

TOGETHERNESS: MAKING THE IMPOSSIBLE BECOME POSSIBLE

A message from Chief Executive Officer, Thomas Reynolds



What will be the defining moments of this era? Will courage, vision, and generosity outshine fear, small-mindedness, and selfishness?

Each day, media feeds scroll across my screen, overloaded with breaking news of violence, cruelty, and pain. These aggravating stories could easily paralyze us—evoking a conclusion that we've passed the point of no return into a society characterized by menace.

I reject this narrative. We can make a positive difference. We can usher in a new era in which we live, love, and flourish despite the challenges of our time.

Together. I find the best antidote to feeling overwhelmed by negativity is to connect with the people who matter most in my life.

Joining, allying, collaborating, partnering, sharing, serving, and amplifying. These are powerful actions that pave the way for a multiplication of virtuosity.

During this past Thanksgiving, Chef Edouardo Jordan and I distributed hearty, delicious meals to families who have struggled mightily.

In January, Starbucks and Northwest Harvest partnered together to distribute ready-to-eat meals across the Puget Sound at no cost to those who are hungry. This new collaboration will yield millions of meals over the course of the year.

This spring we will be working with food banks in every single county in Washington to deliver fresh, healthy foods so that people who struggle can better feed and nourish their families.

Going forward, I plan to engage more with others—driven by the belief that when we work together the impossible can actually become possible.

I truly believe we can drastically reduce hunger in Washington. But to make this a reality, it will take each of us finding our own way to get involved and act on the very best of our instincts.

Together we can make a difference.

Best regards,

WE HAVE A PARTNERSHIP IN SOLVING HUNGER

This spring, Northwest Harvest is taking stock of our partnerships across Washington and celebrating the many successes we have had. One thing has become very clear: we need each other.

From supplying kids three square meals a day in Eastern Washington to offering healthy food for people on Native American reservations to advocating for policies that leave fewer empty stomachs in the first place, partnerships are critical to our success.

You have been a valued partner in all of this. We are committed to providing equitable access to nutritious food for people who are hungry in our state. But more than that, we are driven by social justice. When hunger is determined by where someone lives or the color of their skin, this shows us that systems are failing entire groups of people. We can't solve systemic challenges alone, and we thank you for your dedicated support.

With your help, along with the support of our strategic partners, we intend to cut hunger in half in Washington by 2028 through a combination of distributing healthy food with programs and farmers statewide and advocating for policies that are smart and in-line with the courageous compassion of Washingtonians.

What can you do to ensure our communities are well-nourished? That kids get enough to eat when school is out? Or to rally supporters to fight cuts to SNAP for families who rely on these programs? Consider renewing your gift today to support Northwest Harvest and our partners at northwestharvest.org/donate, or by sending your gift in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

With your support, we can provide nutritious food today—and eliminate hunger tomorrow.



Staff of Kaiser Permanente, a 2019 sponsor of KING 5 Home Team Harvest, volunteered their time at several locations.

"As our backpack program packed weekly bags to be delivered to the schools, a young man came in to talk to the crew. He stated that he'd received weekend meals from middle school through high school—he's now a freshman in college. He said that the weekend meals made a huge impact on his ability to get where he is today, and he wanted to say thank you for our caring and support of not only him but his family."

—Marysville Community Food Bank, Snohomish County

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KNOW YOUR RIGHTS, PROTECT OUR NEIGHBORS

As a part of Social Justice Training Month in January, we were excited to host an organization-wide training—**Know Your Rights, Protect Our Neighbors**. We were honored to be joined by Jay Stansell, whose experience as an Assistant Federal Defender and Professor of Law and Social Change makes him uniquely experienced to help us understand and dive into this complex issue. This critical training in constitutional rights, immigration enforcement, and personal and employer safe spaces helped us build our knowledge and will aid in the creation of site-specific protocols to ensure the safety and well-being of our shoppers, staff, and other guests.

The training was also a powerful reminder of how important it is to make sure our food is truly available to all.

Our partner programs have shown a key interest in making sure that they are open and accessible to everyone, and we are excited to announce that Jay will be back to facilitate a session at our Partner Conference this coming spring.

View online at northwestharvest.org.



“Food insecurity is not an independent issue but caused by many contributing factors and situations. Hearing the stories of users keeps staff and volunteers humble and opens up dialog. For example, maybe our hours work for some but not others or the food we have is not recognized by international users. Questioning how we operate make us more inclusive and accessible to help those in need in our community.”

