

## FINDING A PATH TO BRING EVERYONE FORWARD

A message from Chief Executive Officer, Thomas Reynolds

Our world is not always beautiful; our society does not always offer opportunity to each of its inhabitants—certainly not in an equitable way.

When I lived and worked in other time zones, on other continents, in other places—I saw the devastation of war, the effects of pervasive poverty, the anxiety around failed crops, the futility of contaminated water sources. Somehow it felt easier to diagnose the issues in the lands where I was a foreigner—but perhaps it was only that I was not as emotionally connected to the challenges, nor the solutions.

Now after a year back home in Washington, I am recognizing the profound challenges that so many people face in our cities, towns, and rural areas across our state. There is no randomness to poverty, no haphazardness to hunger. People of color and rural communities face disproportionately high rates of food insecurity. This is happening for a reason. Our society operates within a relatively stable equilibrium which allots privilege unequally.

There is no need to blame people for being hungry; it's not compelling to fault those who struggle with hunger for failing to be successful. The people I meet at food banks are hard-working single mothers and fathers. They are seniors. They are veterans. They are students. They are striving to make ends meet and improve their lives.

There is something bigger at work which underlies our current reality.

The hypothesis that food insecurity can be eradicated by giving surplus food to hungry people has not borne out as a long-term solution—though it does make an important contribution to households in need right now.

Based on the premise that community leaders are the best people to collaborate with to find solutions, Northwest Harvest is linking with small businesses, farming communities, universities, local nonprofit groups, and others to identify scalable hunger-fighting initiatives—especially those focused on efforts to end practices that widen opportunity gaps across our state.

The human experience has many peaks and valleys—this is true for everyone. In the hardest moments of my life—the ones marked by tragedy—the people I am closest to cared for me when I found it hard to continue. I am, and will always be, grateful for their promise to be present, their compassion to listen, and their willingness to support me when I needed it. I believe that is the role of Northwest Harvest—to be an organization that stands unflinchingly with those who experience the oppressive effects of sudden tragedy or the lasting impact of inequality.

I invite each of you to stand with us.

Best regards,



## THE HUNGER STOPS HERE CHALLENGE

This is an important time of the year for those who struggle with hunger. The contributions we receive during the fall will determine the amount of food we're able to procure and distribute to our food program partners all across the state this coming winter season.

Join us for our annual **Hunger Stops Here Challenge**, one of our biggest fundraising events of the year. This year, we have set a goal to raise funds for 5 million meals during the event. Thanks to generous friends of Northwest Harvest, all gifts up to \$500,000 made during the Challenge will be doubled!

As part of the Hunger Stops Here Challenge, your gift will be matched dollar-for-dollar between now and October 31! A gift of \$50 becomes \$100 and will provide nearly 500 nutritious meals to a family in need.

Your support has a real impact on families who are forced to make difficult decisions between putting food on the table or paying bills. You can make a difference to our neighbors in need.

Please make a gift today and **double your impact!**

To take advantage of this dollar-for-dollar match, you'll need to make your donation by October 31.

Here are two simple ways to make your gift:

**Online:** [www.northwestharvest.org/hshc](http://www.northwestharvest.org/hshc)

**Mail:** Use the enclosed postage paid envelope to mail your gift to us. Be sure to write **HSHC** on your check or check the box on the envelope saying you'd like for your gift to be matched.

Thank you!

*"The challenges we have experienced are having seniors ask for fresh veggies since they are a bit more expensive and our program cannot afford them. The success is being able to partner with NWH so that we can provide those veggies and fruits that our program wouldn't otherwise be able to afford."*

—PeopleForPeople MealsOnWheels, Yakima County

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## FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

### GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE HOLDS CLIMATE JUSTICE ROUNDTABLE AT NORTHWEST HARVEST'S KENT DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Thank you, Governor Inslee and all those who participated in the Climate Justice Roundtable at our Kent warehouse. So much spirited

conversation and great ideas on how sectors of all kinds can come together to improve the lives of disenfranchised communities throughout Washington.



## CAST YOUR VOTE AGAINST HUNGER!

Nationally, we have an important opportunity use the 2018 Midterm elections to challenge our current and future leaders to commit to ending hunger in the U.S. and worldwide.

Northwest Harvest joins our friends at Vote To End Hunger in the belief that it will take a combination of public and political will to make ending hunger a priority. We are working together to elevate the issue of hunger with candidates during the next election cycle. "We are committed to asking candidates for public office: 'If elected, what will you do to end hunger, alleviate poverty, and create opportunity in the U.S. and worldwide?'"

