



Eastern Illinois
FOODBANK

INSIDE SCOOP

Alleviating hunger. Nourishing stronger communities.

Spring 2022

A changing warehouse for a changing era of foodbanking

INSIDE

The Daily Briefing:
A vision in progress

2

Local grandma serves
up good health

3

Help more
neighbors thrive

4

A few weeks ago, Eastern Illinois Foodbank (EIF) publicly launched a \$3.6 million campaign to expand and improve our warehouse. With the generous support of our community, we've already secured \$3.3 million toward our vision.

Learn more inside!

The Daly Briefing



Our vision for expansion is quickly taking shape with your help. Pictured is our new docking system, now with two loading areas for faster, more efficient food distribution.

Dear Friends,

Even before the pandemic, the EIF facility was at capacity in both size and suitability. During the pandemic, the needs of our community have stretched our warehouse beyond what it was ever intended to do.

We distributed 11.7 million pounds of food through a single loading dock. We used shipping containers and refrigerated trailers as temporary cold storage. We reduced our number of volunteers and converted our clean room, used for sorting and repacking bulk food, into storage space.

In 2019, under my predecessor Jim Hires, EIF began crafting a vision for how we could better serve our community. **Our plan is exciting.** Not because of changes to the building, but in how it enables us to feed more of our neighbors and alleviate hunger.

Since I assumed my new role as President and CEO, this vision of how we can better serve our community has been my highest priority. With additional warehouse space, we'll be able to **boost our efficiency, accommodate more nutritious, fresh product, and increase the number of people we serve.** A successful campaign will result in a building that matches our vision and allows us to:

- Store and distribute more produce, dairy, and meat.
- Increase our inventory of culturally relevant foods.
- Remain nimble as we emerge from the pandemic and enter a new era of foodbanking.

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Thanks to your kindness, we will be able to provide more of our neighbors facing hunger with fresh, nutritious food.

At one of our first drive-through distributions early in the pandemic, I stood outside in the rain directing traffic. A client pulled up and gave me her umbrella. When I objected, she assured me, “No, you keep it. You need it more than I do.” I kept that umbrella and I have it in my car.

Whenever it rains, I think about the kindness of the woman who gave me her umbrella. It pushes me to get up every day and pursue a vision where everyone in eastern Illinois has access to the healthy, nutritious food they need to thrive.

EIF's vision is only possible through the generous support of our community. We are close to our goal, but we need your help to push us over the top. I hope you'll consider providing an umbrella for someone in the rain by giving again today.

Kelly W. Daly

Kelly Daly, President & CEO

To learn more about our \$3.6 million capital campaign, visit eifoodbank.org/more-than-food/info.html

Good health is on the menu at Pat's house—thanks to you

Pat loved working at her factory jobs. For 30 years, she excelled at every task she put her mind to—including the intricate process of making light bulbs. Now that she's retired, Pat brightens her family's days with her cooking.

With three grandchildren to feed, Pat turns to our partner food pantries for help when her Social Security check doesn't stretch far enough. She loves the wide variety of healthy foods that friends like you help make available.

"We appreciate the breads, the produce, the lettuce," Pat says, reciting a long list. "The different bags of lettuce are really nice, and I always grab some fruit to have in the house. Eggs, canned goods, and pasta, too."

With the food she receives, Pat makes hearty dinners—complete with a big

“ I’m thankful for [the help I get] every time I go. ”

—Pat

green salad—that her grandkids always look forward to.

During the pandemic, Pat has kept tabs on EIF's social media to locate upcoming nearby Foodmobile distributions. Having that information at her fingertips has been vital to helping the whole family eat healthy.

"Any help I can get is greatly appreciated," Pat says. "There's a lot of people facing hunger now, and some wouldn't be able to provide for their families without the help they get from [EIF]. I'm thankful for it every time I go."



You're helping Pat keep her loved ones healthy.

Thank you for all that you do to support nutritious diets for our neighbors facing hunger. You can give again at eifoodbank.org.



Traditional meals require special ingredients. Thank you for helping to make them available!

A taste of home: why it's important to offer culturally relevant foods

As Eastern Illinois Foodbank emerges from the pandemic and enters a new era of foodbanking, one of our priorities is to meet the needs of our neighbors in a way that is meaningful to them. The expansion of our facility will allow us to store and distribute more produce, dairy and meat, as well as increase our inventory of culturally relevant foods.

One of EIF's partners is Channing-Murray Foundation's Bucket Brigade, which delivers food and supplies to households throughout Champaign-Urbana. They specialize in providing different packages of groceries to give clients the ability to cater to their cultural specificity.

"Everyone, despite their socio-economic status, deserves to have the freedom to choose food items that are not just essential shelf

goods," said Solange Leon Vazconez, Program Coordinator of the Bucket Brigade. "Providing this culturally adapted food is vital because it gives them a sense of home, encourages the agency to select specific food they are craving/need, and choose their preferred food items. We strongly believe that everyone deserves to choose the food they want and eat."

EIF has already added 114,000 pounds of culturally diverse product to our inventory, including tortillas, dried cilantro, chorizo, rice, black beans, and more. We are committed to developing food-sourcing systems, community partnerships, and nutrition education that are inclusive of the food needs and preferences of people facing hunger in the communities we serve.

Every \$1 feeds a neighbor for a day

We live in a remarkably resilient community. While we'll feel the impact of the pandemic for many more months, eastern Illinois is making strides every day—and friends like you are fueling that progress with your gifts to EIF. As you read in The Daly Briefing, our vision for the future focuses on extending the number of people we serve and providing more nutritious, fresh product. Improvements to our facility will help bring that vision to life.

We invite you to join us in creating a better foodbank and a better future. Your support will help neighbors like Aaphy, the mother of 4-year-old Mark. Though she works part time, Aaphy recently needed a little help putting nutritious food on the table. Her first visit to an EIF distribution erased all her worries about making sure Mark stays healthy!

Please use the reply form below to send your next gift, or give online at eifoodbank.org. Thank you again for helping to make EIF a life-changing resource for eastern Illinois. Together, we can ensure every neighbor has the healthy food they need to thrive.



Help more local families like Aaphy's thrive.

Stay connected to the work you support! Please visit eifoodbank.org to learn more.



My gift to help even more of our neighbors thrive

Yes, Kelly! I want to help reach every neighbor facing hunger in eastern Illinois with enough food to flourish.

Here is my gift of:

☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other \$ _____

☐ Here is my additional gift to help expand the warehouse: \$ _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

Please make your check payable to:

Eastern Illinois Foodbank

2405 North Shore Drive | Urbana, IL 61802

Your donation is tax deductible to the full extent of the law.
We will send you a receipt for your records.



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