



Food for today. Hope for tomorrow.

A photograph of two women standing in a food bank. The woman on the left is wearing a white and black long-sleeved shirt and glasses, smiling. The woman on the right is wearing a red t-shirt and has long, dark, curly hair, also smiling. They are standing in front of shelves stocked with various food items, including boxes and cans. A sign on the wall in the background reads "SOCIAL SERVICES".

Summer 2025 Quarterly Donor Impact Report

(Photo by Alyssa Schukar for Nourishing Hope.)

A letter from our new CEO, Mitzi D. Baum

Dear Nourishing Hope community,

I am honored to step into the role of CEO at Nourishing Hope during this critical time for our organization and our community. As we face serious challenges in the broader human services sector, **I believe we are uniquely positioned to meet this moment with heart, focus, and resilience.**

Nourishing Hope has already made an incredible impact in supporting individuals and families with not only food and essential resources, but also with dignity and compassion. I am deeply grateful to bring my decades of experience of combatting food insecurity to this new role and to lead an organization so firmly rooted in service and community.

This industry is fragile. The work we do cannot happen without the unwavering support of our donors, community partners, government allies and volunteers. **That support is more critical now than ever.** We know the journey ahead won't always be easy, but we also know the importance of the work that lies before us.

We are not just responding to urgent needs — **we are building a future where every person we serve is met with care, dignity, and opportunity.**

I'm excited to be on this journey with all of you.

With gratitude and determination,



Mitzi D. Baum
Chief Executive Officer

FOOD, IN ADDITION TO MEDICINE

When a patient leaves the hospital, healing doesn't stop at the door. That's why the **Health & Hope** program exists — a collaborative partnership between Nourishing Hope and several area hospitals and care centers, including **Endeavor Health Swedish Hospital (EHS)**. Nourishing Hope's online market coordinator, Ty Matthews, refers to the program as *"snacks, resources, food — it's Nourishing Hope in a small bag."*



Together, we're bridging the critical gap between medical treatment and everyday well-being by providing nutritious groceries to low-income patients at a time when they need them most.

"We want to make sure our patients aren't going home to an empty fridge," said Endeavor Health Swedish Hospital's community nutrition manager AK Kritt (pictured above, right).

We're proud to play a role in this work and even prouder to stand beside partners like EHS — who continue to lead with the understanding of what whole-person care looks like.



Betsy Diller, Community Health Worker, and AK Kritt, Community Nutrition Manager, on-site to receive a shipment of ready-to-eat food bags for patients.

Read the full story at
nourishinghopechi.org/blog

FOOD PROGRAMS

In the first quarter of fiscal year 2026, you helped us serve nearly **24,000 people**. Our signature food programs continue to grow, including our Online Market, which has **grown by 30%** in the last 12 months.

That said, Nourishing Hope has been rising to the challenge, feeding folks with the help of donated food and funds. Together, we provided more than **1.5 million pounds of food** this past quarter, **93%** of which was donated by our grocery and food partners.

Thank you for joining us in providing food for today, and hope for tomorrow. Learn more about ways to support Nourishing Hope programs at nourishinghopechi.org/ways-to-give.



MENTAL WELLNESS AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Nourishing Hope's social services case managers help provide long-term resources to help our neighbors thrive. Immediate needs like **employment, housing, utility assistance, and help applying for benefits** are met with care and curated assistance for each neighbor.

In the first quarter of fiscal year 2026, we provided more than **2,100 social services**. That total includes more than **925 free mental health counseling sessions**.

This summer our therapy team concluded sessions with a new counseling group for LGBTQ+ adults, *I Have a Queer-y*. As one of the facilitators Abby Mayhue shared, "There is power and value in this organization saying, 'We love our queer neighbors. They are part of our community too. We welcome you. We want to serve you,'" [Read more about the therapy group on our blog](#).



Case Manager Susan Cardone stands near the Social Services resource board at Sheridan market.

