



Report highlights cost of hunger

Food banks and pantries across the nation are thankful for the mountain of non-perishable donations they received in the record-setting 2009 NALC National Food Drive, but the food distribution centers are being besieged by the growing number of people seeking help during the recession.

The importance of the drive was underscored by a report released July 5 showing that child hunger is a contributing factor to the nation's economic woes and puts America at a competitive disadvantage.

The report, *Child Food Insecurity: The Economic Impact on Our Nation*, was distributed by Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger relief

organization and a partner in the NALC drive. It spells out the lifelong consequences of "food insecurity" on individual children and families, particularly the impact on children's ability to learn and achieve their full potential. The report was funded by a grant from the ConAgra Foods Foundation.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 12.4 million American children—one in six—are "food insecure."

"This is the first report to show the direct taxpayer burden inflicted by child hunger, along with a clear link to long-term impacts, such as reduced lifetime earnings and the ripple effects through our economy," said Vicki Escarra, president and CEO of Feeding America.

Branch 36 donation

New York City Branch 36 did more than collect food for the drive—it donated \$5,000 to the City Harvest food bank.

In a letter to Branch President Charles Heege, food bank Executive Director Jilly Stephens

applauded the New York letter carriers. "Thank you from all of us here at City Harvest, the agencies we serve, and the hungry New Yorkers who benefit from your generous contributions," Stephens wrote. "We look forward to working with you in the future as we continue to fight hunger in New York." ✉

Losing a liaison

The food drive is losing one of its staunchest supporters.

Terrence (Terry) Atkins, Director-Integrated Marketing for Campbell Soup Company and the chief liaison for that firm with NALC, is leaving Campbell Soup after 29 years.

At a farewell reception in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, July 8, NALC food drive national coordinator Drew Von Bergen read a letter of tribute to Atkins from NALC President Fredric V. Rolando.



“You have been a steady and influential counsel to the NALC since the early years of the drive,” Rolando said. “Most noteworthy has been your genuine caring and dedication to help feed the growing number of families in this nation who face hunger in their daily lives.” ✉

Planning for 2010

Plans are already being made for next year’s NALC drive, set for May 8, 2010, the second Saturday in May. The 73.4 million pounds collected in this year’s NALC National Food Drive eclipsed the 2008 record of 73.1 million pounds and brought the 17-year total to more than 982 million pounds—at the threshold of the 1 billion-pound mark for the drive’s history.

Meanwhile, expressions of appreciation for this year’s drive continue to come in.

Connecticut Merged Branch 20 was honored for its work over the years to help the Gemma E. Moran United Way Labor Food Center.

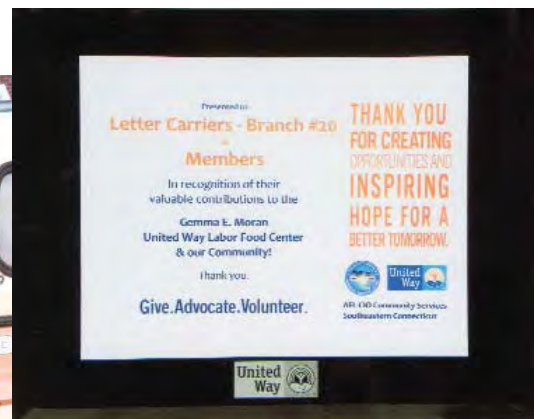
In Florida, the *St. Petersburg Times* noted that three NALC branches—St. Petersburg, Tampa and Clearwater—ranked first, third and fourth nationally in the drive, and said, “It is remarkable, and a point of pride, that despite their personal challenges, Floridians continue to find room in their hearts and budgets to help so many of their neighbors.”

In an editorial, the *Charleston (S.C.) Post and Courier* said the drive is not only a testament to the generous impulses of Americans, but also “good public relations for the letter carriers and even more for the Postal Service,” which it noted took a P.R. hit when postage rates went up. ✉

Reporting in

Reports since the July *Postal Record* include:

- ◆ Deer Lodge, Montana Branch 3839, reported collecting 2,300 pounds.
- ◆ Chicago, Illinois Branch 11, which updated its final poundage to 85,836 pounds to include food delivered to the New Covenant Church pantry.
- ◆ Terre Haute, Indiana Branch 479 reported a total of 42,000 pounds.



Opposite page: Northeast Florida Branch 53 members Bob Henning and Calvin Sinclair picked up 2,208 pounds of food from the 1,300 students of Beauclerc Elementary School.

Above: A plaque from the United Way to Connecticut Merged Branch 20.

Left: Everyone at the Worth, Illinois Post Office pitched in for South Suburban Illinois Branch 4016’s drive.