



OHIO

**ASSOCIATION OF
FOODBANKS**

Hunger and Health Newsletter

October 2023

HUNGER AND HEALTH NEWSLETTER

OAF UPDATES NEW STAFF

Audrey Vanzant - Director of Communications



Audrey Vanzant is a proud born and raised Springfield, Ohio resident who is passionate about giving back to her community, non-profits, and the social service sector. Audrey holds a Bachelor of Arts in Arts Management from The Ohio State University and a Master of Science in Management with a specialization in Non-profit Leadership from New England College.

Prior to joining the Ohio Association of Foodbanks, Audrey spent a little over three years in direct service as the Development Manager for Second Harvest Food Bank of Champaign, Clark, and Logan Counties. During her time at SHFB CCL, Audrey supported their fundraising and development efforts including grant writing, executing all four annual fundraiser events, sponsorships, solicitations to donors, etc. In addition to fundraising, Audrey did all the marketing for SHFB, served as the advocacy point person for the Ohio Association of Foodbanks network, served as their HACCP coordinator, sat on leadership, and lead their staff engagement committee.

When Audrey isn't working towards ending hunger, you can find her outside either playing fetch with her two pups or hiking local trails and park districts. Audrey is a big true-crime fan and enjoys scrapbooking. She is a mental health advocate who shares her own struggles with her chronic illness in hopes of spreading awareness and empathy to society. In addition to mental health, Audrey advocates strongly on behalf of food security, the arts, and animal rights. In addition to her roles as Director of Communications and dog mom, Audrey also owns a small business. Floral by Flourish LLC is a sustainable floral design company that opened in 2019 and is still actively spreading smiles through flowers and nature as of today.

FEDERAL UPDATES

Upon the end of the fiscal year on Oct 1st, with no appropriations for the 2024 fiscal year approved, Congress passed a short term continuing resolution (CR) that will continue to fund the federal government, and avoid a full government shut down. This CR maintains the funding levels from 2023 for federal programs for 45 days, until congress reaches an agreement on full-year appropriations for the 2024 fiscal year. Congress now has until November 17th, 2023 to either pass a full budget, or another continuing resolution, or else the government may be facing yet another shut down.

How will a government shut down affect public assistance?

The continuing resolution allocated enough money for SNAP benefits, new applications, and recertifications through December 31. Medicare and Medicaid benefits, since funded by the Affordable Care Act, still remain intact even through a government shut down. However, the 2023 Farm Bill could see catastrophic outcomes without a reauthorization of the proposed Farm Bill by December 31. Many pilot programs, and funding for nutrition and agriculture programs may cease to exist if the 2023 farm bill is not reauthorized, or passed as an extension of current law.

STATE UPDATES

HHS Secretary Comes to Northeast Ohio for Takeaways on Improving Food Access - Akron Canton Regional Foodbank, Clinic Pantries

Secretary of Human and Health Services, Xavier Becerra, with Congressional Representatives Emilia Strong Skyes (Ohio's 13th Congressional District), and Shontel Brown (Ohio's 11th Congressional District), share priorities of creating healthier families, and a healthier economy through Food is Medicine initiatives, while visiting the Akron Childrens Hospital Food Farmacy, Sponsored by Akron Canton Regional Foodbank.

In July of 2023, Secretary Becerra, Representative Skyes, and Representative Brown toured the Food Farmacy of Akron Childrens Hospital and MetroHealth Medical Center, administered with assistance from the Akron Canton Regional Foodbank. Vice President of Akron Canton Regional Foodbank, Katie Carver Reed, “encouraged Becerra to incentivize health care systems across the country to screen patients for food insecurity”.

Representative Skyes of Ohio's 13th Congressional District has previously led the charge in securing \$1 million in Ohio Department of Medicaid funding to create the Food Farmacy program in 2022. This program has reportedly reached nearly 10,700 people and has distributed more than 38,000 meals. Representative Skyes and Representative Brown both want to work with other congressional colleagues to replicate programs like the Food Farmacy in other states, to “create a wellness care system we know that are not only creating healthier families, but a healthier economy”.

NEWS, RESOURCES, AND RESEARCH

NEWEST RESEARCH

The American Heart Association Presidential Advisory Calls for building on existing research and implementing cross sector approaches to Food Is Medicine

On September 28th, 2023, the American Heart Association published a presidential advisory claim stating that a stronger body of research on the efficacy and value of clinical Food Is Medicine programs, and its importance in improving the treatment and prevention of many serious chronic health conditions.

This report walks through the research that has been performed thus far on Food is Medicine initiatives, the importance of diet and nutrition to cardiovascular health, challenges to consuming a healthy diet in the United States, and potential in-kind Food is Medicine interventions. This report aims to emphasize the principles of Food is Medicine research, and the ethical, equitable, and intentional purpose this research must fulfill, in order to educate health professionals on the importance of Food is Medicine practices.

The full PDF document of the AHA Presidential Advisory Report is linked [here](#).

CASE STUDIES

The True Cost of Food

Tufts University Food is Medicine Institute

This report, published by the Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, with support from the Rockefeller foundation, discusses the true cost - analysis of implementing national Food is Medicine interventions, through two main case studies. The first case study, *Medically Tailored Meals: Hospitalizations and Health Care Expenditures* evaluates the cost of implementing MTM nationally. The second case study, *Produce Prescription Programs: Health and Economic Impacts* evaluates the health and economic costs of implementing national produce prescription programs.

Results showed that national implementation of MTMs in Medicaid for patients with diet related conditions can save approximately \$1.6 billion in averted hospitalizations and \$13.6 billion in healthcare costs.

Results also showed that national implementation of produce prescription programs for patients with diabetes and food insecurity could result in 292,000 averted cardiovascular events, and 260,000 quality-adjusted life years gained, while producing a total savings of \$18,100 per quality adjusted life year gained by nutrition interventions.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Fall Hunger and Health Convening

Date: Thursday, October 26th, 10 am – 3 pm

Location: Freestore Foodbank, 3401 Rosenthal Way, Cincinnati, OH 45204

Topic: Produce Procurement and Distribution Strategies

Please click [here](#) to fill out the Registration Form

We look forward to seeing you there!

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