FRIENDS AND PARTNERS,

I am honored to have the opportunity to lead this amazing organization and shepherd its passion to feed children in Iowa, across the U.S. and around the world.

We are grateful to Susan Bunz for her strong leadership the past five years. Under her guidance, the number of volunteers, packaged meals and donations has grown. Today, Meals from the Heartland is in a good position to take the next leap forward.

I remember working the Drake Relays as a teenager and watching in fascination as an athlete celebrated a new record or a personal best. You could feel the emotion as they reaped the reward from hours of hard work and sweat. Likewise, Meals from the Heartland achieved some personal bests in 2019:

- 23,112,864 meals packaged
- 83,657 volunteers
- $2,863,608 in donations

We may not have set world records, but you wouldn’t know it by the way everyone celebrated when we broke the previous meal record of 23,049,306. Believe me when I tell you, it took a lot of hard work and sweat to get over the bar.

From packagers to packmasters and box makers to dishwashers, we are blessed by the support of our volunteers, ages 5 to 95. Thank you! You Raised Your Hands, stepped up and gave of your time, talent and treasure to feed hungry children. We are extremely thankful for each and every one of you.

Of course, the records are not why we gather and work hard. We do this because every meal and every donation impacts the life of a child. In fact, we’ve updated our mission statement to reflect this focus — Empowering people to save starving children. We work to break the cycle of poverty by feeding kids at school, which helps them to learn, develop and succeed.

Like any athlete, we are striving to be better and do more in 2020. Our goals for this year are over 25 million meals, 90,000 volunteers and $3.1 million in donations. Will you Raise Your Hand and help us put in the work? Our mission partners have raised the bar as well. They are asking us to help them feed 250,000 children per week.

We look forward to achieving more with you in 2020 — but most importantly, being better together to make a difference in the life of a child.

God bless,

Greg DeHaai
Executive Director
Meals Packed per Year:

- 2008: 4 million
- 2011: 6 million
- 2015: 15.7 million
- 2019: 23.1 million

Total Meal Count for 2019: 23,112,864

- 589,248 meals distributed in Iowa
- 3,179,088 meals distributed nationally
- 19,288,368 meals distributed internationally*
- 56,160 meals pending distribution

*285,120 meals for disaster relief

Cost of One Meal: 20¢

94 cents of every dollar goes to program expenses

2019 Volunteer Stats:

- Average Number of Meals Packed per Volunteer Hour: 163
- 142,217 Hours
- 83,657 Volunteers

Meals delivered to over 30 countries around the world.

ANNUAL HUNGERFIGHT MEALS FROM THE HEARTLAND

2019

4 Days 4 Million 7,000+ Meals Packed Volunteers

Empowering people to save starving children
OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE SOMETHING SPECIAL

2019 HUNGER FIGHT WAS OUR BEST YET

The annual Hunger Fight in Des Moines is our largest meal-packing event of the year. Over 7,000 volunteers came together for four days and packed a staggering 4 million meals. That’s 17% of the year’s total packaged meals!

COMING IN 2020

We are happy to announce Meals from the Heartland’s Hunger Fight is expanding this year with new Hunger Fights in Lincoln, Nebraska, and Kansas City, Missouri. More information on these Hunger Fights can be found on our website.

2019 NUMBERS

A record-setting 83,657 volunteers
Gave 142,217 volunteer hours
And packed 23,112,864 meals

2020 HUNGER FIGHTS:

April 15-17, 2020 in Lincoln, Nebraska
June 4-6, 2020 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa
July 30-Aug. 1, 2020 in Kansas City, Missouri
September 1-5, 2020 in Des Moines, Iowa
Barb Keck spends winter months in warmer weather, but when she returns to Iowa, she joins her old and new friends, every Wednesday, putting expiration date labels on Meals from the Heartland bags that help to feed the starving.

