



Don't just feed the line. End the line.
Bill Tommins and Bernie Beaudreau

If you've ever been on the serving side of a line at a soup kitchen, you are surely familiar with the deep sense of fulfillment that comes from serving a meal that eradicates a fellow community member's hunger.

Another thought is sure to quickly follow: How can we address the underlying causes of food insecurity, so that the person on the receiving end never again questions the source or timing of their next meal?

Addressing hunger is a fundamental first step to economic mobility and empowerment. There are a number of road blocks that individuals and families may face in putting food on their tables – largely due to lack of access and affordability. In Connecticut and across the nation, working families earn too little to make ends meet. Households struggle to make rent, pay utilities, cover car expenses and put enough nutritious food on the table.

Family food budgets are often the first to be cut, reducing both the amount and quality of food in many households and putting people in situations of food insecurity and hunger. In 2001, 6.8% of Connecticut's population was food insecure. By 2016, 15 years later, that number had grown to 12.3%, or 442,000 people. That's 1 in every 8 people and 1 in every six children at risk of hunger.

We recognize that food security is a key piece of the puzzle in achieving economic mobility, which is why for the sixth consecutive year, Bank of America is partnering with Feeding America and its network of 200 affiliate food banks – including the Connecticut Food Bank – to support the Give a Meal program (www.bankofamerica.com/give).

For individual donations made to Feeding America through the program before Dec. 31, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation will match each donation (up to \$1,000 per donor) two-to-one, with an aggregate maximum foundation donation of up to \$1.5 million for all Feeding America programs and affiliated food banks. In the past five years, this program has provided 200 million meals to underserved community members across the country.

In the nationwide fight to end hunger, food banks are analyzing and tackling the root causes of food insecurity. For years, the Connecticut Food Bank has "fed the line," distributing over 18 million meals just last year to the 1 in 8 individuals battling hunger in our area.

Bank of America is proud to partner with the Connecticut Food Bank in advancing its mission of providing nutritious food to people in need. Working 365 days a year to provide food and resources to a network of community-based food programs, such as soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, residential programs and day programs, Connecticut Food Bank serves adults and children across six Connecticut counties, including Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham.

Together, Connecticut Food Bank and Bank of America have made an impact far beyond the Give a Meal program. In the past two years, nearly 50 Bank of America employees have dedicated over 700 volunteer hours to Connecticut Food Bank.

This fall the Connecticut Food Bank partnered with Foodshare and End Hunger CT in hosting "Hungry for Change," Connecticut's first summit between political leaders, nonprofit organizations and corporate



partners across the state, sponsored by Bank of America. A series of deep dive conversations were held in several communities in an effort to spread awareness and develop strategies and local alliances addressing food insecurity. Bank of America has been proud to partner with the Connecticut Food Bank in driving these conversations aimed at developing long term solutions.

Now, we turn to you with hopes that you will join us in this fight to end hunger in Connecticut. There are a number of ways you can participate and make a difference, including signing yourself or a group of friends and co-workers up to volunteer.

We hope you will support and even join us in whatever steps you feel appropriate, for they all lead to the one shared goal, which is to not only feed the line, but to end the line.

To donate to Give a Meal, visit www.bankofamerica.com/give. To ensure your gift goes to local efforts, be sure to enter your zip code when prompted and then designate your gift to "Your Local Food Bank."