

## HOW YOU'RE SUPPORTING HOPE WITH DIGNITY

The Anderson\* family moved to Columbus, Georgia for the promise of a better job. Like any family, they stocked the refrigerator in their new apartment with groceries. But a few days later, the refrigerator malfunctioned and all the food was lost.

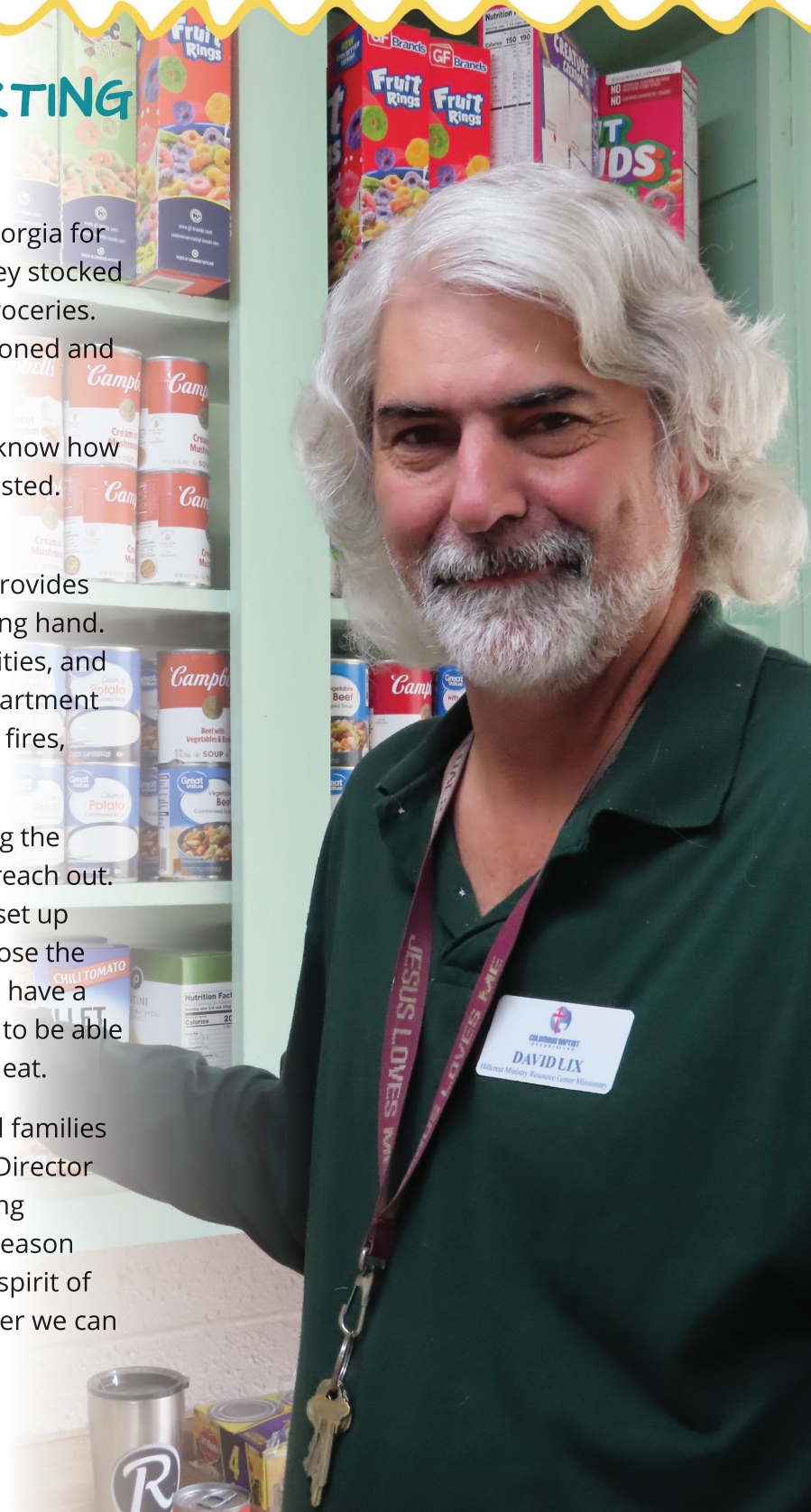
It wasn't a simple matter of buying more. You know how expensive moving is. Their savings were exhausted. There just wasn't any money.

Mission Columbus to the rescue! The agency provides food and clothing to families who need a helping hand. They also provide assistance with rent and utilities, and even have a partnership with the local fire department which enables them to aid families affected by fires, offering essentials and shelter.

The agency gets most of their food from Feeding the Valley, as caring community members like you reach out. With a focus on dignity, Mission Columbus has set up their food distribution to enable families to choose the items they want and need. The Andersons, who have a seven-year-old "selective eater," were delighted to be able to shop for the groceries they knew they would eat.

