



A Note from the Director

Greetings!

It sure seemed like the full swing of summer hit early this year. And there's a good reason for that! In the last two weeks of May, we delivered 33,000 pounds more food than those same two weeks in 2023. This is a trend that has continued through the month of June, which is why we were so grateful to onboard our three new AmeriCorps members the first week of June. We brought them up to speed on the day to day operation as well as training for their seasonal roles. That's right, this influx of food doesn't yet include the seasonal programs Green Iowa AmeriCorps members are here to lead.

With all the new faces, we've had several volunteers ask some version of "What does everyone do around here?" I heard that question a lot in 2019 when we expanded our staff to six after operating for more than 15 years with just three people. We are recovering 2.5 times the amount of food were in 2017 and have added five different initiatives to increase our food collection: expanding our "big truck" food warehouse rescues, adding food transport

rescue from drivers with rejected deliveries, gleaning, farm & garden outreach, recovering from the Twin County Produce Auction twice a week, produce stands, and delivering everything that Grow: Johnson County produces. We've more than doubled our food donors. To accommodate 200+ donors, we've increased the number of regular food rescue routes by 50%. We've engaged twice as many volunteers in our mission so you can help us serve 46 nonprofit partners and ~30,000 neighbors.

Then and now, so much of what the team does might be invisible to those of you doing the daily work of rescuing food, preparing the fleet, or entering data. So we thought we'd share that with you in this edition of the Food Rescue Dispatch.

In gratitude & solidarity,



Nicki Ross, Executive Director

So, What DOES Everyone Do Around Here?

Program Team Members

T2T utilizes 5 program team members throughout the year and hosts two year long AmeriCorps members to work on special projects and food rescue expansion. During the summer, we add 2 or three more AmeriCorps to lead our seasonal local food initiatives. Here's a little about what each of them do.

Support Team Members

We have 4 team members (2.5 FTE) that support the external communications, financial health and administrative functioning of T2T.



The Team

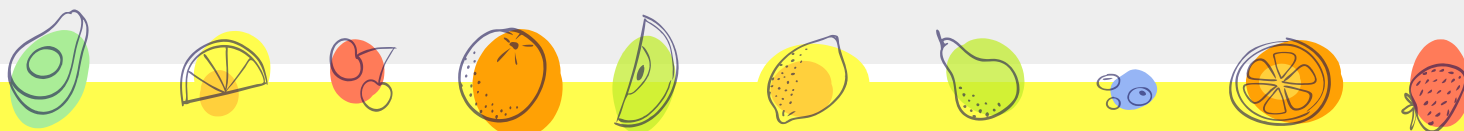
Past and present team members recently convened to say farewell to Anne Hlavacek



Why Am I Greeted By a Three Person Welcome Committee Everyday?

For one thing, building relationships with our volunteers, ensuring you have the support you need and that you feel welcomed is a key component of volunteer satisfaction and retention. And we need you to keep coming back! In the first week of June, you all completed 238 hours of volunteer service. Without our volunteers, we would need to hire at least 3 full time drivers to do the recovery work you all do as volunteers. We think Jared does a tremendous job of connecting with folks and facilitating this sense of belonging. Yet, from an organizational continuity perspective, we need more of our team engaged and knowledgeable about our volunteers and their needs. We do that through regular interaction.

However, the key reason so many team members are available is, to put it simply: **when the soup hits the fan we need many hands on deck.** In June, the T2T staff completed 29 routes in 27 days of delivery. That's just one reason we need team members available. Volunteers call out, vehicles break down, food needs to be loaded into vans, volunteers encounter the unknown on routes, food needs to be unloaded and inventoried at the end of routes, donors call for impromptu pickups, Costco calls for a third pick up after filling up two vans. The challenges are endless. In order to reduce the strain on individual staff, we take the team approach.



Summer Safety Tips

It's hot, hot, hot! We need you to stay cool.

