Hungry No More, She Strives to Give Back

When asked why she donates her hard-earned money to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, Army veteran Connie Choi says the answer is simple. “There’s nothing more basic than food.”

Connie remembers going through tough times financially when she lived overseas with her ex-husband. Looking back on it now, she believes having access to something like our Food Bank would have been a tremendous help.

“I’d have $10 to spend each week to feed a family of four,” Connie recalls with a shake of her head. “How can anyone do that?”

In the intervening years, Connie’s fortunes have improved. Once her kids were grown and she had enough money to live comfortably, Connie began looking for ways to give back.

“Once you’ve known hunger, the feeling never escapes you that it could happen again,” Connie says. “Hunger never leaves you.”

These days, Connie teaches a Sunday school class and collects donations for the Food Bank in a big glass jar. “We’ll tell the kids, you collected $75 and multiply that by 4, that is how many meals you just made possible,” Connie says. “Our church is too small to have a soup kitchen, but we are doing what we can to help others.”

Every $1 you give to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank helps provide 4 wholesome meals that can nourish hungry seniors throughout the spring. Thank you for caring.

Healthy Snacks Put Pep in Their Step

Afternoons used to be tough in Cheryl’s household. She remembers the days not so long ago when her beloved great-grandsons Jayson, 10, and Marcus, 9, would come dragging home from school.

“I hated to see them hungry like that,” Cheryl says. With the boys’ mother hard at work across town, it fell to her to put together an afternoon snack or an early dinner. Often she’d open the cupboard or refrigerator to see empty shelves.

The doting great-grandmother scrambled in search of a better way. After asking around, Cheryl learned about the Greater Cleveland Food Bank’s Mobile Pantry program at nearby Olivet Institutional Baptist Church.

“Getting those fresh fruits and vegetables helped a great deal,” Cheryl says. “We’ve received milk, eggs and other basics too. It makes it that much easier to buy meat at the grocery store. Otherwise, we could never afford it.”

Fuel to Succeed in School

Cheryl also enrolled Jayson and Marcus in an after-school program at Franklin D. Roosevelt Boys & Girls Club. There, the boys enjoy healthy snacks that raise their energy level and improve their concentration. Their snack of choice? A peanut butter and jelly sandwich with string cheese!

“When I eat and don’t feel hungry, I can focus better on homework.” —Marcus, 9

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Read more about the Boys & Girls Club on page 3.
An Apple a Day, Compliments of You

Kristin Warzocha, President & CEO

Food for Thought

Every day in Northeast Ohio, working poor families are forced to make tough decisions. When you’re living paycheck to paycheck, seemingly minor problems can have catastrophic consequences. Take car trouble, for example.

If the family vehicle breaks down, hardworking parents must dip into funds they had earmarked to buy groceries later in the week. It’s easy to see how small setbacks can spiral into full-blown crises. We saw this during the government shutdown. On the day of their first missed paycheck, federal workers and contractors turned to us for help. Thanks to you, we were able to respond.

78% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck. With that in mind, I’m hoping dedicated friends like you will step up and support this year’s Harvest for Hunger campaign. You can host a food and fund drive or make a generous donation.

The 2019 campaign aims to raise more than 22 million meals for hungry people in our region. More than simply providing healthy food for those in need, we’ll also help relieve them of agonizing decisions. They won’t have to choose between buying essential food, filling a prescription, or fixing their only mode of transportation.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank our 2019 Harvest for Hunger co-chairs, Paul Clark of PNC Bank (retired) and Rick Chiricosta of Medical Mutual, and our honorary co-chairs, Mayor Frank Jackson and Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish. Along with our Kitchen Cabinet of community leaders, the co-chairs have worked hard to make this year’s event another resounding success.

In what has already been a difficult year for so many working poor families in our community, Harvest for Hunger offers much-needed help. Thank you for your steadfast support this spring, and all year long!

With gratitude,

Jojan

Destini receives food from Franklin D. Roosevelt Boys & Girls Club.

Fending Off First-Time Hunger with Your Help

We do know where those healthy snacks come from, and the answer is: YOU. Your generous contributions to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank helps to support special programs like Kids Cafes, school markets and more. Thank you for ensuring kids from hardworking families receive nutritious food!

Row After Row of Goodness

When Jojan arrived at the School Market with his daughters in tow, he was delighted to find a colorful assortment of fruits and vegetables. He knew right away that his wife would love making healthy meals from these fresh ingredients.

“I'm in landscaping,” he explains, “and the work is highly seasonal. Money gets tight in the winter and early spring. My wife is a caregiver for the elderly, but our combined income doesn’t cover all the expenses.”

Thank you for ensuring kids from hardworking families receive nutritious food!

Jojan and his daughters receive food from Joseph M. Gallagher Elementary’s School Market.

Destini receives food from Franklin D. Roosevelt Boys & Girls Club.

