



Auction beats Fund-A-Need goal

Thank you to our dedicated supporters who donated to or attended our in person Take a Bite Out of Hunger Benefit Auction on October 29! It was so great to be back in the room with you and feel the energy that everyone brought to our silent auctions, live auction, and dessert dash.

We raised \$278,379 in total and our Fund-A-Need raised \$171,054, which exceeded our goal of \$165,000! All of that will go toward our ever-increasing food budget (which may top \$700,000 this year) to provide nutritious and culturally relevant food to our neighbors in Northeast Seattle.

If you weren't able to attend this year you can still donate to the Food Bank online before the end of the year to help us raise more money for our food budget!

We look forward to seeing you at our 2023 auction next October!

More auction news:

Sponsors, special people: Page 4

Auction item donors: Page 5



Susan Williams and Dick Conway make a bid. **More photos on page 8.**



Liz Benko

Meet Liz Benko, the Food Bank's Packs for Kids coordinator

Meet Liz Benko an incredible volunteer who runs our Packs For Kids program, providing weekend meals for local children. She's made such a difference in so many lives and is always working to find creative ways to save money on purchasing, and even helped supply more than 250 laptops for local students in the schools we

partner with. Read on to learn more about this important program and how you can donate or volunteer!

When did you start volunteering at the Food Bank?

I started as a volunteer in late 2019

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University District Food Bank assists low-income individuals residing within Zip Codes 98102, 98103, 98105, 98112, 98115, and 98125.

Food for Thought is published quarterly by University District Food Bank for our volunteers, donors, and public at large.

University District Food Bank is a program of the University District Service League, a registered 501 (c) (3).

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Letter From The Director

Dear Friends,

If you remember back to the very early days of the pandemic in Spring 2020, one of the most enduring visuals was the long lines of cars waiting to collect groceries from food banks around the country. One of our early pandemic fears at the food bank was not being able to keep up with that rising demand locally.

Well, the generosity of our neighbors – you and so many others across Northeast Seattle – helped us weather that initial surge in customers and new government support programs helped limit how big that surge became. In fact, studies indicate that these pandemic-related government programs actually reduced poverty by as much as 50%. Child poverty rates moved to historic low levels. Importantly, this improvement was true for both white children and children of color. Generational inequities by race were reduced through this pandemic support.

We know far too well the negative impact that poverty has on child development. The impact on cognition, physical and mental health, educational success, and other life outcomes persists into adulthood. So, this reduction in child poverty was encouraging. Yet, we also knew that the government supports were temporary and feared that these positive results were short lived.

In 2022, one of these supports, the child tax credit payments, ended. A recent Boston University study found that with the loss of even these modest payments, food insecurity among families and children ROSE 25% between January and July of this year. Coupled with the loss of universal free school meals at the end of June when that temporary support ended and the broader inflation that we all experience, the pressures faced by low income families this fall are greater than they have been.

Our own survey of customers last spring showed that 75% survive on less than \$30,000 annually. So, it's not hard to imagine how important those child tax credit payments were, how helpful those school meals were, and how their absence can move a family backward economically so very quickly.

In January, Washington State lawmakers will have the opportunity to provide universal free school meals for all K-12 public school students, this time permanently. These free meals can help reduce food insecurity and lower child poverty rates. To make this happen, lawmakers will need your encouragement. Please reach out and urge your state senator and representatives to support this proposal. Make an investment in the long-term health and wellbeing of all our children by investing in their food security today.

Your continued financial support helps us build a hunger free Northeast Seattle. By also reaching out to support this important policy, you can help build a hunger free Washington State. Thank you for taking action.



In peace,
Joe

Past, present board members gather



Former board presidents Carol Cabe and Megan Knight at the reunion.

Thank you to former, present and future University District Food Bank board members who joined us in July at our board reunion! We had a great time gathering with you, meeting new people, and sharing some laughs over food and drinks at Eastlake Bar & Grill.

If you are interested in joining the Food Bank board or recommending someone, please contact Paul Yunker at paul@udistrictfoodbank.org to learn more!



Alfred Lee served on the very first Food Bank Board in the early 1980s.



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The University District Food Bank is an essential part of the U District, preventing hunger and serving our neighbors. We are proud to support this important work.

BE BOUNDLESS / UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Thanks for helping us beat our auction goal!

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Auction Special People

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Curt Milton
Darlene and Jay Moses
Laura Wirkman
Betsy Wheeler

Community groups that have given so generously

Seattle Green Earth Cleaning

A big thank you to Seattle Green Earth Cleaning and its customers who have donated a total of \$30,170 to the University District Food Bank since 2017!

They have donated thousands of pounds of non-perishable food that Heather McDowell and her team at Seattle Green Earth Cleaning have delivered to us. Additionally, they have repeatedly donated to our annual Take A Bite Out of Hunger auction!

Seattle Green Earth Cleaning offers customizable home cleaning services from routine cleaning to deep cleaning to move-in and move-out services, as well a variety of add-ons. Consider giving them a try next time you're in need of a cleaning service and looking to support businesses that give back to their community!

