



Thank you for caring for my family

My name is Becky, and I come to the food pantry at Christian Life Center once a month to get food for my family. Our income is really low, and most of it goes to rent and bills. My husband and I have two boys, ages twelve and seven. So being able to come to the food pantry really helps my family out.

We do get food stamps too, but the recent cuts were a drastic change, and it has affected us food-wise. Around the middle of the month, the little bit of money we have set aside for food is usually gone. That's when we really need to come to the food pantry. Here we get canned goods, pasta, cereals and meat, which is helpful! I really like coming to this pantry because I feel like they really care for us. Everybody knows us and knows our situation.

We always make sure our kids eat

Our biggest challenge every month is just making ends meet, and the food

The food pantry helps Becky and her husband provide enough food for their two growing boys.

"Without you, those of us who struggle wouldn't have the help we need." —BECKY



pantry really helps us do that. When the kids are in school they get the school lunches, and that's a help, too. The summers and holidays are more stressful. Either we have to get them to a special lunch program or feed them. Our kids come first, and we always make sure they eat. There have been times when my husband and I have gone without a meal to make ends meet, but coming to the Center's food pantry means we don't have to do that.

The holidays were very special because they gave us a food basket. It had a ham and all the other things that go with a family meal. The kids were really happy with it, and it was so nice that the food pantry provided that.

I really want to thank the people who support the Food Bank. Without you, those of us who struggle wouldn't have the help we need. It would be a very different life. So thank you.

On page 3, read more about how Becky and her family's situation inspired the start of this food pantry.

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More than 30 years of fighting hunger together

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

FROM GAYLE GIFFORD



Gayle Gifford
Chief Executive Officer
Montana Food Bank
Network

As this school year begins we're excited to have 75 sites, a record number, participating in our Backpack Program. And this summer we had more summer feeding sites providing meals for children than ever. These programs are aimed at addressing the problem of childhood hunger in our state.

In Montana, one in five children is at risk of going hungry. Thanks to your generosity, we are growing in our ability to address the issues of childhood hunger through advocacy, education and providing nutritious food for our kids. We don't want Becky's kids—or any other child in this state—to worry about where their next meal is coming from.

Getting ready for the holidays

In September we're also getting ready for our special holiday distribution, providing a turkey dinner and all the fixings to hungry families. We want to give all our families that wonderful opportunity to gather around a meal together and give thanks for what they have.

Food brings us together at the holidays, and it's a daily necessity for success. For a child to be able to learn in school, for an adult to be productive at work, for seniors to be healthy, they need to be adequately fed. Your support is making that daily difference for hungry people across our state. As the food nourishes their bodies for success, your generosity gives them hope that someone cares.

With gratitude,

Gayle Gifford, Chief Executive Officer
Montana Food Bank Network

"We don't want any child to worry about where their next meal is coming from."

Anaconda Public Schools Backpack Program

Montana Food Bank Network's Backpack Program addresses child hunger by providing at-risk students with child-friendly food for weekends. Chronic hunger in children can lead to learning and behavioral issues. The Backpack Program helps to alleviate some of these difficulties.

Anaconda Public Schools began their program in October 2013, serving about 50 students per week. Tammy Hurley, principal at Fred Moodry Middle School and Backpack Program coordinator, believes the program is important for their community. "There are so many families, so many kids in need," she says. Tammy has goals for expanding the Backpack Program to preschool children at Head Start, and implementing school-based pantries at the middle and high schools.

The Anaconda community and school administration are so passionate about meeting the needs of chronically hungry students, the program has been self-funded since January. Over 30 educators are contributing through pre-tax payroll deductions, along with participation from the hospital and two local car dealerships. "It takes a village to raise a child," and Anaconda is truly a remarkable village!

To find out how you can partner with the Montana Food Bank Network to begin a backpack program in your community, please contact Stephanie Stratton at sstratton@mfbn.org or 406-721-3825, ext. 229.

The Backpack Program provides weekend food for at-risk children.



DIRECTV employees volunteer together, working to fill emergency food boxes for hungry Montanans.

Thank you, DIRECTV

Montana Food Bank Network is grateful for our partnership with DIRECTV. Not only are they quick to be responsive and helpful, their efforts to repackage food, fill food boxes and serve as volunteers at our fundraising events have helped provide thousands of meals to Montana's hungry children, families and seniors. According to Kari Schauss of DIRECTV, "Volunteerism is a key part of DIRECTV's work to be a good corporate citizen, and we support our employees in giving back during work time and in their personal time." Thank you, DIRECTV, for your commitment to making sure that all Montanans have enough to eat.

Reaching more kids with school breakfast

More than 1 in 5 Montana children live in food-insecure homes, impacting their success at school and overall health. The school meal programs play a significant role in reducing child hunger, yet school breakfast continues to be particularly underutilized across our state. During the 2013-2014 school year, fewer than 1/3 of children enrolled in free or reduced-price meals participated in the breakfast program.



We're encouraging at-risk kids to take advantage of the school breakfast program.

The Montana Food Bank Network works with schools to implement alternative breakfast models such as Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab 'n' Go, or Breakfast After the Bell, which have been shown to significantly increase participation. Eating breakfast at school ensures that children start their day well fed and ready to learn, and helps struggling families stretch their dollars a little further.

