

# Reimagining *the future of* Food Banking

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*2021 Impact Report*

foodbank<sup>®</sup>  
OF CENTRAL & EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

## Dear Friends and Partners of the Food Bank

Thus far, 2022 has been a year of reflection — thinking back not only on the last year of incredible hardship for all of us, especially our friends and neighbors facing hunger, but also on all the innovation and reinvention that has been possible in the work of the Food Bank this last fiscal year. In August of this year, I will be hitting a milestone in my time here at the Food Bank, marking my 25th year of service, which has led me to reflect on the solutions we've built together over these years toward our vision of no one going hungry.



It has been a great privilege and honor to serve this organization, and after twenty-five years the time is right, for myself and for my family, to retire. The Food Bank could not be in a better position to continue the mission to support the community.

I am enormously grateful to all of those who were here long before me for developing a strong foundation to build upon. It has been inspirational to witness thousands of volunteers and donors sacrifice their own time and resources to the cause, and to have observed the dedication demonstrated by incredible staff and our countless community partners in their commitment and compassion to the mission of the Food Bank.

As you will see in these pages of our Impact Report, with a new three-year strategic plan and strong programmatic gains in the work of hunger relief, we are making great strides to nourish people, build solutions to end hunger, and work to support empowered communities. With your continued dedication and commitment, I am confident the Food Bank will truly realize the vision of no one going hungry in our 34-county service area.

With sincere appreciation and gratitude,



Peter Werbicki, President & CEO  
Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina

## Out of the Mouth of the Vice President of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Mariah Murrell

In early 2021, the Food Bank hired Mariah Murrell as our Vice President of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). Thanks to Mariah's leadership and the support of employees, volunteers, and donors, we continue to elevate the EDI work being done at the Food Bank. We asked Mariah to share more about the efforts we've made over the last year:



*Food Bank staff have been working diligently to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within the organization and beyond. We are extremely proud of the steps we have taken to address barriers to equity as we work to achieve our mission, and to also ensure a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for our staff. Internally, we have completed hours of trainings related to the diverse identities and experiences represented at the Food Bank, we have recognized various cultural and identity celebrations to promote inclusivity, and have developed a strategic plan that positions EDI as an all-encompassing value. That value is reflected in our strategic initiatives that focus on providing access to food and resources for historically resilient communities. We have worked to learn about and distribute culturally meaningful foods to reflect the preferences of members of various communities and have shared information and resources in Spanish to reflect some of the linguistic diversity of our neighbors and clients. We have engaged with communities and community groups to create and further develop relationships and partnerships that will help us to better address the needs of those experiencing hunger. We have prioritized addressing the root causes of food insecurity. These are only a few highlights, but most importantly, we have committed ourselves to centering equity in our approaches to ending hunger within our service area.*

Mariah leads two internal committees, the Culture Impact Committee (CIC) and the Latinx Empowerment Outreach Network (LEÓN), of Food Bank employees that will continue to develop internal and external strategies to promote EDI. One of these initiatives includes our culturally meaningful food boxes, which members of LEÓN have been working on (see *Reaching People Where They Are*), distributed in Wake County. Keep up with our EDI efforts through our social media channels and our blog at [foodbankcenc.org/blog](https://foodbankcenc.org/blog).

## Reaching People Where They Are

In the last several years, the Food Bank has become more intentional in seeking partnerships with organizations that work to empower systemically marginalized communities. This includes programs to reach Latinx, Indigenous, and rural communities with not only fresh and nutritious food, but culturally meaningful foods.

The pandemic has impacted so many people, and it is even more important for the Food Bank to collaborate with partner agencies that could reach diverse populations. One such partnership is with the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry (EFwM) in Dunn, North Carolina. "When it comes to food distribution, we are serving at least 250 people, every two weeks. Usually in the time in between distributions, we have to put some food together for families that can't make it to the next distribution. We couldn't do it without the Food Bank, that is impossible," shared Juan Carabaña, a Program Coordinator with EFwM. The partnership with the Food Bank has allowed EFwM to serve more people.

Another piece of connecting with the Latinx community is making sure the food they receive is culturally meaningful. We don't want to deliver food that folks have never used before to prepare meals, so we wanted to be intentional with the food we are distributing. The most recent step toward distributing this food is a partnership with eight Wake County agencies to receive boxes of nonperishable food for the Latinx community. About 450 boxes are provided each month and include items such as canned chicken, canned beans and corn, tortillas, rice, and cereal. Tri-Area Ministry Food Pantry in Wake Forest is one of the agencies seeing the benefits of distributing more culturally meaningful foods. Board Chair Michael Burger says:

***"Through our partnership with the Food Bank, we are now able to offer a variety of food items which are more desirable. Our clients are appreciative of our efforts to provide them with foods which are familiar."***

We continue to learn and implement ways to make the Food Bank more accessible. People from all communities and all walks of life experience hunger, and we are working to be reflective of the community we serve in. With your help, we are working to provide stability, sustenance, esteem, and to restore hope.



## Seeing the Impact of Nourishing Children

With your support over the last year, the Food Bank distributed food to approximately 200,000 youth facing hunger in the 34 counties we serve. Unfortunately, we continue to see a devastating impact from COVID-19 for young people, who are left vulnerable to family and school changes.