NEW ONLINE MARKET PARTNER: GROWING HOME

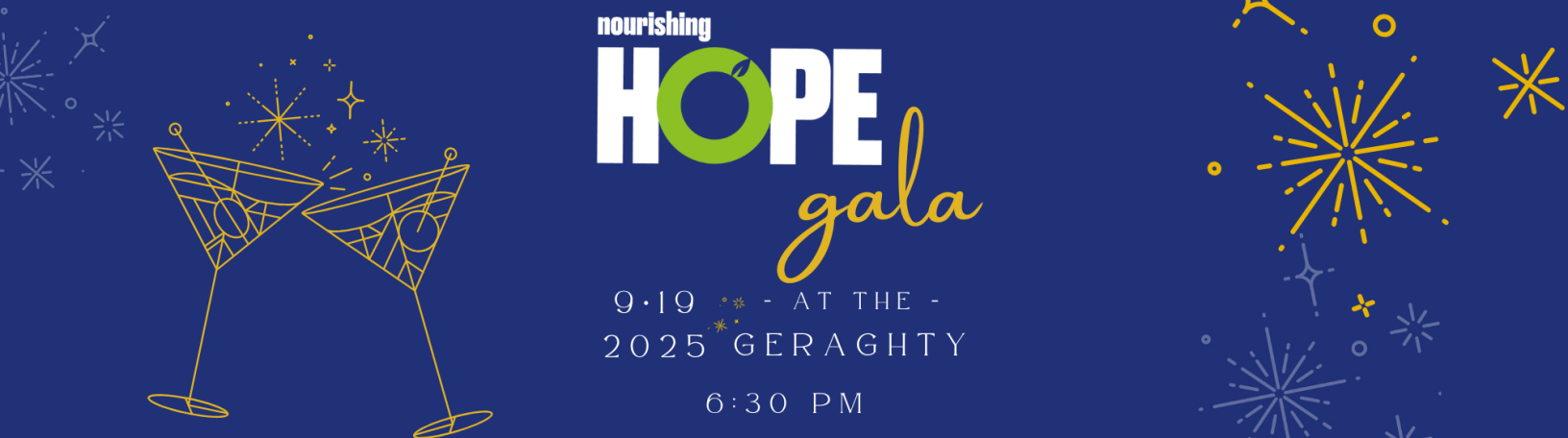
During the first quarter of this year, we added **four new partners** to our Online Market program. [Growing Home](#) is one of those new partners. They provide paid job readiness training and farming experience to individuals with employment barriers, while strengthening Englewood through affordable produce sales and community engagement.

"I'm excited for this partnership to support the exceptional services that Growing Home provides to the Englewood community," said Nourishing Hope's program expansion manager Natia Barnett. *"They have excellent job training programs and rich support for their students. It's an honor to join them as a partner — bringing free, monthly food distributions, available for anyone experiencing food insecurity."*

Our growth in expanding our services is made possible in large part thanks to [Northern Trust](#). The inaugural **\$1 million Anchor Award** from Northern Trust has strengthened Nourishing Hope's capacity, expanded our reach across Chicago's South and West Sides, and opened new pathways to serve young adults ages 16 to 24.



A neighbor picks up their Nourishing Hope Online Market grocery order at Growing Home.



Please join us at our largest annual fundraiser, the [Nourishing Hope Gala](#), held on **Friday, Sept. 19** at The Geraghty at 6:30 p.m.

We'll have an exciting live and silent auction, paddle raise, music, dinner and dancing, and much more! Join us for an unforgettable night while making a difference in your community.

Last year we came together to raise more than \$1 million. This year, we're aiming to set another record to provide vital funding for our programs.

Go to nourishinghopechi.org/gala to confirm your reservation.

You can bid on silent auction prizes from anywhere, visit nourishinghopechi.org/auction to bid.

If you're unable to attend, you can still support by participating in the silent auction online, by purchasing tickets for a friend, or by sponsoring our event. Thank you for celebrating with us!

MEET OUR GALA CO-CHAIRS



Lizette and Phillip Austin



Niki and Jon Cordell



Nicholas Inman



Don Shannon

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DONOR SPOTLIGHT – MICHELE HOOVLER

A CALL TO ACTION: “IF YOU HAVE EXTRA, GIVE EXTRA”

Michele Hoovler didn’t expect to find herself looping grocery bags over her shoulders alongside neighbors at Nourishing Hope’s food pantries. But that hands-on volunteer experience — and the genuine connections she made — has transformed her family’s approach to giving.

“I was really nervous about being able to relate to the clients, about my inability to speak Spanish,” Michele admits about her first volunteer experience. “But I found that everyone was kind. We’d work together in both languages to choose groceries. I was just amazed and really humbled by that.”

What struck her most was witnessing the dignity and resilience of families facing food insecurity. *“I see people waiting outside in all types of weather for 3.5 hours before the doors open, because they need to get food,” Michele says. “I think to myself — if I were trying to feed my family on around 4 lbs. of meat in a month... Well, I don’t know if I could. But our neighbors arrive with a smile, with hope.”*

Beyond the human connections, Michele is impressed by Nourishing Hope’s efficiency. *“I was overwhelmed by the logistics involved,” she says. “To see the trucks, the food, the shelves, and to realize that Nourishing Hope is able to do what it does at that level of financial efficiency — I was very impressed.”*

