Hanging up from a tough phone call, Stacie Ferguson matter-of-factly says, “I swear, when it rains, it pours.” And after a reflective pause, and with a wry smile on her face, “But I’m used to it. That’s been my whole life; it’s just another hurdle I need to jump over.”

Stacie’s positive attitude in the face of adversity is infectious. “I have no other choice but to be positive. Something bad may happen to me, but then something good happens to counteract it.”

Adversity is nothing new to the 37 year-old married mother of four. “I grew up poor in Illinois. My parents divorced when I was two and I stayed with my dad. My dad always worked two part-time jobs as long as I can remember, from sunup to sundown, so my grandma would come in and help us after school. We were on food stamps and medical cards.”

Working hard, and still needing help was all she knew growing up; and that combination has followed her into adulthood. Stacie and her family came to Wisconsin from Indiana in 2015 with the hope that between her and her husband working full time at a big box home improvement chain, and a little temporary help from the state with medical and food, they could make ends meet until her husband was promoted. Unfortunately neither the full time hours, nor the promotion ever materialized.

Recently, after they both found new jobs, her husband came down with a mysterious stomach ailment that has caused him to go on disability at 2/3 his normal income. “The budget was tight, but now with what he’s going through, it’s tighter. I can’t change what’s happening right now, it’s not a choice that my husband’s sick.”

Today, Stacie and her family rely on Second Harvest partner Heights Unlimited Community Service Center for help with food, clothing, and other essentials. “Nobody can begin to know what it’s like to open a cabinet and have nothing in there, so to open a cabinet and have food in there... there’s no words to describe it. You leave here and you’re happy, because your kids are going to be fed. YOU’RE going to be fed, and it’s a good feeling.”

As for the future, Stacie wants what every parent wants for their child, “I want my kids to be successful - I don’t want them to be on welfare or go to pantries. I just want them to love living life, and live it to the fullest.”

Stacie and her family are just one of thousands of stories of those helped by Second Harvest and its partner agencies. If you would like to be part of our story of hope to those we serve, visit SecondHarvestMadison.org/Donate today.
FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

IMPACT

For nearly 275,000 kids in the 16 counties served by Second Harvest, September means the start of the school year. I remember dreading the start of school because to me, summer was a time to have fun with friends, travel, and do many activities with my family. Not until I was hired by Second Harvest did I learn that for many kids, returning to school isn’t so bad, because school means food.

In previous issues I have shared information from studies that show that kids who don’t get enough nutritious food to eat, especially early in life, start school at a disadvantage. Put simply, it is harder to focus in class when you’re hungry. As a result they don’t do as well on exams, are absent more often, are more likely to repeat a grade and unfortunately have higher dropout rates before graduation.

It is estimated that 1 in every 6 children residing in our 16 counties experiences food insecurity. That’s almost enough to fill the Kohl Center to capacity...2 ½ times!

At Second Harvest, we focus on childhood hunger in many different ways, including:

• Being involved with after school programs at 10 community centers, working with PTA’s and parent groups to fill backpacks with food for weekends
• Partnering with numerous agencies to make food available in school-based food pantries, including five new ones in rural areas this coming year
• Providing FoodShare assistance so families can obtain healthy, nutritious food

As you can see, thanks to supporters like you, we are dedicated to doing our part to make sure kids in our community have access to enough healthy and nutritious food to give them every chance in life.

Arthur Fletcher stated, “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.” To let something so precious go to waste, especially if all it takes to prevent it from happening is something as simple as enough healthy nutritious food, would be a tragedy.

On behalf of nearly 44,000 children who struggle, thank you!

Mark Thompson
Retired, Chairman

Luke Hutchins
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Vicki Villacrez
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RBC Wealth Management

Sverre Roang
FAC Services

Bill Westrate
American Family Insurance

Business Hours:
Mon.–Fri. 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Foodbank Tours:
Kris Tazelaar • 608-216-7206
KrisT@shfbmadison.org

Don’t want to get the newsletter?
Katie Ishmael • 608-216-7220
Katiel@shfbmadison.org
Each year after the inception of the NBC15 Share Your Holidays campaign, Co-Founder and News Anchor Mike McKinney would respond the same way when asked how many meals he wanted to raise, “Just one more meal!”

In 2017, thanks to you, the NBC15 Share Your Holidays campaign raised more meals than ever before...4.18 million meals. This allowed Second Harvest - for the first time in our history - to distribute 15 million pounds of food last fiscal year to help our neighbors facing hunger maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Our goal this year... **One More Meal**.

