



Race & Food Security

by Katie Cook

This issue is about how racism affects food security. We know that many factors—things like age, disability and health issues—affect people’s ability to access food for themselves and their families. These factors affect the whole population, but, in every instance, they affect people of color the most.

The Nation recently ran a story titled “Want to Eradicate Hunger in America? Take on Racism.” The article, by Greg Kaufmann, cites a study by Children’s Healthwatch and the Center for Hunger-Free Communities at Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA.

The study examined the relationship between food security in Philadelphia and racial and ethnic discrimination that people face in their daily lives. It concluded that people who experience discrimination are almost twice as likely as others to struggle with hunger.

The Alliance to End Hunger’s fact sheet, “Hunger is a Racial Equality Issue,” states that, while 10 percent of white households experience hunger, up to 21.5 percent of households of color experience hunger.

No Kid Hungry’s report, “Food Insecurity, Children and Race,” breaks it down among children: 11.8 percent of white children were found to be in food-insecure households, while the same applied to 29.3 percent of Black children and 26 percent of Latinx children.

Bread for the World says that 25.4 percent of Native Americans experience food insecurity.

A report from the University of California at Berkeley’s Haas Institute bears out these figures, stating,

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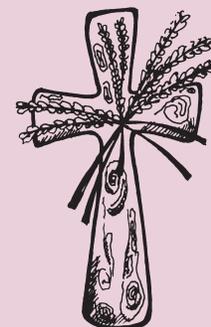
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Art by Sally Lynn Askins



Cross & Wheat logo by Erin Kennedy Mayer.

Food Insecurity Is an Equity Issue

by Stephanie Clintonia Boddie & Lakia M. Scott

In 2018, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported that 37 million people lived in food insecure households.¹ According to the 2018 No Kid Hungry's Child Hunger Facts, 45 million people rely on federal support programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), to purchase food, and 67 percent of these households have children.²

Nationwide, 22 million children rely on the free-or-reduced-price lunch programming at school, but still, one out of every six children goes hungry each day. Nearly 21 percent of Black households and 16 percent of Hispanic households experience food insecurity and only 8 percent of White households, according to the USDA's 2019 report.³

Over the last 20 years during which the USDA has monitored levels of food insecurity, this racial food gap has persisted, according to University of Illinois professor Angela Odoms-Young. For families of color, the issue of food insecurity is compounded by inequitable access to education, transportation, housing, employment and healthcare.

The most striking and persistent gap is the wealth gap. The Pew Research Center reports that White households hold 10 times the wealth of Black households. Other factors that complicate this issue are mass incarceration and higher rates of disability.

Food insecurity is associated with various outcomes, particularly for children and youth. These include low test scores, grade repetition, absenteeism, tardiness, developmental delays, anxiety, depression, aggression, suicidal

ideation, difficulty getting along with others, cigarette smoking, obesity and a wide range of chronic diseases (e.g., asthma, anemia, arthritis, diabetes and cancer).⁴

We have outlined promising solutions that seek to disrupt cycles of food insecurity and poverty, along with addressing inequitable access to other basic resources.

Anti-Hunger Advocacy & Programs

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) should be highlighted as one of the nation's largest child advocacy organizations that seeks to eradicate youth poverty. Its mission is to:

...ensure every child a healthy start, a head start, a fair start, a safe start and a moral start in life and successful passage into adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

Outlined as one of CDF's seven policy priorities is Child Poverty. As a part of this work, CDF advocates for ending child hunger and the expansion of SNAP benefits to cover the full nutritional needs of children, as well as making the Child Tax Credit fully refundable to ensure more low-income families benefit from this policy.⁵

CDF's vision to end child hunger does not stop at national policy reform. Over the past two decades, CDF has hosted the Freedom Schools program, a national seven-week, full-day, summer literacy initiative that spans across 23 states and serves nearly 200,000 children each year. These programs strategically serve students of color from low-income communities. To date, national student representation includes 67 percent African-American, 13 percent Hispanic/Latinx, and 7 percent Native American.⁶

In partnership with the federally funded USDA Summer Food Service Program that provides nutritious meals to students from low-resourced communities when school is not in session, Freedom Schools



Left: Stephanie Boddie, Assistant Professor of Church and Community Ministries at Baylor University. Photo courtesy of Ahmad Sandidge.

provide breakfast, lunch and snack options at more than 100 sites. Some sites also serve Family Dinner, to ensure that students have three complete meals every day. Other forms of support also include the Backpack Program, in which foods are packaged for meals during the weekend. Through these services, CDF is reducing child hunger by providing access to nutritious food options for students and their families.