“Volunteers are told each week of the amount of packaging that has been done and where the packages have been sent. They keep us up to date to remind us that we are helping in this fight and making a difference,” Barb says. “It is amazing how many meals are sent out, whether it’s just to the Des Moines area or around the world.”

Barb, who has volunteered with us for three years, finds the experience upbeat and rewarding, because she knows that she is helping a starving child or a family in need somewhere in the world.

“When volunteering with Meals from the Heartland, you are doing what you can to help other people. There is always something for you to do. It makes such a big difference, not just in Des Moines, but around the world. It’s something we can each do to help,” Barb says.

The impact that volunteers like Barb make is priceless, and we couldn’t do this without them. “When you hear about hunger and realize how bad it is, you feel the need to help out and the need to do something about it,” she says.

That’s why she will continue to volunteer and donate to Meals from the Heartland. “What Meals from the Heartland is doing is great, and I am so glad to be a part of it,” Barb says.
ON THE MOVE WITH MOBILE EVENTS

Meals from the Heartland facilitates meal-packing events across the heartland each year. In 2019, 135 mobile events were held, engaging 37,794 volunteers and contributing 5,480,568 meals.

CHECK OUT CRESTON!
The town of Creston in southwest Iowa has hosted a community packing event for each of the past five years, and 2019 was their best year yet. They had 425 volunteers who packed 86,832 meals. Creston is answering the call to Raise Your Hand and will participate for a sixth year on April 22, 2020.

"We love being a part of the Meals from the Heartland packaging event each year! This is a great project for our adult and youth leadership programs to come together to help plan, organize and execute. Every year, they are amazed by the generosity of community members for both their time and money to make this event a success. Exceeding our packaging goal every year and working with Mike, our fantastic Meals leader, are just a couple of reasons why it’s one of my favorite days of the year!"

— Mindy Stalker, event organizer

INTERESTED IN HOSTING A MOBILE EVENT?
Email Meals from the Heartland at mike.lowe@mealsfromtheheartland.org or call 515.473.9530.
We can’t predict when disasters will strike, but we can be prepared. Meals from the Heartland and its partners respond with compassion and food after natural disasters in the U.S. and around the world. In 2019, we distributed a total of 285,120 meals for disaster relief.

**HURRICANE DORIAN**

Meals from the Heartland partnered with Convoy of Hope to provide critical disaster relief in the Bahamas after Hurricane Dorian slammed into the islands in September 2019. The storm flattened most structures on the islands, leaving 70,000 people homeless and killing 70. Hundreds are still missing.

*From the Meals from the Heartland newsletter:*

The destruction [Hurricane Dorian] left in its path boggles the mind, especially the devastation we witnessed in the Bahamas. When disasters strike, we oftentimes ask ourselves, “What can I do?” Well, we witnessed that answer firsthand when we announced a special Taco Mac meal-packaging week in mid-September with the goal being to package a cargo-load of meals (285,120 meals, or 20 pallets). Central Iowans, being such a caring community, rallied, and we did, in fact, package more than a cargo-load that week. As a matter of fact, it was our largest week of meal packaging in 2019! And we’ve raised over $15,000. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in this effort. Our neighbors in need in the Bahamas have received these meals as they look to rebuild their island nation and their lives.
I just wanted to take the time to thank you all! I’m 3 years new to Illinois, but don’t know much about this state because I’m disabled and unfortunately on a strict budget. I go to the Salvation Army Food Pantry in Bloomington [Illinois] here. I’m enjoying the Taco Mac that I received there as part of my ‘food package.’ It was really delicious with my summer sausage! I always thank those who volunteer their time and services, but I never thought to thank those people where the food actually comes from. As part of my ‘new’ late resolution, I’m doing it now! So a BIG THANK YOU to ALL the people who made, put together, delivered, sorted, packed, etc.! Believe me, it’s extremely appreciated! So with a happy tummy, I thank you one more time!”

— Tammy G.
MEALS FROM THE HEARTLAND

Greg DeHaai, Executive Director

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