An Apple a Day, Compliments of You

For elementary school student Destini, the after-school program at Franklin D. Roosevelt Boys & Girls Club is just part of the daily routine. She loves coloring pictures, meeting up with her friends Jayson and Marcus, and participating in dance lessons. Most of all, Destini enjoys the nectarines, apples and carrots she gets as part of a healthy afternoon snack. “The nectarines are sweet, and they almost taste like candy,” she shares. “Carrots help you grow up big and strong. I like them too.”

Destini never worries where her favorite after-school snacks come from. She just knows it will be there waiting for her, day after day, to keep her mind sharp and her stomach satisfied.

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Jojan recalls the wave of relief that washed over him one recent afternoon. His daughters had just arrived home from school. Bursting with news about the school day, the three girls gave their dad a big hug at the door. Then Jojan’s oldest daughter handed him an envelope.

Inside, a letter invited Jojan and his wife to visit the School Market at Joseph M. Gallagher Elementary. Jojan wasn’t sure what to expect, but he knew his family needed some help.

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With gratitude,

Harvest for Hunger
Here in Northeast Ohio, hardworking families are forced to make tough choices. Many agonize over the decision to purchase groceries, pay for vital medications, or keep the lights on at home.

You can help relieve a hungry neighbor of that terrible burden by supporting the Harvest for Hunger campaign. This year, we’re teaming up with other food banks around the region to help provide more than 22 million meals for people in need. Your contribution will help us meet this important goal.

Go to greaterclevelandfoodbank.org/hfh to get involved.

Mark your calendar for spring events!
Market at the Food Bank
We’re hosting our annual event to benefit the Harvest for Hunger campaign—and you’re invited to be our special guest!

Market at the Food Bank begins at 6 p.m. Sunday, April 28, at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank’s Distribution Center. The event will feature delicious cuisine from more than 50 of Northeast Ohio’s best restaurants and beverage purveyors.

Please join us for a fun night as we enjoy musical entertainment, meet local celebrity chefs and bid on exciting auction items—all while helping to alleviate hunger in our community. Last year’s event raised more than $334,000 in support of hunger-relief efforts. With your help, we’ll beat that mark in 2019.

Purchase your tickets at GreaterClevelandFoodbank.org/Market or please contact Kevin Grissinger at kgrissinger@clevelandfoodbank.org or 216-738-2139.

An Apple a Day, Compliments of You
For elementary school student Destini, the after-school program at Franklin D. Roosevelt Boys & Girls Club is just part of the daily routine. She loves coloring pictures, meeting up with her friends Jayson and Marcus, and participating in dance lessons.

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Row After Row of Goodness
When Jojan arrived at the School Market with his daughters in tow, he was delighted to find a colorful assortment of fruits and vegetables. He knew right away that his wife would love making healthy meals from these fresh ingredients.

“These are vital foods that my girls love,” Jojan says. “All the fruits and vegetables are in excellent condition.”

Your support of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank makes a world of difference for hardworking parents like Jojan. Thanks to your compassion, he has a place to turn when the family budget is stretched to a breaking point.

“I’m very thankful,” Jojan says. “I know from talking to other parents that it’s something so many of us need. It’s wonderful of you to help us like this.”

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An elementary school student enjoys healthy food at the School Market at the Food Bank.
Hungry No More, She Strives to Give Back

When asked why she donates her hard-earned money to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, Army veteran Connie Choi says the answer is simple. “There’s nothing more basic than food.”

Connie remembers going through tough times financially when she lived overseas with her ex-husband. Looking back on it now, she believes having access to something like our Food Bank would have been a tremendous help.

“I’d have $10 to spend each week to feed a family of four,” Connie recalls with a shake of her head. “How can anyone do that?”

In the intervening years, Connie’s fortunes have improved. Once her kids were grown and she had enough money to live comfortably, Connie began looking for ways to give back.

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Afternoons used to be tough in Cheryl’s household. She remembers the days not so long ago when her beloved great-grandsons Jayson, 10, and Marcus, 9, would come dragging home from school.

“I hated to see them hungry like that,” Cheryl says. With the boys’ mother hard at work across town, it fell to her to put together an afternoon snack or an early dinner. Often she’d open the cupboard or refrigerator to see empty shelves.

The doting great-grandmother scavenged the cupboards and found some string cheese! Cheryl also enrolled Jayson and Marcus in an after-school program at Franklin D. Roosevelt Boys & Girls Club. There, the boys enjoy healthy snacks that raise their energy level and improve their concentration. Their snack of choice? A peanut butter and jelly sandwich with string cheese!

“When I eat and don’t feel hungry, I can focus better on homework,” Marcus says. Cheryl has noticed a world of difference, too. She couldn’t be more grateful for the part you’ve played in helping her family.

“We are very appreciative, because this food does help a lot. You’re providing a valuable service to the community when you make programs like this possible.”

Fuel to Succeed in School

Cheryl learned about the Greater Cleveland Food Bank’s Mobile Pantry program at nearby Olivet Institutional Baptist Church.

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Read more about the Boys & Girls club on page 3.

FOOD for THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

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