How does your child's school rank? To find out, you can view our School Breakfast Report and learn more about our work to increase access to school breakfast by visiting mfbn.org/learn/outreach-education/school-breakfast-program

Be an advocate for child nutrition programs

In our mission to end hunger in Montana, we work to ensure that children have access to food through both public and private programs. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act (CNR) authorizes funding and sets policy for all of the federal school meal and child nutrition programs. These ensure that children from low-income families have access to nutritious foods where they live, play and learn.



We need your help to support the Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill.

Over the next year, MFBN will work with state and national partners to advocate for a strong CNR before the current bill expires on September 30, 2015. CNR is our best opportunity to strengthen the child nutrition programs and set policies that make them accessible to the thousands of Montana families struggling with hunger.

Help us support a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization in 2015. Please tell our congressmen that you value these effective programs and the impact they make on ending hunger in Montana. To stay up-to-date on CNR and other policy issues, sign up for our Policy e-newsletter: mfbn.org/learn/public-policy

Agency Spotlight: A new food pantry supports struggling families

One year ago, Cathy Rase and others from the Christian Life Center had a vision for opening a food pantry to serve the south end of Missoula. Cathy's heart for the project started when she began helping Becky (read her story on page 1) with her younger son. "Coming into her community of folks who have real issues of poverty...it was a real eye-opening experience," says Cathy, who now serves as the food pantry's volunteer director. "I could see the needs were profound."

With a wonderful crew of volunteers, the church remodeled the food pantry space to be family-friendly. "We wanted it to be really welcoming for families," says Cathy. "We have toys we bring out. We try and get on a first-name basis with all the clients." The food pantry is now open once a week, and families can come in twice a month to receive a box of food.

Cathy was surprised at how easy it was to partner with the Montana Food Bank Network. "The information they gave us was just right on, and led us through the process," she says. "And the Food Bank does an amazing job of telling people how many hungry folks we have in our state. It's a factual message that the need is there."

Cathy takes care of Becky's son on the weekends.



Cathy Rase runs the family-friendly food pantry at Christian Life Center, one of our over 200 partner agencies.

This is a community that cares!

I'm Andrea, and my four-year-old daughter and I have fallen on some hard times, so I came to the Flathead Food Bank. I love this place! It's a great service for the community. My daughter and I both love getting the fresh fruits and vegetables. The food I get here lasts me two weeks because I spread it out, and my daughter also gets meals at her Head Start program.

I have a part-time job right now, but I'm looking for something else. It's hard to find work that will provide enough to pay the bills and get food. I do hunt, but last year I didn't get a deer, so I missed my opportunity to get meat. In the summer I fish and pick berries to help us out.

This community is so supportive. At Thanksgiving they give turkeys and items to make a meal. It's just such a weight off my shoulders, knowing that my daughter is not going to go hungry. When I come in here and see all the food I think, "Wow, there are a lot of people out there who really care!" So thank you so much for providing me—and this community—with food and the security of knowing our kids won't go hungry.

Your gift today will help us get ready for our holiday distribution to partners like the Flathead Food Bank, and provide healthy food to hungry families across our state. You can return the enclosed form with your donation or give a gift online at mfbn.org. Thank you for showing families like Andrea's how much you care!



"It's such a weight off my shoulders knowing that my daughter is not going to go hungry."

—ANDREA

Is your Will up to date?

When was the last time you reviewed the legacy you'll be leaving to your loved ones and your community? Most estate-planning advisors recommend reviewing your estate plan at least once every five years to make sure it will be carried out according to your current wishes. One great way to benefit the community is to include bequests to a charity such as the Montana Food Bank Network.

When you make a bequest to the Food Bank, your legacy will have a life-changing impact on hungry families far into the future. It can also save you tax dollars and allow you to make larger gifts than you may think possible.

To request a free report, "Preparing and Reviewing Your Will," contact Bill Mathews at 406-721-3825, ext. 244, or bmathews@mfbn.org

Stay connected!



Feed Montana Stadium Sell-Out

We are partnering with the University of Montana Grizzlies to SELL-OUT Washington-Grizzly Stadium and help feed hungry Montanans. Fill a seat (\$5) and your donation provides enough food for 15 meals! Visit feedmt.org to start filling seats!



Feeding Hope Gala—November 14, 2014

Join us for an elegant evening with a gourmet dinner, live music, silent auction, inspirational speakers and the Hunger's Hope Awards, as we work together to cultivate the Seeds of Hope for Montana's hungry children, families and seniors. To purchase tickets or sponsor the event, please contact Katie Lane at klane@mfbn.org



MY FALL DONATION

YES, Gayle, I want to help you be ready to provide holiday dinners to hungry families across our state.

Here's my gift of: ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other \$_____

- ☐ I commit to a monthly gift of \$_____. My first gift is enclosed.
☐ Please send me a copy of the free report, "Preparing and Reviewing your Will"
☐ I have already included Montana Food Bank Network in my Will or Trust

Please charge my gift on my credit card:

☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ DISC



NAME _____

CARD NUMBER _____

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Please make your check payable to:

MONTANA FOOD BANK NETWORK

P.O. Box 17830, Missoula, MT 59808-7830

To charge your gift by phone, please call 406-721-3825 or give online at **mfbn.org**

Your gifts change lives!

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Your donation is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. We will send a receipt for your records.