



**Albert Ratner** believes that no one in the United States should go hungry. “In our society people should have food,” he stated.

Albert is a lot of things - a philanthropist, business leader, writer, advocate, nonagenarian, husband, and father. He’s well known for the number of hats he wears. But, he’s loved by the people at the Food Bank for other reasons - his caring and generosity. Albert has supported the Food Bank in many ways for years.

Albert and his wife Audrey’s advocacy helps to secure additional funding for government programs that support people in need beyond the reach of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. Their financial contributions support vital Food Bank programs that provide nutritious food to hungry people in need right here in our community. Albert’s thoughtful comments and insight add value to any discussion he’s in. “When Albert gives me advice, I listen,” said Kristin Warzocha. “His suggestions and ideas always result in good things for the Food Bank.”

For Albert, supporting the Food Bank makes good business sense. “If I only had \$0.25, that’s all I had to my name, I would ask myself what I would do with my \$0.25. I can’t get over the fact that the Food Bank provides meals at the cost of \$0.25 per meal,” Albert explained. “If

you're looking at value per penny, I don't know of anything that comes close to doing it. When you do something well that can also do good business, that's the winner."

But beyond making good business sense, Albert finds his personal reasons for support dating back to his father's family in Poland. "My dad and his family would sit and talk and talk about the Sabbath meal and they always had a lot of additional people there who would not have food if our grandparents had not provided the food. So, I come from a family in which food was always an important thing and making sure that everybody could it was part of its culture," he remembers. His support for and work on behalf of the Food Bank are rooted in his faith and family. "In the Bible," he explained, "when the Harvest took place, you always left food in the four corners of the field for the people who didn't have food."



Ken Marblestone & Albert Ratner, at the Harvest for Hunger Kickoff

In the early 2000s, Ken Marblestone gave Albert the opportunity to get involved with the Food Bank. At the time, Forest City owned Tower City and Ken was co-chairing the Harvest for Hunger Campaign. Ken asked Albert if the campaign's kickoff could be held at Tower City. "The idea of having something in Tower City made a lot of sense to me," Albert explained, "we were working to make Tower City a place where people of all persuasions and all incomes came together, so it was logical." Later, Ken asked Albert to co-chair the campaign and the rest was history!

Now, Albert's support is greater than hosting a public event for the Food Bank. He's a fierce advocate for the Food Bank - working with the Kasichs during John Kasich's tenure as Governor. He is also working with the DeWine family, who have always given great support to Ohio's food banks. With his background and understanding of the Food Bank and hunger in Ohio, he's been an integral part of ensuring food banks across the state have the funding they need.

"If you have scarcity, if you don't have food, if you don't have access to medical care. - It's a kind of

Albert Ratner, Kristin Warzocha, and First Lady Fran DeWine at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank



insecurity.” At his core, Albert feels it’s important to lift up people in poverty and help them find a way to leave poverty. “The sun doesn’t shine on everyone the same way,” he said.

Albert is passionate about helping to solve poverty, even in a system he describes as broken. He explained that in order to ease poverty, one must understand that it does not exist in a



vacuum. He believes the Greater Cleveland Food Bank understands the holistic approach to help ease poverty because, in order to fulfill our mission of ensuring everyone in our communities has the nutritious food they need every day, it takes a holistic approach.

Albert and his wife Audrey support many worthy organizations working to improve the lives of Northeast Ohioans. But, as Albert explains, there’s something special about the Food Bank.

Audrey and Albert Ratner

“The organization and cost structure of the Food Bank is very uplifting,” he said.

He is especially enthused about the amount of volunteers involved in the Food Bank and our partners’ work. “The system of volunteerism – it touches everybody,” Albert explained, “In my earlier life, very much of the work was done by volunteers with few professional employees.” Now, as more people enter careers in social services, he’s glad to see volunteers still playing a key role in performing the mission of the Food Bank. Whether volunteers are repacking donated food at the Food Bank or operating small church pantries, the spirit of giving time is still a big part of the Food Bank.

We’re honored that Albert is such a strong supporter of the Food Bank. The gratitude is evident in the faces of the people we serve, the people who might not know who he is, but who benefit from his commitment and caring. “The highest level of giving,” Albert stated, “is when a donor donates and the recipient does not know who the donor is and the donor does not know who the recipient is.”



Audrey and Albert Ratner with Kristin Warzocha