



# ENDING HUNGER, BUILDING HOPE

— \$26 MILLION RAISED FOR OZARKS FOOD HARVEST —

SWANSON  HOUSE  
SIGNATURE FUNDRAISING SERIES



# ENDING HUNGER, BUILDING HOPE

## A COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN

### Families in Crisis

The Great Recession had driven thousands of working families into crisis. Two parents, working, were barely making ends meet before the recession. Now families were struggling just to stay in their homes, pay their utilities or medical bills or feed their families.

Just three years prior to the recession, Ozarks Food Harvest had completed its first ever multi-million-dollar

campaign. That effort funded the construction of a 46,000-square-foot hunger-relief center.

The new facility doubled the Food Bank's capacity to acquire, process, warehouse and distribute food to 28 Ozarks counties. But doubling distribution in the first five years was not enough. Four years after the Great Recession, the need for its services had still not subsided.

"We had to do something to once-again increase our capacity to fight hunger," says Bart Brown, President and CEO of Ozarks Food Harvest, a member of the national organization, Feeding America. "Our food was providing 16 million meals a year, but we needed to be closer to 31 million."

To address the increased demand for food assistance, Ozarks Food Harvest raised \$5 million as part of its "Ending Hunger, Building Hope" Campaign. "The campaign would fund solutions for a set of goals," says Brown. "It was about more than a building."

### The Foodbank's Strategic Plan

"We were turning away more than a million pounds of food annually due to a lack of space," recounts Brown. "A lot of it was healthier and more nutritious food, but we lacked the freezer and cooler space."

The Food Bank also needed to address its need for labor. "We had to have more space to engage more volunteers to process the large quantities of food. When we engage more volunteers, we reduce our overhead. Doubling our capacity to engage volunteers was one of several strategic goals."

A 56,000-square-foot warehouse was conceived to be built to the east of the existing facility. It included additional freezer, cooler, and dry food storage space. This expansion allowed the existing space to be re-fitted for volunteer processing. Access to the warehouse for 270 nonprofit partner agencies fighting hunger across southwest Missouri was improved, as was access for large deliveries of donated food.

"For us, more space, and the right kind of space, was the solution to serving more families in need," says Brown.

### Ending Hunger, Building Hope Campaign

In three years, the "Ending Hunger, Building Hope" Campaign raised a total of \$26 million: \$5 million was raised for capital and \$21 million was raised through the annual fund program for operations and program support.

The campaign included more than \$1.6 million raised from outside of Springfield, Missouri, home to Ozarks Food Harvest, and included a \$700,000 capstone challenge grant. An end-game strategy secured more than \$110,000 from donors, and many board members made their single largest gift and pledge they had ever made to a nonprofit.

Swanson House, Inc., helped develop the case for support, in addition to a wide range of campaign tools and resources. A thoughtful, professional, but honest narrative and set of arguments were developed for staff and volunteers to position the campaign with donors. Campaign tracking and management reports and other campaign infrastructure were developed to ensure the important activities of campaign work were completed.

With ten gifts of \$200,000 or more, the "Ending Hunger, Building Hope" Campaign took on "the shape" of a successful multi-million-dollar campaign. "Of course, it's never that simple," says Brown. "You need to sequence prospects; timing is important, and of course when there is a 'no' to a large ask, you have to stop and regroup and adjust your strategy."

Once donor prospects were identified, Campaign Leadership Committee members extended invitations to prospects to take tours of the existing

"There is no replacement for a guiding hand and the knowledge and expertise of people who do this year-in and year out," says Brown. "Robert was our partner in our first campaign and we asked him to return."

"Swanson House knows philanthropy. They're tuned into the philanthropic landscape," says Director of Development and Communications Denise Gibson. "We valued that they involved and educated board members, helped us develop prospects, pushed us to complete tasks and stay on schedule."

**"Organizations like to share their victories, they should not be fearful of sharing their challenges!"**

*Robert Swanson, President & CEO of Swanson House, Inc.*

facility and partner agencies. Once this and other cultivation activities were completed, major gift solicitations were made with each donor. "This process brought new donors into our family," explains Brown.

### A Unique Question

"Why hire fundraising counsel when your first campaign was a success?" It was a question Bart Brown fielded several times.

"Bart and Denise had been thoughtful maintaining relationships with their donors, and that included keeping them apprised of the organization's growing pains," says Swanson.

Just as important, says Swanson, they honored relationships they had created. "Too many organizations forget to communicate with campaign donors. They see them as supporters of a campaign instead of supporters of the organization and its overall mission."