—Council on Aging & Human Services Food Bank, Whitman County

STEPS TO LEAVING A LEGACY

Earlier this year, Northwest Harvest teamed up with Seattle Humane and Museum of Flight to present the first in a series of seminars for financial supporters of nonprofits. Over 140 donors from these organizations gathered at the Museum of Flight to hear Kathleen Steele, CFP, present on the importance of centralized records of documents and accounts. She shared an invaluable resource, The Family Love Letter, in which to record this information. Each participant received a copy for their personal use.

The topic clearly resonated with attendees, who gave enthusiastic reviews and provided a list of topics for future seminars. We’re already planning our next seminar for early June 2020. Our goal is to co-host a series of seminars that tie together the various financial planning

areas that many of our donors are concerned about. All will be presented by experts in an unbiased manner. Topics will include subjects like wills, powers of attorney, health directives, IRA’s and 401(k) plans, and elder care.

Northwest Harvest is committed to sharing important information about how charitable giving can be a part of your financial plans. Estate gifts are key in helping us provide for Washington’s food banking community—while also helping grow our endowment.

We always look forward to your comments and suggestions on financial and estate planning topics. For more information, or to let us know you’ve included Northwest Harvest in your plans, please contact Anne Knapp, Northwest Harvest’s Senior Planned Giving Officer at annek@northwestharvest.org.

“Clients are loving the grocery model style of our food bank. They can choose what they want. The fresh produce that is received from Northwest Harvest is a big plus.”

—Stanwood/Camano Food Bank,
Snohomish County

DEEP DIVE: PROTECTING CHILD NUTRITION

One in 6 Washington kids lives in a household that struggles to put food on the table. Child nutrition programs help ensure kids get the fuel they need to focus on learning, being active, and getting the best start on life. These programs provide free and reduced price meals at school, free summer meals, after school meals at daycare and nutrition support for pregnant or nursing moms, infants, and young children.

Our child nutrition advocacy work focuses on strategies and investments that break down barriers to participation in these programs. They ensure that the nutrition standards for meals served by these programs are consistent with findings from dietitians and dietary guidelines.

According to the Food Research Action Center, two-thirds of all kids who eat school lunch live in a low-income household and rely on free or reduced-price meals. Even for families that qualify for reduced-price school meals, the co-pay costs can still be a barrier for their kids. The co-pays add up, especially in families with more than one school-aged child, and that money might otherwise help pay the rent, utilities, or for after-school care.

Our state priorities this year include a bill that eliminates the cost barrier to school meals that increases the use of the federal Community Eligibility Provision. This will greatly help high-poverty, high-need schools provide universal free meals. Students at a school using CEP will no longer have to worry about

whether they can afford to eat, and schools using CEP will see higher federal reimbursements because they are serving more meals.

We are also working to increase the voucher amount for the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, so that pregnant or nursing mothers, their infants, and young children can buy more nutritious and locally grown food that is recommended for good developmental growth.

At the federal level, we are pushing back against an administrative rule proposal that would weaken school meal nutrition standards. The current standards, established in the 2010 Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act, have a demonstrated track record of high compliance with the standards and increased consumption of a variety of fruits and vegetables by students. A proposed rule, issued in January, threatens to unravel this progress. The rule has the potential to reduce the variety and appeal of more nutritious options and open loopholes for increased service of food items that are high in calories, sodium, and saturated fats.

We also have the opportunity to be proactive. If Congress takes up the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, this will be our opportunity to advocate for improvements to child nutrition programs that can break down barriers for service providers and increase access and participation for low-income families—ensuring that all of our kids have consistent access to nutritious food where they learn, where they live, and where they play.



2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

During this year's short session of the Washington Legislature, our advocacy work includes the following objectives:

- Increase access and affordability of fruits and vegetables for households using SNAP and WIC
- Increase participation in school meals for low-income students by reducing the cost barrier
- Provide critically needed relief for the emergency food system with support to improve capacity and infrastructure for distributing perishable, nutritious food
- Expand Farm to Food Pantry, a program that helps food pantries buy more produce from local growers. The produce bought is high in demand among food bank guests, highly nutritious, and culturally appropriate.

On our support agenda, the priorities include: preventing homelessness by improving tenant rights, expanding access to affordable dental care, funding and expanding our state's Working Families Tax Credit, and reversing harmful policies for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program so that more eligible families can access the program.