At the local level and through the CDF Freedom Schools program, students are also learning to become actively engaged in civic matters—like food security—that directly affect their families and communities. The National Day of Social Action and Local Day of Social Action are two days during the summer that are dedicated to (1) increasing students’ awareness about the root causes of societal issues, (2) engaging students in inquiry-based learning through research and critical thinking, (3) creating student-centered resolutions for improving the societal concern and (4) partnering with students in advocacy for change or reform through civic action and engagement.

In 2017, Baylor Freedom School students participated in a Child Hunger Demonstration and March in order to garner community support to oppose the possible elimination of federally-funded governmental assistance programs, such as SNAP, under the new presidential budget proposal.⁷ Fifty middle school students conducted research on child poverty and hunger, and found that 1.38 million children starve each year.⁸ Students examined some of the consequences of food insecurity and found limited access to quality and nutritious foods are linked to child malnutrition and childhood obesity. Students also examined the scarcity of grocery stores in areas where low-income families resided.

From these findings, students put pen to paper and began writing their representatives in Congress. On the day of the demonstration, select students read their letters to members of the press, parents and other community supporters in front of City Hall. Afterwards, they carried signs and banners highlighting the devastating child hunger statistics, and marched through the streets of downtown Waco. Many of the students connected deeply with this topic, because some, if not most, had experienced food insecurity at some point in their lives. Baylor Freedom School students continued this work by writing on this topic for *Freedom School Press*, a 2018 Seeds of Hope publication.⁹

Economic Development & Food System Change

The Oasis Project¹⁰ uses an economic development strategy to address the food inequity in Pittsburgh, PA. The Oasis Project seeks to create a sustainable food

ecosystem in the center of a once vibrant Pittsburgh business corridor in Homewood. This is part of a larger community economic development effort in this neighborhood.

In 2012, one African-American church, Bible Center, and its non-profit partners began paving the way to address limited food access as well as related social problems: hyper-segregation (it was 94 percent African American), high levels of poverty (27 percent), a high rate of school drop outs (23 percent), unemployment (more than 20 percent), vacant and abandoned buildings (28 percent residential vacancy) and real estate divestment.

Ongoing food access research by the RAND Corporation revealed striking findings in 2011 baseline data: none of Homewood’s 14 retail outlets sold fresh fruit and

For families of color, the issue of food insecurity is compounded by inequitable access to education, transportation, housing, employment and healthcare to all citizens.

vegetables. When asked, 30 percent of the 429 respondents said (often or sometimes) “We couldn’t afford to eat balanced meals”; 40 percent said (often or sometimes) “the food that we bought just didn’t last, and we didn’t have money to get more”; and 48 percent said (often or sometimes) “We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.”¹¹

Equally concerning, a significant portion of the respondents reported diet and nutrition-related health problems: 48 percent hypertension, 40 percent arthritis, 26 percent high cholesterol, 21 percent diabetes, 20 percent high blood sugar and 17 percent heart disease.

The Oasis Project’s ultimate success will be the creation of a sustainable quadruple bottom line that includes economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability goals. Based on a 2013 Just Harvest report, there is a \$7 million grocery retail demand in Homewood.¹² Oasis Foods, a division of the Oasis Project, is poised to take advantage of this largely untapped local demand while also investing in the human, social and cultural capital of this community.

In 2017, the Oasis Project established the Oasis Micro-farm and fishery training program for youth, and employment opportunities as well as healthier food options through its Everyday Café. Dr. John Wallace, Jr., pastor of Bible Center and University of Pittsburgh professor, has leveraged a university-community partnership to continue to develop the community’s food ecosystem

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The Real Food Problem for Indian Country

by Vena A-dae Romero-Briones

“Obesity” is a word that sits like a greasy donut hole in the back of the throat. The phonetics of it even sound gross. Yet, even despite its throat-clogging verbal formulation, “obesity” and its distant relatives “food insecure” and “diabetic” are all words that are used far too freely to describe Indian Country.

