



DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT

SPRING 2026



NORTHEAST IOWA
FOOD BANK

From the Director



By the time you read this, we will be well into spring and preparing for summer. With that also comes the close of our fiscal year. As you may recall, this year has brought a few challenges, and in times like these, we look to our community to help us do more.

Many of these challenges are beyond our control. A government shutdown and changes to federal programs have created uncertainty. At the same time, food donations continue to shift, requiring us to find new ways to source food, including purchasing more. As need continues to rise, more people are turning to our programs for support.

We are able to respond to these challenges because of the generosity of our donors. Each year, during March and April, we launch our Match Challenge, and this year is no different. Thanks to generous contributions, we are able to match donations up to \$40,000, encouraging our community to come together and give.

In addition, the State of Iowa has provided \$34,000 in matching funds through the Choose Iowa program. This allows us to work with partner agencies to purchase locally sourced food and distribute it through pantries across northeast Iowa.

We also hosted our annual Empty Bowls event on March 27, welcoming more than 420 guests, a record for the event. Together, we raised more than \$44,000, also a new record. Thank you to everyone who attended and supported this important effort.

With every challenge comes opportunity. Each of you can make a difference by advocating, donating, or volunteering. Every action helps strengthen our community and supports those facing food insecurity.

We believe food is a basic human right. Thank you for standing with us in this belief and helping us fulfill our mission.

If you have not yet made a gift, please consider doing so. You can help ensure Every Meal. Every Day. Everyone.

On behalf of those we serve, thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Prather". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

PACK THE DOME

On January 19, nearly 2,000 volunteers packed 70,272 bags for our BackPack Program at Pack the Dome: MLK Day of Service at the University of Northern Iowa's UNI-Dome. Pack the Dome is made possible through the partnership of the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley, and the University of Northern Iowa Office of Community Engagement.



FIGHT HUNGER DAY ON THE HILL

In late January, the Northeast Iowa Food Bank joined the Iowa Food Bank Association for Fight Hunger Day on the Hill. At the Iowa State Capitol, we met with legislators to discuss key priorities in the fight against hunger to ensure food security remains a prime focus in Iowa. Thank you to Senator Bill Dotzler and Senator Dave Sires for designating toothbrushes from Delta Dental to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank after meeting with us.

COMING UP

2X MATCH

Make double the impact on your donation this spring. Throughout the months of March and April, anonymous donors match up to \$40,000 for the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. Every \$1 donated can now provide up to 5 meals to northeast Iowans facing food insecurity. Donate before the end of April to double your reach!

2X



LETTER CARRIER FOOD DRIVE

The 2026 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is Saturday, May 9! To participate, simply leave a bag of non-perishable food next to your mailbox. Your letter carrier will collect it, and the food will be donated to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank to help fight hunger in our local communities.

PERSONAL CARE DRIVE

Mark your calendars for NEIFB's annual Personal Care Drive taking place from July 1 until August 2, 2026. This drive helps provide northeast Iowans with basic personal care items such as soap, conditioner, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc. Learn more at neifb.org.



STAY UP TO DATE ON ALL
THINGS NEIFB!



DOUBLING IMPACT WITH LOCAL FOOD PARTNERSHIPS

For the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, partnerships are more than collaboration. They are a way to multiply impact. Through ongoing work with Choose Iowa, the Food Bank is helping expand access to fresh, locally produced food while supporting Iowa farmers and producers.

Choose Iowa, a program through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, connects communities with food grown and made across the state. Through the Farms to Food Banks Program Grant, that connection becomes even more meaningful. The grant is a one-to-one match, which means every dollar invested by the Northeast Iowa Food Bank is matched dollar for dollar through the program.

This structure allows every investment to go twice as far. For example, if an agency partner is allocated \$1,000, half is provided by the Food Bank and half is matched through Choose Iowa bringing more fresh, high-quality food to local shelves.

This partnership continues to make a strong impact across northeast Iowa. The Food Bank has paired 18 pantry partners with nearly 20 Choose Iowa farmers, building direct relationships that increase access to Iowa-grown products. With nearly 60 percent of funds already utilized, the program is actively reaching families and communities throughout the region.

By sourcing food locally, the Northeast Iowa Food Bank is able to support northeast Iowans facing food insecurity while also investing in Iowa's agricultural strengthening local communities at every level.

When resources are matched and partnerships are strong, the result is clear. Together, we can double the impact by supporting local farmers and helping more families put food on the table.



PANTHER PANTRY EXPANDS TO MEET GROWING NEED



Food insecurity can affect anyone, at any age, and college students are no exception. In fact, a 2023 report from the U.S. Department of Education's National Postsecondary Student Aid Study found that 23% of undergraduate students and 12% of graduate students experience food insecurity.

To support Panthers facing food insecurity, the University of Northern Iowa opened the Panther Pantry in January 2019. In its first year, 450 students visited the pantry, which was an early indication of how great the need was for this resource.

Since then, the need for Panther Pantry has continued to grow. By the 2024-25 academic year, student use had increased by roughly 62%. There were 732 students relying on the pantry for food and essential items. This year, the Panther Pantry took a major step forward by moving to a new, more visible location on the ground level of UNI's Maucker Union. The change in numbers was instantaneous. Within the first three days of reopening in January 2026, 179 students walked through the doors. This surpassed last spring's numbers, when 105 students visited during the same period. For many students, the previous basement location was difficult to find, which was a concern frequently noted in surveys.

