



## PRESS RELEASE

09/01/2020

For Immediate Release

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### **NOW MORE THAN EVER, EASTERN ILLINOIS FOODBANK NEEDS SUPPORT FROM EASTERN ILLINOIS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER**

#### ***Feeding America Network Food Banks Across the Country Unite for Hunger Action Month Amid COVID-19 Pandemic***

[Urbana, IL] – [September 1, 2020] - Hunger affects people in every corner of the country, including more than 116,000 of our neighbors in eastern Illinois. And given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, that number may increase to nearly 175,000 people this year.

That's why Eastern Illinois Foodbank (EIF) joins Feeding America® food banks nationwide this September to take part in Hunger Action Month and inspire people to take action and bring attention to the reality of food insecurity in America. This year's campaign comes at a critical time when the COVID-19 pandemic has hurt millions of people living paycheck to paycheck.

"We need your help now more than ever," said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, CEO of Feeding America. "Hunger in this country existed long before COVID-19, but the pandemic has thrust more and more of our neighbors into food insecurity, and food banks are responding to a sustained, increased demand. With support of the community, together we can end hunger one helping at a time."

"This year, we're taking a light-hearted approach to Hunger Action Month and providing fun opportunities for the community to support our work. Our Prom Benefit event in the spring has always been very successful, but because we don't know if it will be possible next year, we decided to host a virtual Stay at Homecoming event this fall," said Jim Hires, President & CEO of Eastern Illinois Foodbank. "When it comes to fighting hunger, every action counts and can have a huge impact for families in need."

Throughout Hunger Action Month, support from the community will have an even greater impact due to a matching donation from Fertilizer Dealer Supply. Donations will be matched up to \$10,000 throughout the month of September.

In addition to the donation match opportunity, EIF has many activities planned to engage the community in hunger relief and awareness building:

- A virtual Stay at Homecoming event with a week-long Spirit Week from September 21-25 for the community to engage on social media.
- Macaroni Madness, a virtual cooking demonstration featuring the following local chefs: Colleen Hatton of Dish Passionate Cuisine, Kenny Hogue of Cast Iron Pub and Irma Lou's Kitchen, Curtis



# Eastern Illinois **FOODBANK**

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McGhee of C&C Kitchen and Bob Rowe, private chef and formerly of Classic Events. Each chef will prepare a dish using macaroni, a staple item at Eastern Illinois Foodbank

- A Facebook Live stream of the Partner Recognition virtual watch party to honor this year's Business Partner of the Year, Community Partner of the Year and Mission Impact award winners. Community leaders, including Champaign-Urbana Public Health Administrator Julie Pryde, will take a pie to the face if EIF reaches Hunger Action Month fundraising goals.

September marks the thirteenth year the Feeding America network has organized this annual call to action. To learn more about Eastern Illinois Foodbank and other ways you can get involved for Hunger Action Month in eastern Illinois, please visit [eifoodbank.org](http://eifoodbank.org). You can also join the conversation by posting photos or stories to social media with #HungerActionMonth, @EIFoodbank and @FeedingAmerica, or by visiting [HungerActionMonth.org](http://HungerActionMonth.org).

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### **About Eastern Illinois Foodbank**

*Eastern Illinois Foodbank works to alleviate hunger in eastern Illinois through cooperation with a network of food pantries, agencies and other programs. The Foodbank distributes donated and discounted food throughout an 18-county service area in cooperation with 170 member agencies and programs. Through these agencies, the Foodbank provides meals to 58,000 men, women and children each month. The Eastern Illinois Foodbank is a member of Feeding America, Feeding Illinois, and the United Way of Champaign County*

### **About Feeding America**

*Feeding America® is the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through a network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs, they provide meals to more than 46 million people each year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Visit [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org) for more information.*