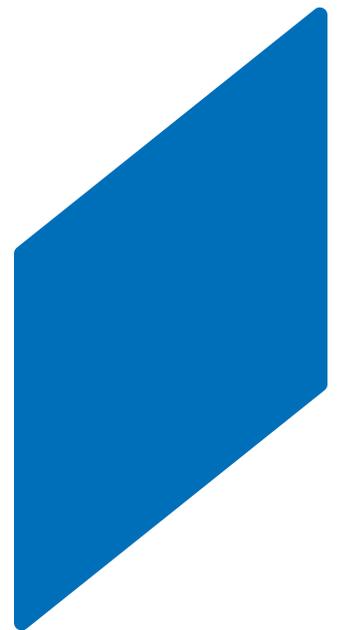


2016 REPORT

Many Partners, One Goal: Food Security for All



ILLINOIS COMMISSION
TO END HUNGER





Average daily school breakfast participation has increased by more than 45,000 students in the last four years.

GOVERNOR RAUNER, CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

The past year has seen tangible progress in the fight against hunger and food insecurity in our state. Significant actions in Springfield, coupled with an improving economy, have eased pressures on many families and laid the groundwork for stabilizing the food supply for more of our residents. But, with approximately 13 percent of our residents facing food insecurity and unprecedented demand for food in some parts of Illinois, often due to chronic unemployment or underemployment, much work remains to be done.

Food insecurity is particularly harmful to children, as poor nutrition can permanently affect brain development. Many studies point to the importance of good nutrition for students. For example, the Commission's No Kid Hungry campaign research shows that students who regularly eat school breakfasts score 17.5 percent higher on standardized math tests than those who do not have a regular breakfast. Illinois currently ranks 42nd in the nation in providing breakfast to low-income students, but we are very pleased to report that we have made significant progress in 2016, including:

- Illinois Senate Bill 2393, passed unanimously by both the Senate and House and signed by Governor Rauner, will enable more than 175,000 additional children to receive school breakfasts in our state (please see the "Spotlight" section in this report for more details).
- A partnership with the Midwest Dairy Council and Share Our Strength, a national hunger relief organization based in Washington, DC, provided 30 grants to Illinois schools, totaling almost \$80,000. This funding encourages adoption of breakfast in the classroom and increased participation in school breakfast in 2016 by 6,000 children statewide. The average daily school breakfast participation has increased by more than 45,000 statewide since the 2011-2012 school year—the baseline year for the No Kid Hungry program—and a total of more than \$272,000 in grants have been awarded.

In January 2016, legislation approved earlier by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Rauner raised the gross income limit for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Illinois to 165 percent from 130 percent of the federal poverty line. This was an essential step in helping struggling working families.

The year also saw many stories of engaging communities and inspiring champions, as we worked to foster and expand collaboration among stakeholders committed to ending food insecurity. We were proud to add the Ounce of Prevention Fund, an organization dedicated to the goal of giving all American children quality early childhood experiences in the crucial first five years of life, to the No Kid Hungry Working Group.

Throughout this report, you will find more examples of the extraordinary work done, day after day, in every one of Illinois's 102 counties. But the stark reality is that almost 1.7 million Illinois residents face food insecurity—greater than the entire populations of Hawaii, Montana and 10 other states—according to the Feeding America 2016 study. Our work will not be over as long as even one family in Illinois faces food insecurity, defined as a lack of access, at times, to enough food for all household members to engage in an active, healthy lifestyle.

The positive news shared in this report would not have been possible without the dedication of every person and organization making up the food safety net—literally thousands of elected officials, government employees, volunteers and donors, food banks and pantries, faith-based organizations, foundations and community groups, and many more. We thank you for your commitment, and for all you have done to help alleviate hunger and food insecurity in Illinois.

Sincerely,

Janice Glenn, Co-Chair
Director
Illinois Department of Human Rights

Kate Maehr, Co-Chair
Executive Director & CEO
Greater Chicago Food Depository

THE COMMISSION TO END HUNGER: WORKING TOWARD A STABLE FOOD SUPPLY

The Commission, a collaboration of the state agencies and private organizations that address hunger year-round, garners bipartisan support and requires no direct funding from the state. The Governor appoints public members of the Commission, while ex officio members are drawn from key state agencies. The first sentence of the Commission to End Hunger Act, passed by the Illinois General Assembly in 2010, states: "It is the goal of the State of Illinois that no man, woman, or child should ever be faced with hunger." Six years later, the Commission has made measurable progress, but much work remains in ensuring food security for every Illinoisan.