Connie Hansen, Associate Director of Student Involvement, has been part of the Panther Pantry since its beginning. For Hansen, the work done in the pantry has been impactful.

"Working with the Panther Pantry has been incredibly rewarding, and I feel very fortunate to be part of this program," said Hansen. "Watching college students support their peers is one of the most meaningful aspects of my role here at UNI. It is truly a blessing to see the generosity of our alumni, community donors, students, faculty, and staff, whose financial support, food donations, and essential items make the pantry's impact possible."

Now in a more visible space, Panther Pantry will continue to fight hunger and ensure that UNI students have a place to turn when they need it most.

DRIVING OUT HUNGER IN NORTHEAST IOWA

The Northeast Iowa Food Bank launched a new community initiative, “Driving Out Hunger,” in December, partnering with local dealerships throughout the month to support people across northeast Iowa. During the government shutdown, which affected many in the community, Bill Colwell Ford, Dan Deery Toyota, and Rydell Chevrolet saw the increased need and stepped in to help. Each dealership donated a portion of every oil change to the Food Bank while also collecting food donations. Together, they raised \$15,000 and collected 214 pounds of food to support northeast Iowans facing food insecurity.



Honorariums

Janelle Swanberg

By David Fish

Isabelle Steffener

By David Dish

Craig Nahsen

By David Fish

Veronica Steffener

By David Fish

Dave Fish

By David Fish

Clayton & Lucille Chapma

By Reggie & Suzan Schmitt

Tom & Connie Duffy

By Elizabeth Fry

Mike & Evelyn Aubrey

By Seth Walker

Cindy & Ken Losch

By Barb & Jim Prather

Ken Cutts

By Louis & Susan Fettkether

Barb & Jim Prather

By Ken & Cynthia Losch

Monica Clark

By Gary & Margaret Clark

Renabel Trainor

By Joyce Tebbe

Juli Ann Farrell

By Wanda Jane Farrell

Jean & Don Richardson

By Jane Ingraham

Pete & Diana Colver

By Suzanne Bembridge

Grace Nolte Hedstrom

By Amalia Myron

David & Andrea Sparks

By Community Foundation
of Greater Des Moines

Meagan Miller

By Otto Schoitz
Foundation

Jim Krebsbach

By Kelly Dunn

Memorials

Earl & Mary Bellis

By Jean & Robert Bellis

E Howard

By Richard & Marcia
Bechthold

Bill Teaford

By Laura Jane Teaford
By Beverly & James
Burns
By Tom Pounds
By Cynthia & Gary
Mixdorf
By Marilee Burns
By Jay & Kathryn Agness
By Richard & Jane Strike
By Merlin & Lois Taylor
By Roger & Louise Odle
By Susan Ilax
By Robert & Virginia Rule
By Roger & Betty LaCoste
By Lyn & Robert Huber
By Roger & Maureen
White
By Allen & Cassie Sage
By Alan & Sally Yakish
By Michael & Monique
Poe
By Phyllis Brown
By Jean Boller
By John & Karen Miller
By Patricia Harper
By Lucinda Mohr
By Denise & Russell
Peterson
By Michael & Patti Dreyer
By Jeanne Robinson
By Black Hawk County
Democrats

Marlys Hughes

By Larry & Carol Chapman
By Gary & Donna Brown
By Laura Jane Teaford
By Juanita Rekers
By Lyn & Robert Huber

Brent Groomes

By Donna Wohlhuter

Dan & Brande Orr

By Charles Orr

Kathryn Brackin

By Kathryn & John Brackin

Mary Ann Burk

By Kathy Braun

Mark Baade

By Barry & Jane Wilson

Linda M. Neidert

By Dennis Niedert

Raymond Boleyn

By Donna Boleyn

Maria

By Andrea Sherwood

James Hutchins

By Dorothy Hutchins

Wayne Bicknese

By Everett & Vicki Rowland

Truman Kaiser

By Richard & Marcia
Bechthold

Charlotte Wells

By Laura Praglin & Kenneth

Atkinson

By Len & Gail Froyen
By Lucille Lettow

Darrel Kramer

By Jane Juchems
By Idella Folkerts
By Linda Kuhn
By Dixie Kramer
By Bonnie Bellinger
By Elaine Kueker
By R. Liddle

Dorothy Keith

By Stephanie Wessman
Lemmon
By Dorothy Keith
By Sharon Wambold
By Ina Ross
By Kris Sunken

Irene Casey

By Dorothy & Eugene Bright

Donna & Warren Timmerman

By Barry Timmerman

Louise Williams

By Roy Dawson

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By Jeanette Oeltjenbruns

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Forrest, Donna, & Warren**Timmerman**

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By Nicholas McNamara

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By Diana Knutsen

Jean Barrett

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By Daniel Schustersich

Aileen Sandell

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Rick Calhoon

By Richard & Marcia
Bechthold

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By Gary & Janet Parson

Peter James Kemp

By John & Beverly Stevens

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By Robert & Judith Wise

Ed Elbers

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Lawrence Seery

By Nancy Seery

Marilyn Lottich

By David & Sue Feltman

Melinda Youngbult

By Michelle Lindquist

Daniel Driscoll

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Marsha Newton

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By Heather Song
By Deborah Goodenbour
By Kathie Obradovich

Grace Johnson

By Roma & Larry Dietrichs



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