ANTI-HUNGER ADVOCATES TAKE PRIORITIES TO OLYMPIA

During each legislative session, the Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition hosts Hunger Action Day, a lobby day in Olympia that highlights issues facing hungry families across Washington. On February 3, 2020, over 130 advocates from 30 legislative districts met with their lawmakers or their staff. By going to Olympia to meet with representatives in person, advocates demonstrated how important these priorities are to them as voters. Working with the Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition and the Washington

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Northwest Harvest provided training for advocates on the issues, key talking points, and how to make the most of their 15-minute meetings with lawmakers.

Rep. Sharon Shewmake spoke to advocates about how poverty is a detriment to all of us when you look at the loss of opportunities and potential: we must invest in anti-poverty and anti-hunger programs to close opportunity gaps and improve the health of our communities.



Advocates share their legislative priorities with lawmakers.

Thank you to all for lending your voices to the fight against hunger! Learn what you can do at northwestharvest.org.

KNOCKING DOWN BARRIERS BY LISTENING TO COMMUNITY

Northwest Harvest's mission to improve access to nutritious food while respecting one's dignity is at the heart of a new grant-funded project taking place within our Community Initiative's team. We know there is a need for equitable and inclusive food access, and this new grant allows us to dive deeply into it.

The grant is called REACH (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health) and the grant's goal is to improve health and reduce disparities for African born, African American, and Asian American communities in south Seattle, SeaTac, and Tukwila. While there are many partners involved in this work, our focus is to look at barriers to accessing food and how we can work to eliminate these barriers at our partner food banks.

While we have a good understanding of some of the typical barriers to accessing food banks (transportation, hours, stigma, etc.), we wanted to take a closer look at specific populations. We worked with six community-based organizations who work directly with at least one of the target populations. This included African Community Housing and Development (pictured), Asian Counseling and Referral

Service, South Park Senior Center, Atlantic Street Center, Congolese Integration Network, and Seattle Neighborhood Group. Participants were from nine different countries in Africa and seven countries in south and southeast Asia.

Each partner organization hosted and facilitated the listening session in the languages represented. Each session looked at access to and cultural relevancy of food. We then had participants complete a survey asking if they felt understood and respected at food banks, how they travel to food banks, and if they would like food banks to offer more services than just food.

A lot of great data came out of these sessions. We now have a specific and detailed list of foods participants want to see that are culturally significant. We have an understanding that many folks who do not speak English find it hard to visit a food bank because of language barriers. We learned that overwhelmingly people would like to be able to access other services while at a food bank. We learned that the food banks available in Seattle are still not enough because of accessibility issues and service hours. People want to be able to visit more frequently with less restrictions. Many participants spoke out about not even knowing where to find a food bank—showing the need of getting the right resources into the hands of people. What we heard time and again was that people know how to eat healthy



African Community Housing and Development participants engage in listening session.

and what's good for them; they simply need their culturally significant foods available.

We've just begun this four-year journey to remove barriers to accessing food banks. Up next, we will be taking the listening session data and recommendations to the REACH region food banks to begin an intensive human-centered design process of creating customer advisory groups to roll-out recommendations. We see this work as central in our commitment to equity. This takes building trust and holding accountability with those directly impacted. We hope this work begins a pathway in which we are doing just that.

LIVE STORIES: ADDRESSING HUNGER, POVERTY, AND COMMUNITIES IN NEED THROUGHOUT WASHINGTON

Northwest Harvest has recently built a new online tool that helps provide a full statistical picture of the food security landscape throughout Washington state and all of its 39 counties. The data in this site is arranged into three broad topics— 1) Food Insecurity, 2) Poverty in Working Washington, and 3) Community Snapshot. Each topic starts with an overview of the data at a full state level. But from there, each visitor to the site can search for any county in Washington to see how data compares county to county or to statewide benchmarks.

For thousands of people in Washington, the threat of hunger is a fact of life. One in 10 Washingtonians is considered to be

“food insecure” by the USDA—meaning that they do not have consistent access to a healthy amount or variety of food. The number for children in Washington is 1 in 6. Food insecurity might mean spending money on food instead of other vital expenses, like school supplies or medicine. For some households, food insecurity takes the form of hunger. This site is able to give you a deeper picture into the needs our state faces.

In addition to county-level food insecurity data, we've also included data on demographics, poverty, basic food participation, unemployment, and other measures from the American Community Survey, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Feeding America.

