SECOND HARVEST BRINGS BITE2GO TO SPOKANE HIGH SCHOOLS

Bite2Go has expanded exponentially since it began as the Backpack program. It now serves more than 4,200 kids in dozens of schools throughout Eastern Washington and North Idaho.

Bite2Go combines the effort of At The Core and community partners like churches, clubs, businesses and schools and Second Harvest to give students weekend meals throughout the school year. Partner organizations pay for weekend food kits and organize volunteering, labor and transportation to deliver kits to target schools.

Formerly only at elementary schools, Bite2Go is now a pilot program at three area high schools and Glover Middle School. Students at Mead, Lewis and Clark and Mount Spokane high schools began distributions this year, said Chris Sloan, donor relations manager with Second Harvest.

High school Bite2Go, or Bite2Go XL, is similar to the elementary school program, where kids pick up bags of nonperishable, portable meals and snacks for the weekend. Portions are larger to accommodate higher caloric needs of older students, and the pantries will be mostly run by student groups, school civic clubs like the ASB, or as senior projects. A faculty advisor will oversee each project to provide stability.

Several new organizations have agreed to sponsor students at the schools during the pilot projects, as well as existing Bite2Go donors, Sloan said. Food distributions will be organized by student volunteers.

"Students within a school are going to be serving and feeding other students," he said. Referrals will come from school staff and will be confidential. "We want the staff to refer kids. They'll be on the front lines."

Students get to choose what they want in their bags, picking from a variety of nonperishable items they can prepare with entry-level cooking skills and with or without access to a full kitchen, like tuna, chili, peanut butter, canned fruit and vegetables, cereal and crackers.

Chantal Czarapata, marketing instructor and DECA advisor at Lewis and Clark High School, helps a group of 12 students put bags of food together in a hallway near her classroom.

"I think there's more of a need," she said of the new program. "Every week we've been getting a few more."

DECA, founded in 1946, is a national nonprofit with chapters in high schools and colleges throughout the world. Activities prepare students for careers in business, leadership and marketing, among others. Czarapata said staff at Lewis and Clark has been trying to spread the word while still keeping it anonymous. They've been working with school guidance counselors and other administration officials to identify students in need.

Jeff Naslund, an administrator at Mead High School, said staff welcomed Bite2Go XL, and many of them are working with student clubs to get the new program off the ground. The first deliveries went out in late October.

"Our staff, students and community are incredibly generous. The families benefiting from Bite2Go have the potential to fall through the cracks, which is unacceptable here," Naslund said. "We believe all people are worthy of love and belonging. Bite2Go XL is one of the best ways for us to prove it. The program has provided us with an opportunity to empower many different facets of our community. Bold love is hard, but always worth it."
Second Harvest’s Pasco distribution center is working with three new local partners to supply food to hungry people in the Tri-Cities area: Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels, Tri-County Partners Habitat for Humanity and the Second Chance Center, a program of the Community Action Committee (CAC).

Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels (MOW) receives nutritious fresh produce and other perishable groceries from Second Harvest to prepare hot meals delivered to homebound seniors. Marcee Woffinden, nutrition services program director, said MOW has been able to include more fresh produce in their menus because of Second Harvest’s partnership. “This is a nice treat for the seniors we serve. It has also allowed us to have more freedom in menu development and will help us be able to serve more seniors,” she said.

Tri-County Partners Habitat for Humanity works with families who need housing and help building their new homes. Second Harvest provides a stocked refrigerator and pantry for families moving in to their new home. “There is nothing better than seeing the faces of a Habitat family open their cupboards and fridge to find food donated from Second Harvest on Dedication Day,” said executive director Lisa Godwin.

Second Chance Center, which opened in late 2016 and houses up to 35 people, serves families and children who need daytime shelter while parents or caregivers look for work. Second Chance has a computer center and places for

DONATIONS HELP BLENDED FAMILIES SAVE ON RENT, FOOD

Smith, a grandmother who goes by her last name, visited Second Harvest in November 2016 to help feed her grandson, 17. “He’s tall and skinny and he eats a lot,” she said ruefully. “I’m 60 years old and I have health problems. I work part time. I was OK [financially] on my own.” Since her grandson moved in with her, she said her costs for food have gone up, and she’s had to turn to the food bank to make ends meet.

In 2011, nearly one in every five seniors living with grandchildren was food insecure, according to a 2015 report from the Minnesota Hunger Initiative. About 7.8 million children lived with at least one grandparent in 2009, a 64 percent increase since 1991.

Bob, who visited a Mobile Food Bank at Grant Elementary in 2016, is a retired Navy veteran who’s also supporting two grandkids and his daughter. He guided his wheelchair expertly around boxes as he picked out a loaf of bread.

