



# A Place at the Table

NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

SUMMER 2015

## Summer Hunger

- 50,480 kids in Rhode Island receive free or reduced-price school lunches
- Last year, only 7,875 children received free summer meals
- In Rhode Island, 21.5 percent of children under the age of 18 live in poverty



**Mission:** The Rhode Island Community Food Bank provides food to people in need and promotes long-term solutions to the problem of hunger.



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

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## Tackling the Summer Hunger Crisis

**H**unger is not often in the public eye during the summer months. But it is a harsh reality, especially for families of the 50,480 children who would normally receive free and reduced-price lunches during the school year.

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank and its member agencies deliver several programs to support families during the summer.

### Filling the Gap for Working Families

Being a working mom with two kids means juggling a lot of responsibilities. For Deidre, those challenges increase during the summer months.

While her children are in school, they receive free lunch through the federal School Lunch Program. However, like many other families, they miss out on these meals during the summer months.

Fortunately for Deidre, the Jonnycake Center of Peace Dale, a member agency of the Food Bank, offers a program that provides breakfast and lunch to kids all summer long.

"Once a week, we can pick up food for the whole week so I can have breakfast and lunch for my kids."

This arrangement is very convenient for Deidre, since she doesn't have a car, an especially challenging aspect of living in South County where public transportation is limited and resources can be spread too far apart.

"It's hard to get around down here without a vehicle. But they come down to the rental office (of the housing development) so you can pick up what you need."

The convenience of the program is important to Deidre, who works five days a week



Deidre works full-time at the Jonnycake Center but still needs assistance providing summer meals for her children.

running the retail store at the Jonnycake Center. In addition to her income, she receives SNAP benefits (formerly food stamps) but still does not have enough resources to provide for her children, especially during the summer when her kids miss school meals.

Without this program, she would have to find a way to travel to other food pantries to get enough food for her family during the week.

"I can get everything for the whole week all at once. And the food is good—fruits and veggies."

### Reaching More Kids with Summer Meals

To expand access to summer meals, the Rhode Island Community Food Bank is partnering with cities and towns throughout the state to promote the federal Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

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## Reaching More Kids with Summer Meals

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Through this initiative, healthy, nutritious lunches and snacks are delivered to children who participate in summer recreational activities at their local parks and camps.

During the gap between the end of school and the beginning of SFSP, the Food Bank distributed 6,500 "vacation" boxes of kid-friendly, healthy food to families in need along with information about how they can participate in the program.

Many families are not aware that SFSP exists. So through the support of Stop & Shop's "Our Family Foundation," the Food Bank has also launched an extensive community outreach campaign to let them know that these resources are available for free.

Last summer, the campaign increased participation by 1,454 children, serving a total of 246,497 meals to 7,875 youth. Still, that's nowhere near the more than 50,000 Rhode Island children who receive free or reduced-price lunches during the school year and are missing



out on this opportunity for a healthy meal.

This summer, the program has expanded to several new communities to reach even more children throughout the state with a goal of increasing participation by 10% to nearly 8,650.

To find a Summer Food Service Program site near you, call United Way 2-1-1.

## Summer Food Drive Helps During Critical Time

### Help Us Keep Food on the Table All Summer Long

**T**he Rhode Island Community Food Bank kicked off its annual Summer Food Drive on Wednesday, June 24 with remarks by its chair, First Gentleman Andy Moffit. The husband of Governor Gina Raimondo, Andy has dedicated himself to addressing hunger in Rhode Island.

Traditionally, food and fund donations to the Food Bank decrease over the summer months. The Summer Food Drive is a way to raise awareness of this challenge and encourage individuals and groups to help collect more food.

The most effective way to help is by donating to the Food Bank. With every dollar raised, we can acquire three pounds of nutritious food.

Or you can conduct a food or fund drive in your neighborhood or at your business, organization, faith community, or club.

To help spread the word, food drive bins and posters are available at the Food Bank,



200 Niantic Avenue in Providence between 8 am and 5 pm weekdays.

You can also find materials and resources by visiting [rifoodbank.org](http://rifoodbank.org) and clicking on *Get Involved*.

The Food Bank appreciates the support of this year's Summer Food Drive sponsors including Ocean State Job Lot, PGE Credit Union, and UnitedHealthcare.

# Making a Will Prepares You for the Future

More than 60% of Americans don't have a valid will in place. Without one, state laws determine how an estate is distributed. With a will, you can:

- Provide for your loved ones.
- Make arrangements for a loved one who may require extra care.
- Choose the people to administer your estate.
- Make gifts to the charitable organizations that mean the most to you.



Writing a will is easier than most people realize and it gives you and your family peace of mind knowing that you have a plan for their future.

