



# Hunger News

*The mission of the Arkansas Hunger Coalition is to reduce hunger and malnutrition through collective action, advocacy and education.*

FALL 2008

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## A POSITIVE NOTE TO START ON

I am excited about the merger of the Arkansas Hunger Coalition and the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. Whenever we work together, we are in a stronger position to eradicate hunger in Arkansas.

The merger occurs at a critical juncture in our country and state. Gas prices are rising. A result has been an increase in food prices. Every day in the communities of our state, people are making difficult choices between buying gas to get to work, purchasing food, paying utility bills, or purchasing their needed medicines.

I am convinced that as a new organization, we can make a huge impact in the lives of the people in Arkansas. I look forward to exciting days ahead. I am also excited about the leadership of our new Executive Director, Rhonda Sanders. I want to encourage each of us to strive daily to eradicate hunger in our great state.

Stephen Copley, Co-President of the Board  
Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance



*Rev. Steve Copley*

# Moving Forward Together

Since the beginning of the New Year I have barely been able to contain my excitement over the possibility of combining the two statewide hunger relief and advocacy organizations in Arkansas! I first heard of the possibility as the Alliance and the Hunger Coalition were simultaneously seeking new leadership. Shortly after becoming the new executive director of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance in April 2008 the boards of the Hunger Coalition and the Alliance voted to merge and reform under the name of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. The two boards adopted the new mission to reduce hunger through a unified effort to provide hunger relief, education and advocacy and are now charting a course on fulfilling this mission. Support for this new organization has been overwhelming and clearly shows that we will be better together!!

So, what will the merger mean to most of you? We will get the information flowing again and you can expect e-mail updates on a regular basis. While we will merge the Hunger Alliance website with the Hunger Coalition website we will keep many of the same links and hope to enhance the information already provided to you. Newsletters will go out to you two to four times a year with opportunities for members to post events and activities occurring in areas of the state. We have scheduled a Hunger Day at the Capitol on March 11th and will give you regular electronic updates on session activities.



*Rhonda Sanders*

We hope each of you will become members and take advantage of all the new things we will be doing. With that thought in mind be sure to review the membership form that is part of this newsletter. We have created some new categories that we hope will broaden our base of members and help sustain efforts to reach our goal of reducing hunger in Arkansas.

Thank you so much for all the work you are doing and I am looking forward to working with each of you as we move forward for Arkansas!!

Rhonda Sanders  
Executive Director

## *Are You a Hunger Advocacy Network Member?*

Choose your Membership Level on page 4 and fill out the Membership Form on page 5. For more information contact the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance at 501.399.9999.



*Remember to thank  
your donors and volunteers!  
Say thank you. Say it often and  
say it personally when you can.*

# 2008 Hunger Conference

The 2008 Hunger Conference was once again a major success. We appreciate Rose Adams and the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association for allowing us to tag on to their annual conference. There were wonderful discussions and presentations about food stamps, free health clinics, the Benefit Bank and nutritious meals. The highlight of the meeting was the luncheon with Governor Beebe providing verbal support for our work. The 2008 mini-grant recipients were recognized and the meeting closed with a viewing of *An American Idealist: The Story of Sargent Shriver*. Many thanks go out to Hunger Coalition members who helped to pull this together! Below is a list of mini-grant recipients for 2008. Congratulations to these wonderful organizations!!

## 2008 ARKANSAS HUNGER COALITION MINI-GRANTS

Abused Women and Children, Courage House - Arkadelphia  
Shelter and outreach supportive services  
Grant for food for after school snacks, meals and food boxes in the outreach program.

Alma Community Outreach Center – Alma  
Food and clothing to families in need  
Grant to replace an upright freezer.

Amboy Community Food Pantry – North Little Rock Food pantry  
Grant to purchase a heavy duty platform dolly and material to build a ramp to permit loading and unloading food from trailer.

CASA Women's Shelter – Pine Bluff  
Shelter for victims of domestic violence and rape  
Grant will be used for food in the summer months when the shelter serves more children's meals.

Choctaw Food Bank – Choctaw  
Food, water and disaster relief for Van Buren County and neighboring communities. The pantry served 80 new households in April because of tornadoes this Spring.  
Grant will be used for gasoline to come to Little Rock to Rice Depot or Arkansas Foodbank Network to pick up food. They make 4 trips per month. The Arkansas Community Foundation supported this grant with the STOP Hunger Fund.