The Commission was created because nearly two million Illinois residents face food insecurity. This hardship is present in every county of our state and has a significant impact on the health and economic well-being of our residents and our communities. Although food insecurity represents a significant challenge, it is one that can be overcome. The Commission brings together government entities, community partners and committed individuals to work collaboratively toward the goal of ensuring that no man, woman or child in Illinois ever experiences hunger. We do this through advocacy, improved coordination of existing programs, and engaging new partners.



In FY15, an average of 1,060,589 Illinois households—more than 2 million people—participated in the SNAP program each month.

THE FOUR OVERARCHING GOALS OF THE COMMISSION:

Goal 1: End hunger by improving access to quality, nutritious food among all Illinois populations.

Goal 2: Build needed state infrastructure and foster communication and collaboration among government programs and agencies.

Goal 3: Create public awareness of hunger and the solutions.

Goal 4: Build and expand collaborative partnerships between the public and private sectors to implement Commission goals.

The bulk of the Commission's responsibilities are carried out through three Working Groups: Benefits Access, Emergency Food System, and No Kid Hungry. This report provides highlights of their achievements during 2016, and recommendations to continue our momentum and address ongoing challenges.



SLOW PROGRESS, MUCH NEED

Most of us are fortunate to never wake up to empty refrigerators and kitchen shelves, or need to spend part of the day worrying about where the next meal will come from, struggling to feed our children. Hunger and food insecurity are a very real issue in every one of our 102 counties, affecting a total of almost 1.7 million residents. In Cook County alone, there are an estimated 227,000 food-insecure children. Hunger and food insecurity lead to physical, emotional and economic problems for children and adults alike. Hungry children cannot reach their full potential in school. Food-insecure adults cannot perform optimally at work, or actively conduct a successful job search if they are unemployed or under-employed.

Statistics cannot fully convey the pain and consequences of hunger, but the following chart provides a snapshot of the most recent data regarding the demand for key nutrition programs in Illinois. We are fortunate to have many effective tools, and champions, to fight food insecurity in our state. However, our impact in Fiscal Year 2016 was limited due to the lack of a state budget, which placed additional strain on families that rely on state benefits such as childcare.

ILLINOIS 2014 RATES

Food insecurity rate: 12.9%

Number of food-insecure people: 1,658,280

Poverty rate: 14.4% (1,804,535 individuals)

Child poverty rate: 20.2% (593,186 children)

Percent of the population living under 185% of the federal poverty level: 29.0% (3,641,537 individuals)



USDA Programs—Statewide Utilization Data (Source: USDA Food and Nutrition Service)	Participation FY14 (individuals)	Participation FY15 (individuals)	Percent change in participation FY14–FY15	Latest month available, April 2016
SNAP (average)	2,015,303	2,042,306	1.3%	1,828,522
Women, Infants and Children (WIC)	265,923	247,594	-6.9%	224,341
National School Lunch	1,124,756	1,108,557	-1.4%	1,022,720
National School Breakfast	419,947	423,306	0.8%	398,477*
Summer Food Service Program	69,897	70,835	1.3%	n/a
Child and Adult Care Food Program, average daily attendance	133,868	141,449	5.7%	n/a
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (primarily serving older adults)	16,080	16,281	1.3%	n/a

*much higher in March 2016 at 444,907 children

SNAP: In FY15, an average of 1,060,589 Illinois households (or 2,042,306 persons) participated in the SNAP program each month. In FY14, an average of 1,021,150 Illinois households (or 2,015,303 persons) participated in the SNAP program each month. SNAP participation rates have been decreasing, with 951,933 households (1,828,522 individuals) participating in April of 2016.

