Dear Food Bank Friends,

In 2013 the Thurston County Food Bank launched the Neighbors Helping Neighbors Capital Campaign. The campaign will pay for necessary capacity building via a new warehouse building as well as the long-overdue renovation and upgrade of existing facilities. In what turned out to be a tough fundraising environment, we are extremely pleased that the campaign has raised $2.8 of the $3.5 needed to support the future of the Thurston County Food Bank.

The first objective of the capital campaign has already been met. The leaky, aging roof and corrugated fiberglass skylights were replaced with a high-efficiency membrane roof and triple-paned skylights. The new roof is not only tight as a drum, but, has already reduced heating costs by over 30%.

Meanwhile, as we embarked on this landmark capacity building project, demand for Food Bank services continued to increase. This result of reductions of government sponsored benefit programs as well as an economy that has not fully recovered by the challenges of the past few years further validated the urgency of the capacity building effort.

Your ongoing support allowed us to not only continue to provide the same high-level of service as has been provided in the past but also to add services. In 2013 TCFB helped connect 243 individuals with health insurance through the Washington Health Plan Finder. For many of these individuals, this was the first time in their lives that they had access to health insurance.

As we move into the final phases of the capital campaign we hope you’ll join us at benefit events around the county. We hope to not only fundraise but to make many new friends through this process. Keep your eye on the website and the newsletter for more information – we hope you’ll consider passing this information along within your communities and networks.

You have made all these things possible. They are not our accomplishments but yours. Your support and commitment are changing lives every single day in Thurston County. Thank you for all you do for your community.

Sincerely,
Anne Hirsch, President, TCFB Board of Directors
Food Bank to the Rescue!
The USDA estimates that 40% of the food made or grown in the US goes to waste. Here in Thurston County we’re partnering with other agencies and businesses and doing our best to make that statistic ancient history.

TCFB, in partnership with Thurston County Solid Waste, Food Lifeline and numerous area restaurants and grocers has launched 2 programs aimed at drastically reducing the amount of food waste in our community. The Grocery Rescue and Restaurant Rescue programs identify usable food that would be headed to the landfill and divert it to places where it can be put to good use - like the Thurston County Food Bank.

In 2013 alone these programs, along with additional food rescue efforts resulted in over 1,000,000 pounds of food for the Food Bank.

As TCFB continues to expand the capacity for these and other such programs will continue to grow. Initiatives like these rescue programs prove once again that together we can end hunger in Thurston County. Ask your local grocery or favorite restaurant if they participate in any food rescue programs.

Summary
Consistent with National trends, 2013 saw client numbers consistent with the previous year. 41,516 individual clients came to visit the Food Bank 238,150 times. These individuals represented 13,985 households. These numbers indicate that, while the economy has shown improvement, the least well-off in our community are needing an increasing amount of support to make ends meet.

Thank you for continuing to support those in need in your local community via the Thurston County Food Bank. Your support is more critical than ever and continues to make a difference every single day.