Clarksville Housing Authority – Clarksville  
Housing Authority Food Bank  
Grant will be used for purchasing protein items for the food bank.

Community Action Program for Central Arkansas – Conway  
Multiple programs in Cleburne, Faulkner and White counties  
Grant for storage bins and storage totes for non-perishable items for the Cleburne County Food Pantry.

Crowley's Ridge Development Council, Inc. – Jonesboro  
Multiple programs in Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Greene, Jackson, Poinsett, St. Francis and Woodruff Counties.  
Grant to be used for food for the food pantries they operate.

Food Share Arkansas – Prescott  
Food pantry began in February 2008.  
Grant will be used for a freezer, extension cord and thermometer.

Full Gospel Church Outreach Ministry – Hamburg  
Emergency Food Pantry  
Grant will be used to purchase food.

McGehee Community Food Pantry – McGehee  
Food pantry and emergency food assistance serving McGehee and other south Desha County communities.  
Grant will be used to purchase canned meat for pantry.

Grace Community Food Pantry – Helena  
Food Pantry for Helena, West Helena and neighboring communities.  
Grant will be used toward the installation of an awning so that clients do not have to stand in the rain or sun while they wait to enter the pantry.

Health Resources of Arkansas – Batesville  
Provides mental health, rehabilitation and other supportive services as well as primary care for a 16 county area.  
Grant will be used toward the purchase of a computer for the food distribution program.

Montrose Development Center – Montrose  
After school and job readiness programs for youth, senior programs, food pantry and emergency assistance.  
Grant will be used for construction to secure the food pantry and food storage areas.

Neighbor to Neighbor – Pine Bluff  
Soup kitchen, referral services, clothing and emergency services including food  
Grant will be used to purchase food for the emergency food program. The Arkansas Community Foundation supported this grant with the STOP Hunger Fund.

Open Arms Food Pantry – Huntsville  
Food pantry and emergency food  
Grant will be used to purchase an air conditioner, long table and one shelf unit.

St. Andrew United Methodist Food Pantry – Little Rock  
Food Pantry  
Grant will be used to purchase canned vegetables.

Women and Children First – Little Rock  
Shelter for abused women and children and other support services  
Grant will be used to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and meat. The Arkansas Community Foundation supported this grant with the STOP Hunger Fund.

Yellville Area Food Closet Association – Yellville  
Food pantry  
Grant will be used toward the purchase of new energy efficient freezers.

# YOUVARN ANDERSON AWARD

The Youvarn Anderson Award was established by the board in memory of a former board member of the Coalition. Mrs. Anderson was an employee of the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. She began as a program associate and, after completing a degree in Home Economics from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, became an Extension Agent. She led many clients in the community in gleaning vegetables and fruit from fields and orchards and then taught them how to preserve the food. She also taught clients how to garden – whether in a large or small garden, containers on balconies or – in front of the Extension Service building! She was tireless and continually working to help others become self-sufficient. The Arkansas Community Foundation supported this grant with the STOP Hunger Fund.

## **The Smith House of Hot Spring County, Inc. – Malvern**

Domestic violence shelter serving Hot Spring and surrounding counties. Services include meeting needs for physical, emotional, legal and self help to become independent.

Grant will be used to engage residents, children and staff to plan, establish and maintain small space gardens. To preserve produce the grant will also be used to purchase a small chest freezer. Children can help and gain knowledge and exercise responsibility.

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## Join the Hunger Advocacy Network in 2009

Any membership dues paid to the Arkansas Hunger Coalition since January 1, 2008 are still good for a membership through December 31, 2008. If you join now, your membership will be good through December 2009.

### **New Membership Levels:**

#### **Statewide Advocacy/State Agency Programs Organizations - \$125 per year**

(This level is for statewide organizations that do advocacy or research and are interested in ensuring families have an adequate diet, or for state or federal programs that focus on nutrition or hunger issues.)

Membership includes the following:

Newsletters twice a year

Electronic E-mail updates

Advocacy Bulletins during legislative session

Ability to utilize network for information sharing

Discounted membership rate for Annual Hunger Conference and Legislative Hunger at the Capitol Advocacy Day

#### **Local Hunger Relief Organizations - \$25 per year**

(This level is for local organizations directly provide food to those in need. These may be food pantries, emergency shelters, soup kitchens or other organizations that provide direct hunger relief.)

