



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



The Deeper Hunger

Written by our participant and supporter, Susanne Menge

I was the classic Boulder stay-at-home Mom: we bought what we wanted, traveled as desired, and played a lot. I went to yoga often, volunteered at my daughters' schools, and donated money to charitable organizations.

Then, life took a turn.

Four deaths in our close circle, a health challenge, and being raped by a man in my spiritual community led me to question life. In the wake of trauma, my husband blamed me and ended our marriage. At 41, I became a single mom, running a household alone for the first time in my life.

Through a combination of faith and hard work, I found my way, one step at a time.

I walked into Whole Foods Market and asked for any job they had. Slowly, I rebuilt my confidence, and I was blessed to work with a leader who helped me recognize my gift for impacting employees in ways far beyond the job. Three years later, I launched my own

coaching and consulting business...and just one month in, COVID hit. I had remarkable clients, but the revenue was not keeping up. I began living off credit card debt while attempting to deny the worries and self-doubt that had become the everyday narrative of my mind.

It was quite the paradox: as a coach, I was working to fill the emotional hunger in our world, and yet physical hunger was closing in on me.

I realized I needed to make a tectonic shift. I moved to a home with lower rent, and I took another job at Whole Foods to create a steady income. I decided it was time to humble myself and walk through Community Food Share's doors.

I did it. I drove there, parked, and walked in. Every step required a deep breath and gratitude that, this time, I could be on the receiving end of support.

I took home a beautiful array of food for my family; more importantly, I received compassion from the people who welcomed me. I never expected to walk this path, yet my three visits to Community Food Share's pantry gave me the emotional nourishment I needed to reconnect to my inner knowing that I was made for so much more.

I am beyond grateful for the support of Community Food Share. There is such extraordinary generosity in our world, and though I am used to being the one that gives a hand up, in the moment I needed a hand, you were there.



Read the full story and watch our interview with Susanne at communityfoodshare.org/blog



A NOTE FROM KIM

Just months ago, our community was hit by the most destructive wildfire in Colorado's history. The flames stopped less than a mile from our food bank, and while we are grateful that our building was spared, we are still grieving alongside the thousands of neighbors who lost their loved ones, homes, and businesses.

I'll never forget driving past the shell of a restaurant that had just held its grand opening. The owners had graciously invited us to be part of the celebration as they collected donations in lieu of customers paying for their meals. I remember the energy that day and the faces of all the team members who were so proud and excited for what was to come. I now hope that they, like so many others, can rebuild and repair, because the people who live and work here are truly the backbone of the community that we all love.

Recovery will take time, especially amid continued pandemic challenges. Community Food Share has always been and will always be a hub where neighbors help neighbors. We are inspired by your continued resilience and commitment to serving our community. With your support, we'll be here for the long haul, poised to meet the evolving needs of those who call Boulder and Broomfield Counties home.

