



MEDIA ALERT

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Second Harvest Begins Food Distribution to Students at Two DuBois Schools

DuBois, PA., April 4, 2019 – According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, more than half of all DuBois area school district students are considered “economically disadvantaged.” These numbers are reflective of the Map the Meal Gap study results which recognize one out of every five children (3,220 total) under the age of 18 in Clearfield County are “food insecure.” The Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania, in cooperation with the DuBois Area School District, are addressing this issue of student hunger by opening programs in both DuBois Area Middle School and DuBois Area High School.

At DuBois Area Middle School, the Second Harvest Backpack Program is expected to provide a weekly bag of food on Fridays to 50 students who qualify for free or reduced lunch program. The Backpack will contain multiple breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack items to feed the child over the weekend. The first distribution of Backpacks will be on Friday, April 12th and students will continue to receive food each Friday through the remainder of the school year.

Also on April 12th, the DuBois Area High School is opening a Second Harvest School Pantry for its students. It is anticipated that 50 students will receive food each week from now until the end of the school year. Using school facilities to provide nutritious groceries for children and their families is a convenient and cost-effective solution to child hunger and an important way to reach families who might not know about or frequent their local food pantry

“We want make sure every child has enough food so that hunger is not a distraction to them, and each of our child feeding programs helps us to address these needs,” said Karen Seggi, executive director of Second Harvest.

The Second Harvest Child Feeding programs in DuBois are made possible because of a generous grant from C&S Wholesale.

Media is invited to witness and photograph the first food delivery from Second Harvest to DuBois middle school which will be used to feed students in need through the Backpack Program. Information includes:

- **Where:** DuBois Area Middle School – 404 Liberty Blvd, DuBois, PA 15801
- **When:** Thursday, April 4th, between 10:30 a.m.-11 a.m.
- **Who:** School administrators and staff on site to answer questions regarding School Pantry and Backpack Programs

- **What:** First food delivery from Second Harvest to DuBois middle school to feed students in need through the Backpack Program

More than 95,000 individuals are food insecure within Second Harvest's service area. An unfortunate reality is that nearly 31% of those individuals are children under the age of 18. The Backpack Program addresses the problem of child hunger by providing children in poverty with nutritious, child-friendly food necessary for overall growth, physical and cognitive development and satisfactory performance in school. Backpacks are discreetly distributed to participating children at school on Fridays to help them through the weekend. Second Harvest operates 38 Backpack sites in 7 counties and 10 school districts. In the 2017-18 academic year, Second Harvest distributed nearly 63,000 weekend backpacks of food.

The Second Harvest School Pantry program exists within the school districts of Oil City, Warren, and Erie, and DuBois represents the 13th site across an 11 county service area. These pantries will distribute food to more than 400 students each month with the opportunity for expansion. The Second Harvest School Pantry Program addresses child hunger by providing children in poverty with nutritious, child-friendly food necessary for overall growth, physical and cognitive development and satisfactory performance in school. Previous studies indicate that when children are struggling with hunger, their parents, older siblings and relatives are, too. Parents typically feed their children before themselves, meaning that when a child is threatened by hunger at home, it is likely that the whole family is facing this threat.

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About the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania

The mission of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania is to provide food to those in need within 11 counties of northwest Pennsylvania while creating awareness and educating the community on the realities of hunger. Last year, Second Harvest distributed more than 9.2 million meals through 412 member agencies and distribution partners.

Second Harvest serves the following 11 counties in northwest Pennsylvania:
Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango and Warren.