In Washington, our next opportunity to be heard is the November 6 general election. The deadlines for Washington

voter registration are October 8 for mail or online and October 29 for in-person. Contact the county elections department where you are currently registered to request a ballot if you haven't received yours by October 25. Return your ballot to a ballot drop box, no stamp required. Your ballot must be returned to a ballot drop box by 8 p.m. election day. Find more details and resources at [www.sos.wa.gov/elections/](http://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/).

Northwest Harvest works to support and encourage the engagement of all communities in the democratic process through education and awareness efforts, including helping food bank participants register to vote and collaborating with other organizations on candidate forums.

Follow our advocacy updates at [northwestharvest.org/take-action](http://northwestharvest.org/take-action), and learn more about voting against hunger at [votetoendhunger.org](http://votetoendhunger.org).

*"One family's story stands out: They travel from Bellingham to Seattle 3-4 times a week for a medical treatment for one child. The treatment lasts several hours. The family does their laundry onsite at the hospital in our free laundry room, and picks up groceries every week. I think we are truly making a difference for this family. I wonder what they used to do before having access to our food pantry."*

—Seattle Children's Hospital, King County  
(MOBILE FOOD BANK)

## WHY THE FARM BILL MATTERS

### LEGISLATION'S DEEP, FAR-REACHING IMPACT ON NUTRITION ACCESS

The Farm Bill is a comprehensive piece of legislation that authorizes most of our federal agricultural and nutrition programs. Congress must pass a new Farm Bill every five years. This is Congress's opportunity to make structural changes that can impact access to programs that help low-income people put food on their tables, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (federal commodities distributed at food banks), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (commodities used to supplement senior nutrition).

The current Farm Bill is set to expire on September 30, and both Senate and House leadership are determined to pass a new bill before then. With both a House bill and a Senate bill that have passed their respective chambers, Congress must negotiate a bill that resolves the differences and that can pass out of both chambers before it can go to the President to be signed into law.



Complicating the process is the fact that the two bills are vastly different from one another, especially when it comes to SNAP. The House bill (which passed on a very narrow vote of 213-211) threatens to take food off the tables of over 2 million low-income people nationwide. Here in Washington, the proposed cuts in the House bill could eliminate benefits for 60,000 individuals, mostly working families with children.

The Senate bill, however, protects SNAP benefits and nearly doubles the investment for states to test out innovations in employment and training that will move people off SNAP and into good paying jobs. The Senate bill also protects and strengthens key programs that help small and mid-scale growers so they can keep their farms in business. The

bill does all of this without harming SNAP for our neighbors in need.

Protecting and strengthening SNAP is at the top of our federal policy agenda: SNAP is our first line of defense against hunger. SNAP is used to buy food at grocery stores, farmers markets, and farm stands, generating economic activity and creating jobs in our local economies. Since SNAP provides 12 meals for every one meal provided by a food bank, we know that charity is not enough: without SNAP, the hunger relief system would be overwhelmed.

Throughout the Farm Bill process, Northwest Harvest has been meeting with members of our Congressional delegation, both in DC and throughout our state. We've been raising public awareness about the importance of SNAP through our advocacy alerts, interviews with newspapers and television stations, and press statements. We've shared stories about the difference SNAP makes for struggling families that we learn from talking with food bank and focus groups participants.

For more information and to find out how you can help speak up to protect SNAP, follow our advocacy updates at [northwestharvest.org/take-action](http://northwestharvest.org/take-action).

## FOCUS GROUPS INFORM ANTI-HUNGER WORK IN SHARING LIVED EXPERIENCES

Since 2007, Northwest Harvest has published our annual Focus on Food Security reports, documenting the stories of people living with hunger and poverty throughout Washington state. We use this report to tell the story of hunger in our communities, identify barriers to service, and recommend policy changes and budget investments to provide equitable access to nutritious food for all Washingtonians.

We collect these stories through a series of focus groups held every summer. Each year, we choose five different food banks from our statewide network and interview participants at those programs about their barriers to food and other basic needs, including housing, health care, transportation, and economic stability. We also ask our focus groups for their advice to

lawmakers about what they can do to alleviate hunger and poverty in their communities.

Our next report will come out in January 2019 and will relate stories from food banks in Spokane, Kennewick, Orcas Island, Ocean Shores, and Orting. But starting next year, we hope to improve our focus group process: our focus groups will kick off a two year cycle that puts people with lived experiences of hunger and poverty in the driver's seat of our policy development process.

Next summer, we plan on returning to three of our focus group locations to convene regional policy summits. We'll invite back our focus group participants to a meeting with representatives from



*Above: Orcas Island participants share stories and challenges of food access with each other and Northwest Harvest.*

nearby food banks, human services agencies, advocates, and lawmakers. Our goal will be to work from the issues identified in our focus group to find policy and programmatic solutions. In the time between our focus groups and our summits, we will hold in-person meetings with our focus group participants, providing public speaking training and advocacy opportunities. We want them to feel prepared and empowered to lead us in identifying how we can all work together to end hunger in Washington.

# COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER FOR FOOD JUSTICE

Northwest Harvest firmly believes that access to food is a fundamental social element that drives opportunity. From an individual level, a family level, and a community-wide level—food is a central ingredient in social justice. Our “Food Justice” vision of equitable access to nutritious food for all in Washington cannot be separated from combined efforts to provide each of our state’s residents with equitable access to education, housing, employment, and economic opportunities. Nutritious food lays the foundation for good health, and good health opens up opportunity for the mental and physical capabilities to focus on learning or to find work and keep striving to open pathways for greater economic stability.

We have a unique opportunity to make a measurable difference in reducing the injustices and inequities that far too many of our communities face when it comes to both our local food system and other structures that systemically repress communities—keeping them from reaching their full potential.

“Every day, we see hunger persist because our neighbors are skipping meals in order to keep a roof over their heads, or they’re paying for life-sustaining medications, or choosing to keep the water from being shut off,” said Thomas Reynolds, Northwest Harvest’s CEO. “We must collectively agree that these cycles must be broken. Achieving food justice in communities that have systematically been shut out is perhaps the greatest avenue to social justice and greater economic opportunities.”

This core belief is just one of the reasons Northwest Harvest is excited about partnering with Living Well

Kent and King Conservation District on a local greenhouse farming project just south of Seattle.

Together, we’re reactivating a commercial-grade greenhouse—with the potential to expand that to eight greenhouses along with 15 acres of quality adjacent farmland. With the generous support from Arnie Hall and the Hall Family Foundation, we are working toward transforming a once idle farm in Auburn into a thriving agriculture enterprise. This project not only brings quality farm land and valuable farm infrastructure back to productive use and provides quality training opportunities and land access for immigrant farmers, we are increasing access to healthy local produce in South King County.

This truly unique project utilizes the agricultural skills of South King County’s growing immigrant communities to provide nutritious, diverse, and culturally favored foods directly where the need is greatest. The produce grown in these greenhouses is sold in local farmers markets, as well as donated to community food banks.

“We know that this project alone is not the answer to solving all the hunger issues in our state,” says Jim Procopio, Northwest Harvest’s Operations Director. “But it’s ideas like this, that when spread across Washington, can help communities have more control and gain sovereignty in the food they access.”



This multi-organizational initiative is a product of Northwest Harvest’s vision of bringing engaged organizations, food justice allies, and a diverse community of volunteers together—all with the goal of improving access to nutritious food for those in our communities who struggle against hunger.

Reynolds added, “This is as much about mobilizing a community around equity and food access as it is about bringing freshly grown produce to market.”

If you would like to know more about this project, please visit [www.livingwellkent.org/projects](http://www.livingwellkent.org/projects).



*“I saw a new client for utility assistance. He came to America at age three. He has always had a green card. He got into a little trouble, spent the night in jail. He let his green card expire, because he is so fearful he will be deported from this one mistake. I directed him to a couple of agencies locally that may be able to help. He is paralyzed with fear.”*

—Our Place Community Outreach, Spokane County

## EVENTS

WASHINGTON  
WESTERN | CENTRAL | EASTERN*More events and  
up-to-the-minute details at:  
northwestharvest.org***SPOKANE OPEN HOUSE**

TUESDAY, SEPT. 25, 4:30 - 7:30 P.M.

SPOKANE BUSINESS & INDUSTRIAL PARK,  
BUILDING #14-J, SPOKANE VALLEY

Join Northwest Harvest for an open house in our new space! Please join us to learn about our impact in the region and our vision for the future. Light appetizers and drinks will be provided with a short program to begin at 5:30 p.m. RSVP to Lisa Ream at 509.891.7276 or [LisaR@northwestharvest.org](mailto:LisaR@northwestharvest.org).

**CARVE OUT HUNGER**

SATURDAY, OCT. 13, 6 - 9 P.M.

**SIPS. CARVES. BITES.** Join Northwest Harvest at the Selah Civic Center for a fun, laid back, "wear your jeans" evening to help fight hunger, sponsored by First Fruits Marketing of Washington! This 5th annual event features a celebrity media pumpkin carving contest, local craft beer, wine, delicious food and dessert sampling from local caterers. Age 21 and over only. \$50 per person. Tickets on sale at [carveouthunger2018.eventbrite.com](http://carveouthunger2018.eventbrite.com).

**THANK YOU, EVENT SUPPORTERS!**

*We could never list them all, but the hundreds of events held each year throughout our state provide tremendous impact across every community we serve. To everyone who contributes in any way, thank you for making a difference!*

Northwest Harvest is so grateful for our ongoing partnerships.