“This is very helpful. My daughter just moved in with two of my grandkids and now more of us need to eat,” he said. “Retirement isn’t everything they told me it would be.”

Disabled seniors like Bob are also more likely to be food insecure than their non-disabled counterparts (Faces of Senior Hunger, 2015).

Edwin and Debbie, married 36 years, recently moved in with extended family to help save money. Funds were still tight. They take their grandsons to the after-school SPEAR program, where Edwin volunteers, and occasionally use Second Harvest’s food pantries to make ends meet.

“With me on disability and Debbie working full time and our daughter working, we get so close to getting over the hump, but we just don’t quite get there,” Edwin said. “There’d be times that Debbie and I would have to skip meals to make sure the grandkids eat every day. Without the food bank and Second Harvest, we’d struggle. We’d have to spend a lot more of what little money we do have on food.”
Nutrition education

Two chapters of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Spokane County are spending lots of time at Second Harvest’s Kitchen classes this year. A $13,333 grant from Empire Health Foundation is funding two quarters of classes for elementary kids and two for middle and high-school students. Hands-on cooking sessions will include recipe demonstrations and sharing, food sampling and healthy food preparation activities. A final session each quarter includes a field trip to The Kitchen at Second Harvest.

Currently, one in four children in Spokane County is food insecure – in other words, they don’t know where their next meal is coming from, and may regularly experience hunger or not get enough to eat.

“Our clubs provide an excellent opportunity to equip some of our community’s most at-risk children with basic scratch cooking skills,” said Tamara Korth, director of program operations at Boys and Girls Clubs. “Second Harvest piloted similar classes at our two clubs last winter and we were thrilled with the results.”

A new direction

To address the issues facing today’s kids, nutrition educators at Second Harvest are turning to evidence-based curriculum from Cornell University’s Division of Nutritional Sciences, called Choose Health: Food, Fun and Fitness, or CHFFF, an award-winning lesson set geared for kids ages 8 to 12. CHFFF is spearheaded by Mindy Wallis, nutrition education manager with Second Harvest, who joined the nutrition team in 2016. Wallis also supervises Second Harvest’s Washington Service Corps team and the school Mobile Food Bank program. CHFFF lessons include food preparation, interactive games, goal-setting challenges and help navigating food labels.

A family affair

Families show up for classes at The Kitchen, too. Crystal Cooper was searching for a local food bank online when she ran across the listing for cooking classes at The Kitchen at Second Harvest. Cooper grew up learning to cook, and wants to pass on the skill to her sons, now 15 and 16.

“I’ve always loved cooking,” Cooper said. “It’s just something I wanted to show my kids.” The family of four is currently homeless, living in an RV while they wait to be approved for a studio apartment in Spokane.

“It became a family night for us – something to get away from our housing situation,” she said. “Something normal. As a mom this class has helped us more than you know. And we get to spend time with the kids and with some food without draining our wallet more.”

To find out more about upcoming classes or volunteer opportunities in The Kitchen, check out secondharvestkitchen.org or email info@2-harvest.org.

Welcome to the team

Second Harvest is proud to welcome long-time employee Emily Kanally as the new director of kitchen programs. Her experience in the Volunteer Center and years working at a 5-star hotel make her an excellent fit for our growing scratch-cooking program. She’s excited to combine her customer service skills and culinary background to teach cooking, meal planning and more to Spokane families.

Emily on why food equity, volunteerism and Second Harvest matter to her: “I’ve always had a passion for food and feeding people, and I wanted to turn that passion into a career. From a young age my parents taught me the importance of cooking and growing my own food. I feel it’s my responsibility to serve others in any way I can and I hope to use the knowledge and skills I have cultivated in the Volunteer Center to further the progress of The Kitchen at Second Harvest.”
SPECIAL THANKS TO FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Meet some of our amazing supporters who helped feed hungry people this quarter in the Inland Northwest. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to learn more – and look for a picture of your volunteer group!

Syngenta employees and partners sorted and preppe over 12,000 pounds of potatoes and onions for delivery to area food banks and meal programs.

Agrium Inc.
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The 2nd Annual Hunger Run, presented by Safeway Albertsons, was a great success! On Saturday, April 1, the sun came out at Plante’s Ferry Park and so did a great group of volunteers and more than 530 walkers, joggers, and runners who crossed the finish line. This year’s Hunger Run raised more than $17,000, which will be split to feed the hungry through Second Harvest and the Union Gospel Mission.

