



SPRING 2022

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT FOOD BANK

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CURT MILTON PHOTO

Shanelle Donaldson, second from right, on the Food Bank's roof, with the Bloom Project interns.

## Farm manager Shanelle Donaldson and Bloom Project keep us growing

Shanelle Donaldson is the rockstar manager behind the Food Bank's Rooftop Roots Farm, and has some incredible projects up her sleeve this spring!

Shanelle started at the Food Bank in October 2020, taking over managing our rooftop farm where we grow seasonal fruits, vegetables and herbs year-round to feed the community. With all that she does for us, she's also operated her own business, an urban farm called Percussion Farms, since 2016. It's a backyard farm model where

people donate space and she grows food in Seattle's Central District, Beacon Hill and in Auburn. Food that's grown is distributed to food banks and the local BIPOC community.

In 2021 Shanelle partnered with the Doorway Project to found an urban farming job training program called the Bloom Project, dedicated to educating youth about how to grow food in an urban setting. Last year they had enough funding for one cohort, and after receiving grant funding

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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've spent any time in the Food Bank, you know just how important volunteers are to the work that we do. From collecting food donations from nearby businesses, to sorting those donations so that we keep only the best looking options for our store, to restocking our shelves, to packing up groceries for our customers, and even delivering those groceries to folks who can't come in themselves: Volunteers make the magic happen each and every day.

If you are one of the many volunteers who contributed more than 44,000 volunteer hours with us last year then let me say, "thank you." If you are one of the 650 different volunteers we have had help us out already in 2022 then let me say, "thank you".

Even with all this support though, we still need your help. We still value your participation.

The most obvious way you can help is by giving hours to support our food distribution. We need your help, especially on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and evenings, to shop for our customers. Even as we explore reopening the store to in-person shopping later this spring, we will need shopping assistance. Two to three hours of help once a week means a lot. And as we relax our standards to allow middle schoolers to join us again (with a parent or guardian), this can become a family friendly activity.

What if your busy schedule doesn't let you help us on site? Think about other ways to make an impact. Spread the word about our work. Share our news and our needs with your neighbors, other families at your school or church, on your social media networks, or even with your co-workers.

I know that so many of us live busy lives and balance many commitments. What works one season might not work the next. We experience that same thing. Volunteers and donors come and go. We need to hustle to replace and grow our community of supporters. You can help. In fact, a personal recommendation or testimonial is often what someone needs to step forward to try our volunteering or write that first check.

Think of how powerful product and restaurant reviews are in guiding your choices. Your personal endorsement means a lot to those in your life and your network.

And if that doesn't seem like enough, you can always organize your own mini food drive. You don't need our permission to rustle up the donations to fill our shelves. Inflation is impacting us all, the food bank included. If you can help us fill our shelves then you can help us overcome our lost buying power that we have experienced with rising food costs. Our website has a list of our common food and household needs. Our social media sometimes calls out special shortages.

At the end of the day, our work is possible because of the generosity of our community. The understanding that our own well-being is interwoven with those around us. By volunteering, you strengthen and grow this connection. Thank you.



In peace,  
Joe

# Co-presidents felt the call to help out

When someone decides to volunteer for an organization, most people ask themselves two things; 1) How can I help? and 2) How much time can I give? Ben Spruch and Michael Goodheim are the Co-Presidents of the Food Bank's Board of Directors, and they asked themselves these same questions before they joined the board. Both have busy professional lives, but they were inspired to join the board of the U-District Food Bank about five years ago because they saw a strong organization fulfilling a vital community need — to relieve hunger.

"I saw the lines of people at the old and new locations that were being served and I felt like I could do more to help," says Michael. "I had served on a number of non-profit boards and thought my strategy and finance expertise could be useful at the Food Bank." In Michael's time as a director, he has helped with fundraising, updating the organization bylaws, served as Treasurer and is now helping to lead the Board. "It is such a rewarding experience to support such an effective group of managers and volunteers to achieve our mission."

Ben has also sought ways to bring his talents to board work. "This was my first non-profit board experience, so I wanted to learn about what the organization needed and what role I could play." Ben has co-led the board's Advocacy Committee, worked on updating bylaws, and served on the Finance Committee, before stepping up to be Co-President. "This past year, our board has been focused on building equity and inclusion considerations into strategies to increase our reach



Our Co-Presidents are Michael Goodheim, left, and Ben Spruch.



*"I saw the lines of people ... that were being served and I felt like I could do more to help."*

**Michael Goodheim**

Food Bank Co-President

into the community. It's been great to be part of exploring new possibilities for the Food Bank and our customers."

