

Kern leads a ‘celebration of community’ at Clinton Market

When it comes to the Food Bank’s Child Hunger programs, we couldn’t do the work without superstars like Linda Kern at Clinton Elementary School in Lincoln.

Linda, who is Clinton’s Care Coordinator, has been at the school ten years and with Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) for 30. Leading with her heart, she captains the ship that is the Clinton Comet Food Market, which provides a wide variety of items for Clinton families.

The Food Bank’s BackPack Program started at Clinton with 50 families in 2004. Just a few years ago, because of the high need at the school, the program changed to the Market format. On Sept. 1, at the first Food Market of the 2022-23 school year, more than 230 students and their families received food at the Clinton Market.

“We know hungry kids don’t perform to their full potential; their relationships with others may be strained, and they may have health issues related to diet,” Kern said. “The Food Bank provides Clinton parents and students with canned and boxed food, fresh produce and baked items. Parents and students ‘shop the Market’ and choose groceries based on their individual needs. We have community partners – as well as our Clinton staff members – who volunteer their time to help us stock and replenish tables of food, help students fill their bags and help carry them outside. Our volunteers are the key to our meeting the needs of our families.”

Volunteers from all walks helping a school with a high percentage of students in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program.



Linda Kern at the Clinton Food Market.

“The Food Market illustrates to Lincoln the celebration of what it means to be part of a true community,” Kern said. “We watch out for each other and step up when needed. When acts of compassion are visible to our community, we raise the consciousness of everyone. We give, and we ask for nothing in return except knowing we have been a part of making a parent, a child, a family feel valued and recognized – which is all any of us asks.”

“This is the gift the Food Bank of Lincoln gives to us all. The first Thursday of each month, we come together in our shared work, and we help our families to breathe a little easier, walk a little taller and feel the strength of community.”

Thanks to the strength and heart of Linda Kern and so many others in our 16 counties, an estimated 6,800 students and their families receive food each month.

That is something to celebrate.