

WINTER 2018

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT FOOD BANK

## Annual auction: It's a record!



Velociraptor photobombs photo, but auction attendees are having too much fun to notice.

Thanks to generous individuals and businesses in our community, the 23rd annual “Take a Bite Out of Hunger” benefit auction raised a record \$250,000! There were many highlights, not the least of which, Fund-A-Need, designated for our \$225,000 annual food budget, garnered \$116,000. These are funds that we can use to supplement food donations across our main programs: walk-in food bank, Home Delivery and Packs For Kids.

The event theme changes every year, but one thing stays true: auction attendees love desserts. The dessert dash donations raised \$18,339. The 12-day Holland America cruise was the top selling item, collecting \$4,600. Please support the businesses that donated items or sponsored. Along with individual donors they make the auction possible.

Special thanks to the auction committee members, Leah Ball, Joy Mooney, Brooke Anderson and Cathy Petito Boyce, who sewed felt vegetables raffle tickets that perfectly matched the “Cultivating Our Future” theme. And thanks to our event partners Cameron Catering, Stokes Auction Group, St. Demetrios Hall, Tenakee Films, and Frank Harlan that help make the event run as smooth as possible.



Cute felt vegetables were the tickets to entering the Best of the Live Auction raffle.

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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**Joe Gruber**, Executive Director

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#### ADDRESS:

5017 Roosevelt Way N.E.  
Seattle WA 98105

#### Website:

[www.udistrictfoodbank.org](http://www.udistrictfoodbank.org)

#### Email:

[udfb@udistrictfoodbank.org](mailto:udfb@udistrictfoodbank.org)

**Phone:** 206-523-7060

# Letter From The Director

Dear Friends,

How can access to healthy food create opportunity?

In the months and years ahead, we will explore this very issue as we expand the breadth of our services to provide access to real opportunity through improved family and financial stability via a food bank visit. Providing healthy food remains at the core of our work; it is the central theme of what we do and what brings immediate support for the families that visit us every day. However, we understand that the need for food is a symptom of poverty. It's an indicator of an opportunity to expand how we engage and support our customers beyond their weekly shopping visit; a touch-point for us to create hope and begin helping them create new opportunity for themselves.

The causes of systemic poverty are complex, and we're learning from national experts that the impact of poverty on our customer's lives is complex as well. The traumas of enduring chronic scarcity and systems that have advantaged one group over another for generations have created a myriad of road blocks for our families. Though these road blocks are different for each of our families, they routinely block pathways to financial stability, wellness, family stability, job readiness and housing. Our work then must help our customers identify and navigate past these road blocks. From national research, we know that only one in four families living in poverty today will move out of poverty in their lifetimes. Our work must help better their odds.

Importantly, we know that our customer families themselves are the ones best positioned to identify their own roadblocks and do the work to surmount them. We just need to be their coach and mentor. We can help them develop future oriented goals, help them break seemingly insurmountable tasks into achievable steps, and hold them accountable for making steady progress along the way. In small ways, this work is being done today through a pilot project we have with the City of Seattle. But in the year to come, we will formalize and expand that work to include more customers and more powerful coaching.

Moving out of poverty is a journey, one we stand ready to support. While difficulties in one part of someone's life can create difficulties in another part, the opposite holds true as well. Success in one part of life can reinforce success in another. We need to coach toward, support, and celebrate that success. And all the while, remain ready with an abundance of healthy food, too.

Your continued trust and investment in the food bank will enable our customer families to realize greater opportunity in the new year to come.

In peace,  
Joe



# Roosevelt High student helps food bank's bee hives to thrive

Hans-Karl Frautschi, a fifteen-year-old sophomore at Roosevelt High School, has been in the bee business for quite a long time. How it came to be is somewhat serendipitous. When he was five years old, he asked for chickens for Christmas. Instead, he was surprised to receive a Langstroth Bee Hive Kit. And, as is often said, the rest is history!

In the beginning, beekeeping was not an easy or successful hobby. Two separate orders of Italian honeybees (six pounds total) died over the course of two years. Not to be deterred, Hans-Karl moved on to the smaller darker Carniolans and local honeybees. Since then he has only lost one hive. Those bees swarmed away when he was on a trip. He can thank his father, Jason, for helping him during the early days with inspections and hive care while Hans-Karl watched.

Reading and observation of his hives are the methods he used to learn about beekeeping. Last year he became involved with the Puget Sound Beekeepers Association. He has benefited from the meetings with other keepers, learning about advances in the science, and checking out new equipment.

