



FOOD FOR THOUGHT OUTREACH

ANNUAL
REPORT

2019/2020

ffttl.org
50-290-4056



A NOTE FROM FOUNDER & CEO

The 2019-20 fiscal year at Food For Thought brought with it many unexpected changes and challenges. Within this report, it is our goal to share with you how we worked to address and overcome these obstacles in order to deliver on our commitment to fighting child hunger in Walton and Okaloosa Counties.

While we spent months preparing to honor our 10 year anniversary with a sustainability campaign, our plans quickly changed as all of our energy was needed to address the negative impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic in March.

There will come a time when we can celebrate our milestone but today, I am proud that we have ten years of best practices that positioned us to rise to this occasion and serve our community.



Stacie M. Nelson





10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

As we welcomed the new year, 2020 also marked our 10 year anniversary at Food For Thought Outreach. Our team spent months preparing a strong campaign and celebration to honor this milestone. Our goal was centered around positioning the organization for the next 10 years of service through a multi-year giving strategy. We introduced this plan for the first time in mid-February and less than a month later, our country was facing a pandemic and record unemployment levels.

COVID-19 ARRIVES

As a board, we understood that our plans would have to wait and that it was most important for us to answer the call of the increased needs of our community first and foremost. In a way, nothing honors our 10 years better than our response to the COVID 19 crisis. I am grateful for the support we have seen and continue to see as we navigate these times. We still are aiming to sustain-serve-and grow to meet the needs of our community, as this pandemic has shown that the needs are ongoing, and growing.



SCHOOLS SERVED

35

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

3,300

BACKPACKS PACKED

79,200

HOLIDAY MEALS

18,000

CURBSIDE SERVICES

50

CURBSIDE MEALS

8,500

TOTAL FUNDS RAISED

\$1,020,908

TOTAL FOOD DONATIONS

\$280,000

TOTAL FOOD ITEMS

1,300,00

TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED

\$511,00



Backpack Program

From August into March, 3,300 students were served each week at 35 schools within Okaloosa & Walton County.



Full Circle Kitchen

The Emeril Lagasse Full Circle Kitchen provided cooking classes to students, given by local chefs and volunteers



Full Circle Garden

The Emeril Lagasse Full Circle Garden is located at the Destin Pantry and the Walton Academy. Produce harvested provides seasonal offerings for kitchen classes & the backpack program.



Snack Program

Each month, 8,900 food units are provided to the schools to give teachers added support for children who are in need of food during the school day. 71,200 snack items were provided August into March.

Volunteers

The backbone of Food For Thought remains our volunteers. We are fortunate to have a pool of people and organizations who continue to serve our programs, and have continued to serve even through the pandemic.





Thanksgiving Service:

6,000 meals in total were provided for Thanksgiving across our Pantry Locations.
Sponsor: Alys Beach



Christmas Service:

12,000 meals in total were provided for Christmas across our Pantry Locations.
Sponsor: Alys Beach



STOCK THE PANTRY

Our 6th annual event to kick off the year to fill our pantries for the 2019-2020 school year. This year broke all records; the equivalent to \$253,358 raised!

TEAMS

FOOD ITEMS

18

336,850



DESTIN CHARITY WINE AUCTION

We are fortunate to be among 16 deserving non-profits in Northwest Florida that benefit from the Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, which benefits children in need.

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$200,000



EGGS ON THE BEACH

Every fall the culinary competition, Eggs on the Beach presented by Bay Breeze Patio, donates funds to Food For Thought

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$16,250



CHI CHI MIGUEL | HILTON DINNER

The April 2019 Chi Chi Miguel Throwdown auctioned off a dinner, which took place September 25, 2019.

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$2,800



FALL FROLIC DINNER

The Marrow Chefs + Better Together Beverages joined forces to host a dinner in the Full Circle Kitchen, October 3, 2019.

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$3,150



Full Circle Dinner:

To kick off the Food For Thought 10-year anniversary, we hosted the Full Circle Dinner with Hilton Sandestin, bringing together six area chefs for a dinner to remember. Justin Gaffrey painted a custom mural in the Santa Rosa Beach Pantry, which was revealed during this evening.

Multi-Year Commitment:

Corcoran & Reverie to Sponsor Summer Programs for 3-years (\$10K/year)

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$16,500



Brunch with Santa

The First Annual Brunch with Santa was a success at the Santa Rosa Beach Pantry, December 2019.