WIC: In FY15, 247,594 people participated. **This is down from 265,923 people in FY14.**

Key Child Nutrition Programs:

- National School Lunch: In FY15, 1,108,557 children participated and 184,941,240 lunches were served. **This is a 1.4% decrease in children participating and a .07% increase in lunches served from FY14.**
- National School Breakfast: In FY15, 423,306 children participated and 73,210,544 breakfasts were served. **This is a 0.8% increase in children participating and a 2.1% increase in breakfasts served from FY14.**
- Summer Food Service Program: In FY2015, average daily attendance was 70,835 children and 5,097,105 SFSP meals were served. **This is a 1.3% increase in average daily attendance and 5% increase in SFSP meals served from FY14.**

SPOTLIGHT: CLOSING THE GAP ON SCHOOL NUTRITION

A signature achievement of 2016 hunger relief efforts in Illinois was the enactment of Senate Bill 2393, which will expand school breakfast for 175,000 low-income students by requiring schools where more than 70 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals to serve *Breakfast After the Bell*. SB2393 won unanimous passage in both the House and Senate, and was signed into law by Governor Rauner in August. SB2393 will provide the equivalent of 32 million meals and will take effect in the 2017-18 school year.

The benefits of providing school breakfasts are hard to overstate. Research shows that children who eat school breakfast are more likely to do better in reading and mathematics, retain more of what they learn, and participate more actively in class. School breakfast also is associated with reduced absenteeism, tardiness, behavioral problems and visits to school nurses' offices, with students complaining of headaches or stomachaches caused by empty bellies.

More than 817,000 Illinois students depend upon a free or reduced-price school lunch, but fewer than half of those children are getting a school breakfast. The state has required that schools offer breakfast; however, serving breakfast in cafeterias before school starts has not proven to be an effective strategy. *Breakfast After the Bell* improves on the traditional model of breakfast before the start of school. Instead, breakfast is offered to all students in the classroom during the first few minutes of the day during routine activities, such as taking attendance and listening to morning announcements over the public-address system. This model removes the social stigma of needy students eating before school in the cafeteria, and also lessens the burden on working parents of getting students to school early. The bill will bring \$42 million in additional federal funds to Illinois and does not require additional state funding.

SB2393 became reality thanks to its legislative sponsors (listed below) and the advocacy and commitment of countless organizations and volunteers.

Senate Sponsors

Don Harmon, Kimberly A. Lightford, Jacqueline Y. Collins, Ira I. Silverstein, Chris Nybo, Sue Rezin, Michael Noland, Iris Y. Martinez, and Jason A. Barickman

House Sponsors

Robert W. Pritchard, William Davis, John Cavaletto, Eddie Lee Jackson, Sr. Marcus C. Evans, Jr. Silvana Tabares, Kelly M. Cassidy, André Thapedi, Daniel V. Beiser, Emanuel Chris Welch, Ron Sandack, Linda Chapa LaVia, Mark Batinick, Jack D. Franks, and Carol Ammons



“Strong kids need strong moms. One way to ease the burden on hard-working moms is to make sure their kids get a healthy breakfast at school.”

—Debra Floyd, a Chicago mom who supported Breakfast After the Bell

“Our children can’t learn on an empty stomach. Making sure our students get a nutritious breakfast is the first step toward ensuring success in school.”

—Scott Riddle, Principal, Beardstown (IL) Middle School/High School

NO KID HUNGRY WORKING GROUP

PARTNERSHIPS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Co-chairs: Janine Hill, EverThrive Illinois; Tom Browning, Illinois Action for Children

The No Kid Hungry Working Group supports strategies that alleviate child hunger year-round through school- and community-based programs - advocating policies that address the nutritional needs of children and reaching out to families in need. The group seeks to expand the number of Illinois children utilizing the National School Breakfast Program, the Summer Foodservice Program (SFSP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

OUR PROGRESS

Ambassadors Knock on Doors, Put Food on Tables

For many, summer is their favorite time of year in Chicago. There are negatives associated with the season, however, including searing city heat, humidity, and thunderstorms—that can keep some people indoors, seeking cool and shelter.

But not the Food Ambassadors of the Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI).

“Sometimes it’s hard because of the weather—the heat, the rain—but knowing that what you’re doing helps children and families gets you through the day,” says Melissa Rendon, a food ambassador, of her work in the Chicago’s Belmont Cragin neighborhood.

Sherry Henry, an ambassador who has volunteered with COFI for three years, says: “I see the impact when children have food and when they do not. It makes a big difference.”

