

AUGUST 2023

food for thought

"THIS IS MY HOME."

How you're helping this community rebuild after Hurricane Ida.

See story on Page 2.

**\$1 CAN
HELP
PROVIDE
3 MEALS!**

A Time
for Hope



 **SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD BANK**
FEEDING SOUTH LOUISIANA

A MINISTRY OF
ARCHDIOCESE OF
NEW ORLEANS

FEEDING
AMERICA



no-hunger.org

A Message From Natalie



Fall is almost here. Kids return to school and, for many of us, a new chapter begins filled with challenges, big and small.

For many of our neighbors, ensuring everyone gets healthy meals each day can be difficult and painful when there isn't enough to go around. Yes, some kids

will once again start receiving free meals at school, but they are not the only ones confronted with hunger and hardship in our community.

As peak hurricane season approaches in South Louisiana, everyone is preparing for an additional layer of stress. And we know that people facing food insecurity are often hit the hardest by a disaster.

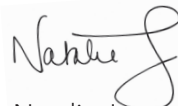
This issue of *Food for Thought* explores how people from all different walks of life face food insecurity. It's a

problem that touches lives, far and wide. Yet, so too does your compassion. Thanks to caring friends like you, we will meet the challenges of this fall with resources and optimism. But we can't do it without inspiring individuals like you.

Thank you for caring, and for taking action when neighbors are hurting or in need of a hand to get through a hard time. I'm so grateful.

And remember, every \$1 you give can help provide 3 nutritious meals.

Thank you!



Natalie Jayroe
President & CEO

"This Is My Home"

How you're helping this community rebuild after Hurricane Ida

On Friday at 7:30 a.m., the Second Harvest truck pulls up behind the Grand Isle Community Center for the monthly mobile food pantry. The volunteers, who are all residents of Grand Isle, have already set up a line of tables and are helping to unload the delivery. The items include fresh vegetables, butter, canned goods, and staples that will help their neighbors get through the month as they continue to rebuild.

The two-year anniversary of Hurricane Ida is approaching, and many residents are still facing a long road to recovery after the island community was battered by the storm.

A line of cars snakes around the driveway and onto LA 1. Ms. Kate, age 72, pulls up in her Honda Accord. Just like almost everyone else, she lost her home to Hurricane Ida, and now lives in a trailer as she rebuilds. But she has a big smile on her face.

"I will never leave — this is my home," Kate says. "I'm so thankful for this pantry. Walmart is 45 minutes away, and with food prices so high, I can't get all that I need when I do make the trip."

But Kate isn't just here for herself — she's also picking up food for seven of her close friends and family members. The trunk of her car is so full that she loaded up her back seat as well.

"Some of them lost their cars during Ida, so they've got no transportation," Kate says. "And some of them are



much older than I am. On Grand Isle, we look out for each other. And when a storm hits, the community pulls together."

Since Hurricane Ida raked through the Bayou Region, impacting Grand Isle and surrounding communities, life has become harder. In addition to high grocery prices, flood insurance is not affordable, and homeowner's insurance is unavailable. That's when residents pull together. **And Second Harvest will be there to support them for as long as it takes.**

Changing for *the Better*

Eric is an associate pastor at First Baptist Church in Slidell. He came from Florida seven years ago and one of his first responsibilities was to run the church's food pantry. "There was no organization when I started. There were three volunteers, and it was first come, first served. We ended up helping about 30 families. People fought over what we had. It was a mess."

Eric saw that with the help of Second Harvest, the First Baptist Food Pantry could help many more families, but things would have to change. Families could come once a month, but they were required to make an appointment. "At first, people were very resistant to the change, but I stood my ground. Now, they enjoy meeting with the pantry coordinators. It allows us to build a relationship with the clients. We ask if they would like us to pray with them. They're under no obligation, but some take us up on the offer."

The work has been a challenge, and the money wasn't always there. But Eric had faith, recalling that "an older man and his 6-year-old grandson came in for their appointment, and after I checked them in I asked if they had any prayer requests. The little boy leaned in and asked, 'Can you pray that my mommy's boyfriend will stop beating her?' It took my breath away." Eric prayed with them, and the boy gave him a folded-up dollar, whispering, "Please use this to help other hungry people." The grandfather told Eric that he had given the dollar to his grandson to spend at the dollar store after they visited the pantry. "I knew from then on God was going to provide for our needs."



Friends like Eric want to make a difference for folks facing food insecurity.

In seven years, Eric has been able to grow the pantry's operation to serve 300 families with the assistance of 52 volunteers. Second Harvest provides regular deliveries of food and has facilitated a relationship with First Baptist Food Pantry and the local Walmart. Volunteers regularly pick up donated items from the store to serve even more people. First Baptist Slidell is leading the fight against food insecurity in East St. Tammany Parish.

