

# Ottawa Food Bank FAQ

It's cause to celebrate: In recent months, readership of this quarterly newsletter has more than doubled!

We would like to take this opportunity to better help our readers understand what we do on a day-to-day basis here at the Ottawa Food Bank. We've compiled some of the questions we receive most often from curious supporters who would like to know more about hunger in the Nation's Capital and beyond.

**How many people does the Ottawa Food Bank help?** Each month, the Ottawa Food Bank provides emergency food assistance to over 43,000 people. 40% of those people are children.

**How much food do you distribute?** Each and every working day, over 12 tons of food leaves our Michael Street warehouse, bound

for one of the 135+ agencies where it will be distributed to the community.

**How does the Ottawa Food Bank make ends meet?** 90% of our funding comes from non-government sources, so community and corporate support is key. Funds are most often gathered by way of corporate and individual donations, as well as grants and third-party fundraising events. We purchase some food staples, but the majority is donated through food industry partners, the reclamation program and food drives.

**How can I make a donation?** There are so many ways to make an impact in the fight against community hunger! You can make a financial donation online at [www.theottawafoodbank.ca](http://www.theottawafoodbank.ca) or by calling us at 613-745-7001. Food donations can be

dropped off at our warehouse at 1317B Michael St. from Monday to Friday between 8:30am and 4:00pm. Food can also be dropped off to the red bin at your local Metro or Loblaws store.

**I'd like to organize an event in support of the Ottawa Food Bank. How do I get started?** If you'd like to organize a food drive in your workplace, school or group, please register at [www.theottawafoodbank.ca](http://www.theottawafoodbank.ca). For any other type of event, please contact Chris at [chris@theottawafoodbank.ca](mailto:chris@theottawafoodbank.ca).

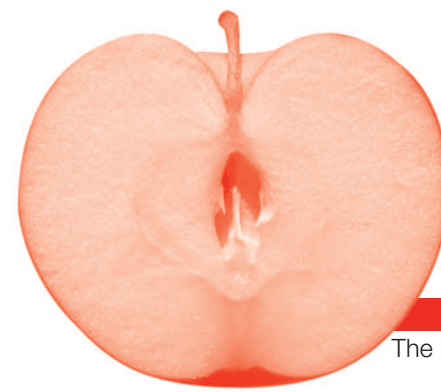
**Can I volunteer with the Ottawa Food Bank?** We're always looking for enthusiastic volunteers! Please contact our volunteer coordinator Lindsay Irvine at [lindsay@theottawafoodbank.ca](mailto:lindsay@theottawafoodbank.ca) for more information about our volunteer and food sorting initiatives.



## Announcing a new Volunteer Coordinator!

Our work at the Ottawa Food Bank would not be possible without the crucial help we receive from hundreds of dedicated volunteers. That makes the work of our Volunteer Coordinator extremely vital in the fight against community hunger. This fall, we're happy to welcome Lindsay Irvine to the position!

Lindsay hails from Midland, Ontario by way of Guelph. She recently graduated from Humber College's post-graduate Fundraising and Volunteer Management program. She is your contact for all volunteer activities — food sorting groups in our warehouse, events and much more! For inquiries about upcoming opportunities, please don't hesitate to contact Lindsay at 613-745-7001 or [lindsay@theottawafoodbank.ca](mailto:lindsay@theottawafoodbank.ca).



# FoodBytes

The Newsletter of the Ottawa Food Bank

October 2009

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## Giving in a recession — the impact of economic woes on Canadian charities

While the jury is still out on the current state of our economy, many have weighed in on the effect the recession has had on the less fortunate, as well as those who work to help them. The Ottawa Food Bank has compiled information from Scotiabank, the Ottawa Citizen, and [advisor.ca](http://advisor.ca) to highlight current trends about charitable giving.