Mission Columbus serves south Columbus and families across Muscogee County zip codes. Executive Director David Lix says, "High grocery costs are impacting everyone, and we're here to help. There is no reason for anyone to be hungry in this city. There is a spirit of unity in our community and by working together we can accomplish a lot."

*\*Name changed for privacy reasons.*



# FRESH THOUGHTS

April was National Volunteer Month, the perfect time to honor and recognize the hundreds of Superhero volunteers behind so much of our work. With selfless dedication, they pack food boxes and Buddy Packs, sort donated food and fresh produce, and lend their helping hands in our kitchen. They truly are heroes in solving hunger in our community.

**We're also grateful to all who participated in the National Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger food drive this spring and to local media outlets and retailers that hosted food drives of their own.**

As you may know, we help thousands of children during the summer months when school lunches aren't available, so this opportunity to "stock up" is a lifeline. Thanks to these food drives and your support, we can send nearly 5,000 Kids Café meals a day to children in Muscogee County and outlying rural counties.



Cathy Horne of Open Door Community House in Columbus, GA, says gratefully, ***"We have a vital partnership with Feeding the Valley. Our after-school students and summer camp students receive a hot, nutritious meal every day through Feeding the Valley's Kids Café Program. For some students, this is their only afternoon meal."***

Meanwhile, our Farmer's Truck is racking up the miles distributing fresh fruits and vegetables, a true blessing for families facing budget challenges due to high grocery costs. The smiles we see are priceless.



**This summer, *lettuce* celebrate the goodness we can create and the nourishment we provide to families facing hunger!**

Frank Sheppard  
President & CEO

**WANT TO BECOME  
A SUPERHERO  
VOLUNTEER YOURSELF?**

Visit [feedingthevalley.org/getinvolved](https://feedingthevalley.org/getinvolved)  
to find your perfect spot!



## ON THE MOVE TO SOLVE HUNGER

Earlier this year, we welcomed a new addition to our fleet! **Thanks to Publix Supermarket Charities, in their mission to alleviate hunger, 22 mobile food pantry “Farmer’s Trucks” are rolling out of their parking lots with fresh produce to communities facing food insecurity.**

In our 18-county footprint in Georgia and east Alabama, six of the counties we serve are in the top ten counties with the highest food insecurity rate in the state of Georgia. The opportunity to offer more fresh fruits and vegetables is a game changer for these rural counties.

**“Helping provide food to our neighbors in need is at the heart of our philanthropic efforts at Publix,”** said Publix CEO Todd Jones. “We’re thankful to Publix Super Markets Charities for their continued support of hunger alleviation efforts. Their support and our work with food banks throughout the Southeast provide nourishment and better the lives of families and individuals in our communities. We’re proud to do good, together.”

**“One in ten people in America experience food insecurity, so improving access to fresh, nutritious food is as important as ever,”** said Feeding America CEO Claire Babineaux-Fontenot. “We know we can end hunger in America when we work together with communities, with people facing hunger, and with generous partners like Publix and Publix Super Markets Charities. We are incredibly appreciative of their long-standing support.”

### Looking for a fun and meaningful way to make an impact on your community?

Volunteers are the “secret sauce” of our mission, donating hundreds of hours of their time each year. We always need volunteers to pack our Mobile Pantry food boxes, sort groceries and produce, and help with various tasks in our warehouse. We encourage individuals, corporate groups, students who need community service hours, civic clubs and others are always welcome to volunteer.

**Get started today. Visit [feedingthevalley.org/getinvolved](https://feedingthevalley.org/getinvolved) and select the day, time, and task that is convenient for YOU!**

# THANK YOU FOR HELPING OUR NATION'S HEROES



Like most Americans, you probably honor our servicemen and women for selflessly protecting our freedom. Yet also like most Americans, you may not realize that one in six of them are grappling with food insecurity. **To put it simply, many of our nation's heroes struggle to put food on their tables.**

The reasons are complex. The soaring cost of living, the demands of growing families, the costs of frequent relocations, low pay scales for enlisted service members, and the struggles of military spouses to find employment at new duty stations—all contribute to this reality. Most soldiers do not qualify for assistance because their Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) is considered part of their income.

**Yet, in the face of these hardships, military families are resilient, and your support for Feeding the Valley is helping to ease the burden.**

At Fort Moore, formerly Fort Benning, Ga., for example, we're working with the Chaplains on post and through our partner agency, St. Anne Community Outreach, to make a difference. A Mobile Pantry food distribution started in January exclusively to serve active-duty soldiers and their families.



Volunteers packing groceries you helped provide for the Active-Duty Mobile Pantry Food Distribution at St. Anne Community Outreach

**Thank you for honoring our military neighbors in a truly meaningful way!**

"Many of our team members at St. Anne's are military families themselves, and they see the struggles firsthand. Our soldiers, especially our junior NCOs (non-commissioned officers) with families, should never have to worry about where their next meal will come from. They've already committed to deploy and defend our nation's interests; ensuring their families are cared for shouldn't be another battle they have to fight." - Kelly Tolman, St. Anne Community Outreach Director and also a military spouse.