- On especially warm days, **please bring a water bottle or grab one from the T2T fridge.**
- Take cool down breaks in the AC as often as you need to.
- If severe weather occurs or driving conditions are unsafe while on your route (rain, thunderstorms, wind), **please pull over safely, shelter, or return to T2T.** You can be a gawking midwesterner on your own back porch. We don't need T2T to make the news for having volunteers blow away. Plus, Jared would have to fill your shift until you return from Oz.

It's hot, hot, hot! Which is bad, bad, bad for FOOD SAFETY

- **Keep those vehicles and refrigeration units running at each stop** on your route. Tip: make sure your partner has the key in their pocket before locking up or a call to a locksmith will be in order.
- **Keep the cargo doors closed** as much as possible while packing and loading.
- In unrefrigerated vehicles, **place ice pack sheets on top of boxes** with chilled items. Collect the sheets before distributing the box to our partner.

Record temperatures at each stop:

- Refrigerated vans - make sure to record the temperature read out on the refrigeration unit at each stop and report to staff if the reefer is not keeping temp.
- Unrefrigerated vans - use the infrared temperature reader to record the temperature of the ice packs. This demonstrates we have a cooling method and the start and end time of the route demonstrates we've met time and temperature guidance for safe food transport.



Program Team Members

We count on **Dispatcher** to get the day's operations kicked off right. They are here part time during the busy morning dispatch hours to coordinate volunteers and food rescue efforts. They prepare route sheets, tracks and takes action on volunteer and partner feedback, preps vans for their second route of the day, and helps enter route data into FoodForce. We learned a few years ago that having a consistent "opener" makes a huge difference in volunteer and partner satisfaction. Our dispatcher can see trends in volunteer feedback and identify potential challenges so we can take timely action.

(You can find our dispatcher at the front desk until noon most weekdays.)

New
dispatcher
coming soon!

Logistics and Relationships Coordinator, Chaim Jensen oversees food rescue logistics by designing the complex route system we use to rescue millions of pounds of food. distribute it in a way that best serves our partners and the needs of those they serve. After all that thoughtful planning, he pivots at least a dozen times a week to make the necessary daily changes that are an inherent part of the unpredictable food rescue business. Chaim is in problem solving mode all day, everyday. His position serves as a liaison connecting the dots between the T2T team, food donors, and food access partners. He follows up on feedback and regularly engages and educates donors to improve food safety, increase food donation, and show our appreciation for their partnership. Chaim facilitates program data analysis and uses that information to make timely adjustments and recommend opportunities for future focused strategic adjustment.

(You can find Chaim in the front office on the right.)

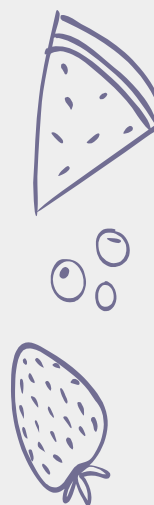
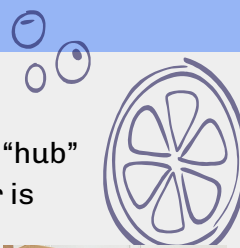


Operations Coordinator, Elizabeth Wagner's role is best described as the "hub" where the work of every team member is facilitated. As our FoodForce system administrator, Elizabeth builds functionality and troubleshoots system use for fundraising and finance, daily food rescue programming, volunteer coordination, food collection and distribution data, and fleet management. She coordinates all facility and vehicle maintenance which includes troubleshooting and engaging maintenance vendors. Elizabeth ensures we have operational tracking systems for food safety, food donation tax documentation, workplace safety, and grants deadlines and contract compliance. And on top of all that, she coordinates our hiring AND facilitates team birthday and departure recognition.

(You can find Elizabeth in the back of the shared office space.)