In partnership with you,



Kim Da Silva
CEO

Volunteer Spotlight

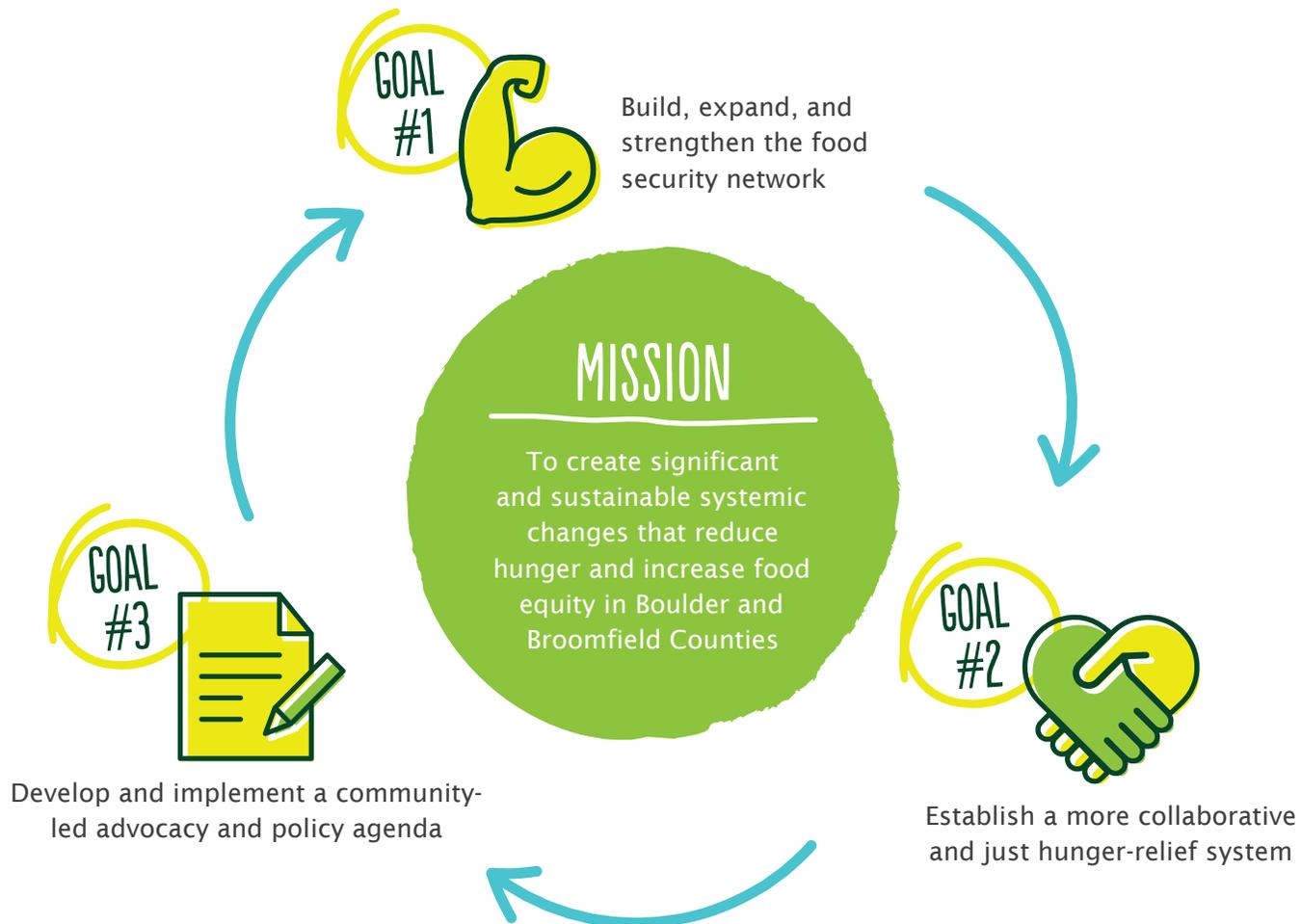


Alex Bernat (they/them)

Meet Alex Bernat, an outstanding volunteer, and a wonderful person. Before volunteering with us, they volunteered at a new organization every month with their friends. After finding Community Food Share, Alex decided to stick around and help us on a consistent basis. "The pandemic was a kick in the pants to volunteer more," Alex reflected. Volunteering has become "one of the main anchors in my life." Alex helps everywhere they can, getting their hands dirty in our gardens, building pallets in our warehouse, and assisting shoppers at our Feeding Families food pantry. Thank you, Alex, for all that you do!

THE FOOD SECURITY NETWORK

The Food Security Network of Boulder and Broomfield Counties is a coalition of local agencies, partners, and community members that share the vision of a more equitable hunger-relief system. Since its inception in 2019, the network has grown to include more than 35 members.



TOGETHER, THE FOOD SECURITY NETWORK IS BUILT BY:



HUNGER-RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS

Along with Community Food Share, our local food pantries, meal programs, and family resource centers come to the table to share knowledge, challenges, and ideas



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Collaborators like local governments, school districts, and non-profits help people experiencing hunger navigate available resources



NEIGHBORS

The network relies on people impacted by hunger to create a food system that is fair, effective, and accessible

If you want to get involved, contact Erika Wey, Food Security Network Accelerator, at ewey@communityfoodshare.org

The Immediate Advantage of Future Charitable Gifts

For Cindy Buchenroth Martin, a longtime donor and volunteer, building a strong community was instilled at a young age.

My mom was always very philanthropic and gave her heart and soul to community building in my hometown. When I started volunteering with Community Food Share, it was very eye-opening. It helped me understand the impact of food insecurity in our community. When my mom passed away, we were fortunate to have more resources to support the causes that are important to us, including Community Food Share.

This year, Cindy and her husband, Andrew, set up a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF). A DAF is a charitable investment account set up through a community

foundation, Fidelity, or Schwab. They provide simple, flexible, and efficient ways to manage charitable giving while providing immediate tax advantages.



Perks of Donor-Advised Funds:

You can contribute funds as frequently as you like and recommend how much and how often money is granted to your favorite charities. Meanwhile, the funds can be invested and will continue to grow. When included in your estate plan, DAFs also allow you to create a charitable legacy that ensures ongoing support of the charities important to you.

To learn if a DAF is right for you, consult your attorney, CPA, or financial advisor.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR
21-25

Family Volunteer Days

Bring the whole family (ages 5+) to these family-oriented volunteer shifts during spring break. Registration required; limited availability.

APR
17-23

Volunteer Appreciation Week

A time to recognize our volunteers for all they do! Registered volunteers will enjoy tasty treats all week.

APR 29 -
MAY 1

Hunger Hurts the Whole Community Fund & Food Drive

Give funds, food, and time during this hallmark event. We're hopeful that we will once again be stationed at King Soopers stores throughout the community.

MAY
21

Spring Resource Fair

This family-friendly gathering focuses on community resource sharing, nutrition and healthy eating, and activities to kick off the growing season!

Visit communityfoodshare.org/events for more details.

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FOOD SHARE



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