University Presbyterian Church

We appreciate all of the local churches who give generously to

our Food Bank and this month we'd like to thank the University Presbyterian Church for their thoughtful giving.

Since 1994 they have donated nearly \$750,000 to our organization! This large congregation is so connected to the community outside of its doors and engaged in service to the neighborhood. Their efforts are so impactful and very much make a difference in people's lives. Thank you!

Thanks to our 2022 auction item donors!

2BAR Spirits	Dick's Drive-In Restaurants, Inc.	Karen Drumheller	Paul Yunker	Staypineapple
Acorn Street Shop	Dino Haak	Karen Ko	Peg Balachowski	Ste. Michelle Wine Estates
Adamant Cellars	Dumpling the Noodle	Kate Delavan and Will Lowell	Penelope & The Beauty Bar	Stephanie Bender
Adventures with Sarah	Dunham Cellars	Kathleen Day	Pine Cone Creamery	Stoneway Hardware
Alaska Airlines	DW Distilling	Kathleen Higgins and Patrick Jenny	Portage Bay Cafe	Stoup Brewing
Alderbrook Resort & Spa	Earshot Jazz	Kavonne Wynn	Queen Anne Book Company	Sun Liquor Distillery
Amy Funbuttons	Ethan Stowell Restaurants	Kelly and Ruby Grebinsky	Queen Anne Frame & Gift	Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort
Amy Stephson & Brian Rapalee	Eureka! Seattle's University Village	Kontos Cellars	Rebecca Andrew	Susan Williams and Dick Conway
Arra Ebersten	Finale's Gourmet Desserts	Kuma Coffee	Reininger & Helix Wines	Swansons Nursery
Avennia Winery	Float Seattle	Ladd & Lass Brewing	Renaissance Tree Care	Syncline Winery
Ba Bar	Flying Apron	Latta Wines	Republic of Cider	Tacoma Art Museum
Baer Winery	Fresh Flours Bakery & Cafe	Le Fournil	Residence Inn By Marriott Seattle University District	Ted Hunter
Bakery Nouveau	Frisky Girl Farm	Leah Ball	Rick Steves' Europe	Tennis Center Sand Point
Bang Salon	Full Pull Wines	Letterpress Distilling	Rob Beem	The 5th Avenue Theater
Barbara Roller	Gelatiamo	LetThemEatSoap.com	Roger Wagoner	The Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture
Beecher's Handmade Cheese	Georgetown Brewing Company	Linda Rethke	Rotie Cellars	The College Inn Pub
Best Western Pioneer Square Hotel	Georgetown Liquor Company	Madison Park Bakery	Sand Point Country Club, Jim and Holly Johnson	The Mountaineers
Bloomer Estates	Greg Doerge	Magnuson Athletic Club	Sarah Washburn and Ben Spruch	The Museum of Flight
Book Larder	Guardian Cellars	McMenamins Pubs and Breweries	Saviah Cellars	The Pastry Project
Bottleworks	Hawaiian Vanilla Company	Mercer Estates Winery	Scarecrow Video	The SweetSide
Cafe Allegro	Hedges Family Estate	Mercer Park Dentistry	School of Acrobatics and New Circus Arts	Theo Chocolate
Cameron Catering	Hellbent Brewing Company	Meredith J. Berlin	Scratch Distillery	Third Place Books – Ravenna
Can Can Culinary Cabaret	Holly Marklyn	Michael Florentino Cellars	Sea Creatures Restaurants	Thurston Wolfe Winery
Carol Cabe	Hotel Nexus	Mighty-O Donuts	Seattle Aquarium	Tom Douglas Restaurants and Hot Stove Society
Carolyn and Vince Wirkman	I Love Thai Cooking LLC	Mike Gleason	Seattle Donut Boat Company	Trophy Cupcakes
Cathy Petito Boyce	Ian's Pizza	Mojito Latin American Restaurant	Seattle Interiors	Tropical Flowers & Bouquets of Hawaii
Charlie Burdell and Ryan Durkan	Irene Holroyd	Molly & David Hancock	Seattle Kraken	University Village
Cheryl & Scott Washburn	Irwin's Bakery & Cafe	Molly Moon's Homemade Ice Cream	Seattle Seaplane	University of Washington Athletic Department
Cheryl Marek	Isenhower Cellars	Museum of Pop Culture	Seattle Storm	University of Washington School of Drama
Chris Schenck	Jane Lamb	Nathaniel Banse	Seattle Symphony	Urban Float
City Eyeworks	Jeff Sconyers and Deb Godfrey	Neighborhood Farmers	Seattle Theatre Group	Uwajimaya, Inc.
CJ Hawkinson	Jerry and Lynne Arthun	Nerka Sea-Frozen Salmon	Serafina	View Ridge PCC
Copperworks Distilling Company	Jess and Mary Levine	New Roots Organics	Shake Shack	Village Theatre
Costco	Joan Horn	Nielsen's Pastries	Shanelle Donaldson	Westland Distillery
Curt Milton	John Howie Restaurants	Night Light Nails Salon	Shirley Towner	Wine O'Clock
Dahlia Bakery	Jonathan and Marissa Cats	Nuflours	Skagit Cellars	Woodland Park Zoo
Daniel's Broiler – Prime Steaks & Seafood	JuneBaby Restaurant	OOLA Distillery	Sleight of Hand Cellars	Zylberschtein's
Darlene and Jared Moses	Karen Andersen	PacWesty	Starbucks	Delicatessen & Bakery
DeLille Cellars		Pagliacci Pizza		
		Paint the Town		
		Patty Minzel		

Food Bank works for a healthier planet

Our staff and volunteers are not only committed to the health and wellness of our shoppers but also to our planet. We're always keeping in mind how we can run our food bank and be more energy efficient, reduce waste and lower emissions. Check out what we're currently doing and learn more about what's in the works!

