

The Feeding Frontline



Winter 2025
lincolnfoodbank.org



Program Spotlight

Bridges Out of Poverty



Getting Ahead While Getting Out 2024 graduates

Did you get enough to eat? Did you like the food that was shared? Was the presentation of the food appealing?

When you sit down to eat, does one of these questions resonate with you? Which one likely depends on the hidden rules by which you operate. Shaped by socioeconomic class, hidden rules are unspoken norms of a group that guide behavior. These powerful but often subconscious rules reveal a sense of belonging—or a lack of it—within social situations and relationships. Like in the example above, unspoken norms around food may determine whether you prioritize quantity, quality or appearance of the nourishment on your plate.

Uncovering hidden rules of social class and how they manifest in our world, including workplaces, is just one of many topics explored in a Bridges Out of Poverty workshop.

Facilitated by the Food Bank of Lincoln, this community initiative aims to enhance individual and community stability by exploring the root causes of poverty and exploring actionable strategies—such as understanding hidden rules—to improve outcomes for people living in poverty.

With a focus on long-term solutions for food security, the Bridges initiative casts a wide net, offering valuable opportunities for individuals and groups.

In fiscal year 2024, that focus resulted in 11 Bridges Out of Poverty workshops for 362 individuals and 45 Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World graduates.

Opportunities for Individuals

Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World workshops
A 10-week workshop for individuals living in or near poverty who want to explore how to get ahead instead of simply getting by. In a kitchen-table-style learning environment, participants—called Investigators—gain tools for viewing their lives and writing their future stories, while fostering relationships with people who offer support. For many Investigators, the workshop leaves a lasting impression. As recent graduates shared:

“I’m hoping to take the information and move forward and continue to elevate myself and put myself and my family in a better situation.”

“...(It) has actually made me feel hopeful for a better future and understanding my finances and knowing my goals (are) obtainable.”

Mission

To alleviate hunger in Southeast Nebraska.

Vision

Nourishing our communities to end hunger.

Values

Collaboration, Compassion, Diversity, Education, Responsibility

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A Letter from the President & CEO



“What are we going to solve today?”

This is a question one of my colleagues told me he often thinks about on his commute to work. As we talked about our work, we agreed in our almost 20 combined years of Food Bank employment, neither one of us has had a day when we dreaded coming to work. More than that, we agreed we're eager to see what challenges or surprises await us.

Don't get me wrong. It's not always a peaches-and-cream place to work. Still, it is an environment where we have daily exposure to the brightest and bleakest days for our fellow neighbors, including colleagues.

On a Friday in January, we learned a former colleague died. He struggled with mental health and addiction for the better part of his life. Ultimately, it overcame him. Tanner, our teammate and friend, was the kind of person who would be the first to extend a warm welcome. His lighthearted demeanor and tie-dyed T-shirts were two of his signature characteristics. He put those around him at ease with his playfulness. He wasn't afraid to work hard or lend a helping hand. He took responsibility for his actions and didn't blame others for his choices. He fought his demons.

We couldn't solve our friend's addiction. Nor can we make decisions for neighbors facing these or other challenges, but we will always have a responsibility to see humanity in one another and rise to the challenge, as long as the challenge exists.

Thank you to our partners and supporters who help us take pride in collective efforts that confront the root causes of hunger. We have friends, family, colleagues and neighbors who stand to benefit.

With gratitude,

Michaela Kumke
President & CEO

Bridges Out of Poverty continued...

Getting Ahead While Getting Out

Through a partnership with Lancaster County Corrections, Getting Ahead While Getting Out launched in Lancaster County in fall of 2024 to help individuals near the end of incarceration prepare for reentry into the community. These inaugural workshops graduated 10 individuals from two cohorts. Additional workshops return this spring.



For Groups

Workplace Stability

With a curriculum designed for employers, this workshop aims to help improve employee retention and performance.

Bring Bridges to you!

Our trained facilitators host workshops for organizations and workplaces. Using a socioeconomic lens, groups explore the factors that contribute to poverty, develop a shared language around poverty, and gain strategies that can be implemented to support community members.

Learn more about Bridges at lincolnfoodbank.org.

Food Bank FAQ:

What is a "Partner Agency?"