Hans-Karl's mother Erika is a volunteer at the Food Bank. One day when he was working with her, Bill noticed that his right hand was swollen. In talking about it, Bill learned about Hans-Karl's beekeeping and suggested that he join the "Bee Team" tending hives on the Food Bank's rooftop garden. Within a week he was on the roof checking the bees and the two Top Bar hives. With these

hives the honey is extracted by cutting out the honeycomb and squishing it in a bucket. Because they are young hives, Hans-Karl predicts they should produce about 15-20 pound of honey this fall. When the hives are mature, they could produce as much as fifty pounds – enough honey to fill a five gallon bucket.

In addition to helping with the Food Bank hives, Hans-Karl manages others, including one holding a swarm he "captured" in May. In addition to the Food Bank hives, he will be taking seven hives of his own into winter this year. Beekeeping is difficult.

"I tend to get stung a lot," he said.

Although many people want to save bees, it is estimated that 75 percent of new beekeepers quit within two years. In cities, the biggest issue is preventing swarming in the spring. Another big problem is the Varroa Mite which can cause a hive to collapse. There is controversy as to whether to treat commercial hives for these mites. It has been proven that left alone over time bees will become resistant without the use of a chemical treatment.

"There have been many times I have wished honeybees were domesticated, but I can tell you they are definitely not," Hans-Karl said. "They are an untamed wonder, and they will punish you if you do something wrong or if they just don't like you. A colony of bees is most comparable to a feral cat; their likes and dislikes vary greatly from person to person, but mostly they just want to be left alone."

Hans-Karl has an interesting and important hobby. He is also a naturalist/scientist. We know we need bees to help pollinate the plants we rely upon for food.

"Honeybees are a multifaceted, unique and highly individualistic society," he said. "Modern research has shown that bees are able to do complex math, geometry and navigation and make collective decisions based on quantitative data. Every time I open up a hive I think about how much we still don't understand and feel privileged and lucky. Then I drop a frame or move too fast and I get nailed by the bees I was admiring a few seconds ago."



# Thanks to our auction donors!

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# Turkey Trot aids Food Bank



Turkey costumes, community spirit and families were on full display at the 3rd annual Montlake Community Club Turkey Trot 5k and Kids 1k on Thanksgiving Day. Nearly 1,000 runners and approximately 100 strollers raced through the Washington Park Arboretum. The proceeds are expected to reach \$30,000 in support of Food Bank programs! Thanks to the Montlake Community Club for doing the hard work of organizing a fun and successful fundraiser.

**Pictured:** Board Vice-President Joseph Smith demonstrates proper wing-flapping/stretching at the Turkey Trot starting line. Photo by Chris Cumming.

## Thanks to our Weekly Donation Partners

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University District)

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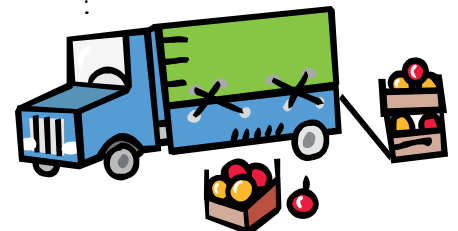
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The food bank summer interns are seen working in our rooftop garden.

## Our summer interns really helped the food bank to grow

Over the course of seven weeks last summer, the food bank hired nine middle school students to work with Rooftop Roots, our 2,000 sq. ft. rooftop farm. As recipients of our Packs for Kids program, these students were given the opportunity to engage with our community in an unprecedented way. Three days a week, three hours each day, interns dug their hands into the soil and compost that cultivates fresh produce for our walk-in grocery store.

After a few weeks, our interns needed little direction. They arrived ready to work, identified the tasks at hand and jumped right in, grabbing the correct tools, compost bins and gloves. Each week, rows of radishes, tomatoes and kale were planted, harvested, bagged and bunched to travel four floors down to the store.

Our interns braved hot and smoky days, bees and spiders, and some smelly fish fertilizer over the course of the summer.

We saw our young workers grow both individually and as a group and while some never made friends with the bees, each intern learned to get out of their comfort zone, get a little

dirty and work with others as a team.

These 18 extra hands put in an incredible 450 hours of labor this summer! This amount of dedication allowed us to harvest over 700 pounds of food that went directly to our community in need and does not include the thousands of seeds and starts that were planted for later harvests.

Rooftop Roots allows us to distribute this produce without the use of any fossil fuels or chemicals to ensure our community members are always getting the healthiest and freshest food possible.

We are looking forward to our second year of interns next summer and hope to reach an even broader group of students. A new focus will include more time spent in the food bank space and more curricula regarding our community food system, poverty and food insecurity. We hope to encourage the young people in our community to be advocates for food justice and to take initiative in their family's wellness. Thanks to our nine garden intern rockstars who made this our most productive season of growing yet!