Reducing Food Waste – Our Food Bank helps save perfectly good food from all over the area from going to waste through our grocery rescue programs (thanks to Peddling Relief Project for using bike power to help rescue 1,000 lbs. of food every week!). Grocery stores often can't sell imperfect looking foods and we'll gladly take those wonderful fresh fruits and veggies. We also save food like stale bread for local pig farmers.

Electric Delivery Vans – We converted one of our gas delivery vans to 100% electric and are working on converting the second one in 2023. Big thank you to EV Works on Bainbridge Island for converting the van from gas to electric!

Rooftop Roots – Growing our own fruits and veggies on the Food Bank's rooftop provides a near zero-footprint supply of fresh food for our shoppers during spring, summer and fall.

Honey Bees – The honey bees we keep will allow us to harvest 50 lbs. of honey this year that we can give to shoppers. They also pollinate our garden and help it thrive. How sweet!

Biodigester Composter – We're excited to launch our biodigester

composter next year. It will allow us to compost our own scraps on site, will generate enough energy to power our electric delivery vans, and will save us money by no longer paying to compost with the city.



We converted one of our gas-powered delivery vans to be 100% electric and are working to convert a second van in 2023.

Deeply Rooted in Washington

Like the UNIVERSITY DISTRICT FOOD BANK, we're committed to providing life-changing resources so our neighbors can thrive.

We proudly support the University District Food Bank and its mission of preventing hunger and helping generations of families prepare nutritionally balanced meals at home.



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Making a difference with Packs for Kids program

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not long before everything shut down for COVID. In 2021, I took over as a volunteer coordinator for the Packs For Kids program.

Tell us a little about your background?

I was an architect and project manager for many years and moved on from that career. I felt I wasn't making a difference in the world and helping my community in the way that I wanted to. I was raised by parents who went out of their way to teach about being a part of the community and doing what you can to contribute time, energy and talents.

What is the Packs for Kids program at University District Food Bank?

The program started in the early 2000s with one local school after Food Bank staff learned about the food insecurity that many children faced on the weekends. They were receiving free breakfast and lunch at school but what happened on the weekends?

Food Bank staff partnered with parents at Eckstein Middle School and started the program with just 15 kids. They would supply a pack filled with enough nutritious food for one child to eat at home over the weekend and not worry about their next meal. By the end of that year they had 6 or 7 schools on board!

Today we serve 14 Seattle schools and 700 kids in grades K-12. The foods we include are easy enough for the youngest children to prepare at home for themselves and we've worked with nutritionists to ensure that our packs meet nutritional standards – we buy prepared and shelf stable

items that include trail mix, apple sauce, mac and cheese cups, shelf stable milks – foods that they enjoy and meet our standards.

How many families utilize it each week?

We serve almost 700 kids in Northeast Seattle, and our numbers are continuing to grow.

90-95% of the food in the packs and our grocery bills are increasing this year, just like everyone else's.

In the last calendar year, the cost has increased 20% per child. Without more funding and financial support from our community there is a physical limit to the program.

“I love the idea of helping kids who need it. I really believe every child deserves access to healthy food. It's a human right.”

Liz Benko

Packs for Kids Coordinator



What is your favorite part of your job?

I love the idea of helping kids who need it. I really believe every child deserve access to healthy food. It's a human right. I also love connecting with my community and working with parent and staff volunteers, getting feedback about what the kids need. We have an amazing team of volunteers as well that keep this program alive. More volunteers are always welcome!

What is something our community may not know about Packs For Kids?

It's the most expensive per client program we operate because we need to ensure everything is easy for kids to prepare and eat. To achieve this we purchase

Tell us about securing 263 laptops from Interconnection for kids in 2021!

It's such a fantastic partnership! I helped coordinate with all schools we work with on our Packs For Kids program to get counts for how many students needed laptops. Interconnection in Seattle really understood our needs and there was no barrier to access, families did not need to give any personal information or prove eligibility to receive a computer. They ended up donating 263 laptops to local school children in grades K-12!

Interconnection is committed to digital equity and runs a store in Wallingford. Please check them out online (interconnection.org) or at their store and support how you can.

Food Bank auction returns to a live event ... at last!



Bidding in the Fund-A-Need portion of the auction.



Friends greeting each other during the Silent Auction.

At right: There were lots of yummy treats in the Dessert Dash.

Far right: Former board members Elizabeth Tutmarc and Jeff Staples are perfectly in style!