Some shocking reports have estimated that over 10,000 Canadian charities could close up shop before the economy truly climbs from its slump. If estimates are believed, it is easy to see that the recession will no doubt have a long and painful impact on the less fortunate in our society.

By late 2008 charitable organizations across the country began to see a drastic reduction in revenues. There

were several factors that contributed to this situation, not the least of which included a drop in both foundational giving and private donations from a variety of sources.

Charitable endowment funds were hit especially hard during the market crash, with some funds losing as much as 30% of their value. Many foundations that depend on these funds in order to redistribute capital to charities by way of foundational grants were forced to scale back or outright cancel their giving plans during 2008. Smaller, locally focused charities have felt the pinch from this belt-tightening the most.

It isn't all bad news, however. While it's true that there has been a drop in donations from private sources and individuals, there has

also been a shift in how these donations are made. Many charities are finding that an increased emphasis is being put on planned giving and bequests, as people begin to think for the long term when it comes to money management issues. Donations of this sort are increasingly important to many charitable organizations and can often result in larger cash gifts than the donor anticipated.

Many charitable donations are also being made by way of monthly pre-authorized payments. Charitable organizations who receive a portion of their funding by way of these kinds of donations can expect a steady and stable monthly income. It is trends like these that prove that the philanthropic will of Canadians has not waned during this recession, only changed.

And so, with the economic outlook positive but still somewhat uncertain, the future is far from clear. The Ottawa Food Bank continues its fight against community hunger and thanks its supporters for their ongoing donations of food, funds and time. Watch the streets mid-November for our winter appeal letter — if everybody gives, everybody eats.



## Upcoming Events

### October

- 10 > Thanksgiving Food Drive wraps up
- 11 > Fall Colours Marathon
- 12 > Trick or Treat With the Mayor
- 31 > Carleton and University of Ottawa Trick or Eat

### November

- 2 > Drive Away Hunger begins
- 4 > Awesome Auction
- 7 > Scouts Food Drive
- 24 > Vintage Wine Auction

If you'd like to organize a third party event to benefit the Ottawa Food Bank, please contact Chris Cline at 613-745-7001 or [chris@theottawafoodbank.ca](mailto:chris@theottawafoodbank.ca).

Want more details? Visit our events calendar at [www.theottawafoodbank.ca](http://www.theottawafoodbank.ca)



The Hon. Madeleine Meilleur joined our partners from IBM, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Social Planning Council of Ottawa to launch our online Agency Look-Up Tool. The Tool provides access to up-to-date food hamper information 24/7.

## The Long Drive Home

As long drives to the cottage turn to long drives to work in the snow, there is another significant drive in the works for the holiday season: the 2009 edition of the Ottawa Food Bank's Drive Away Hunger (DAH) campaign aims to put a major dent in community hunger this November and December by calling on employees in the National Capital Region to hold workplace food

drives. DAH is a major fundraising event for the Ottawa Food Bank and the campaign needs your office to participate!

Last year's edition of DAH raised an unprecedented 60,000 lbs of food, with over \$35,000 in cash donations. Over 265 organizations participated in the holiday campaign, and this year we hope to exceed that number!

From November 2 to December 18, it's your chance to help Drive Away Hunger. All participant organizations will be eligible to appear in one of six weekly Drive Away Hunger advertisements in the Ottawa Business Journal by way of a random draw. The only way to win is to sign up, so register today at [www.theottawafoodbank.ca](http://www.theottawafoodbank.ca)

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## Fighting Community Hunger

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## Meet Raul, an Ottawa Food Bank Volunteer

The Ottawa Food Bank is extremely fortunate to have a whole host of volunteers who are ready and willing to jump in and help in the fight against community hunger! We thought we'd talk to one of our most active event volunteers about his experiences in helping us collect the food we distribute to our beneficiaries. Raul Pasta can be seen collecting donations at events throughout the National Capital Region. He is a fantastic ambassador for the Ottawa Food Bank and its beneficiaries, always doing an excellent job of informing the public about community hunger. He is an upbeat and energetic guy who is currently training to become a police officer.