Summertime is always an important consideration for childhood hunger, because children are out of school and lose access to school breakfast and lunch programs. COFI partners with the Greater Chicago Food Depository and the Hunger Commission to raise awareness of free summer meals in high-need communities. COFI ambassadors go door-to-door, hand out flyers and put up door hangers with information about where to find the nearest summertime meal programs. Data show that the program has been successful in increasing participation in summer meals programs in low-income communities. Spreading the word is particularly important for Charlene Campbell, a team leader who has been participating in COFI’s summer meals canvassing since it started in 2012.

“I have experienced hunger. I’ve used pantries and my children have used the summer meals program, so food issues are important to me,” she said. “I know the food helps children.”

“Kids should not have to be hungry,” she said. “That’s why we’re out here today.”

2016 data were not available at press time, but statistics on the increase in FY15 over FY14 are very encouraging: *Cicero, 51,117 meals, up 32 percent from 38,733; Englewood, 109,483 meals, up 7.5 percent from 101,875; North Lawndale, 146,386 meals, up 37 percent from 106,881.*



AMBASSADOR SHERRY HENRY

Sherry, whose children are ages 14, 6 and 5, loves spreading the word about nutrition and food assistance in Woodlawn.

“Education and nutrition go hand-in-hand,” she says. “It’s important that children get healthy meals, nutritional meals. Without them, they can’t learn, can’t function, can’t grow. That’s what I’ve said to my children.”

“I love what the Food Depository and COFI do for people,” she adds. “As ambassadors, we get the message out there. Every summer it grows and expands. We feed more and more kids and families.”



AMBASSADOR TARA WILLIAMS

Tara, a mother of four children ages 23, 18, 12 and 11, volunteers in Englewood as part of her efforts to strengthen the neighborhood, for her own kids and the community as a whole. She says she gets as much out of the program as she gives.

“The families we contact are always very grateful, and I’m always learning something every time I’m with the families. I meet a lot of people from different backgrounds, different cultures and different ethnic groups. It’s very exciting to me,” Tara says, adding that her work with COFI has given her confidence about engaging with people, and helped her pursue her bachelor’s degree in business administration online.

“When I first heard about the program, I thought I’d be passing out food,” she says. “I had no idea we were doing door-to-door knocking. But I got used to it, and now it’s fun. I love being part of COFI, it’s been a blessing to me. We have a lot of children here who are hungry. You see the smile on a mother’s face, on a child’s face, and people know they’re not being left out.”

HANDS-ON PROGRAM HELPS FAMILIES LEARN HEALTHY COOKING AND NUTRITION

“Cooking Matters” is a six-week culinary and nutrition program focusing on low-income families, with an emphasis on parents of children under five years old. An initiative of the Commission’s No Kid Hungry Working Group, EverThrive Illinois and the national Share Our Strength organization, Cooking Matters now partners with 33 agencies at 61 locations in Illinois. The program focuses on kitchen safety, building cooking confidence, making healthy choices, and reading labels. All recipes/meals in the program are designed to cost \$2 or less per serving.

In FY16, a total of 1,157 individuals participated in the course across all categories: parents, adults, families (in which parents and children take the class together), kids (grades 3–5), and teens (grades 6–12). In addition to the full program, Cooking Matters also offers separate grocery store tours as part of its educational efforts. An additional 322 people participated in a grocery store tour during the last fiscal year.

The program measures shifts in behavior, fruit and vegetable consumption, use of nutrition labels, confidence in the kitchen, and confidence of participants’ ability to feed a family on a limited budget.

CHALLENGE FOCUSES ON GREATEST NEED

In April 2016, Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti announced the Lieutenant Governor’s Summer Meals Challenge, to build summer meals capacity in 36 counties without a summer site (primarily in southern Illinois). Organizations in eight counties signed up to host sites for the first time in 2016. The program was ongoing through August so the increase in meals for 2016 is not yet known, but in 2015, summer meals saw an increase in participation of more than 269,000 meals statewide from the previous year.



