

– SUMMER 2020 –

– NOURISHPC.ORG –



TOGETHER WE NOURISH – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Have you seen the news? Lines of cars waiting for help from their local food bank. The need for food bank support is immediate and immense. Nourish distributes food throughout Pierce County, but we can't do it without volunteers

Nourish Pierce County currently operates 23 food bank distribution locations. With a staff of only 17 full time employees, we rely on 1,000 volunteers annually to help maintain our food bank operations. When the COVID-19 crisis hit, the bulk of our volunteer base stayed home as they are over 65 years of age. Since early April, the Washington National Guard has filled that void. But as their service is scaling back, Nourish needs volunteers. Without the support of dedicated volunteers, we face having to close distribution sites. Reducing our service locations will create an additional burden for those who depend on us.

Can you help? We have shifts available Monday – Saturday.

Qualifications:

- 17 years or older
- Good health
- Be able to stand for 3 or more hours
- Be able to bend, lift, and carry 25 lbs.
- Pass a criminal background check

The safety of our staff, volunteers and customers is the number one priority for Nourish. We continue to do curbside/walk up service at all sites. This allows us to keep socially distant and limit interactions. All volunteers will be given a reusable face mask and we continue to distribute masks to clients as they are available.



To learn more or register to volunteer, please visit **[NourishPC.org/volunteer](https://www.nourishpc.org/volunteer)** or email questions to **Volunteer@NourishPC.org**





CONTINUING TO NOURISH THROUGHOUT A CRISIS

What does it take to nourish a community during a national health crisis?

Supporting best practices as well as our mission, Nourish operates a self-select model. Clients visiting any of our food bank locations, including our two mobile food banks, use a shopping cart while guided by a volunteer to make their own food choices. In March, when COVID-19 hit, we changed to a pre-boxed distribution model to safeguard the health of our community.

Our warehouse became an assembly line. Our food bank parking lots became routed drive-through distribution sites. Our volunteer base, as much as 75%, stayed home due to health concerns. We gratefully welcomed the National Guard to fill the void.

All this, while our client numbers soared to the highest point in our history. In May and June, we provided over **61,880 clients** enough food for almost **556,920 meals**. *That's 50% increase from last year.* Due to the significant increase in demand, we spent our entire annual food budget by mid-year. We are continuing to raise funds and secure grants and donations in order to keep up with demand.

As the health crisis wears on and the economy struggles, the need will continue to be immense and immediate. But through it all, and with the support of our generous community, we have continued to provide enough food for three meals a day for three days for each household member to anyone who visits our food banks.

So, what does it take to nourish a community during a national health crisis? It takes all of us, including you. Read more to learn how you can help. **#TogetherWeNourish**.

FUND-THE-NEED

All of our annual fundraising events for 2020 have been cancelled due to COVID-19 precautions. These annual events, including the Nourish Dinner & Auction, our largest fundraiser of the year, generate the funds needed to purchase food. At the same time, as unemployment numbers are at a record high, the need for food bank services is greater than ever. According to the national hunger relief organization, Feeding America, it is estimated that 1 in 6 American could face hunger as a result of the pandemic. While events may be cancelled, hunger isn't taking a break.

But you can help! We invite you to make a donation to reach our Fund-The-Need goal. We are striving to raise \$125,000. You can join us in making a difference in the lives of families in Pierce County. Donate online at **NourishPC.org/campaigns/fund-a-need**. Or use the enclosed envelope to mail a check.

Please help support Nourish in providing nutritious food to people in need with compassion, dignity and respect with a gift today.

Other Ways to Help

- Host a Virtual Fundraiser. Customize a fundraising page and share the link with your friends, family and co-workers. Encourage them to donate and start raising funds for Nourish Pierce County Banks today. Visit **NourishPC.org/online-fund-drive** to get started.
- Support Nourish by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card and scanning it every time you shop there.
- Shopping on Amazon? AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features. Just select Nourish Pierce County as your charity of choice and the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products. It's that easy!
- September is Hunger Action Month. Visit **NourishPC.org/hunger-action-month** to take action against hunger.



*To donate online,
use your phone's
camera or app
and hover over
the code.*



Leave a lasting legacy to the food bank with an estate gift.

Contact Angela Seretis, at 253-302-3643 to discuss how to remember the food bank in your will or estate plan.



THANK YOU WASHINGTON NATIONAL GUARD

Louis Hocking, 24, has developed a full appreciation for the work of food banks. Growing up in “small town” Arkansas, his family often depended on the local food bank. He’s been serving in the Washington National Guard since 2019 after leaving the Marine Corps. His most recent deployment has been packing boxes and trucks at Nourish Pierce County’s warehouse to help ensure others get the food they need.

“I had no idea of the amount of work, care and love that people behind the scenes put into giving others the opportunity to eat,” he said.

When Governor Inslee issued stay-at-home orders in response to COVID-19, the bulk of Nourish’s volunteer base stayed home. Hocking was one of 61 Guard members deployed in early April to assist in maintaining operations throughout Nourish’s 23 active distribution sites and the warehouse.

Jason Cole, 38, is one of the guards serving at Nourish’s SE Tacoma Food Bank. In the span of his service, he has seen a significant increase in need. “When I started (in April), we were serving 200 families on Fridays. Now we see as many as 500,” he explained.

Nourish depends on 1,000 volunteers annually to maintain operations. Without the support of the National Guard, the organization may not have been able to meet that increased demand. Although the Guard is now being scaled back, the need persists as unemployment is at record numbers. Yet as the virus is still a threat, many volunteers may not be able to return.

According to Guardsman Hocking, he’s part of the demographic that can make the difference. “As the younger generation, we need to step up. Do the work. Keep others safe and fill in. Because we can.”

Both guardsman say the work has been meaningful. “The clients are very friendly and thankful,” explained Cole. “It’s a misconception that people who come to food banks are greedy. I’ve seen clients turn down food they don’t need so someone else can use it”.

Asked what he may one day tell his future grandchildren about this time in history, Cole responded, “Our community stepped up”.

The staff, volunteers, and clients of Nourish Pierce County are incredibly grateful to the National Guard for their dedication in supporting our mission. Thank you!





NOURISH PIERCE COUNTY

Food Banks for Healthier Futures

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Nourish Pierce County is a proud partner of the United Way

CLIENT STORY: IVAN

“A couple years ago, I was discouraged and lacking energy. My friend didn’t think I was eating properly, so he introduced me to Nourish Pierce County. We stopped in front of the mobile unit at Key Peninsula. He said go in and meet Durk (the food bank manager) and see how they are helping people. Durk signed me up and said go get a cart. Then Durk proceeded talking as we went through rows and rows of the truck asking do you want this, do you want that, talking as fast as he could. When I finished walking through the truck my cart was full of food. I felt emotionally and physically nourished as he walked me to the car. As he walked away, he said please come again. Every week I look forward to Friday to be nourished and emotionally uplifted.”



Ivan also volunteers weekly with Nourish.

SAVE THE DATE