**And if you include the Rhode Island Community Food Bank in your will, we'll be grateful, too.**

With a gift through your will, you can ensure that we will be able to help families that face hunger in the future. Here is some sample bequest language:

*I give \$ \_\_\_\_\_ [or: \_\_\_ percent of the residue of my estate] to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, a Rhode Island non-profit corporation located in Providence, RI, for its general purposes.*

If you have already included the Food Bank in your will, let us know. We would love to thank you personally.

To discuss further, please contact Karen Fuller at 401-230-1676, or visit [www.rifoodbank.org/plannedgiving](http://www.rifoodbank.org/plannedgiving).

## SAVE THE DATES

### Sing Away Hunger

Concert with Bill Harley & Keith Munslow

**Saturday, November 21**

Two performances, 11 am and 2 pm  
Lincoln School, Providence

Join the fun for a great cause as two of Rhode Island's favorite children's entertainers perform their hilarious and heartwarming songs.

### Holiday Food Drive & Open House

**Saturday, December 12, 9 am to noon**

Bring your family to visit the Food Bank and celebrate the holidays with music and other festivities. Take a tour of the Food Bank's warehouse. Your donation of non-perishable food items will help us fill the need during this holiday season.

# How You Helped Us

## RI Helps Fill Empty Bowls

The first ever Empty Bowls event held by the Rhode Island Community Food Bank was a huge success, raising over \$85,000 to help address hunger in Rhode Island. Nearly 1,000 people came out to show their support for the Food Bank, enjoyed delicious food donated by local restaurants, and chose a hand-crafted artisanal bowl to take home, reminding them how they helped fill the empty bowls in their community. The event would not have been possible without our presenting sponsor Citizens Bank and their incredible corps of volunteers.



## Truck Stop Offers Street Fare Under the Stars

This year's **Truck Stop: A Festival of Street Eats** was a huge success with 600 guests joining us at the Providence Rink at the ALEX AND ANI City Center. Mother Nature provided a beautiful night as 15 food trucks offered delicious samples of their fare. Thanks to festival sponsor Stop & Shop, Eat Drink RI and a dedicated and hardworking crew of volunteers who helped pull it all together. The event raised more than \$110,000 toward ending hunger in Rhode Island.



## Striking Out Hunger Scores Big for Food Bank

For the ninth year, the Food Bank is teaming with the Citizens Bank Foundation, Cox Communications, and the Pawtucket Red Sox to strike out hunger. Every time a Pawtucket Red Sox pitcher strikes out a batter on an opposing team, the Food Bank receives \$75 up to a total contribution of \$75,000. Cox Communications supports the effort with public service announcements throughout the season. Another reason to root for the home team!



# Getting Your Hands Dirty for a Good Cause

Through our network of community farms, the Rhode Island Community Food Bank is able to distribute fresh produce to food pantries throughout the area.

Last year, nearly 60,000 pounds of produce came from these great partners whose growing season is managed by volunteer coordinators working closely with the Food Bank. An army of volunteers helps out to make sure the farm program succeeds each year.

That's where you come in! This summer, you can help grow food for people in need. Volunteers can help plant seeds, pull weeds, and harvest crops through the summer and fall.

Get your hands dirty and know that you are making a difference. No experience required.

For more information on how you can participate in this movement, visit [rifofoodbank.org](http://rifofoodbank.org) and click on *Community Farms* under the Programs tab.



## Community Cooking Wholesome Eating on a Budget

The Food Bank's Community Cooking program teaches food pantry clients how to make healthy, practical meals on a tight budget. Classes combine hands-on cooking with nutritional education emphasizing diets incorporating vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.

To give you a taste of what clients are learning, we're including one of their favorite recent recipes.



### Watermelon Salad with Balsamic Reduction

Created by Chef Trevor Daneker,  
Programs and Nutrition Education  
Senior Coordinator

Serves 6

#### Ingredients

- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 6 cups diced watermelon, seeds removed
- ¼ cup fresh mint leaves
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

#### Optional items

- 4 ounces feta or goat cheese
- lettuce, any kind
- ¼ cup Kalamata olives

#### Directions

- To make the balsamic reduction, bring balsamic vinegar to a boil over medium heat. Boil until thick and reduced, approximately 4–5 minutes.
- In a large bowl, combine watermelon, mint leaves and olive oil.
- Add in any of the optional items, as desired.
- Serve immediately, drizzled with balsamic reduction.

## DRIVE AWAY HUNGER

### Donate Your Old Vehicle

Turn your old vehicle into food for Rhode Island families who are struggling to get by. Find out how your old vehicle can become a charitable donation that makes a real difference in the lives of others.

Visit: [rifofoodbank.org/donateyourvehicle](http://rifofoodbank.org/donateyourvehicle).

### Mr. Potato Head License Plate

Sprout a Mr. Potato Head license plate and support the Food Bank while showing other drivers that you care about hunger in your community. Your contribution puts food on the plates of hungry Rhode Islanders. For more information, visit: [rifofoodbank.org/plates](http://rifofoodbank.org/plates).