Volunteer and Program Coordinator, Jared Long is responsible for overall volunteer experience. Jared has helped expand volunteer opportunities, facilitated regular audits to ensure insurance compliance, and is currently working with the Volunteer Engagement Committee to work through the volunteer certification program, Service Enterprise. Jared interviews, onboards, and oversees the training schedule for hundreds of volunteers. Then, he schedules these volunteers for thousands of food rescue and operational support shifts each year. We hear the dad jokes are good for morale.

(You can find Jared in the front office on the left.)



Program Leadership & Green Iowa AmeriCorps Roles

Program & Services Manager, Allison Gnade is responsible for the management and development of the T2T food recovery programs. She oversees the work and culture of the program team by helping remove barriers and allocating resources to facilitate program success. She guides service delivery by assessing community priorities and determining needs for adjustment or expansion. She is also responsible for launching new initiatives and partnerships. Allison leads our seasonal programming and supervises our AmeriCorps members and T2T's compliance with that federal program. She develops and maintains relationships with community partners, facilitates community connections, and participates in community vision for hunger relief in Johnson County.

(You can find Allie in the first office on the right before you get to the food warehouse.)



Green Iowa (Too-Many-Jobs-to-Title),

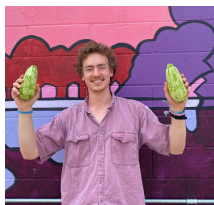
Marquis Heard has spent the last year with Table to Table in a variety of Green Iowa roles starting as our produce stand coordinator. At the end of last summer he transitioned to lead the development of our food transport recovery program, work with our communications coordinator and the City of Iowa City on Love Food, Fight Waste Initiative, and establish a composting program for T2T and key partners. Before his service ends in July, he has led the training of new AmeriCorps in seasonal produce programs. In his time here, he's led a combination of 134 gleans, produce stands, routes, and food transport recoveries. You can see why we're unable to pin his work down with just a single job title.



(You can find Marquis in the AmeriCorps work room behind Jared's office for just two more weeks!)

Green Iowa Gleaning & Garden Recovery Coordinator,

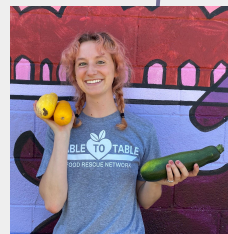
Adam McFee facilitates T2T's relationships with local farmers to harvest excess produce from their fields. He also works with home gardeners to donate their excess produce or plant extra specifically for T2T clients and facilitates our partnership with the twin county produce auction. These programs collected more than 50,000 pounds of produce last year.



(You can find Adam in the AmeriCorps work room behind Jared's office until the end of the summer.)

Green Iowa Free Produce Stand Coordinator,

Emma Duncan is responsible for the planning and implementation of free produce stand distribution throughout Johnson County. She'll help us determine the appropriate produce stand sites and communicate with partners and support outreach and advertisement for this initiative. Ahead of the start of produce season, Emma has been instrumental in kicking off our Twin County Produce Auction partnership and has assisted other local produce access initiatives and general food rescue program operations as needed.



(You can find Emma in the AmeriCorps work room behind Jared's office until the end of the summer.)

Green Iowa Food Rescue Specialist,

Noah Thomas is part of the core team directing volunteers and actualizing smooth pick-up and delivery of food donations, and preparing T2T's fleet of vehicles for food rescue routes.



When summer season starts, we have a 30% increase in volunteer shifts to meet demands. Noah is critical to handling this increase by stepping in where needed and supporting volunteer training and supervision. Noah will also lead some harvesting from farms and gardens and distributing the harvest via free produce stands. Actually, we should probably give him the title of food rescue generalist.

(You can find Noah at the core support desk in the front office until the end of the summer.)



Did you know that collectively our refrigerated fleet is worth more than \$300,000 and we pay \$20,000 in annual insurance premiums for our vehicles alone? Help us put safety first, maintain our fleet, and keep operational costs down.