Board and committee members spearhead the Food Bank's efforts for fundraising events, identify ways to involve the neighbors and businesses in supporting the organization's mission, and set the strategic direction for the Food Bank. The people who serve in these organizing and governance roles do so not only because they

are passionate about the work of the Food Bank, but also because they wish to be more actively engaged in the community. The commitment can be as little as five hours a month and is flexible (other than the general meeting times).

"We are always looking for new participants on our committees, as well as the full board of directors," says Ben. Work currently under way includes the Auction Committee's planning for our annual event in October and the FUNdraising Committee's exploration of a spring event in addition to working to support the Montlake Turkey Trot. Our Finance Committee is always seeking members with finance and accounting experience. If you think that you have some time and energy to bring to the strategy, fundraising and governance work of your Food Bank, please contact [boardsupport@udistrictfoodbank.org](mailto:boardsupport@udistrictfoodbank.org).





Lena Kabeshita manages the North Seattle College and Magnuson Park Community food pantries.

# MEET THE TEAM:

Lena Kabeshita,  
AmeriCorps  
team member  
and Food Access  
Program  
Coordinator

Lena Kabeshita is one of the Food Bank's three new team members who came to us through our partnership with AmeriCorps. She joined us in October 2021 to manage our two satellite pantries at North Seattle College and Magnuson Park, and is such an important part of the work we do for the north Seattle community!

Originally from Illinois, Lena was living and interning in Yakima before coming to Seattle. She is a recent college graduate with a major in soil and crop science and a minor in women and gender studies.

## What is your role at the Food Bank?

I am the Pantry Program Coordinator. I manage our two offsite pantries — North Seattle College on Tuesday nights and Magnuson Park on Wednesday afternoons. I'm responsible for ordering food for the pantries, bringing the food over to each pantry and making sure they are running smoothly. I also coordinate 8-12 volunteers

per week to help run the pantries.

### **Why were these satellite pantries created?**

The satellite pantries pre-date the pandemic and were created to serve areas of need in North Seattle where there's not a food bank nearby or affordable grocery stores. The North Seattle College Pantry was intended to support food insecure students at the college, but it has expanded beyond the student community and grown overall to fill a need among additional North Seattle households. In January 2022 we served 50 student households, nine staff households, and 98 community member households.

We purchase food specifically for these pantries each week, then set up and break down on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, but each runs a little differently. North Seattle College offers pre-packed food in bags and then shoppers choose their protein with a drive-through

and walk-up service style.

Magnuson is more of a shopping model where guests walk through and choose what they want for the week.

### **How many families do you serve per week?**

In January at Magnuson we served 320 households for the month and in North Seattle we served 229 households for the month. I want to give a big shout out to the volunteers who dedicate time each week to support these pantries. Their work is invaluable, and I couldn't operate without them!

One of our regular volunteers at our Magnuson pantry passed away in February. His name was John Tuttle, and he had been volunteering at Magnuson for the last year. I want to thank him for all his hard work and dedication to our cause. He will be missed by all of us.



John Tuttle was a valued volunteer at the Magnuson Pantry. He passed away in February.



A volunteer works to set up the North Seattle College Pantry.

CURT MILTON PHOTOS

# Thank You To our Donors Paula Becker and Barry Brown

Barry Brown and Paula Becker are generous Food Bank donors whose gifts in memory of their son, Hunter Brown, have funded our North Seattle Pantry. The family had been longtime monthly donors to the University District Food Bank.

Hunter was killed in 2017. Paula and Barry subsequently received a jury award enabling them to further help the Food Bank and other organizations that help young people who struggle.

During high school, Hunter had attended Running Start classes at North Seattle College. As a young adult, Hunter struggled with addiction and experienced periods of homelessness. During this period, he was a customer of the University District Food Bank.

When the need arose to help fund the North Seattle pantry, Paula and Barry appreciated the

chance to help in a way that had such a strong connection to Hunter.

Approximately 90% of the food we distribute at the satellite pantries is purchased, making the Hunter Brown memorial donation support so impactful and important to the Food Bank and our shoppers.

“The Food Bank stretches donations so much farther than I imagined. We know that every penny we’re able to donate to the Food Bank is going to be maximized. No one can fail to understand the importance of putting food in people’s mouths,” said Paula Becker. “I feel grateful that there is an organization like this that will take our donation and do so much good with it.”

We want to send a heartfelt thank you to Paula and Barry for keeping their son Hunter’s memory alive through their generous gifts.

They are touching so many lives.

“Even small donations make an enormous difference. What matters is consistently supporting an organization you believe in. It’s the number of people who are willing to stand up and donate, not the amount,” Paula said.