Thank you to sponsors Safeway Albertsons, Novation, Fastway Freight System, Consumer Auto Liquidators, Kind Bars, Powers Candy & Nuts, Fleet Feet Sports, Find Your Pace Running, KEY 101 FM and 93.7 FM The Mountain.
For more information, go to 2-harvest.org/bite.
EVENTS AND VOLUNTEERING

April – Spokane & Tri-Cities
National Volunteer Month
Join us to celebrate the thousands of volunteers who help feed hungry neighbors each year – at Second Harvest’s Volunteer Center, as delivery drivers, and at community events. Register to volunteer at 2-harvest.org.

May 4 – Spokane
Drew Holcomb and The Neighbors Concert
Drew Holcomb and The Neighbors, an Americana band from Tennessee are playing at the Knitting Factory in Spokane on May 4. The band will be donating 20% of sales at the merchandise booth the night of the concert, direct to Second Harvest to help feed hungry people locally.

May 5 – Tri-Cities
Bite2Go Big Build
Dozens of volunteers will assemble thousands of Bite2Go weekend food kits for area schoolchildren in need. Contact Michele Roth at 545-0787, ext. 208 or michele.roth@2-harvest.org to learn how you can support this program.

May 8-13 – Tri-Cities
Ford Peanut Butter Drive
Second Harvest is partnering with Conwin Ford Tri-Cities in Pasco and KVEW ABC on the annual Ford Focus on Child Hunger. Watch our website and social media for details on how to participate.

May 13 – Spokane & Tri-Cities
Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive
Hardworking letter carriers will be collecting food for hungry families and seniors. Collection bags, sponsored by Progressions Credit Union in Spokane and Yoke’s Fresh Markets in the Tri-Cities, will be delivered in advance by local postmen and women. You can help by filling the bag you receive with nonperishable food and leaving it near your mailbox on May 13. Second Harvest needs volunteers to help postal workers collect bags in Spokane. In the Tri-Cities, volunteers are needed at the Pasco and Richland post office locations only.

May 17 – Spokane
23rd Annual Taking a Bite out of Hunger
Round up a table of family and friends for this food and beverage tasting and auction held from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at the Spokane Arena.

May 13 – June 18, Tri-Cities
Dollar Tree Food Drive
Dollar Tree stores will be collecting donations of nonperishable food as part of their annual drive supporting Feeding America food banks. Give generously to provide food for families in need in our area.

May 21 – Spokane
Karts 4 Our Community
Businesses assemble teams that vie for top honors go-kart racing at FastKart Indoor Speedway. The fundraiser, now in its 15th year, is put on by the Spokane Food Circle Group and benefits Second Harvest and two other charities.

May 25 – Spokane & Tri-Cities
Red Nose Day
Help end child hunger and poverty, one nose at a time, on #RedNoseDay. To learn more, visit rednoseday.org.

June (TBD) – Spokane & Tri-Cities
Yoke’s What’s for Lunch? Food Drive
Stop by Yoke’s Fresh Markets for the What’s for Lunch? Food Drive – promoted by KXLY in Spokane and KVEW in the Tri-Cities. The event helps Second Harvest feed hungry children over the summer months. Visit Yoke’s stores to donate cash or food or to purchase pre-bagged groceries for $5 or $10.

June 12-16 – Spokane & Coeur d’Alene
15th Annual Spokane Street Music Week
Musicians and other performers provide lunch hour entertainment on the streets of downtown Spokane, the Garland District and Coeur d’Alene in exchange for donations to Second Harvest. The event is the brainchild of Doug Clark of The Spokesman-Review, who promotes the event.

Learn more about these and other volunteer opportunities at 2-harvest.org.

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 2017

Volunteers are needed to help postal workers collect bags of donated food during the Stamp Out Hunger food drive. Go online to lettercarriers.inland.volunteerhub.com/events/indexv1 to sign up for available shifts. For more information call 252-6257 or e-mail volunteer@2-harvest.org.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Dakota Magnum-Turner helps run the Bite2Go XL site at Lewis and Clark High School. Dakota moved to Spokane from California when his parents divorced, and said going back and forth between their households gave him a unique perspective on poverty. “I get to see both ways of living,” he said. “I go to a house where eating out is a consistent thing, and a house where we have to be very careful about what we buy.” He began volunteering with Project Hope in summer 2016, and working with the nonprofit got him interested in further activism. Because of his personal experience with poverty, he knows the long-term impact of not having enough food, and wanted to do something about it for other students at LC. “There’s a direct correlation between food insecurity and how much education you get, and what kind of job you have,” he said.

“Once people have a steady source of food, they can focus on the bigger things.”

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Fighting hunger, feeding hope, Second Harvest brings community resources together to feed people in need through empowerment, education and partnerships.

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