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$3,670



GIVING TUESDAY

Food For Thought took part in the national Giving Tuesday campaign, geared to help non-profits have a day dedicated to raising money during the holidays

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$9,578



2019/2020 Corporate Sponsors:



REVERIE



Bike, Beach, Baby, & More



Top 15 Grants Received 2019 - 2020

AMOUNT RAISED:

\$511,000

- The Alys Foundation
- Davis Family Foundation
- Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation
- Dugas Foundation
- The St. Joe Community Foundation
- Emeril Lagasse Foundation
- Fidelity Charitable
- Haley Herbert & Marian Foundation
- Publix Super Market Charities
- Rosemary Beach Foundation, Inc.
- The Sandestin Foundation
- The Seaside Interfaith Chapel
- Sysco Corporation
- UBS Donor
- Windgate Charitable Foundation

**listed in alphabetical order*



COVID-19 MODIFIED OUR SERVICES

Since the onset of the Covid-19 Crisis, we at Food For Thought have had to change the way we operate our backpack program and manage our volunteers.

Prior to schools closing due to the pandemic, we created a set of health standards and guidelines for our volunteer staff to follow upon starting a volunteer shift (based on WHO and CDC Recommendations). We moved to only plastic bags, boxes and paper bags instead of backpacks to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Once schools closed, we continued the same protocols and standards to keep our volunteers and staff healthy, but modified our food distribution to a direct pick-up service, where families can come to one of our five locations to pick up a bag of food (includes 30+ food items & fresh produce). We began this service at three locations, and with the increased need & to help accessibility, we now offer five locations.

We have continued to work with the school districts to help bridge the meal gap and provide food to families during this time of crisis, as the need continues to grow.

FOOD INSECURITY:

noun: **the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.**

CHILD FOOD INSECURITY IN NORTHWEST FLORIDA

OKALOOSA COUNTY:

- 2018 - 18%
- PROJECTED 2020 - 29.7%
- 65% INCREASE

WALTON COUNTY

- 2018 - 22.1%
- PROJECTED 2020 - 33.1%
- 50% INCREASE

21% of food insecure families in Okaloosa & Walton Counties fall into the gap between free/reduced meal guidelines and the food cost - ineligible for programs.

UNEMPLOYMENT IS ON THE RISE IN 2020

the onset of Covid-19 pandemic has created a rise in unemployment, in return further feeding food insecurity.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN NORTHWEST FLORIDA

OKALOOSA COUNTY:

- JUNE 2020 - 6.4%
- JUNE 2019 - 2.8%
- 129% INCREASE

WALTON COUNTY

- JUNE 2020 - 7.1%
- JUNE 2019 - 2.9%
- 145% INCREASE

SOURCES:

<https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2018/child/florida>

*<https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Map%20the%20Meal%20Gap%202020%20Food%20Price%20Module.pdf>

<https://www.feedingamericaaction.org/the-impact-of-coronavirus-on-food-insecurity/>

HOW FFT CONTINUED TO SERVE:

- Providing safe, curbside food pick-up for families 2x/Month at Five Locations in Okaloosa & Walton Counties
- 500 families received weekly food to bridge the meal gap (we anticipate the number of families to grow)
- Two weeks of food is provided for each pick up
- Food For Thought is prepared to continue these services through the school year, knowing that the need will grow with unemployment growing, and the limited accessibility that is now available on school properties.
- FFT volunteers and staff are following all CDC guidelines to ensure that all food remains safe for families



FOOD FOR THOUGHT ADAPTED TO SERVE NEED

March 23: Curbside Services Launched

March - July: **50 Curbside Events** over **17 weeks**

8,500 Meals provided to families in need!

Started with 3 Locations...

Grew to 5 Locations: Santa Rosa Beach, Destin, DeFuniak Springs, Mary Esther and Freeport

Fresh Produce provided through partnership with City Produce

Updates to the set-up and infrastructure in each of the pantries were made in July 2020 to accommodate curbside pickups; including new equipment, pantry set-up, and re Fridgeration for food storage.



Thank you to all who have supported FFT this year!



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THE NEED IS ONGOING & GROWING

The means to provide food to the children in our community may have shifted this past year from backpacks in schools to curbside pickups, however the core mission remains the same for Food for Thought Outreach:

To fight childhood hunger and food insecurity

No matter what this next year may hold, now, more than ever, FFT remains committed to serve our community. We are grateful for the continued support of our community to provide volunteer and monetary assistance, to allow us to be able to adapt to the need that **is ongoing, and growing.**

Food For Thought will continue to utilize the help of volunteers and private donors in order to pack boxes of food for our curbside services to assist families in need. We remain committed to help and serve our community as we embark on this next year.

With gratitude,

Shanie M. Nelson