

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Executive Director of Transformed Birth Services Lindsay Mputubwele (left) with community partners.

MORE THAN FOOD: BUILDING COMMUNITY ONE CONNECTION AT A TIME

At Food Finders Food Bank, every connection tells a story of community. Recognizing that food insecurity rarely exists in isolation, our Resource Coordination program takes a holistic approach to supporting neighbors across our 16-county service area. Food Finders understands that each person's experience with food insecurity involves navigating a complex web of interconnected challenges that can often feel overwhelming. This reality shapes how resource coordinators approach their work, connecting neighbors to services that touch virtually every aspect of daily life.

From housing and clothing assistance to transportation solutions and employment resources, resource coordinators help families access comprehensive support. When government assistance programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Medicaid feel daunting, resource coordinators serve as trusted guides through the application process.

As resource coordinator Megan Miller explains, "I think of it like this: we're just walking alongside [neighbors] and helping guide them through whatever that looks like for them. The most important thing is to meet the neighbors where they are at."

This personalized approach is strengthened through strategic partnerships with local organizations, creating a community network of support. Our partnership with Transformed Birth Services exemplifies this collaborative model. Transformed Birth Services is a nonprofit comprised of community doulas addressing maternal health disparities in Tippecanoe County. Lindsay Mputubwele, the organization's executive director, recognized early on that supporting new mothers requires more than birth assistance alone. "When we first got into this, we realized that there were so many needs outside of just carrying a baby. There were food needs and insurance needs.

MORE THAN FOOD

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We needed to help mothers connect to resources in our community," Mputubwele explains.

Through this partnership, Food Finders' resource coordinators and community doulas at Transformed Birth Services bridge the critical connection between food security and health outcomes for new families. Resource coordinators attend pregnancy support groups and community baby showers, working directly with families during this pivotal time. Most importantly, resource coordinators are dedicated to providing a dignified experience, understanding that accessing help requires trust and courage.

Whether working alongside other community resources or directly with neighbors who visit mobile food distribution sites, the transformation that occurs when people realize there is hope in their situation creates ripple effects throughout families and communities. Resource coordinators consistently witness this shift, the relief of the moment when overwhelming challenges begin to feel manageable, or when isolation gives way to connection. As Megan Miller reflects, "I've seen the switch in someone when they realize that there is hope in their situation."

At its core, the Resource Coordination program embodies the belief that when we walk alongside our neighbors, we all move forward together.

For the 11th annual Blue Jean Ball, Food Finders set out to tell a story about our Resource Coordination program and various ways in which the program touches the lives of neighbors across our 16-county service area through a video. While filming in Tippecanoe and Warren counties, we met with community partners and volunteers who work directly with the Resource Coordination program, witnessing the program's vast reach.

To see the video created for this year's Blue Jean Ball, scan the QR code:



The 12th annual Blue Jean Ball was a great success! Thanks to generous contributions through our live and silent auctions, ticket sales, and direct donations and sponsorships, the event raised over \$190,000 – making this our most successful Blue Jean Ball yet.

AUGUST IS 'MAKE A WILL MONTH': THE BEATYS SHARE THEIR COMMITMENT TO FOOD FINDERS

For Jan and Jim Beaty, the decision to include Food Finders in their will was not just about making a donation, but also about ensuring their values would continue to feed their community long after they're gone. "I believe in the mission of Food Finders," Jan explains. Adding, "I also feel deeply that everybody needs a good meal. We can't function without eating—our bodies just don't do it."

The Beaty's connection to Food Finders runs deep, built through years of hands-on volunteerism. Working with Food Finders in various capacities, Jan has helped with the Backpack program, at the Fresh Market, led the Blue Jean Ball committee, spent six years on the board of directors, and currently serves on the development committee.



Jan and Jim Beaty volunteering at the Katy Bunder Food Resource and Education Center.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT/CEO

"Working in the pantry when it was downstairs was a whole different volunteerism than at the current Fresh Market pantry," Jan recalls. Adding, "Volunteering really opened my eyes to the needs of our community."

What makes the Beaty's planned gift particularly meaningful is that it is unrestricted. Jim emphasizes the deep trust behind their decision: "We have great trust in leadership here at Food Finders, and that leadership will make the best decisions with our gift." For the Beatys, including Food Finders in their will represents more than financial support—it's a continuation of their life's work.

As Jim notes, "When you have a passion for a cause, you can give your time, your talents, or your money. We're blessed that since we've retired, we've been in a position to do all three and encourage other people to take this on as a mission for them as well."

Their message to other potential donors is straightforward: "It's not how much you give, but what you can give to continue the workings of the organization. Any amount would be appreciated."

Through their planned gift, the Beatys are ensuring that their passion for ending food insecurity will continue to make a difference in their community for years to come, thereby extending their legacy of compassion.

If you are interested in following the Beaty's lead and making a gift to Food Finders Food Bank in your will, please reach out to Kyle Puetz at kpuetz@food-finders.org or Larry Sommers at lsommers@food-finders.org.

Dear Friends,

This summer, I want to share with you both the challenges we're facing and the unwavering commitment that continues to drive our mission.

Like many organizations in the social services sector, we're confronting unprecedented operational challenges that echo what we experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. But today's hurdles are different and largely preventable. Any cuts to critical federal safety-net programs like Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) threaten to undo decades of progress. Food banks and our network of agency partners were built to fill the gaps, not to be the only source of food.

At Food Finders, less than 10% of our funding comes from federal sources like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and SNAP. But what we receive plays a vital role, as TEFAP helps connect farmers to food banks and families across all 16 counties we serve. If funding is reduced or shifted to the states, families may be forced to choose between food, healthcare, and other essentials. The resulting surge of people seeking food assistance would overwhelm the charitable food sector.

While we may be forced to make difficult decisions in the upcoming months to meet growing needs, I want to assure you that our fundamental commitment remains unshakable.



At the heart of everything we do lies our commitment to community, recognizing that every neighbor deserves compassion and access to food, regardless of their circumstances. Access to food, dignity, and empowerment continues to drive our mission.

This summer, I'm asking for more than your continued financial support, though that remains crucial. I'm also asking you to contact our U.S. senators, and advocate for the families we serve. We have the privilege of doing this vital work together, and we cannot afford to grow weary; our neighbors are counting on us now more than ever.

Thank you for standing with us as we navigate these challenging times. Together, we will continue fight food insecurity in our communities.

Kier Crites Muller
President/CEO



Food Finders
Food Bank, Inc.
fighting hunger, giving hope

1204 Greenbush Street
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Summer 2025



Volunteers are vital to our organization and the fight to end hunger, and we would love for you to join our team of compassionate, community-minded volunteers.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities at Food Finders, please visit food-finders.org/volunteer, call us at 765-471-0062, or scan the QR code below.



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