Hunter Brown

## Help Us Grow the Food Bank Community in 2022!

We couldn’t serve the families of Northeast Seattle without the support of the University District Food Bank’s amazing volunteers and donors! We have so many incredible people donating money, volunteering their time to help at the Food Bank, organizing community drives, and helping to plan events like our Fall auction and more.

Even with all of this help, every year we have people who move away, donate to a different cause or just get busy and no longer have the time to spend with us. To keep our community strong we’re asking you to join us in 2022 and help us grow!



A Food Bank supporter checking out items at the auction.

Here’s few easy ways to help:

- Sign up for our e-newsletters at [udistrictfoodbank.org](http://udistrictfoodbank.org) and share the next one with three friends, encouraging them to sign up and stay connected.
- Text three people and ask them to join you in volunteering or donating any monetary amount they can this year.
- Post on Instagram and Facebook about getting involved, donating or attending one of our upcoming events.

All of this helps to spread the word and grow our reach in the community so we may continue to operate and help more families!



# Program features urban farming and art

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they will be able to offer two cohorts that will each run for 10 weeks in 2022 and in 2023!

The program is offered to five students per session, ages 18-24, and focuses on black and indigenous youth, as well as those experiencing housing insecurity and living in youth care and transitional housing. The students are paid \$20 per hour for 10 hours of training per week and get to experience everything hands-on. They will spend five hours at the



University District Food Bank and the other five hours at Doorway Project where they will work on building an urban garden and growing space. They will learn about food systems, how food is distributed, all about worms and composting from the folks at the Tilth

Alliance, a beekeeper will teach them about bees and pollinators, and a local forager will take them foraging in the city.

Additionally, art will play a big role in the curriculum, offering a creative and healing experience. This includes painting beehives, writing poetry, making lip balm from flowers they grow, making vegetable dyes from veggies they grow, making seed paper, and building a mason beehive.

After the 10 weeks they hope to place all students in urban agriculture jobs including at farmers markets, and with beekeepers and at urban farms like Percussion. Shanelle hopes to open their eyes and minds to the world of urban agriculture, which is filled with opportunities they may have never known about.

Shanelle is also in the process of converting the Food Bank's rooftop raised beds from milk crates to larger wood and metal beds that are deeper, allowing for more growing options. We can't wait for you to see it when it's completed later this spring!



Shanelle Donaldson, top left, is the manager of the Food Bank's Rooftop Roots farm. She works with interns in the Bloom Project. The program focuses on urban farming and art. One of the interns, top right, decorates a pot. Below, Shanelle shows a Scarlet Sentinel Colonnade Apple tree that is new to the Rooftop Roots garden.



**TAKE A BITE OUT OF HUNGER**

27th Annual Auction  
St. Demetrios Hall  
October 22nd, 2022



**University  
District  
Food Bank**

# Save The Date!

Our 'Take A Bite Out of Hunger' annual gala and auction will be on Saturday, October 22, at St. Demetrios Hall in Montlake. At this time we are planning an in-person event with a virtual component. We will keep you posted on any changes as things develop in our ever-changing world, but we remain hopeful that we can all gather in person again!

We would love your help procuring auction items! Please contact Paul Yunker to get involved at [paul@udistrictfoodbank.org](mailto:paul@udistrictfoodbank.org) and let's make it the best auction yet!

## We need your donated items for the auction

The University District Food Bank's 27th Annual Take a Bite Out of Hunger fundraiser will take place on Saturday, October 22.

There will be a live auction during the event, as well as a silent auction online the week prior. We need donations for both auctions!

Below are some ideas for auction items. If you don't see what you have to donate, or if you have other questions, please contact Paul at [paul@udistrictfoodbank.org](mailto:paul@udistrictfoodbank.org) or 206-532-7060 x701.

To donate, please complete our procurement form at <https://udistrictfoodbank.ejoinme.org/DonateAuctionItems>

To learn more about the auction, go here: <https://udistrictfoodbank.ejoinme.org/auction2022>

Artwork

Handmade items

New electronics

Gift cards

Jewelry and accessories

New games and toys

Outdoor fun (golf, paddling, etc.)

Subscriptions/memberships  
(meal boxes, wine of the month, etc.)

Hotel/B&B/Timeshare accommodations

Themed gift baskets

Home services (yard care, house cleaning, etc.)

Personal services (massage, hair

and nails, etc.)

Pet services (walking, grooming, daycare, etc.)

Auto services (detailing, oil changes, mechanic, etc.)

Autographed memorabilia

Antiques, collectibles

Virtual classes (cooking, music, art, fitness, etc.)