Membership includes the following:

Newsletters twice a year

Electronic E-mail updates

Advocacy Bulletins during legislative session

Able to Apply for Annual Capacity Building Mini-grants

Discounted membership rate for Annual Hunger Conference and Legislative Hunger at the Capitol Advocacy Day

#### **Local Hunger Advocates - \$25 per year**

(This level is for individuals or local organizations that do not directly provide food to those in need but have an interest in assisting with reducing hunger in our state.)

Membership includes the following:

Newsletters twice a year

Electronic E-mail updates

Advocacy Bulletins during legislative session

Invitation to all Hunger Advocacy Network events

# Membership Form 2009

Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

<b>2009 Membership Level (Mark your choice)</b>			
<u>Level</u>	<u>Number of Memberships</u>	<u>Annual Amount</u>	<u>Total</u> (Number of memberships x Annual Amount)
Statewide Advocacy or Program		\$125 each	
Local Hunger Relief Organization		\$25 each	
Local Hunger Advocate		\$25 each	
<b>Total Amount Due</b>			

Please send all checks and forms to:



Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance  
Attn: Temeka Douglas  
1400 W. Markham, Ste. 304  
Little Rock, AR 72201

## Hunger Day at the Capitol

We have scheduled March 11th as a special day focused on Hunger during the 2009 Legislative session. Keep your eyes open for more information about signing up for the event!!!!

# Hunger Action Breakfast 2008

It may have been a windy and wet day with the remnants of Gustav hanging around, but inside the Governor's Mansion there was fire, passion and commitment to help those in our state who are hungry. The Hunger Action Breakfast 2008 was a major success thanks to our hosts, the Governor and Mrs. Beebe, the 150 individuals who were able to brave the elements to attend and to the gracious donors who helped sponsor the event.

From the opening remarks and proclamation by Governor Beebe to the closing remarks by Rhonda Sanders, Executive Director of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, it was clear that Arkansas is pulling together to make a difference for families in need of food. "We at the Alliance are very grateful to the Governor for proclaiming September Hunger Action Month in Arkansas," said Rhonda Sanders, Executive Director of The Alliance. "We are hopeful that Governor Beebe's continued support of this issue will fuel discussion and actions to move from the position of the state with the third highest incidence of hunger in the nation to one where no one has to go hungry."

Comments by presenters during the morning stressed the importance of working together from every angle possible to cure hunger. A cross section of organizations and individuals were represented at the breakfast. Businesses, health care providers, legislators, advocates and hunger relief organizations all agreed that feeding the 400,000 plus individual Arkansans who are hungry must be a priority as we move forward with education and economic development strategies in our state.

The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance would like to thank the sponsors of the breakfast for making it possible. The Walton Family Foundation underwrote the event through a special grant. Additional sponsors included:

**Affiliated Foods Southwest**  
**Arkansas Children's Hospital**  
**Arkansas Farm Bureau**  
**Arkansas Foodbank Network**  
**Arkansas Rice Depot**  
**Arvest Bank**  
**AT&T**  
**Virginia & Dr. Ted Bailey Family Foundation**  
**Richard E. Bell**  
**Brent Stevenson Associates**

**Cranford Johnson Robinson Woods**  
**Entergy Arkansas**  
**Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas**  
**Dr. Mary Good**  
**Performance Food Group**  
**Representatives Kathy Webb and Bobby Pierce**  
**Senators Blanche Lincoln and Mark Pryor**  
**Stallion Transportation Group**  
**Windstream Corporation**

The host committee out did themselves with planning and support for the breakfast. The committee included the following individuals:

**Rose Adams**  
**Jim Cargill**  
**Larry Choate**  
**Reverend Steve Copley**  
**Linda Finley**  
**Phyllis Haynes**

**Misty Krug-Pitchford**  
**Cydney Pearce**  
**Harriett Phillips**  
**Jennali Shook**  
**Representative Kathy Webb**  
**Ron Witherspoon**

The Alliance is growing and expanding as they seek to build a team that will work to reduce hunger by working together to provide hunger relief, education and advocacy. The Alliance honored two Arkansas farmers today for their efforts to help develop the Society of Saint Andrew's Arkansas Gleaning Project. Bob Fritchey of the Society of Saint Andrew accepted the award in the place of Randy Clanton and Abraham Carpenter who were unable to attend due to the flooding in their areas. This new project is one of the ways the Alliance is partnering with multiple organizations to leverage Arkansas resources for reducing hunger. The Alliance hopes to at least double the 200,000 + pounds of food gleaned in the state in 2008 by this time next year.

