS

WASHINGTON
WESTERN | CENTRAL | EASTERN

KING 5 HOME TEAM HARVEST 20 YEARS. MILLION MEALS.

KING 5 HOME TEAM HARVEST

SATURDAY, DEC. 5

Tune in to KING 5 and KONG at 10 a.m. on Saturday, December 5 for a broadcast special celebrating 20 years of Home Team Harvest. Learn more about the campaign, its history, how it changes lives in our communities, and how YOU can help us reach our goal to raise 20 million meals for our neighbors in need. For more information, go to king5.com/hometeamharvest.

HOMETOWN HARVEST

SATURDAY, DEC. 5

On Saturday, December 5th, tune in to KHQ in Spokane (7:00-9:30 a.m.) and KNDO/KNDU in Yakima/Tri-Cities (7:00-9:00 a.m.) for a broadcast special celebrating a very special Hometown Harvest. Learn more about the campaign and how our communities support Northwest Harvest, its impact and how YOU can help us provide for our neighbors.

THANK YOU, EVENT SUPPORTERS!

This year, we have received an outpouring of support from numerous companies, community organizations and families raising awareness and funds on behalf of Northwest Harvest. We could never list them all; we have highlighted a few events here. We are eternally grateful to everyone who contributes in any way. Thank you for making a difference!

KZOK ROCK THE HARVEST

Thanks to you, Rock the Harvest 2020 was a record-breaking year! We raised more than \$116,000 to provide 500,000 nutritious meals to individuals and families across the state of Washington. A huge thanks to our 2020 partners—Evergreen Home Loans, Tacoma Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram, Beacon Plumbing, Taco Time, Papa John's, and Whistle Workwear—for their support.

GLENDALE RELIEF FOR HUNGER COMMITTEE

Glendale Golf & Country Club members spearheaded a fundraiser with fellow

members, friends, families, and an anonymous donor, ultimately raising \$100,000 for Northwest Harvest—enough to provide some 450,000 meals for Washingtonians in need.



Glendale Relief for Hunger Committee presents their generous gift for Northwest Harvest.

WINE AND DINE

Winemakers and retailers are coming together to help Washingtonians dine on healthy, nutritious food from Northwest Harvest:

Tinte Cellars, a Woodinville-based winery owned by husband and wife team Tim Gamble and Teresa Spellman Gamble, has donated more than \$25,000 since starting

More events and up-to-the-minute details at:
northwestharvest.org

BILINGUAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT SODO COMMUNITY MARKET!

We're recruiting bilingual volunteers in the Seattle area to help us out during our Monday, Wednesday, and Friday market shifts. We're particularly in need of volunteers who speak Cantonese or Mandarin. Volunteer duties include greeting and checking in guests, restocking shelves, and bagging groceries. Shifts are roughly three hours.

For more information, please contact Ames Hwang, our SODO Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at amesh@northwestharvest.org.



their partnership with Northwest Harvest in 2019.

Community, volunteerism, and philanthropy formed the foundation of Tim and Teresa's upbringings. When they established Tinte Cellars, they designed the business to reflect these values. They also foster giving in their family; their son and his friends host an annual food-and-funds drive in support of Northwest Harvest's work.

Total Wine and More, a nationwide retailer, launched their Points with a Purpose initiative in stores around the country to support people in the communities where their stores are located. As a result of this campaign, Northwest Harvest received \$80,000 from Puget Sound-area stores in October.

Join us in a toast to the generosity of these community-minded businesses!



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northwestharvest.org
@NWHarvest



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Interested in learning more about working for Northwest Harvest? Check out our job openings at northwestharvest.org/careers.

STARBUCKS—LOCAL MUSIC, COFFEE, AND HEALTHY FOOD



Starbucks has been a key partner of Northwest Harvest since January of 2020. As their western Washington FoodShare partner, we receive unsold food from their stores to provide nourishing meals to those experiencing food insecurity, and after the onset of COVID-19, they continued to pour on support. In addition to a generous donation of \$250,000 to our COVID-19 Emergency Fund, they donated shield guards to protect

shoppers, staff, and volunteers, and their executive team volunteered at our SODO Community Market to provide prepackaged food bags to shoppers.

Now, during the majority of November and December, Starbucks is partnering with local radio station KEXP to run radio spots highlighting Northwest Harvest's mission. Thank you, Starbucks for your double shot of generosity!

HOST A FOOD DRIVE!

Hosting a food and funds drive for Northwest Harvest is a great way to raise awareness about hunger in Washington state, learn about the root causes of food insecurity, and help those most impacted by this injustice.

We've made some changes to our food drive processes to make drives more effective. Check out our website to learn more: northwestharvest.org/get-involved/food-drives.