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Engage partners for implementation of SB2393, Breakfast After the Bell. Now that SB2393 has been signed into law, there is much work to be done to ensure its successful implementation. The bill will impact approximately 1,400 schools where more than 70 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced-priced meals. This will require a significant outreach and education effort as well as technical assistance.
- Increase the number of summer meal and after-school program sponsor sites. Sponsor sites are community organizations approved by the USDA to provide meals during summer or after school programs. Having an adequate number of sites is critical to ensure children have access to meals when schools let out. While progress has been made, more work is needed to expand the number of sponsor sites, particularly in underserved areas.
- Advocate for robust Child Nutrition Reauthorization. The Child Nutrition Act is the authorizing legislation for child nutrition programs, including WIC, school meals and CACFP. The Act expired last year and is up for reauthorization in Congress. We support a bill that strengthens child nutrition programs to ensure all children have access to the healthy, nutritious food they need to thrive.

An additional 9,000 kids were served in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk After School program in FY16, and there also was an increase in After School program sponsors. Seven summer meal program sponsors became after-school sponsors and an additional three non-profit organizations became new after-school sponsors, for a total of 10 new sponsors in FY16.



BENEFITS ACCESS WORKING GROUP

STRATEGIES TO DO MORE, FASTER

Co-chairs: Dan Lesser, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law; Kathy Chan, Cook County Health and Hospitals System

The mission of the Benefits Access Working Group is to advocate for policies and practices that increase access to publicly-funded food and nutrition benefits. The Group's priorities are to identify and advance strategies to improve access to government nutrition programs (other than those directly serving children, which are the focus of the No Kids Hungry Working Group) and maximize the benefits obtained through such programs. These programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps—the foundation of the federal food safety net), the Older Americans Act meal programs, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

Expanding Eligibility for SNAP Recipients

SB1847 increased the SNAP gross income test to 165 percent from 130 percent of the federal poverty line, and worked with the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to promote this important change for newly eligible families. (The federal poverty guideline for a family of four in the lower 48 states is a pre-tax income of \$24,300.) The legislation took effect on January 1, 2016. The state agency estimates that 40,000 households and 80,000 individuals became eligible for SNAP as a result of this change.

Helping Victims of Human Trafficking

We advocated to make SNAP and other public benefits available to victims of human trafficking and other serious crimes and asylum applicants during the time before their applications are acted upon. The result was passage of SB3007, which was signed into law by Governor Rauner in August.

Enhanced Services for SNAP Employment & Training

The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, in partnership with IDHS leadership, worked to restructure the SNAP E&T program in Chicago to improve services. A high percentage of SNAP recipients were not responding to mass E&T call-in notices to IDHS' only E&T office in Cook County, located on Chicago's south side. As part of the reorganization, that office closed, and its workers dispersed to other, local offices. All participants were given an appointment rather than being required to show up via mass call-ins and wait for hours. IDHS enhanced its screening procedures, and the Shriver Center and IDHS worked together to significantly improve the notice sent to participants. Participants can now submit verifications to the office by mail, email, or fax. The solutions were particularly helpful for eligible individuals who were employed but disabled or could not get off work.

Food Insecurity and Health

The Cook County Health and Hospitals System (CCHHS), in partnership with the Greater Chicago Food Depository, trained five CCHHS health centers on the connections between food insecurity and health outcomes, along with the public benefits that provide food assistance. CCHHS patients are now routinely screened for food insecurity and an appropriate referral to SNAP and other community-based resources is provided to patients who screen positive.

The Shriver Center worked with the Illinois Hospital Association to create a guide for hospitals to screen and enroll patients into SNAP, using the online Application for Benefits Eligibility (ABE) system.

The Shriver Center and CCHHS presented a webinar that reached 60 navigators, in-person counselors, and other entities that routinely assist individuals with Medicaid and Marketplace applications, to share information about SNAP and to encourage these entities to screen and assist with applications for SNAP.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Apply for the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) waiver. Illinois has historically operated under this waiver, but it is scheduled to expire at the end of December. Illinois is eligible for an extension, and the Benefit Access Working Group advocates for Governor Rauner to apply. SNAP benefits are 100 percent federally funded. Without this waiver, 18-49 year old able-bodied adults who do not have dependent children (ABAWDs) would have to work 20 hours per week as a condition of eligibility for SNAP benefits, or would be limited to three months of SNAP benefits in a three-year period. A waiver would ensure that 216,000 of Illinois' most vulnerable people, such as homeless veterans, persons with mental and physical health conditions, and ex-offenders, could continue to purchase adequate, nutritious food.
- Educate health care providers about the connection between food insecurity and health outcomes. The Cook County Health and Hospitals System, in partnership with EverThrive, has applied for a grant from Share Our Strength to expand access to this type of training for physicians and clinic staffs. (This builds on the work that Greater Chicago Food Depository has done with the Cook County Health and Hospitals System and ACCESS Community Health Network to implement food insecurity screenings in clinical settings and develop an appropriate response if a family is found to be food-insecure.)
- Create a directory of community resources for benefits enrollment and post it to the Commission website.