(Note: these tips are for fender bender type situations, we know and trust that you are mitigating more serious incidents because you take your personal safety very seriously.)

Vehicle Safety Tips



Use a Spotter

When navigating spaces with less than 10 feet of clearance on either side, your route partner should act as spotter.

Roll down the window so you can hear one another, and make clear with your route partner what signals you are going to use to indicate when to stop.

Be aware of your surroundings, especially at all loading and unloading. Keep distance from poles, dumpsters, and other vehicles.

Back Up Safely

Be sure you can safely back up. There's a reason the USPS basically prohibits their drivers from backing up. It's the cause of so many fender benders.

Don't back into a parking spot without a spotter no matter how many times you've done the route.

Find pull through parking when possible and park farther away when that's the safest option.

Look Out, Look Up!

Stay aware of vehicle clearance.



Use a spotter at stops like the Coralville Pantry to avoid collisions with low awnings.

At the North Liberty Pantry, don't drive anywhere near the church awning. Enter and leave the parking lot a different way.

Spotters, LOOK UP and SPEAK LOUDLY!

What is it that they say?

Vehicle safety tips are written in the myriad dents, broken windows, decapitated refrigeration units, and soaring insurance rates.

Leadership & Support Team Members

Development & Communications

Coordinator - Our long time coordinator recently resigned to attend graduate school. We're eager to fill this critical role which conveys our mission to inspire and encourage engagement from volunteers, financial donors, and the community as a whole. This role coordinates fundraising initiatives, implements communications strategy and supports volunteer recruitment. Since adding this role to our team, T2T has doubled individual household contributions and doubled the revenue from our annual dinner event. This position is critical to the financial health and community investment in the organization.

(You can find the development coordinator in the first office on the left as you head down the hall.)

AmeriCorps VISTAs have supported capacity building and fundraising in a variety of ways over the years. This year **Nourish Iowa VISTA**, Jada McDonald is leading our website update, creating a brand and messaging guide that correlates with our new mission-vision-values, and is supporting the development of new equity components of the volunteer handbook.

(You can find Jada sharing an office with the development coordinator, the first office on the left as you head down the hall.)

New
development
coordinator
coming soon!



Part-time Donor Relations

Manager, Sheila Boyd coordinates and implements an expanded program for financial donor engagement, cultivation, recognition, and stewardship. She's launched an annual sponsorship program, increased our personalized communication with financial supporters, and facilitated a monthly giving initiative that aims to provide sustained support for our programming. Sheila is hyper-focused on financial donor development as we continue to ensure sustainability for our critical service to the community.

(You may find Sheila posted up anywhere she can find a space. Mostly she's out in the community meeting with our financial supporters.)

Part-time Bookkeeper, Celia

Eckerman supports the overall fiscal responsibility of T2T. She tracks and documents the financial transactions of the organization and facilitates regular financial reporting. She coordinates our budgeting process, leads our annual financial audit, and contributes guidance on the financial policies and practices of the organization. Celia has her scanner and shredder at the ready to organize thousands of pages of paperwork that crosses the director's desk for grants, insurance, HR & benefits, and vendor contracts.

(You can find Celia a few hours a week in the back corner of the shared work room next to Elizabeth.)



Executive Director, Nicki Ross serves as the Executive Officer and works directly with the Board to lead our mission and financial objectives. She leads the strategic planning and implementation process and directs funding development initiatives. The role of executive director is a little different at every nonprofit. Here, the director contributes to communication (like writing this newsletter!), is responsible for the majority of grant writing and reporting which accounts for nearly half our revenue, leads community planning initiatives, and serves as a subject matter expert on food insecurity and food recovery both locally and nationally.

(Find her in the last office on the right before you get to the food warehouse.)



On any given day, you might see any team member dispatching in the morning, rescuing food on a route, mopping a floor, or prepping a van whether this is a core responsibility or not. As a team, we come from a place of "yes" and do what it takes to facilitate food recovery and feed people.