



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **25<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HARVEST FOR HUNGER CAMPAIGN SETS NEW RECORD**

*20 million meals announced at recognition event today!*

**CLEVELAND, June 14, 2016 (For Release Tuesday)** – Harvest for Hunger Co-Chair Joe DiRocco, President, Citizens Bank, Ohio and Dennis Lafferty, representing Bernie Moreno Companies, thanked donors to this year’s **Harvest for Hunger** community-wide food and funds drive at an event today. Kristin Warzocha, Food Bank President & CEO also spoke at the event to thank supporters. **The campaign set a new record, collecting over \$4.9 million and 300,000 lbs. of food to provide 20 million nutritious meals for local food pantries and soup kitchens.** Harvest for Hunger is one of the largest annual, community-wide food and funds drives in the nation covering 21-counties. Other participating food banks include the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley and Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio.

Nearly 600 companies, schools, nonprofits and governmental entities in Northeast Ohio participated by running food and fund drives this year, raising over \$1.3 million.

In addition, *Check Out Hunger*, a cashier-led fundraising effort in grocery stores across the region during March raised over \$1.4 million. Buehler’s, Fisher Foods, Giant Eagle, Heinen’s, and Dave’s collected gifts from customers at their cash registers for the Harvest for Hunger campaign.

“At our food bank, and at food banks throughout our state, we are serving more clients now than we were before the recession – nearly 250,000 clients a year,” said Kristin Warzocha. “That is why Harvest for Hunger is so important, where every dollar donated can provide four nutritious meals. This community understands the need and has responded in a tremendous way – providing enough money and food for 20 million meals!”

Special awards were presented to companies and schools that went above and beyond the call of duty raised during this year’s campaign:

**The Bag of Hope Award**, which is given to companies that have 200 or more employees, was presented to **Thompson Hine**. Their Harvest for Hunger fundraising efforts included a variety of fun, interactive activities that not only raised more than \$15,000 but provided opportunities for lawyers and staff to spend time with their colleagues. In addition, their staff came out to the Food Bank to volunteer this spring.

**The Edmond V. Worley Award**, named after the founding director of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, is given to organizations with less than 200 employees and was presented to **AXA Advisors**. Employees participated in various events including a chili cook-off, March Madness brackets, and raffles. They were also a sponsor of Market at the Food Bank. AXA Advisors has been a long-time supporter of Harvest for Hunger and raised nearly \$7,000 this year.

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The **Rory Borgio Award** is presented to a remarkable school that is working to improve their community. This year's award goes to **Hilliard Elementary School** in Rocky River. This school has steadily increased their giving over the past several years. One fundraising event included duct taping their Principal to the wall if they met their goal, and they succeeded raising more than 4,000.

Media sponsors for Harvest for Hunger included Advance Ohio, WKYC Channel 3, WOIO Channel 19, FOX 8, WEWS Channel 5, and Clear Channel Radio. Supermarket sponsors included Giant Eagle, Heinen's Fine Foods, Dave's Markets, Buehler's Fresh Foods and Fishers Foods.

Harvest for Hunger is an annual food and funds drive that raises resources for food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters in 21 Northeast Ohio counties. It is a combined effort of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, Greater Cleveland Food Bank, Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley and Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio. The drive began in 1992 and is coordinated locally by the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. For more information, please visit [www.HarvestforHunger.org](http://www.HarvestforHunger.org)

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