

Recruitment Update

We are in need of a few **Saturday route subs**. This would not be a weekly commitment, but an opportunity for someone interested in volunteering about once or twice per month.

If you know someone who might be interested, they may contact Jared at

volunteer@table2table.org or (319) 337-3400.



News and Events

● Iowa Heartlanders Hockey Game

- The Heartlanders have granted us with several tickets, which we are using to invite our volunteers and family members to a hockey game in Coralville.
- The game is on **Saturday, February 15, 2025, at 6pm**. Please contact Jared if you are interested.

● Souper Volunteer Appreciation Week

- Back by popular demand! From **February 3rd - 8th**, we'll have hot soup waiting for volunteers to enjoy after your chilly shifts. The soup may be enjoyed onsite or taken home.

Volunteer Spotlight

Meet Michael Webb, AKA "Webb," a man of diverse experiences. He's been a driver for T2T and Grow Johnson County for about two years, but his background is quite varied.

"I grew up working on a farm, and now, many years later, I build fancy electronics for use in space satellites," Webb explains. This contrast highlights his unique journey and the distinct perspective he brings to his volunteer work.

Webb's involvement with Grow Johnson County began when he spotted a "Grow" route posting. Located at the historic Johnson County Poor Farm (now known as Grow Johnson County) off Melrose, the once-abandoned site has been transformed into a thriving farm dedicated to providing food for the local community.

Webb has many fond memories from his work with T2T. One standout moment was picking up two massive pallets of melons. After a conversation about vans and tractors with the farmer, the pallets were loaded into Webb's cargo van via forklift. The farmer was delighted that the perfectly ripe melons would be distributed immediately. Another memorable occasion involved distributing thousands of pounds of strawberries—a "berry" impressive sight.

Webb advises new volunteers to "Don't be afraid to ask questions and engage with staff as you learn your route and tasks; they are knowledgeable and helpful."

Webb works with rescue Huskies in his free time and appreciates their playful and affectionate nature. He also hopes to return to Bali to assist a friend who provides direct community support. His favorite dessert indulgences are coffee, ice cream, and fresh baklava.



Staying Connected: Key Moments to Reach Out to T2T Office During Your Route

We want to take a moment to express just how truly invaluable your time and energy are to our mission. Your dedication keeps our operations running smoothly, and we're deeply grateful for all you do. We are here to support you every step of the way. **Below are key moments when it's especially important to contact the office.**



1. Large Amounts of Food: If you come across a large quantity of one type of food (such as 30 cases of eggs or 500 pounds of bananas), please don't hesitate to reach out. By letting us know, we can help redistribute the food and ensure that all our partners receive what they need. Your proactive communication helps us spread the wealth where it's needed most.

2. Too Much Food for the Van: Sometimes, the load may exceed what the van can carry. If that happens, just give us a call! Together, we can explore options such as sending another van or prioritizing certain foods based on category or amount. For example, if you have 8 or more carts of bakery items, we may decide to limit the volume taken, ensuring we make room for other critical donations.

3. Partner Organization Appears Closed: Please let us know if a partner organization seems to be closed. We'll quickly confirm if there's been a change in hours or new pick-up instructions we weren't aware of.

4. Accidents or Vehicle Damage: If there's ever an accident—whether it's a minor fender bender or an incident like scraping the van against a structure—please contact the office right away. We're here to support you, assess any damage, and take the appropriate steps to ensure everyone's safety. We understand it's not always easy to report these situations, but we want you to feel completely comfortable reaching out to us. You can call or speak with us privately—we're here to help.

We also encourage you to keep your cell phone with you and turn it on during your route. Having your phone available ensures that we can stay connected and quickly let you know of any additional requests or changes that might come up.

Good Samaritan Law

Did you know there is a law that protects individuals and businesses that donate to nonprofits for distribution to those in need? It's called the Good Samaritan Act.

The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996 provides limited liability protection for those who donate food to nonprofit organizations that serve the needy. In 2018, the Farm Bill (Section 12504) enhanced this liability protection. This law safeguards both the donor and the nonprofit organizations benefiting from the donations, but it does not extend to direct donations made to individuals in need.

To comply with the law's requirements, donors must act "in good faith" and donate items that meet the definitions of "apparently wholesome food" and "apparently fit grocery products." The donated food and groceries must adhere to federal, state, and local food quality and labeling regulations, but they may be donated if they are simply less marketable. Protection under this law is void if the donation involves negligence or misconduct.

Donors include grocery stores, farmers, restaurants, manufacturers, food banks, distributors, hospitals, food trucks, educational institutions, and caterers.

T2T History Part 3

Pepperwood Plaza (2021-present)

Pepperwood Plaza is the current location of T2T and Field to Family. It is adjacent to CommUnity, the principal recipient of rescued food in Johnson County. Between 700 and 900 families a week solve their food needs by a visit to CommUnity.

Room in the new Pepperwood facility had increased to 4800 square feet. This was a far cry from the original 700 square feet at Old Brick. The increased room allowed for upgrades in T2T operations. There are five staff offices plus seven desk spaces. The food storage capabilities are now like six household refrigerators and five freezers, used for storing food until it can be distributed to partners. The size of the staff has increased to as many as 14 including full-time, part-time, and AmeriCorps members; it currently sits at 10.



The average routes per week have increased to 52. We have over 100 volunteers each week who help with the routes and various other roles, with over 300 volunteers available. The amount of food rescued is up to 2.7 million pounds, a value of about \$9.1 million. We continue to have good relations with our over 100 donor partners. Our history at Pepperwood Plaza is currently being written six days a week by our volunteers.

Food insecurity has increased in Johnson County since the pandemic. The idea of rescuing food and making that food available for hungry people is simple. Yet the solution, as you can see, is complex. Table to Table has expanded beyond just one driver picking up food. It is a cavalcade of T2T vans, on expertly devised routes, rescuing food and delivering that food to community places.

In recent years T2T has partnered with local farmers to harvest produce remaining in their fields. This is called gleaning. Local gardeners are encouraged to donate their excess homegrown fruits and vegetables to T2T as part of the Garden Recovery program. There are many T2T pop-up Markets available during the summer months. T2T has a relationship with Green Iowa, as well as Field to Family. T2T is a nonprofit, supported by individual donations as well as several governmental grants. Every town in Johnson County has, or has access to, a food distribution center. Food pickups also come from outside of the county. And still, T2T continues to evolve.

How can we do the job more effectively? Stay tuned for the answer.

Got an idea for the newsletter?

We want to hear about it! If you have an idea of something that you think might be a good newsletter article, please let Jared or Gina know. We are always looking for fresh ideas!

Thanks to the Newsletter Team:

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