The social distancing created by COVID-19 made the food pantry change its operations to distributing food to passing cars, but as soon as the need for social distancing passed, Eric reverted the pantry operations to appointments. "It gives us the opportunity to get to know the clients, and clients can choose the items that they need instead of having a prepacked box dropped in the trunks of their cars."



**SATURDAY,
SEPT. 30
BIG LAKE AT
CITY PARK**

NO-HUNGER.ORG/DUCKS

"We Must Work Together"

For Trina, attending the monthly distribution at Little Zion Baptist Church remains a constant on her schedule. Trina can't afford to miss the box of fresh food and pantry staples she receives from Second Harvest. If she does, she risks not having enough for herself plus the two other adults she cares for — her disabled uncle and elderly aunt.

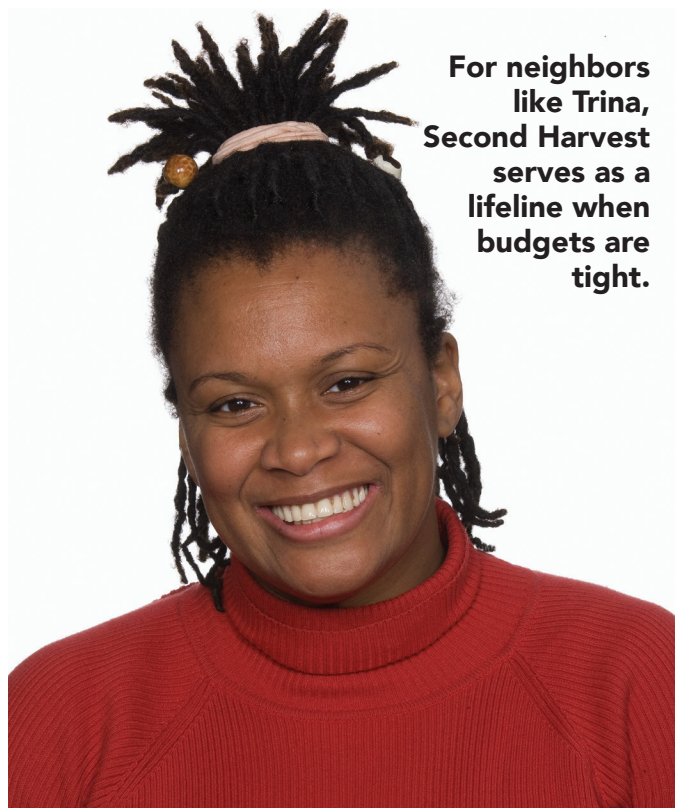
As a licensed CNA, nurturing and caring for people is second nature for Trina, so she blocks time out of her schedule to ensure she, her uncle, and her aunt have the food they need to live healthy lives. Amid her daily work as a CNA, she's the primary caregiver for her uncle, who has significant health issues, and supports her elderly aunt, who can't gather necessities for herself.

"At times like this, when prices for groceries are high, and with our SNAP benefits recently being cut so badly, for myself, my uncle, and my aunt, the mobile pantry offers an opportunity to gather fresh food and vegetables," shares Trina. "All this food isn't just for me. I make sure to take care of those in my care as well. They need this food, especially since my uncle and I have some health challenges."

Trina is also a Second Harvest donor, living by the biblical passage, "You reap what you sow." Trina adds, "I believe in giving back to Second Harvest Food Bank no matter what. Even if it's something small, I donate because Second Harvest has helped me and my family out so much."

With the cost of living increasing across the country, many people like Trina are turning to food banks as a resource to help get them through where they are short.

For neighbors like Trina, Second Harvest serves as a lifeline when budgets are tight.



"Everything is expensive right now. The cost of living has put pressure on everybody. No matter who you are. We must work together as a community, making sure we are all taken care of — at least, that's what I'm doing."

And thanks to your support, we'll always be there to help neighbors like Trina in our community.

Make a Lasting *Impact*

Tomorrow's Harvest Society celebrates supporters who are committed to leading the fight against hunger in South Louisiana. When you join the Tomorrow's Harvest Society, you impact the future of Second Harvest by including us in your legacy giving plans.

By thoughtfully arranging your gift now, you are ensuring a tomorrow that sees fewer neighbors with food insecurity. Are you interested in making a planned gift to Second Harvest or learning more about leaving a lasting legacy? Contact Heather Sweeney at 504-729-2839 or hsweeney@secondharvest.org.



 **SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD BANK**
FEEDING SOUTH LOUISIANA

A MINISTRY OF
ARCHDIOCESE OF
NEW ORLEANS

FEEDING
AMERICA



contact us

700 Edwards Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70123-3121
504.734.1322

To learn more or to make a donation to Second Harvest Food Bank, visit no-hunger.org.

