



SPRING 2010

Spotlight: The Thursday Morning Crew

Thursday Morning at the University District Food Bank is the day the trucks arrive and drop off supplies. Sure, we get food donations every day, throughout the day, but Thursday is when Northwest Harvest and Food Lifeline drop off Dry Goods, Canned Goods and seasonal Fresh Fruit and Vegetables. 30 pound boxes of margarine, 50 pound bags of carrots and onions, 40 pound boxes of potatoes, apples cantaloupes, and did I mention canned goods? My point is, of all days to volunteer, why would anyone want to volunteer to move around truck loads of heavy stuff?

When I visited the Food Bank's web site to see what volunteer opportunities were available I saw listed, Thursday Morning 8:30am –Noon, Unload Trucks. I thought to myself, I bet that's a hard shift to fill. So I decided to see if it was a volunteer job that would work for me. Well, I've been at it now every week for a little over a year. During that time, I've worked alongside many volunteers; students, seniors, community groups and citizens fulfilling their court ordered community service. But, a regular cast of characters continue to show up every Thursday morning like clock work, put on an apron and just start doing what needs to be done. Some of them volunteer at least twice a week and also work



with Food Bank clients during the hours that we are open to the public; a completely different kind of volunteer work.

Everyone has their own reason for being here. Some Food Bank customers volunteers, like Roy, volunteer because, "I cannot imagine taking the food and not giving back." Others are here because they have always volunteered in the community they live in. For me, I volunteer at the Food Bank because it's in my neighborhood and, best of all, I can see that my investment of time and energy actually makes a difference. Plus I've met a lot of down to earth goodhearted people that inspire me to keep coming back.

I thought it would be good to

hear why some of the regulars show up for the Thursday morning crew, so I asked them. Greg has been coming weekly for more than a year, the first time I met him he told me that he supports President Obama and when he suggested that citizens volunteer and get involved in community service, he ended up here. He keeps coming back. He says, "its because of Bill (Food Bank Assistant Director) and the love and respect he shows to his volunteers." It's true, Bill is a great guy and a lot of the regular volunteers feel a friendship, of some kind, with him.

Theo, a Thursday morning crew regular claims, "I love volunteering here! Everybody works hard with

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The 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 the University District Food Bank for our volunteers, donors, and the public at large.

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

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Plant a Row for the Hungry

Did you know that the University District Food Bank accepts veggie and fruit donations from local gardeners? We do! If you have some extra room in your garden please plant a row for the Food Bank. It's a unique opportunity for you to give back to the community, providing fresh produce to your neighbors in need. There aren't strict guidelines on what to grow, so plant what you like. The donation drop off window is in the alley next to the food bank. Generally the best time to drop off donations is during our distribution hours, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and 3 p.m.-8 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday.

Letter From The Director

Dear Friends:

Several years ago, our colleagues at Solid Ground completed a survey of residents in Seattle Housing Authority buildings. One of the key points of information they discovered during the survey was that many seniors living there were running dangerously short of food each and every week. While we were able to immediately perform some marketing to ensure that seniors living in our area knew about our services, the most frail - those homebound by illness, disease or age - were still at risk of hunger and malnutrition since they couldn't reliably get to us for food. Later this summer, we'll finally be able to assist these individuals too with our new home delivery program.



Working with a team of community volunteers from Leadership Tomorrow, we developed a model for home delivery that will work for us. It is both scalable and affordable. For little more than the cost of the food we're delivering, we will be able to reliably provide three days worth of nutritious food every week to each senior enrolled in our program. For these seniors, already living with significantly compromised health and nutrition, this supplemental food will have an important and immediate impact. There will be fewer missed meals, more calories eaten and more nutrients to help improve overall health.

We're excited to have this opportunity to respond to this important community need. If you'd like to help us make home delivery a success then please send me an email or give me a call. We're looking for volunteers specifically interested in delivering groceries to a few homebound seniors each week.

Thanks for your continued support of our work.

In peace,
Joe

BENEFIT AUCTION OCTOBER 23, 2010

Thursday Crew

FROM PAGE 1

great attitude. And it just feels good to give back even with just labor.” Theo is a hard worker; he can always find something to do. Dale told me, “I volunteer because it helps the community.” I’m sure it goes a little deeper than that. Like Kristin said, “Food is a basic equalizing human need. The work (at the Food Bank) is hard and simple, and it feels good to participate in something as profound and mundane as sorting the old from the nourishing and getting it to people who need to eat.”

Ray told me he volunteers, “So I’m not bored... Contributing to society, I enjoy the other volunteers and patrons camaraderie” Ray gets along with everybody! Camaraderie at the Food Bank has a lot to do with volunteers returning and not burning out. Shannon stated ever so profoundly, “I volunteer her because I love Bill (Hey! Who doesn’t?), and because I spent years as an unproductive member of society and I believe that it’s important to make up for that and give back to my community! Her daughter, Bianca, age 7, was also there the day that I talked with everyone for this article. Often parents bring their school age kids in to share the community service experience. Bianca said she was volunteering that day because, “I’m a good girl and wanted to help.” And, she was a big help too! There are a lot of general duties that need to be taken care of daily at the Food Bank that kids, under their parents’ guidance, are very capable of participating in.