EMERGENCY FOOD SYSTEM WORKING GROUP

FROM FARMS, TO FIELDS, TO FOOD BANKS—CREATIVE, NIMBLE SOLUTIONS

Chair: Michael Miller, River Bend Foodbank

The Emergency Food System Working Group explores and supports public and private policies and practices that enhance and advance food security. Our goal is increasing the available supply, thus ensuring that everyone in Illinois has access at all times to nutritious food.

OUR PROGRESS

Making Sure Crops Don't Go to Waste

In partnership with Feeding Illinois, this Working Group applied for a US Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant to pilot a specialty crop surplus capture project (specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts and dried fruit). This Agricultural Clearance Program, like similar programs in other states, would be a collaborative enterprise with agricultural industry stakeholders to increase access to Illinois' specialty crops for people in need. The program would reimburse farmers for the costs associated with picking, packing, processing and transporting their unharvested and/or unsold surplus crops. Grant awardees should be announced in November 2016.

Innovative Partnership with Hunters

Another innovative initiative is the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Sportsmen Against Hunger partnerships between deer hunters and food banks, which we seek to expand. Hunters donate their excess meat to food banks and charities. Participating meat processors grind venison into two-pound packages of burger at no cost to the donor. The meat is inspected and processed at a licensed facility and then donated to area hunger relief organizations.

The Northern Illinois Food Bank has received ground venison through the Illinois Sportsmen Against Hunger program over the past three years:

- CY15: 60,812 pounds
- CY14: 74,262 pounds
- CY13: 47,958 pounds

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement a pilot for an agricultural surplus program for specialty crops in Illinois.
- Identify strategies to increase donations through the Illinois DNR and Sportsmen Against Hunger.
- Explore opportunities to increase food donation through food waste reduction strategies from food manufacturers and distributors, retail and food services.

CONCLUSION

We thank the countless people and organizations, in both the public and private sectors, who worked tirelessly over the past year to make real progress on behalf of our state's most vulnerable citizens. There is no more compelling example than the enactment of SB2393, which demonstrates what is possible when we identify a solution to a serious problem and work together to achieve our goal. Looking ahead to the next year, the Hunger Commission will advance the recommendations of the three Working Groups and keep advocating for policies at both the state and federal levels that can reduce the burden of food insecurity on families. The Commission will continue to bring together partners for the annual Hunger Summit, and strive even harder to educate the broader public and elected officials about the reality of food insecurity—and how we can keep food on the table for everyone in Illinois.

The only way we end hunger is through collective action, so if you have been inspired by this report, we invite you to become a partner in this work. Please support the eight food banks across the state - volunteer, donate, become an advocate. For more information, visit www.endhunger.illinois.gov.



MEMBERS AND WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Appointed Commissioners

Patricia Bellock, State Representative
Brian Colgan, Office of Lieutenant Governor
Evelyn Sanguinetti
Betsy Creamer, Illinois Department on Aging
John Cheney Egan, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Janice Glenn, Office of Governor Bruce Rauner (co-chair)
Esperanza Velasquez Gonzalez, Illinois Migrant Council
Marla Goodwin, Jeremiah's Food Pantry
Angel Gutierrez, Catholic Charities
Mark Haller, Illinois State Board of Education
Grant Hammer, Illinois Department of Agriculture
Don Harmon, State Senator
Elizabeth Hernandez, State Representative
Janine Hill, EverThrive Illinois
Michael Holmes, African-American Family Commission
Diane Grigsby Jackson, Illinois Department of Human Services
Ahlam Jbara, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Jay Johnson, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Barbara Karacic, Beacon Place, Inc.