**How long have you been volunteering at the Ottawa Food Bank?** I started as a volunteer in January of 2008.

**What do you enjoy most about volunteering with the Ottawa Food Bank?** The Ottawa Food Bank is a great organization to work with. The staff are dedicated, professional and supportive. I've been able to participate in a variety of different activities during my time as a volunteer. Most importantly to me, however, is the knowledge that my actions are helping to keep people from going hungry. With 43,000 people fed every month and with 40% of them children, the Ottawa Food Bank helps satisfy the most basic human need — food.

**Can you describe your duties and activities at a typical event?** Most events involve collecting food and money, or distributing bags to be filled with food by donors. I also participate in activities where we provide event support, and thereby ensure that the Ottawa Food Bank receives a portion of the proceeds from ticket sales, sponsorships or the like.

**What are your favourite types of volunteer events and why?** My favourite events tend to involve children. I have a young daughter, and it's always rewarding to see children learn the importance of giving and helping others at such an early age by donating food or funds.

*Thanks to Raul for his continued support of the Ottawa Food Bank, and all the best in the future!*



## Community Kudos: How others are helping the Ottawa Food Bank

**Here Comes the Sun** — The Ottawa Food Bank was one of the lucky beneficiaries of this year's long-running Sun Life Financial Golf Tournament! The tournament took place on a perfect, sunny day in August at the Hammond Golf and Country Club. In total, tournament organizers and players managed to raise over \$4,000 and 400 lbs of food to help stave off hunger in our community!

**A Picnic in the Park** — This summer marked the return of the Nepalese Canadian Association of Ottawa's annual picnic at Andrew Hayden Park. A multicultural event that ties together performances of dance, music and more, the organizers have made food collection an important part of the

day's activities. This year, the NCAO managed to handily beat and exceed last year's total of 12,000 pounds of food!

**Sens-sational!** The Ottawa Senators held their annual SensFest this September, much to the delight of the legion of hockey fans in the Nation's Capital. Amidst the festivities, kid's activities and appearances by the Senators Spartacat mascot, Ottawa Food Bank volunteers were on hand to collect food and funds. Fans responded in full force by donating over 1,500 pounds of food and \$1,100!

**Brokering a Deal for Hunger Relief** — By early June of this year summer was only just beginning, but the Ottawa Insurance Brokers Association was busy organizing an

extremely successful golf tournament! They began by making the Ottawa Food Bank their charity of choice for the event, and in addition to selling out the tournament at the Meadows Golf and Country Club, they raised over \$5,000 for the Ottawa Food Bank!

**It's All Greek to Me** — Amid this summer's plethora of festivals, the GreekFest stands out for its emphasis on music, dancing and food. This year, the Hellenic Community of Ottawa reached out to include the Ottawa Food Bank in its festivities. The Heroes Fighting Hunger night took place on August 17th, and it was a great opportunity for Ottawa Food Bank staff and volunteers to spread the word about community hunger while accepting food and fund donations.



## It's never too early for Christmas Cheer!

It's never too early to start preparing for the holiday season, and why not start by purchasing a table at one of Ottawa's premier networking events — the Christmas Cheer Breakfast! Hosted every year by The Westin Ottawa, the fundraiser benefits the Ottawa Food Bank and two other local charities to ensure that no one will have to go without food over the

holiday season. This year's event will be held on Thursday, December 3 from 7-9am. Tables of 10 are \$500 and individual tickets are \$60. After the Breakfast, don't forget to tune into 580 CFRA for the Christmas Cheer Broadcast from 9am-7pm! Pledge your support to the charities by making a donation

either by phone or in person at the broadcast site in the Rideau Centre. Join CFRA for fantastic holiday programming, sure to get you into the festive spirit!