With 1 in 7 neighbors—including 1 in 5 children—facing hunger in Southeast Nebraska, addressing food insecurity requires a community effort. The Food Bank of Lincoln proudly collaborates with **47 nonprofit agencies** to serve neighbors at **70 locations** across our 16-county service area. Together, we strengthen access to vital food resources.



Who is a Food Bank of Lincoln "partner agency?"

A partner agency is a nonprofit organization that connects neighbors to essential services and resources, including food. Our partners range from hot meal sites and food pantries to community centers and faith-based organizations. For a complete list of our partner agencies, visit lincolnfoodbank.org/services/partner-agencies.

What is the Food Bank's role in the partnership?

The Food Bank of Lincoln serves as a central hub for acquiring, handling and distributing food—whether it's donated, purchased or government-provided. Partner agencies then access a secure online portal to view the Food Bank's inventory and place orders for products they need to prepare meals or stock their shelves. The Food Bank's Distribution Center team prepares these orders for pickup or delivery to the agency. From there, agencies get the food into the hands of neighbors facing hunger in their communities.



For USDA-provided food through programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Food Bank also acts as an administrative liaison, ensuring compliance between the USDA and the partner agency.

Does the Food Bank sell food to partner agencies?

No. Thanks to support from friends like you, the Food Bank provides food free of charge to neighbors and partner agencies. Agencies contribute a shared maintenance fee to help cover transportation costs, including freight and fuel.

How much food does the partner agency network distribute?

In fiscal year 2024, Food Bank of Lincoln partner agencies distributed 6.3 million pounds of food (of 11.95 million total pounds distributed) to *266,092 households across Southeast Nebraska.

I donated food to the Food Bank. Will it go to a partner agency?

Possibly! A dedicated team of staff and volunteers carefully check all donated food to ensure it meets safety standards. Once examined and sorted, these items are added to the Food Bank's inventory, making them available for partner agencies to order and distribute within their communities.

**Includes duplicates*

Spring 2025 Event Calendar

April

U-Stop Kicks It Back to the Community

Fuel up at any U-Stop on Tuesdays in April and 2¢ of every gallon sold will be donated to the Food Bank.

4/26

Extra Mile Walk

Help end child hunger in our communities.

See page 4 for an exciting opportunity!

5/27

Empty Bowls Luncheon

Enjoy soups from local chefs and pick out your own handcrafted pottery bowl from Down Under Pottery.

Tickets go on sale March 10.

5/29

Give to Lincoln Day

A community-wide day of giving to support local nonprofits.

For more information about these events, visit lincolnfoodbank.org.



Go the Extra Mile

Help unlock matching dollars for Child Hunger Programs

Every step we take together through the Extra Mile Walk ensures that no child in our community faces a weekend without food. By supporting the walk, you're helping fuel brighter futures—and this year, your impact is doubled!

Thanks to the incredible generosity of the Acklie Charitable Foundation, every dollar you donate to the 2025 Extra Mile Walk will be matched—up to \$200,000! This means twice as many meals for kids and families facing hunger. Twice the fuel for focus and learning. And twice the hope and smiles for Southeast Nebraska.



To participate, visit lincolnfoodbank.org/donate and select “Extra Mile Walk” from the dropdown menu. Then, join us at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 26 at Lincoln Northwest High School for the family-friendly event. Let's go the extra mile to alleviate child hunger, together. Questions? Contact John Mabry at jmabry@lincolnfoodbank.org or (402) 819-6861.



2024 Season Stats



Lincoln Fresh

Distributing fresh fruits and vegetables throughout Lincoln from March-November.



496,037
Pounds of Fresh Produce Distributed



47,868
People Served
**54% increase from 2023 season*



233 Stops at
15 Distribution Sites



40+
Unique Types of Produce Offered

Hometown Fresh

Distributing fresh produce, protein and shelf-stable staples in rural communities.



118,367
Pounds of Food Distributed



5,009
People Served
**54% increase from 2023 season*



108 Stops at
12 Distribution Sites



3 New Sites Added in
2024



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Address

1221 Kingbird Road
Lincoln, NE 68521
lincolnfoodbank.org
402.466.8170

Hours

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday

Connect On Social Media



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