

AUGUST 2024

food for thought



PROVIDING FOOD AND HOPE

With your help, Raynada has the nutritious food her family needs to thrive

See story on Page 3.

\$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 nearly here. Children are returning to school, and each of us will start a new chapter filled with challenges, big and small. It's an exciting time! However ...

Families facing hunger aren't able to enjoy the changes this new season brings. Thinking about buying school supplies

and new clothing is extra stressful when you're working to put food on the table. A nourishing meal is a basic comfort that's at risk in far too many households here in South Louisiana.

But thanks to friends like you, we're able to help neighbors put enough nutritious food on the table for their families. We're so grateful for all you do to help provide meals in our community.

In this issue of *Food for Thought*, you'll meet a few of the neighbors you're helping through your gifts to Second Harvest Food Bank. I hope their stories will move you to give again as we head into the last month of summer. You'll help many more neighbors and families as they get ready to send their children back to school.

Remember, every \$1 you give can help provide 3 meals for families and neighbors. Thank you for doing all you can to help!

Thank you!

Natalie Jayroe
President & CEO



Providing Food and Hope You helped Yvette give her goddaughter the start she needed

Yvette has stomach cancer, cirrhosis, and diabetes — but those health battles are not what weigh most on her mind. Instead, it's the decision her 19-year-old goddaughter now faces.

She has to choose between going to college and staying home to help Yvette. "She doesn't want to go because of my medical problems," Yvette explains, though she encourages her goddaughter to pursue her dreams of being an artist.

The fact that she has this big decision ahead is thanks to the strong start Yvette was able to give her, and the food assistance donors like you make possible.

Since the girl was a baby, Yvette has helped care for her periodically. But one day, the child's mom left the 11-year-old girl alone with nothing more than a bag of chips and a drink. Yvette stepped in and has had custody ever since.

Those first years as a new family were an uphill battle as the young girl adapted to life with a new structure and new rules.

"I had to be hard on her," Yvette says. But her tough love paid off. Her goddaughter is now thriving. She's on the honor roll at school, and she pitches in at home to help. Knowing her goddaughter will need to strike out on her own soon is hard, but Yvette has no regrets.

"It really has been a blessing to have her," she says.

Yvette says providing for the two of them on a limited



Yvette visits Plymouth Rock Baptist Church in Houma, a Second Harvest partner food pantry.

income would be impossible without the help she gets from Second Harvest and Plymouth Rock Baptist Church. "There's no way I could do it without it," Yvette says gratefully.

Thank you for providing South Louisiana families like Yvette's with the nourishing food that helps them thrive!

"It can Be a Lot"

Thousands of families like Raynada's need extra food assistance

Raynada is a single mother of four and an Army veteran who lives on VA disability checks supplemented by the occasional gig as a substitute teacher.

Every morning, she wakes up before dawn, her mind a whirlwind of calculations and concerns. She makes breakfast for her children — simple but made with love — and sends them off to school with a smile. But as soon as they leave, the weight of reality settles back onto her shoulders.

"You have a mortgage, you have utilities, children always have needs, period," she says, her voice tinged with a mix of exhaustion and determination. "The struggle to put food on the table is a persistent concern."

The unexpected bills that seem to come out of nowhere only add to the stress, making it difficult to stay afloat.

Raynada knows the road ahead might not be easy, but she also knows she is not walking it alone. Thanks to friends like you, Raynada can rely on the meals Second Harvest provides at the Boys & Girls Club of Acadiana.

In the quiet moments after dinner, when the children are asleep, Raynada allows herself a moment of reflection. She thinks about the community that has risen to support her, the



Thank you for helping kids get the nutrition they need from Second Harvest at after-school programs like the Boys & Girls Clubs.

people who have donated their time, money, and resources to ensure no child goes hungry.

"I'm thankful," she says. "Thankful for the support, for the people who care."

Thank you for all you do to help families. Your gifts make it all possible!



NO-HUNGER.ORG/DUCKS

Plan Today Give hope for tomorrow

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. Interested in making a planned gift to Second Harvest or learning more about your options? **Contact Heather Sweeney at 504-729-2839 or hsweeney@no-hunger.org.**



Bringing Nutrition Into Food Deserts

Second Harvest's newest Makin' Groceries Mobile Market has officially opened its doors. This new venture is part of our commitment to ensuring all residents have access to affordable, nutritious food.

This new location, at the James C. Simmons Community Center, serves neighbors in Waggaman, Kennedy Heights, and Avondale. These Jefferson Parish communities became a food desert when the only supermarket closed in 2019.

Unlike traditional food pantries, the Mobile Market sells fresh produce and everyday staples at lower-than-retail costs, and Second Harvest purchases food specifically for this program to ensure affordability and high quality.

Our effort is already making an impact, judging by the responses from our shoppers. Kim, a resident of Avondale, expressed her gratitude, saying, "I just got home from the Mobile Market. I can't tell you how nice it is to have this and how thankful I am." Another shopper said, "The quality of the produce looks really

nice, so I'm excited."

These sentiments are echoed by many who have visited the market. One community member remarked, "Everyone is so nice, and I am so thankful for this place because we don't have a grocery store."

The market was made possible by a partnership with Jefferson Parish Council member Byron Lee, the CF Industry Foundation, and support from donors like you. Together, we are creating a future where everyone has access to the food they need to thrive.

Thanks to friends like you, Second Harvest can bring nutritious food into our area's food deserts. For more information, visit no-hunger.org/mobilemarket.



Serving With Passion We're thankful for the volunteers who keep our programs going strong

Leslye Johnson retired as the chief of police at Louisiana State University and wanted to spend her time giving back. She started working in the Reily Foods Kitchen at Second Harvest on Mondays, helping plate meals for kids and seniors. Leslye liked it so much, she comes three days a week now.

"I wanted to be out and about, meeting people and talking with people," she says. "It's rewarding; we all get to know each other. I feel blessed. This is wonderful to be able to do this and give back."

Leslye's advice to anyone considering volunteering is simple: "At least come out once or twice and try it. It's

very rewarding. Everyone here really, really appreciates you and lets you know that they appreciate you. That's a real good feeling to leave with."

Volunteers are needed to pack senior food boxes, sort and repack food donations, and plate meals for seniors and kids' after-school programs. If you're considering coming out to volunteer, we have a place for you!

We are so grateful for Leslye and all of our volunteers! To learn more or sign up, go to no-hunger.org/volunteer.



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AMERICA

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Way

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

Second Harvest's email addresses have changed from @secondharvest.org to @no-hunger.org. For questions about donations, contact us at givetoday@no-hunger.org.