



Greater Cleveland  
Food Bank



Creativity. To **Ray Murphy**, that's the one thing that's launched the Food Bank from a simple food redistribution center to a champion of hunger relief in the city of Cleveland.

Ray was a member of the Food Bank's Board for almost a decade. During that time, he experienced the loss of Ed Worley, the hiring of Anne Goodman, and the Food Bank's move from a leaking old building to a state-of-the-art facility.

Since 1890, the Murphy family has been in the soap business. Ray worked in the family business selling soap to both businesses and consumers for his entire career. He was raised in a family of five and poverty alleviation was instilled in him from a young age. "We were raised with the conscience and the idea of always taking care of the poor in our volunteer work and our philanthropy. That's always been a recurring theme in my life," he explained.

This is evident through Ray's deep involvement with the Food Bank and other poverty relief organizations in Cleveland and through the establishment of the Murphy Family Foundation. "Our mission is to provide support to charities and institutions that serve people in poverty," he stated. The Murphy Family Foundation is still a generous supporter of the Food Bank.

Ray learned about the Food Bank when he met his wife Katie. Her mother, Eileen Mullally, was good friends with the Hausermans and the Marottas, two families that were integral in the



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founding of the Food Bank. Eileen was also involved in the founding, attending a few Board meetings in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Ray and his family are still friends with the Marotta family.

Later in his life, after the establishment of the Murphy Family Foundation, Ray and his family started financially supporting the Food Bank. And the rest was history.

“I came on the Board and served for eight or ten years,” Ray explained. During this time on the Board, Ed Worley, the Food Bank’s founding Executive Director, passed away suddenly. Ray and some of his fellow Board members were tasked with hiring a new leader. “I was on the search committee with John Nestor and we met Anne Campbell Goodman,” Ray remembered with a smile. “We said, ‘we’ve got this opportunity.’ And she was perfect for the role.”

Building a new facility was something Anne and the Board made a priority. Ray is fond of both Anne and Kristin Warzocha, the Food Bank’s current President & CEO. “The Food Bank’s had super leadership. That’s where it starts,” he stated.



Ray talks with Kristin Warzocha at the Food Bank

With Anne at the helm, the Food Bank started on a trajectory to build a new facility. First came a campaign to raise the funds for the building. Ray and his wife made one of the key gifts to the campaign, which had a goal of raising \$10 million. “It feels wonderful to be one of the key gifts for the capital campaign,” Ray remembered. “I had told Anne that my wife and I would make a significant gift. But, we needed another significant gift. So, the two of us went to speak with the Geisse Foundation. We met with Tim

Geisse and he committed to a six-figure gift and that’s what really gave the campaign momentum,” Ray explained.

From there, Anthony Rego stepped in and led the Capital Campaign. “It was one of the most impressive campaigns,” Ray explained. “This was a campaign that was very, very thoughtful, strategic, and comprehensive. The Food Bank did all the things that you need to do. And before you know it, there was a ribbon cutting! It was just a celebration when the place opened.”

The Food Bank’s building opened in 2005. Over the last 14 years, the Food Bank’s scope and capacity has grown immensely to not only distribute food, but to address key factors that



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contribute to food insecurity. Ray, as a former Board member, and more recently, a committee member, has had a front row seat to the transformation of the Food Bank.

“The Food Bank and its efficient distribution of resources has alleviated food insecurity,” Ray explained. “The Food Bank and the many distribution points that they serve are absolutely essential and absolutely needed. They are indispensable to the quality of life for so many people here in Cleveland. There are so many touchpoints the Food Bank has with people in need.”

As for the next 40 years, Ray isn’t sure what’s going to happen to the Food Bank, but he’s confident that people in need will continue to receive the nutritious food they need. “We’re going to keep on delivering the food,” Ray said, “but how else can we improve the quality of life? This is a wonderful, innovative, and creative shop. With good leadership, the Food Bank is going to continue getting better and better to provide ever-better service.”

Now retired, Ray has had time to reflect on the legacy he wishes to leave with Cleveland. “What defines the quality of a community?” he asked. “You could define it in terms of how many Fortune 500 Companies you have. Or you can define it by how the have-nots get along. Here, in Cleveland, people struggle, but at least they can stay fed.”

Without Ray’s work on the Food Bank’s Board and his leadership to help build the Food Bank’s building and beyond, many people in need would be without the support of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and our network of partners. We’re grateful to have him on our team in the fight against hunger.