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# CAMPAIGN GIFTS RECEIVED

GIFT RANGES	# OF GIFTS
\$500,000 & Above	2
\$250,000 to \$499,999	1
\$200,000 to \$249,999	7
\$50,000 to \$199,999	7
\$25,000 to \$49,999	6
\$10,000 to \$24,999	27
\$5,000 to \$9,999	17
\$1,000 to \$4,999	54

## SWANSON HOUSE FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONALS

Swanson House, a full-service fundraising consulting company, has partnered with nonprofits across America to build stronger, more dynamic and effective organizations. Those working with Swanson House consultants have raised more than one billion dollars. Thoughtful, creative and bold strategies are delivered by professional counsel dedicated to helping the nonprofit community better serve its clients.



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### ► Ending Hunger...continued

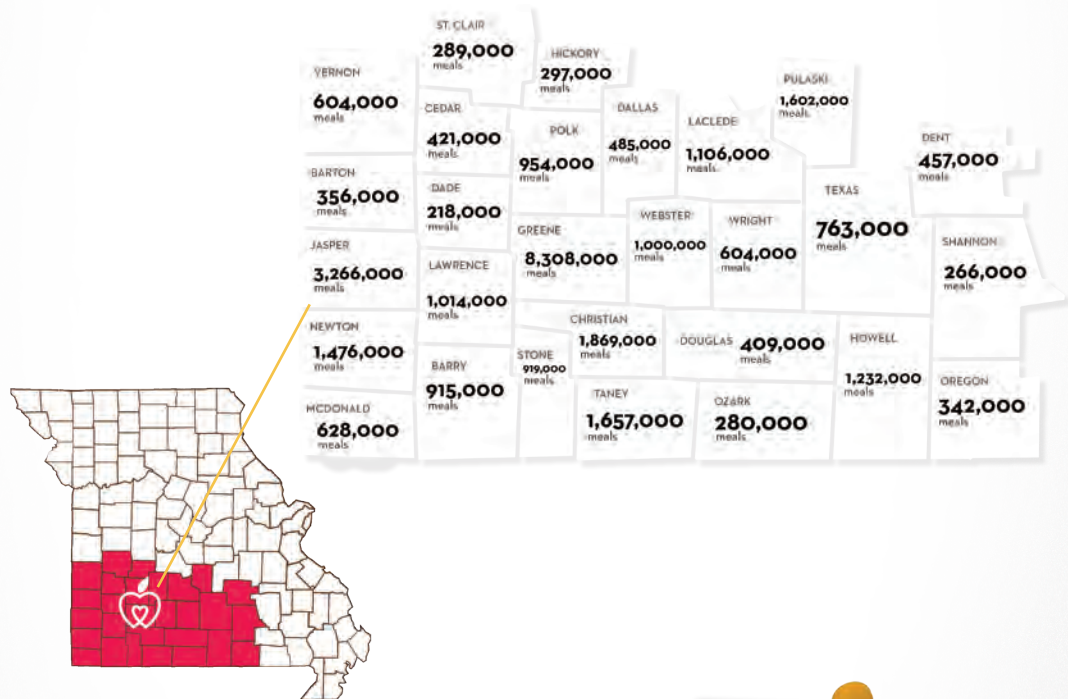
We discussed this dynamic after the last campaign. They heard our message and admonition. Over the years, they stayed in contact and communicated with campaign donors in a way that created long-term relationships."

"The breadth and scope of issues dealt with by a campaign can be challenging. The "Ending Hunger,

Building Hope" Campaign required us to engage known and new donors," says Brown. "Structuring and executing a campaign requires dedication and commitment on the part of the organization, and the expertise and knowledge of fundraising professionals. Combined with caring donors, campaigns are made successful."

### Ozarks Food Harvest and its partners serve 28 counties in the Ozarks.

See how many meals they provide to each county in the chart below!



## CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

- Tim Bellanti, Associated Wholesale Grocers, Inc.
- Dr. John Buckner, MD, Ferrell-Duncan Clinic
- Tamara de Wild, O'Reilly Auto Parts
- Mike Pinkston, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith, Inc.
- Kenny Ross, Ross Construction Group
- Jill Reynolds, Commerce Trust Company, Commerce Bank
- Meera Scarrow, MD, JD, Mercy Hospital-Springfield
- Alan Scarrow, MD, JD, Mercy Hospital-Springfield
- Bart Brown, OFH President & CEO
- Denise Gibson, OFH Development & Communication Director
- Cassie Hanson, OFH Development & Grants Manager