Karen Lehman, Fresh Taste
Dan Lesser, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Kate Maehr, Greater Chicago Food Depository (co-chair)
Michael Miller, River Bend Foodbank
Sue Rezin, State Senator
Amy Rynell, Heartland Alliance
Bridgett Stone, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Layla Suleiman-Gonzalez, Illinois Latino Family Commission
Gary Tomlin
Mary Ellen Warren, Illinois Hunger Coalition
Lynda Williams, Teach for America
Julie Yurko, Northern Illinois Food Bank



BENEFITS ACCESS WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Chairs: **Kathy Chan**, Cook County Health and Hospitals System; **Dan Lesser**, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law;
Staff Support: **Aimee Ramirez**, Greater Chicago Food Depository; **MacKenzie Speer**, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

Members:

Mary Ellen Abbott, Illinois Hunger Coalition
Sherie Arriazola, Treatment Alternative for Safe Communities (TASC)
Hollie Baker-Lutz, Northern Illinois Food Bank
Graham Bowman, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
Caroline Chapman, LAF
Betsy Creamer, Illinois Department on Aging
Kimberly Drew, Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights
Jan Freeman, Illinois Department of Human Services
Michael Gillespie, Eastern Illinois University
Kathleen Gregory, Access Community Health Network

Susan Holzer, United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services
Ahlam Jbara, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Meghan Jenkins-Morales, AgeOptions
Carmenza Millan, AARP
Graciela Ruela, Greater Chicago Food Depository
Angelia Smith, Ford Heights Community Center
Elisabeth Elizabeth Steimel, AgeOptions
Maribeth Stein, AgeOptions
Alison Stevens, Illinois Hunger Coalition
Mary Ellen Warren, Illinois Hunger Coalition

EMERGENCY FOOD SYSTEM WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Chair: **Mike Miller**, River Bend Foodbank
Staff Support: **Bob Dolgan**, Greater Chicago Food Depository; **Terri Nally**, Feeding Illinois

Members:

Lindsey Arenberg, Illinois Alliance to Prevent Obesity
Steve Ericson, Northern Illinois Food Bank
Esperanza Velasquez Gonzalez, Illinois Migrant Council
Marla Goodwin, Jeremiah's Food Pantry
Grant Hammer, Illinois Department of Agriculture
Jay Johnson, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Sheila Kennedy, Top Box Foods
Karen Lehman, Fresh Taste
Jessica Lynch, Illinois Public Health Institute
Janie Maxwell, Illinois Farmers Market Association
Suzy McNamara, Top Box Foods
Gary Tomlin, Knox County Produce Farms

NO KID HUNGRY WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Co-Chairs: **Tom Browning**, Illinois Action for Children; **Janine Hill**, EverThrive Illinois
Staff Support: **Suzy Lee**, Greater Chicago Food Depository

Members:

Signe Anderson, FRAC
Robin Levy Brown, Midwest Dairy Council
Diane Doherty, Illinois Hunger Coalition
Jonathan Doster, The Ounce of Prevention Fund
Daylan Dufelmeier, UIC Chicago Partnership for Health Promotion
Jill Edelblute, YMCA Chicago
John Cheney Egan, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Angel Gutierrez, Catholic Charities
Mark Haller, Illinois State Board of Education
Maged Hanafi, USDA Food and Nutrition Service

Lilah Handler, EverThrive Illinois
Merdis Hudson, USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Barb Karacic, Beacon Place
Tracy Kelsey, Northern Illinois Food Bank
Katie Klus, Illinois Hunger Coalition
Lolita Lopez, EverThrive Illinois
Angela Odoms-Young, UIC Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition
Barbara Rose
Penny Roth, Illinois Department of Human Services
Cecilia Tipiani-Fuentes, EverThrive Illinois

The Illinois Hunger Summit is the state's leading annual conference for the hunger-relief sector, bringing together more than 300 people from academia, education, government, faith-based organizations, philanthropy and public health. The 2016 Hunger Summit took place in Springfield in May. The Commission also sponsored "breakfast summits" in Chicago Heights, Hazel Crest and Oak Forest, which were attended by representatives of 21 school districts plus community partners.



Report prepared by the Greater Chicago Food Depository with input from partners statewide.

Contact information:

Greater Chicago Food Depository
4100 West Ann Lurie Place, Chicago, IL 60632
773-247-3663 | www.endhunger.illinois.gov