

Feeding Hope

Leading the fight to end hunger.



HARRY
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FOOD
BANK

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Neighbor Spotlight

Hope Found in Immokalee

Every Tuesday morning, Maria Perez arrives at Harry Chapin Food Bank's mobile food distribution at Immokalee Church of the Nazarene with her service dog, Amy. For the past two years, the weekly distribution has helped Maria and her mother, who lives with her, put nutritious food on the table.

Before her life changed, Maria dedicated her career to caring for others. As a bilingual nurse, she found joy in serving families in her community, taking the time to understand their needs and helping them navigate their medical care.

After being diagnosed with breast cancer, Maria's life took an unexpected turn. Today, she is a survivor, but the physical and emotional toll of her illness left her unable to continue working. Living on a monthly disability check, she says rising costs have made it increasingly difficult to make ends meet.

"I would not be able to get the nutrition I need without this support," said Maria. "The people here are really nice. There's always someone who helps me carry my food to my car because I'm physically unable to do it myself."

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Maria is one of as many as 300 neighbors who visit the weekly distribution in Immokalee. At each distribution, Pastor Jean C. Paul and members of his congregation welcome every neighbor with a smile.

"We want our community to know they can come to us, and we are glad to partner with Harry Chapin Food Bank to provide this service for families who need it," says Pastor Paul.

Maria says she never imagined she would one day need the same kind of support she once provided to others.

"God bless Harry Chapin Food Bank for giving us this help," she says. "I thank every single person who makes this support possible."

Although Maria can no longer work as a nurse, her desire to serve others has never faded. She plans to sign up as a Harry Chapin Food Bank volunteer because she knows firsthand the difference a helping hand can make.





A Message From Our President & CEO **New Hunger Action Center Thanks to Your Generosity**

As you read this, our team is preparing for one of the most significant milestones in Harry Chapin Food Bank's history. In just a few weeks, we will begin operating from our new Hunger Action Center in Fort Myers, a facility built to help us meet the growing need for food assistance across Southwest Florida.

We recently surpassed an incredible milestone, distributing more than 500 million pounds of food since our founding. This past June, we also recorded our third-highest month of food distribution in our history, surpassed only by two months during extraordinary disaster response efforts. Today, we serve nearly 300,000 neighbors each month, and one in seven people, including one in five children, experiences food insecurity. Our new Hunger Action Center will more than double our distribution capacity while expanding access to nutritious food, a Neighbor Choice Market, and a Neighbor Resource Center that connects families with services to help build long-term stability.

None of this would have been possible without you. To every donor, foundation, business, and community partner who has supported our Feeding the Future campaign, thank you. And we're not stopping here. Planning is already underway for our future Hunger Action Center in Naples, with construction expected to begin in 2027, expanding our ability to serve Collier County for years to come. If you'd like to be part of this next chapter, I invite you to visit our Feeding the Future page on our website to learn more about the campaign: harrychapinfoodbank.org/feedingthefuture.

As we prepare for this exciting next chapter, please note that our mailing address will remain the same for now. We'll share updates on our new physical address and the official opening of the Hunger Action Center soon.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping build more than a new facility.



Richard LeBer,
President & CEO



Naples Children Foundation Invests \$1.2 Million to Fight Child Hunger

Children in Collier County will have greater access to nutritious food thanks to a transformational \$1.2 million grant from Naples Children Foundation (NCF), founders of the Naples Winter Wine Festival. The funding will strengthen Harry Chapin Food Bank's child hunger initiatives through June 2028, helping ensure children and families have reliable access to healthy meals when they need them most.

As a Blueprint Partner in NCF's Hunger Initiative, Harry Chapin Food Bank works alongside a collaborative network of nonprofit organizations dedicated to reducing childhood hunger throughout Collier County. This investment will expand partnerships with schools, early learning centers, after-school programs, and other trusted community organizations that connect children with nutritious food.

The grant will strengthen programs that help bridge meal gaps during evenings, weekends, school breaks, and other times when children may have limited access to food. Together, these efforts help ensure children have the nourishment they need to learn, grow, and succeed.



A New Look. The Same Mission.



You may notice something new in this issue of our newsletter. Harry Chapin Food Bank has unveiled a new brand that reflects who we are today and where we're headed tomorrow. While our look has evolved, our mission remains the same: to lead our community in the fight to end hunger.

For more than 40 years, we've grown alongside our community, expanding our reach, strengthening partnerships, and finding new ways to serve our neighbors with dignity. Our new brand reflects that evolution and the exciting future ahead, including the opening of our new Hunger Action Center in Fort Myers and plans for a future Hunger Action Center in Naples.

You'll see our new logo, colors, and visual identity across our communications, but one thing hasn't changed: our commitment to *Fighting Hunger. Feeding Hope*. Thank you for being part of this journey as we continue building a stronger future for Southwest Florida.



GL Homes and Harry Chapin Food Bank Food Drive

Hope for the Holidays

The holiday season is a time of celebration, but for many families across Southwest Florida, it can also be one of the most difficult times of the year. GL Homes & Harry Chapin Food Bank Food Drive is a community-wide campaign that brings together businesses, community partners, and volunteers to help ensure our neighbors have food on the table when they need it most.

This event builds on a strong year-round partnership, including GL Homes' annual Summer of Service and support of Harry Chapin Food Bank. Sponsor support helps provide nutritious food to children, seniors, and families while stocking agency partners and supporting neighborhood food distributions throughout Southwest Florida.

We invite businesses and organizations to join us as campaign sponsors and help bring hope to thousands of neighbors this holiday season.

Learn more
about sponsorship
opportunities:
[harrychapinfoodbank.org/
glhomes](http://harrychapinfoodbank.org/glhomes)

GLHOMES®



Last Chance to Register!

There's still time to sign up for the 4th Annual *Drive Out Hunger Charity Golf Tournament* benefiting Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Join us on Monday, October 26, at The Club at Pelican Preserve for an afternoon of golf, followed by cocktails, dinner, and awards. Can't make it to the golf tournament? You can still support the cause by attending the new Drive Out Hunger Brunch & Silent Auction on Sunday, October 25, at 11:30 a.m.

Space is limited. Register today at
[harrychapinfoodbank.org/
driveouthunger](http://harrychapinfoodbank.org/driveouthunger).



Check out Fort Myers Living, the newest publication of Seabreeze Communications, featuring monthly news about Harry Chapin Food Bank: fortmyersliving.com.

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