As the event closed and friends and supporters exited the doors a sense of humility settled on Alliance staff. So many people fought the wind and rain to attend an event and show support for ending hunger in Arkansas. So many more attempted to attend but met with flooding, power outages and traffic restrictions. This level of passion and commitment must be met with action and endurance. The Alliance will be facilitating legislative visits, writing and circulating editorials and attending events through out the state during the upcoming month. All of these activities will be focused on challenging Arkansans to work with us as we move forward with strategies to reduce the number of hungry right here at home.

If you would like information concerning The Alliance and its activities please feel free to call us at 501-399-9999 or to check the website at [www.arhungeralliance.org](http://www.arhungeralliance.org).

## SPIRIT OF GIVING: An Annual Holiday Food Drive

The Spirit of Giving Campaign is an annual statewide partnership to collect food and donations to support local hunger relief organizations and the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. The campaign will run from December 1, 2008 – December 19, 2008.

Each participating organization will be paired with a drop site and a hunger-relief agency from their community. For instance you may utilize a local sponsoring business, such as a bank or school, as your drop off point. Then all food collected at that site will go to a certain agency with in the community. The local agency may be a soup kitchen, food pantry or shelter. The Alliance will get daily reports from all drop-off locations as to the number and amount of food. The Alliance will convert that information into pounds received and KATV will report the combined total pounds of food in their daily broadcasts. At the end of the drive, or before if needed, the local partner agency will collect donated food from the drop-off locations.

Participating organizations will compete within organizational categories to determine who collected the most food during the campaign. Based upon an organization's registration information the amount of food they collected will be turned into a pounds per person collected. This will allow large and small organizations to participate on a level playing field. Different prizes will be given for the different categories.

The Categories will include the following:

**Schools and/or School organizations:** (Examples - schools, PTO/PTA, Student Council)  
**Civic organizations:** (Examples - Rotary, Boys and Girls clubs, Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts)  
**Governmental Agencies:** (Examples - Department of Health, City of Little Rock)  
**Churches/Business**

Feel free to contact Michelle Shope or Temeka Douglas at the Alliance office for more information. Phone- 501-399-9999

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## Farm Bill Update

Congress recently passed a new farm bill that includes several good things for Arkansas citizens. We applaud Senator Lincoln for her leadership on this bill and will continue to monitor its implementation in Arkansas. The following piece is an update from the Department of Human Service concerning the bill.

Arkansas DHS is working hard to implement the mandated changes that evolved as a result of the Farm Bill passage. See the following changes that are on schedule to become policy effective 10/01/08:

- Minimum benefit will increase from 10 to 14 dollars.
- Maximum benefits have increased.
- Standard and Shelter deductions have increased along with the Standard Utility Allowance. All of these should combine to give participants an increase in their benefits.
- Exclusion of Retirement and Educational Savings Accounts (Tax Preferred) as resources.
- Removal of the Dependent Care Cap. As of 10/1/08, the actual amount paid for child care per child will be allowed as a deduction instead of being capped at a lower level.
- Job Retention Services will be added as a component for those participating in DHS's voluntary Employment and Training (E & T) program.





## ARKANSAS HUNGER COALITION

A project of the Arkansas Community Action Agencies

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Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-0451

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## 2009 ARKANSAS HUNGER RELIEF ALLIANCE

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### Hunger Day at the Capitol

We have scheduled March 11th as a special day focused on Hunger during the 2009 Legislative session.

Keep your eyes open for more information about signing up for the event!!!

### *New To Our List?*

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If this is your first issue of our newsletter, welcome! If you have friends or co-workers concerned about hunger who would like to be on our mailing list – or if for some reason you want to be removed from this list – please contact the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance at [info@arhungeralliance.org](mailto:info@arhungeralliance.org) or **501.399.9999**. Remember to check out our website at [www.arhungeralliance.org](http://www.arhungeralliance.org).