Remember, both the Christmas Cheer Breakfast & Broadcast support people in need within our community. Your support would be greatly appreciated.



The Good Day Workshop (GDW) is an excellent example of a social enterprise at its best. It is also an example of the diversity of programs that make up the Ottawa Food Bank's 135+ member agencies. The Workshop not only offers a safe place for unemployed, at-risk people to learn furniture refinishing skills, but it also provides a business service to the community which helps generate revenues that cover program costs. Food is also an important part of the GDW's program; the daily hot meals provide participants with essential

## Agency Snapshot – Good Day Workshop

nutrition and the energy to participate in this often life-changing program.

The GDW was started thirteen years ago by Sister McGrath of the Gray Sisters of Immaculate Conception in the Bronson Centre. While working with the homeless, Sister McGrath observed that many people were refurbishing old furniture and selling it on the streets as a means to make ends meet, and the idea of the GDW was born.

The Sisters also saw the potential for the Good Day Workshop program to generate some of its revenues using a social enterprise model. Program participants learn new furniture repair and refinishing skills and the public compensates them for their quality workmanship.

In 2008, revenues from the furniture repair and refinishing services generated 21% of GDW's annual budget.

When asked whether the recession has had an impact on the Good Day Workshop, Director Liz Gauthier answered that the most measurable impact has been the increase in clients bringing furniture in to be refinished. More people are seeing the value in preserving old furniture rather than buying new, and the workshop's policy of using only environmentally-friendly products has boosted its popularity.

On a typical day at the Good Day Workshop, as many as 30 program participants will spend up to eight hours working on furniture in various stages of repair. Program participants come from all areas of the city, but most call the surrounding area of Chinatown and Centretown home. Typically, program participants are people who have difficulty finding paid employment because of problems related to mental or physical



*Program participant Jules Paris refinishes a drawer.*

disabilities, addiction or homelessness. Learning a skilled trade allows participants to gain valuable work experience and, most importantly, boosts their self-esteem.

The GDW has a tremendous life-changing impact on many program participants. The stability that the program offers by providing a regular routine and a daily hot meal has allowed many participants to avoid homelessness, and in some cases, even re-enter the workforce. Liz remarks that she is continually inspired in

the change she sees in people that come into the program; "It's like the furniture we take in — when it arrives it's a little rusty around the edges, but it emerges as something truly beautiful."

With support from the Ottawa Food Bank, the Good Day Workshop serves an average of 900 meals every month. The Ottawa Food Bank is proud to support the Good Day Workshop and congratulates program participants for their excellent work.

## Super Savvy Staff Profile: Adam Campbell

*We commandeered one of our drivers to find out a little bit more about him.*



**How long have you worked at the Ottawa Food Bank?** I've been with the Ottawa Food Bank for 2.5 years.

**Describe your typical day at the Ottawa Food Bank?** Well, for me a typical day includes delivering food orders to many of our different

agencies. I also spend a lot of time picking up non-perishable food donations from the red bins placed in Metro and Loblaws grocery stores across the city.

**What is your favourite part of the day?** My favourite part of the day is all day. I really like the people I work with, especially the volunteers who ride along with me in the truck.

**What are your hobbies outside of work?** I like to play video games, watch TV and surf the net.

**What are your current video game obsessions?** I'm a huge fan of open world games like Grand Theft Auto 4. I'm a driver by trade, so it's cool to try different cars and vehicles that all feel and play differently. From expensive import cars to transport trucks, that game has them all.

**What is one thing that you are proud of?** I recently discovered that I have a talent for gardening. I successfully harvested my first tomato plant this past summer!

**What are your future gardening ambitions?** I liked gardening so much that I don't want to stop now that the planting and harvesting seasons are over. I'm considering trying to set up an indoor solution, but I have to think about light and heating conditions, so we'll see how it all pans out.

**Tell us a random fact about yourself.** I love to sing while driving. I usually find my best vocal material on BOB FM.