The Hoovler Family Giving Fund’s approach to philanthropy reflects

Michele’s practical wisdom: *“If you got an extra five bucks, send the five bucks. I just went to Starbucks and bought myself a \$10 drink, so I would like to mentally allocate \$10 to something that’s not for me.”*

For the Hoovlers, food insecurity became a clear priority. *“If you can’t eat, you can’t do anything,” Michele explains. “We’re at a place in our lives where we feel that it’s very important to give back. We can each have at least a little bit of empathy with folks that have a greater need.”*

With government funding sources under pressure, Michele sees individual giving as more crucial than ever. She has a simple message to potential donors: *“No matter what, people need to eat. For anyone who’s looking for a place, or anyone who’s feeling a little bit of that tug, ‘Maybe I could give just a little bit more...’ — come visit Nourishing Hope. When I saw it firsthand, I thought, ‘This is it. This is the place.’”*

Thanks to The Hoovler Family Giving Fund, **all donations up to \$50,000 are MATCHED during September for Hunger Action Month.** Double your gift today at nourishinghopechi.org/hungeractionmonth



STOCK GIFTS

Consider making a stock gift to Nourishing Hope! Your support now will help us remain a trusted resource for our neighbors as other programs they rely on are reduced or eliminated.

Please notify Nourishing Hope of stock type and number of shares before transferring by contacting aliya.prescott@nourishinghopechi.org.

Transfer stock to Morgan Stanley: Account number: 628-045306-885 DTC number: 0015

Tax identification number (FEIN) 36-2734184 Account name: Nourishing Hope

For assistance with making your transfer, contact our Morgan Stanley representative, Marissa Harenberg at 312-648-3549

ON THE MOVE: #TEAMNOURISHINGHOPE

Nourishing Hope has **40 members** running for us on this year's Chicago Bank of America 2025 Marathon team. They're on track to raise **\$80,000**.

Help us cheer them on on **October 12** as they run 26.2 miles for Nourishing Hope's programs!

Summer training is in full swing, and several first-time marathoners are running their longest runs ever in the build-up to the big day.

The team has been committed to nourishing our neighbors by raising funds and volunteering together. Check out the photo of the team at The Hub (below).

During this shift, **#TeamNourishingHope** packed grocery boxes for 177 Home Delivery neighbors!

Our current top fundraiser is **Caity Ross**, who has raised over \$3,100 in support of Nourishing Hope!

Check out each of our runners and their stories at nourishinghopechi.org/marathon



GROWING OUR COMPOSTING



What began as a pilot project in 2023, has grown into a comprehensive composting initiative at Nourishing Hope, thanks to a few generous anonymous donors with an interest in environmental sustainability.

Nourishing Hope sources more than **6 million pounds of food** each year, enabling us to feed thousands of neighbors across Chicago. Every food item gets inspected for quality, and anything that can't be distributed can now be composted.

Over the past two years, we've composted more than **50,000 lbs. of food** waste that would have otherwise gone to landfills and contributed to greenhouse gas emissions.

Due to the success of our composting program at our Headquarters site, **our generous supporters provided funding to support our sustainability efforts** for another two years, and expanded the program to service both Sheridan Market and The Hub.

Community members can now join this effort through a special partnership. New residential customers can sign up to compost with our provider, WasteNot, using the promo code **NOURISHINGHOPE** to **receive a free month of composting service!** Sign up today at wastenotcompost.com

**This offer applies to first-time customers only. Skokie residents are not eligible, due to village restrictions.*

IN THE NEWS

In June, the [Chicago Sun-Times](#) spotlighted two Nourishing Hope volunteers, emphasizing the health benefits of volunteering, [For older adults, a robust network of friends, relatives key to better health outcomes, study finds.](#)

Nourishing Hope's Program Expansion Manager, Natia Barnett, appeared on [Fox32's Good Day Chicago](#) alongside Crystal Amah, Director of Communications & Engagement at the FAME Center.

In July, Nourishing Hope CEO (then Interim CEO), Mitzi Baum, was featured in both the [Chicago Sun-Times](#) and the [Chicago Tribune](#) in articles addressing the potential impacts of proposed Medicaid and SNAP cuts on food pantries across the city.

Read the full articles here:

[Trump's Medicaid, SNAP cuts leave Chicago food pantries, community hospitals bracing for hardship](#)

[In the wake of SNAP cuts, feeding hungry Illinoisans falls more than ever on food pantries](#)



Photo credit: John J. Kim/Chicago Tribune



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www.NourishingHopeChi.org

Nourishing Hope is one of the largest and longest-operating hunger relief organizations in Chicago, providing the equivalent of more than 4.5 million meals each year.

Our mission: Nourishing Hope through food, mental health and social services so that all of our neighbors can thrive.

Our vision: A city where all people have the resources needed for a dignified life.