No child should have to worry when they will eat again, and no parent should have to skip a meal so they can put food on the table for their children. Through agency distributions, targeted nutrition programs, education, and public policy work, the Food Bank is reaching young people with healthy and fun food options.

Our dedicated staff goes into communities to meet children where they already are: operating grab n' go meal sites, pantries at schools, meals to take home on weekends and breaks, hot foods at after-school care, and breakfast and lunch at summer camps. Every year, the Food Bank provides healthy food to children so they can build the skills to be whatever they want to be in life and advocates for policies that ensure programs like these continue to receive vital government support.

"It takes a team to make sure children have access to food," said Christina Paige, Outreach Coordinator for the Food Bank. "Our staff, volunteers, partner agencies, and vendors come together to ensure nutritious food reaches kids where they are, but we can't even begin that process without our donors."

One example of your investments at work can be seen at Pender County Schools. The Food Bank has supported ongoing food programs for students and extra assistance during times of disaster. Principal/Alternative Learning Program Coordinator Aja Winstead says some families in the district depend on the food their children receive at school. And the kids need to have enough nutritious food to be able to focus on their work.

Winstead has observed first-hand the impact of regular, nutritious food on the students:

***"Students who have regular access to food can focus on their schoolwork and spend time working with their classmates rather than worrying about their next meal. Food security allows students to be fully engaged in the classroom. Food security also reduces health risks and behaviors."***

Together our targeted programs (Kids Summer Meals, Weekend Power Pack, Kids Cafe, School Pantries) provided over 1.1 million meals to kids last year.

Your support ensured the Food Bank's ability to nourish people, build solutions, and empower communities in 2021.

**138,400,000** lbs. of food distributed

**115,333,333** meals provided

**51,714,404** lbs. of produce distributed

**134,988** volunteer hours

**813** partner agencies

**1.1 million** meals provided through our Kids Programs

**\$4.6 million** benefits generated through outreach team (SNAP)

**\$7 million** in economic activity generated by benefits outreach



**The corporate, foundation, and government partners showcased here are members of our CORE leadership giving circles. Each organization on this list has made a significant gift of food or funds in support of our mission and has allowed us to respond to unprecedented need. You give us hope for the future — thank you!**

**Cornerstone Supporters**

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## The Future of the Food Bank

We've known for some time that the Food Bank's next strategic plan would need to be informed by an in-depth look at what's next in fighting hunger and building a path to food security. But we could not have anticipated the incredible impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had for the people and communities we serve.

COVID-19 shed light on an issue we've known was there — so many members of our community are living one health crisis, one missed paycheck, and one grocery store trip away from needing to use the Food Bank network. While we have witnessed and experienced unprecedented need, we have also experienced unprecedented support. The community has developed a greater awareness of food insecurity, of how many families and individuals live so close to the edge in putting food on the table.

With this strategic plan, we have an opportunity, and a responsibility, to look deeper and develop approaches to support people on the cusp of food insecurity before they find themselves needing the services of the hunger relief system.

By prioritizing equity, diversity, and inclusion; nourishing people; building solutions; and empowering communities, we're being innovative: building on and strengthening our tactics that will move the needle toward food security in our communities, ultimately realizing our vision of no one going hungry.



## 2021 Financials

### 2021 REVENUE

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Food Donated  | \$ 233,753,294        |
| Contributions                                       | \$ 58,469,202         |
| Campaign Pledges                                    | \$ 3,047,324          |
| Governmental Awards                                 | \$ 13,941,463         |
| Agency Contributions                                | \$ 585,743            |
| Miscellaneous                                       | \$ 6,368              |
| Goods, Services, and Facilities Contributed In-kind | \$ 909,591            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$ 310,712,985</b> |

Accounting by Elliott Davis

### 2021 EXPENSES

|                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Program Services     | \$ 261,832,879        |
| Management & General | \$ 1,743,250          |
| Fundraising          | \$ 4,236,676          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>\$ 267,812,805</b> |

This means that **97¢** of every **\$1** goes directly to programs and services.

### 2021 NET ASSETS

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets           | \$ 43,138,500 |
| Increase in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets | \$ (238,320)  |
| Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets             | \$ 42,900,180 |
| Net Assets at the Beginning of the Year       | \$ 40,460,841 |
| Net Assets at the End of the Year             | \$ 83,361,021 |

## Work Begins on New Facility for Wilmington

The Food Bank began work on a new facility at 1000 Greenfield Street in Wilmington — anticipated to open in early 2023. The five-acre tract of land was purchased in 2020 and was the first step to address urgent food insecurity in Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties.

The new 35,000 square foot facility — the nCino Hunger Solution Center — will provide the infrastructure and space to reach more of our neighbors facing food insecurity in the Cape Fear region and allow the Food Bank to operate additional programs to address hunger at its root causes.

The new facility will accommodate substantially more dry food and will provide 80% more freezer and cooler space, significantly increasing distribution of fresh, healthy foods. To build solutions for long-term hunger relief, plans for the new site will also include expanded programming in workforce development and health education, a community garden, and access to fresh, healthy food for nearby residents.

Many thanks to those who have made significant investments in the project so far: Bruce Barclay Cameron Foundation, Dan Cameron Family Foundation, nCino, the State of North Carolina, and Food Lion among many others. Follow the construction process and get more information at [foodbankcenc.org/ilmupdate](http://foodbankcenc.org/ilmupdate).



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