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**IRA BENEFITS FOR YOU AND SECOND HARVEST**

People are already talking about how the passage of The Tax Cuts and Job Act of 2017 revises the way they’ll file taxes. While the law did not change the basic rules for charitable deductions, it nearly doubled the standard deduction. Now, the standard deduction will be $12,000 for single filers and $24,000 for joint filers. This deduction may be greater if you are over age 65.

**IRA Funds and Required Minimum Distribution**

Individual Retirement Accounts, or IRAs, require a minimum distribution annually, beginning when you turn 70 ½ . An appealing option for donors, at this age, is contributing to a non-profit through the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) as it may help you save on your taxes.

When you donate some (or all) of your required minimum distribution (RMD) it no longer counts as income, as long as the money is transferred directly from the IRA to the non-profit. Making a direct transfer, called a Qualified Charitable Distribution, can be done anytime during the year.

If you are 70 ½ years or older, you can make a tax-free transfer up to $100,000 each year to non-profit organizations. Talk to your financial advisor or IRA administrator about how to complete this transaction. It is also helpful to let Second Harvest, or other non-profit, know about your plans so we can make sure to acknowledge your gift properly.

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**NEXT RISING STARS OF SECOND HARVEST: NRSSH**

NRSSH (pronounced NOURISH) is Second Harvest’s premier networking group for young professionals focused on giving back to the community, professional development, and volunteering. It is a group that is shaping the next generation of leadership for Second Harvest and beyond. Through its fundraising, volunteer and professional development events, members will grow their list of connections in the community and learn from the current group of community leaders, all while enhancing their resume.

If you are interested in being part of NRSSH, visit SecondHarvestMadison.org/NRSSH.
A TEMPORARY SOLUTION TURNS PERMANENT

One of the ways Second Harvest helps those facing hunger in our community is through our Mobile Pantry Program. The idea behind the program is to work with a local group to staff a mobile food pantry stop in a community once a month. Ideally a mobile pantry stop is a temporary solution until a long-term permanent solution can be put in place. That’s exactly how it happened in Black Earth, Wisconsin.

From July of 2011 to December of 2016, Second Harvest held a mobile food pantry in the parking lot of a church in Black Earth. Each month it would serve on average 70-100 families. In January of 2017 that all changed. Thanks to amazing support from the community, and a wonderful group of volunteers, including Co-Coordinator Pam Gattenby (pictured above second from the left), a permanent pantry called Heights Unlimited opened.

According to Pam, “We had a base of clients already, and their biggest concern about switching from mobile to fixed was that they didn’t necessarily live in the area. We assured them that we are open to anybody in need.”

One big benefit of the permanent location over a mobile pantry is the number of times it can be open to those needing help. Heights Unlimited is open every Tuesday, and one Saturday per month; as compared to the Mobile Pantry that only came once per month.

A year and a half later, Heights Unlimited has become more than a source for food, clothing and assistance with other resources; they’ve become a family. “This has provided not only something they really need, but they also get a chance to socialize,” says Pam. “They spend time and laugh together, cry together and share a bond that others don’t understand. We provide way more than just food.”

To learn more about our Mobile Pantry Program, visit SecondHarvestMadison.org/Mobile.

September is Hunger Action Month! Check out these six ways you can take action in September:

- **Download, print and post our 30 Ways in 30 Days calendar** (which can be found at SecondHarvestMadison.org/30Ways). It contains 30 ways you can take action — 1 for every day — towards helping us end hunger.

- **Go Orange on September 13:**

  - **Wear Orange:** Wear something orange, take a picture, and post it to NBC15’s Facebook page. For every picture posted Lands’ End, Habush Habush & Rottier S.C., Thrivent Financial, UW Health & Quartz, Door Creek Dental, Starion Bank and TASC will provide much needed meals to those we serve. **Post both individual AND group photos!**

- **Lands’ End In-Store Promotion:** Donate cash or non-perishable food at the Lands’ End store at 209 Junction Rd. on Madison’s west side and get an additional 30% off your purchase.

- **Shop at area Festival Foods locations and make a donation at the register**

- **Join us for a Go Orange Social at Octopi Brewing (1131 Uniek Dr., Waunakee, WI) from 5-7 pm. Enjoy the first chance to taste Octopi’s limited-run, custom small batch Second Harvest beer. 100% of the sales will be donated to Second Harvest. The event is hosted by NRSSH (see pg. 3).**

- **Food Fight Against Hunger All Month:** Dine out at a Food Fight Restaurant and help provide thousands of meals for southwestern Wisconsin families. Order from the Harvest menu ($1 from each Harvest menu item ordered benefits Second Harvest) or add a donation to your dining bill. Each $1 raised provides 3 meals for families facing hunger.