



2024
IMPACT REPORT
INSIDE!

**You Helped Us Build
Something Amazing!**

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University Campus Pantries Are Feeding Potential

OFS Partners with Local Universities

When most people think of a bustling university campus, they don't often envision hungry people. But for millions of students across the country, food insecurity is a daily reality that threatens their ability to focus and thrive. **Food insecurity estimates on campuses range between 19% to 56%**, according to the National Library of Medicine. A conservative projection would mean **36,000 students across the 20 university campuses in the St. Louis region face hunger daily.**

Feeding Potential *(Continued)*

"You can't learn when you have an empty stomach," says OFS President and CEO Kristen Wild. "OFS has programs starting in preschool that give students the fuel they need to reach their full potential. We see our college food pantries as a continuation of that care."

University students who face food insecurity are more likely to be the first person in their family to attend a post-secondary school, female, receiving financial aid, non-white, and working while attending school. The rising cost of tuition and decreasing availability of financial aid have also impacted students' ability to afford both school fees and food.

Recognizing these challenges, OFS is working to support students through new partnerships with Webster University and the University of Missouri–St. Louis (UMSL).



Webster University and OFS began a partnership to support its food pantry in January 2025 after a campus food insecurity assessment found that **more than half of students had skipped meals due to a lack of funds.** The rising number of international students is a likely contributor to the increase in need, as many face visa-related employment restrictions, lack local family support, and are unfamiliar with the cost of living before coming to the U.S.

"I cannot think of a more urgent crisis than being hungry and having nowhere to turn for help," says Webster University Chancellor Tim Keane. "For students, their very capacity to learn is threatened, and the emotional stress can make them feel hopeless. **The new partnership with OFS provides a critical foundation** for Webster to ensure all of our community is cared for when they need it most."

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- Tim Keane
Webster University Chancellor

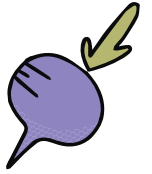


At UMSL, OFS joined forces with the Triton Pantry in fall 2024 to expand food access, particularly for nontraditional students, such as parents and first-generation university students. According to the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behavior Survey, **nearly 30% of UMSL students experience food insecurity.** In fall 2024 alone, the pantry served 513 students over 2,698 visits.

"Food insecurity impacts students' ability to focus, learn, and succeed, and we are committed to breaking down that barrier," says Shannon Quinn, Senior Case Manager from the Student Advocacy & Care team at UMSL. "We're grateful to OFS for playing a role in strengthening not just individuals today, but the workforce and communities they will shape for years to come."

You Helped Us Build Something Amazing in 2024

Together We're Building a Hunger-Free Tomorrow



With the support of generous friends like you, **2024 was a year of growth for OFS**. We served more child meals than in the previous year, expanded our programs to provide more nutrient-dense food, and completed construction for Healthy Food, Healthy Community Renovation Project. This major investment in infrastructure is **enabling us to provide even more fresh, healthy food** to the community now and in the years to come.

From doubling our warehouse racking space and doubling our cooler and freezer capacity so we can distribute more food than ever to enhancing volunteer spaces that support the work of our thousands of

dedicated volunteers, **the renovation was essential to OFS's mission of creating a hunger-free tomorrow**. Improved work and food-packing spaces allow our innovative programs to grow to meet the increased need for nutritious food, while a new teaching kitchen and teaching garden create opportunities to increase Nutrition IQ.

Learn more about the impact of your support on our 2024 fiscal year digital annual report: OperationFoodSearch.org/2024

You'll be able to review financial details, our donor lists, and be inspired by our latest video.



2024 COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY



OFS served more than
200,000
people each month



\$32+ MILLION

worth of food and necessities were distributed through our programs and partner network in 25 counties in Missouri and Illinois.

CHILD MEALS

656,782 weekend meals
59,002 after-school meals
58,695 summer meals

COMMUNITY NUTRITION



2,000 individuals participated in Community Nutrition classes and cooking demos

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

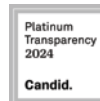
St. Louis MetroMarket served more than
37,000 individuals at 312 stops.

OFS rescued nearly
14,000 pounds of fresh produce through our gleaming program.



Committed To Excellence

Operation Food Search is certified and accredited for its accountability, transparency and adherence to strong and comprehensive industry standards.



What's Cooking in the Teaching Kitchen

April Recipe of the Month

The April recipe of the month is Italian Lentil Soup, an affordable, hearty soup that is high in fiber and protein. This soup is ready to eat in just 45 minutes. Join us in the OFS Teaching Kitchen to prepare this recipe and others!

To learn about registering for a group class, contact our Culinary Nutrition Education Manager, Jason Goldman, at Jason.goldman@operationfoodsearch.org.



APRIL RECIPE OF THE MONTH
Italian Lentil Soup

← Scan to View Recipe



Save the Dates Learn more: OperationFoodSearch.org/2025-events



Party for Packs

Thursday, May 15, 2025

A local tasting event supporting the Operation Backpack program



Golf Tournament

Monday, July 14, 2025

Our 31st Annual Swing to Heal Hunger Tournament Event



Feast for Change

Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025

Annual farm-to-fork dining experience to benefit OFS

Two Easy Ways to Heal Hunger



Become a Hunger Healer

Joining the Hunger Healers, a monthly giving group for Operation Food Search, is a powerful way to make a lasting impact to end food insecurity. As a member, you'll be part of a compassionate community of more than 400 Hunger Healers dedicated to providing food today and creating a hunger-free tomorrow.

Learn More:

OperationFoodSearch.org/monthly-giving



Double Your Impact with Matching Gifts

Double your impact with an employer match! Many companies match donations dollar for dollar or more. Check with your employer or use our search tool below. Submit your receipt with any required forms to boost your gift's impact, helping provide even more healthy food to those in need.

Learn More:

OperationFoodSearch.com/matching-gifts

