



Press release for Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. For immediate release.  
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## **Serving up Solutions : Near Record for Hunger Relief**

**LITTLE ROCK, AR(June 27, 2013)**– On Thursday evening, June 20<sup>th</sup>, members of the Arkansas Legislative Hunger Caucus, First Lady Ginger Beebe, Event Co-chairs Debra Wolfe Sheppard and Courtney Sheppard, leaders of business and industry, hunger advocates, guest chefs and artists raised a near-record amount of money to help support the programs of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. Event sponsorships, individual table sponsorships, silent and live auctions along with individual contributions totaled more than \$70,000. A very good result. We are grateful to this year’s event sponsors: Tyson (gold), and silver sponsors CGI, Stallion Transportation Group, Rick Fleetwood and the Arkansas Rice Council for their generosity and leadership.

Proceeds from the annual Serving up Solutions events are used in part to provide Alliance member food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and other agencies with capacity building grants. These grants make it possible for member agencies to purchase equipment and make improvements that increase their ability to meet the growing need for food in their communities. An increasing number of direct hunger relief agencies across the state report having to close their doors early or decrease the number of days they are open each week because they cannot keep enough food on hand to meet the demand. Inadequate storage space or shelving, limited or no refrigeration options, an inability to transport large enough quantities of food are just some of the factors contributing to the struggles of local hunger agencies around Arkansas. The grants from Serving up Solutions are helping our member agencies increase the amount of food they can provide to hungry Arkansas families.

The Arkansas Gleaning Project is another of the Alliance’s programs that is supported by funds raised at Serving up Solutions. Gleaning, the ancient practice of hand gathering crops left in the fields after harvest, is an important (and often the only) source of low cost fruits and vegetables for many of our hunger agencies. Last year, a record 1.2 million pounds of fresh produce was gleaned at a cost of just 2.8 cents per pound. With the gleaning season just beginning, adequate program funding will help us increase our capacity to bring better nutrition options to the underserved in Arkansas.

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### **About the Alliance**

Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance is a non-profit collaborative network of more than 250 hunger relief organizations across Arkansas including the Arkansas Foodbank in Little Rock, the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas in Jonesboro, Harvest Texarkana Regional Food Bank in Texarkana, Food Bank of North Central Arkansas in Norfork, Northwest Arkansas Food Bank in Bethel Heights and River Valley Regional Food Bank in Fort Smith who are dedicated to reducing hunger through direct relief, education and advocacy. We invite you to visit [www.ARhungeralliance.org](http://www.ARhungeralliance.org) for details on hunger relief programs and volunteer opportunities.