The Food Bank is open to the public 25 hours a week. But it still takes a week’s worth of work days and hundreds of volunteers to make it all happen. I know that some of the Monday morning seniors that check visitors in and out have been coming every week for more than 10 years. That tells me that in addition to the food, a lot of good energy is always coming into the Food Bank and even more good stuff is going out.

Many of the Food Bank volunteers already know that if you want to give back to your community but don’t have the resources to give them money for general operations, a donation of one’s time and energy is always welcome.

– Frank Harlan, a guy on the Thursday Morning Crew

Volunteer: Atlas Trieu

The reason I started volunteering at the Food Bank was because I didn’t get into medical school. My original plan was that I would apply for school after spending a year traveling.

That was the plan at least.

I packed up all my belongings and headed to Cusco, Peru, to learn Spanish while supporting myself teaching English. After six months, hundreds of miles of dusty bus rides, and many bouts of diarrhea, I came back to the beautiful English-speaking-diarrhea-free-drinking-water-land of the United States to interview with two medical schools.

My girlfriend was living in Seattle. I went to live with her on a strictly “temporary” stay until I was accepted to medical school. A week became a month and one month became three. The rejection letters piled up and the acceptance letter was sadly missing.

I found myself still in Seattle without a job or car or, besides my girlfriend, any friends. I realized I had to do something.

While searching for work, a stranger suggested volunteering at food banks. I e-mailed and called a lot of food banks but most never replied or required weeks of paper work.

Except for the University District Food Bank, which called back the next day. Bill Lowie told me that I was welcome to come on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. So, I showed up that Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. sharp. Shortly afterwards I found myself breaking down boxes to be compacted. I spent the rest of day stocking shelves, bagging bread and anything else Bill told me to do. I stayed until 4 p.m. and asked Bill if I could come the next day, to which Bill replied (Bill’s typical response), “Of course brother, you’re always welcome.”

That was nearly a year ago. Since then, I have bagged hundreds of loaves of bread, stocked every shelf and found Bill and the rest of the volunteers and clients at the Food Bank to be greatly inviting and very funny people.

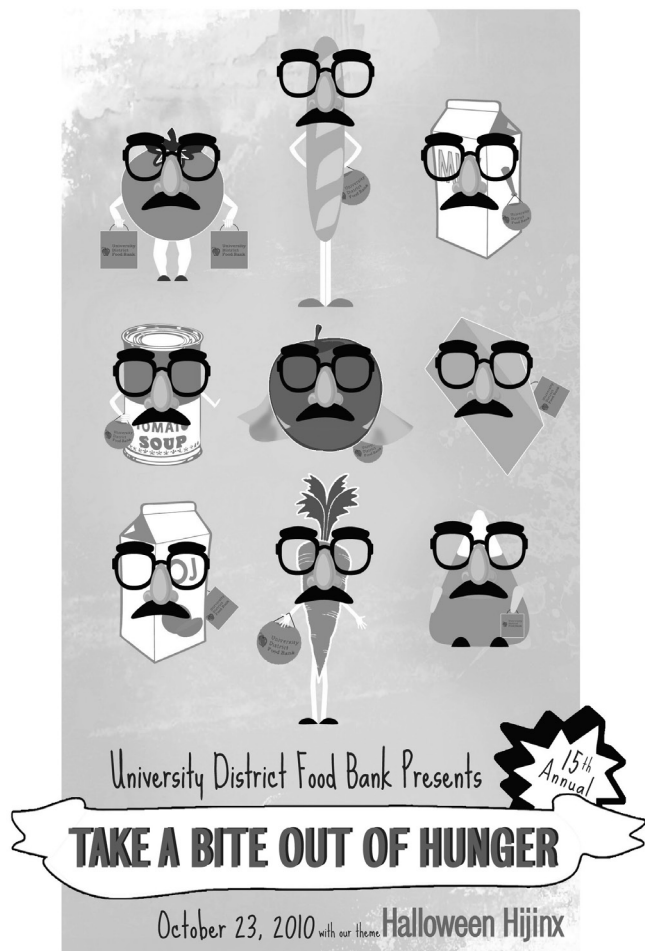
In the end though, I did not volunteer because of community service hours or even because I didn’t get into med school. I did it because I liked coming to the Food Bank. I liked giving back to the community.



UNIVERSITY DISTRICT SERVICE LEAGUE
UNIVERSITY DISTRICT FOOD BANK
4731 15th Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98105-4404

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 5995

Return Service Requested



Save the Date!

Where: St. Demetrios Hall, 2100 Boyer Avenue East

When: Oct. 23, 2010

Time: Doors open 5:30 PM

Fund a Need: Raise money for food purchases. Stock our shelves!

Dinner: Family style dinner prepared by Cameron Catering

Tickets: Online signup and ticket prices will be available in June from the

Food Bank website: (more info to come!)

Items: Current Item List can be found at:
<http://udistrictfoodbank.org/publications.php>

Donations: Call Paul Yunker at 527-1990 if you have auction items to donate.