We invite you to explore the data for Washington and all 39 counties in the state by going to northwestharvest.org.



Each page includes a section about the data as well as what these numbers mean to our state.

If you have any questions about our LiveStories site, please email: info@northwestharvest.org. Please include the subject line LIVESTORIES.

EVENTS

WASHINGTON
WESTERN | CENTRAL | EASTERN

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

BACON EGGS & KEGS

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Join us for
Seattle's favorite
brunchy booze
fest at CenturyLink
Field, benefiting
Northwest Harvest!



Enjoy thoughtfully curated brunch
dishes from hand-selected PNW chefs
and local food truck favorites, tastes
from local breweries and cideries,
and the famous 30-foot Bloody Mary
Bar. Don't forget the games, dueling
pianos, and more! Tickets available
at baconeggsandkegs.com/tickets.



The KING 5 Evening team show off their camera-readiness at KOnnected 2019.

KING 5 KOnnected

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

Get KOnnected with your
community at this Party with
a Purpose! Join KING 5 for one
exciting evening to get connected
to nonprofits and individuals who
make the Pacific Northwest the
unique region that it is. Meet with
more than 40 nonprofits, enjoy beer,
cocktails, and delicious bites from
some of the best restaurants in the
city, take in live entertainment, and
mix and mingle with like-minded
Seattleites. Tickets on sale now at
king5konnected2020.eventbrite.com.

THANK YOU, EVENT SUPPORTERS!

We could never list them all, but the
hundreds of events held each year
throughout our state provide tremendous
impact across every community we serve.
To everyone who contributes in any way,
thank you for making a difference!



Christ the Teacher Catholic School has won the Kids for Cans trophy five years in a row.

KIMA KIDS FOR CANS – YAKIMA

Each year the KIMA Kids for Cans school food
drive challenge raises food for thousands of
families across the Yakima area. THANK YOU
to all 18 schools that participated, altogether
bringing in a total of 41,192 pounds of food,
which is over **31,686 meals!**

A congratulations is in order to the winning
school, for the 5th year in a row, **Christ the
Teacher Catholic School**, at 33 pounds per
student! This year they are moving into the
Kids for Cans Hall of Fame, as an honorary
participant and will help Northwest Harvest
and KIMA pass the trophy off to the winning
school next school year!

Shout out to our 2nd place school, Gilbert
Elementary, at 15 pounds per student!

We want to acknowledge three new
participating schools this year: **Union Gap
School**, **Kirkwood Elementary** in Toppenish,
and **Lincoln Elementary** in Toppenish.



Andrew Morford of Green Arce Farms (right) joins the effort with a donation.

TOWNSQUARE MEDIA COASTAL FARM & RANCH MATCH – YAKIMA

Thank you to Townsquare Media, Coastal
Farm & Ranch, and all those who braved
the early morning cold in Yakima to help
Northwest Harvest raise nearly **19,000
meals** for Yakima-area food banks. A special
thank you to Mr. Andrew Morford of Green
Arce Farms. Your generosity helps make our
community even stronger.

SAVE THE DATE!

GIVEBIG WEDNESDAY, MAY 6

GiveBIG Washington is a day where individuals
and organizations come together and make an
investment in the communities we want to live
in by supporting Washington-based nonprofits.
When we give, we make a conscious step
towards creating the society we want to live in.
Watch our website for details.



"We had a surprising number
of families this month who took
very few cans of food, since we
had so much fresh produce from
individuals and farms."

—Battle Ground Adventist Community
Services, Adams County



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

PARTNERING TO BUILD A HUNGER-FREE WASHINGTON

Northwest Harvest is grateful for the many corporate partners that enable us to continue incorporating equity into our food system. These partners are essential in helping to realize our vision to end hunger in Washington. Companies from around the state provide financial

support, volunteer at one of our four locations, host food and fund drives, and help build awareness about the issue of hunger in Washington.

We invite you to partner with Northwest Harvest, and we look forward to growing with you. For information and opportunities, please contact Jasmine Bridges, Corporate Engagement Officer at jasmineb@northwestharvest.org.

BILINGUAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT SODO COMMUNITY MARKET!

We're recruiting bilingual volunteers in the Seattle area to help us out on 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.



Delta group volunteers at Kent Distribution Center.

"The volunteers are dedicated and love working with each client to help put nutritious food on their tables."

—Cashmere Food Bank,
Chelan County