Thanks to our friends at **CENTURYLINK, THE SEATTLE MARINERS, KCTS 9,** and **HERITAGE BANK** (just to name a few) for their efforts to raise food and funds in support of the community this summer.

Our work would not be possible without you!

**KIMA KIDS FOR CANS - YAKIMA**

NOVEMBER THROUGH JANUARY

Yakima area schools compete in a food and fund drive challenge to benefit Northwest Harvest. For more information, email Community Engagement Manager Sheri Bissell at [SheriB@northwestharvest.org](mailto:SheriB@northwestharvest.org) or 509.469.0531.

**KZOK ROCK THE HARVEST**THURSDAY, NOV. 1,  
7 A.M. - 6 P.M.

KZOK 102.5FM is proud to host the 21st annual Rock the Harvest radio-thon



benefiting Northwest Harvest. Since 1997, the Rock the Harvest campaign has raised over 1 million dollars! Callers that donate \$102.50 or more will receive a commemorative **Rock the Harvest** t-shirt and other special prizes.

**SEATTLE SEAHAWKS TACKLE HUNGER**

SUNDAY, NOV. 4

Come out to CenturyLink Field and support the Seattle Seahawks vs. the Los Angeles Chargers as they host the 30th annual Tackle Hunger fundraiser, benefiting Northwest Harvest. Fans and supporters can also donate to this event by texting **TACKLEHUNGER** to **41444**.

**SAVE THE DATES!**

*Join us in December for our biggest events of the year—KING 5 Home Team Harvest in Western WA; NBC Right Now Hometown Harvest in Central WA; and KHQ Hometown Harvest in Eastern WA. We hope to see you there!*

**KING 5 HOME TEAM HARVEST**

SATURDAY, DEC. 1

Your favorite KING 5 personalities broadcast live from several Puget Sound locations as Northwest Harvest volunteers and staff spend the day collecting food and funds at our largest one-day benefit of the year!

**KHQ HOMETOWN HARVEST FOOD DRIVE**

FRIDAY, DEC. 7

Northwest Harvest is excited to once again partner with Albertsons and Safeway for this year's event! KHQ broadcasts live from select locations as Spokane stores collect food and funds throughout the day.

**NBC RIGHT NOW HOMETOWN HARVEST FOOD DRIVE**

FRIDAY, DEC. 7

Albertsons and Safeway stores in Central Washington will be supporting Northwest Harvest by collecting food and funds throughout the day. Your favorite NBC RIGHT NOW personalities will broadcast live from select Albertsons and Safeway locations in Yakima and Tri-Cities.

*Watch for more information and location details at [northwestharvest.org](http://northwestharvest.org).*

*"An older couple that has been coming to our food bank for years received subsidized housing after being on the waiting list for years. They started a patio flower garden. For the past weeks they have been bringing in fresh cut flowers for staff and volunteers as a thank you for all the help they have received over the years."*

—Plateau Outreach Ministries, King County



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## YOU MAKE OUR COMMUNITY STRONGER

This year we have established a bold goal of cutting hunger in half in Washington state by 2028. We are working with service providers, business leaders, policy-makers, growers, advocates, civic organizations, volunteers, and food bank guests to identify innovative, hunger-fighting initiatives to bring equitable access to nutritious food to all in Washington.

As we work on long-term solutions to hunger by growing food justice across our state, we must also remain focused on providing nutritious food to our hungry neighbors. At some point this year, 1 in 6 Washingtonians will

have to rely on a local food bank for groceries in order to provide food for themselves or their families. And, 1 in 5 Washington kids live in a household that struggles to put food on the table.

We rely on contributions of time and resources from thousands of supporters to provide access to nutritious food for all in Washington.

Whether you contribute as a volunteer, advocate, or donor, Northwest Harvest so grateful for your investment. Your concern for others makes our community stronger for all, and your gifts of money, time, energy, and passion allow our important work to be done.

Thank you.



### REAL PEOPLE, REAL STORIES: PROTECTING SNAP

Representative Adam Smith came to the Cherry Street Food Bank to talk to the Participant Advisory Council, a group of people who use the food bank who meet regularly to provide ideas and feedback for our work. We talked about how to strengthen and protect SNAP in the Farm Bill and how to make health care more affordable and accessible for everyone. Representative Smith, thank you so much for listening to our stories over lunch and please tell the rest of Congress that **#SNAPmatters!**

*“Although we’re seeing an uptick in our clients who are employed, they are (at) lower paying jobs and continue to not receive full-time work. Many of the retail jobs seem to be capping at below 40 hours a week. Clients are finding some relief but express that they are grateful the food bank continues to help them fill the gap in their nutritional needs.”*

—Ferndale Food Bank, Whatcom County