Labeling in Indian Country is nothing new. Indians have historically been labeled and categorized as noble, savages, heathens and objects obstructing progress. These historical labels no doubt had an effect on Indian lives, nations and the overall treatment of Indian people. In fact, blanket federal policies are often the result of over-generalized labels that are meant to address all of Indian Country, as if we are all the same.

The available data on American Indians does suggest that our communities do have issues around food,

diet and health. For example, the American Diabetes Association notes that American Indians are more than two times more likely to have diabetes when compared to non-Natives. Yet, data is just that—data. The story of the data can be told in numerous ways from varying perspectives. So, how will we tell the story of our health data? What is the issue?

If we weren’t wiser, we’d be led to believe—according to the present story of American Indian health—that American Indian communities around the country are fat, sick and in great need of help. Additional statistics about food insecurity among Native people on reservations vary from one in four living with food security to rates as high as one in three, depending on the community.² There are even some reservations with food insecurity rates of up to 40 percent. These statistics paint a bleak picture of modern food systems in reservation communities.

Luckily, growing up in one of the most beautiful places in this world, Cochiti Pueblo, NM, has taught me that labels like “fat,” “sick” and “in need” are often given indiscriminately to Indigenous communities by those who probably mean well, but perhaps lack the vocabulary to truly describe the places we call home and the people we call family. While some may be diabetic or food-insecure, the story is much more complex.

During a memorable conversation with another Pueblo woman, she described her village as a thriving community, fully capable of addressing the economic, health and social disparities of her modern day village. But she also indicated the use of the word “poverty,” as a descriptor, as a root cause of the social ills that plagued her community. The problem, as she said, is not that we have income levels that are below the state or national average. The problem is that, once we started describing ourselves as “in poverty,” we began to believe it, rather than focusing on the many tools we have in our 5,000-year-old arsenal to address the issues that lead to labels like “poverty.”

In actuality, these one-word torpedoes, the weapons that seem to crash and slash the very fabric of our



The photos of Indigenous food sources on pages 4 and 5 are courtesy of the First Nations Development Institute. Special thanks go to Jennifer Churchill for sharing them.

communities, are a result of a long history of systematic, institutional war on that very fabric—our communities, our food systems, our relationships. Except that now, the weapons are the focus rather than the war that has been waged for decades and began with European settlement.

Direct Federal policies that began with the displacement of Native people from their homelands did considerable damage not only to the cultural and social well-being of entire communities, but also began the long, systematic onslaught on individual health—physical and mental. Moreover, boarding school policies directed at the youngest of the American Indian population followed land displacement policies like removal and reservation confinement. Boarding school policies deliberately targeted cultural and social fabrics that included profound understandings of environment, food, community and Indigenous relationships, and replaced them with Americanized ideas of individualism and industrialization—sprinkled with white flour, sugar and lard.

The result was an entire generation of young American Indian people indoctrinated with a western diet, along with the accompanying cooking skills for that diet, which were deployed in every Indian reservation in this country. The vital skills that created the Indigenous diet became antiquated, as was the need for the cultural practices based on Indigenous diet skills that reinforced Indigenous community.

Similarly, while working in the field of food and agriculture, American Indian communities are often relegated to the “obese and diabetic” categories that seem to ignite a funding frenzy among philanthropists. The catch is that we unseeingly concede to the labels in order to get much-needed grant money to fund our food and agriculture programs.

When I operated a small non-profit in my community, I saw other Native people using this negative and derogatory terminology to describe Pueblo people and communities. These individuals did this to get money to help us “poor obese and diabetic Pueblos.” This rhetoric suggested, in part, that Pueblo communities needed more education and self-control rather than understanding the history of food-system destruction through centralized colonial policies.

In many instances, the people (who meant well) who perpetuated

these depictions of our communities were not Pueblo and didn’t understand our communities, traditions and empowering epistemologies. Their vocabulary was limited. While it’s easier to conceive of solutions that focus on individual behavior, these kinds of solutions can only get us so far and cannot heal the root cause of the systemic destruction of our food systems: our wounded relationships to each other and to our lands.

Boarding school policies deliberately targeted cultural and social fabrics that included profound understandings of environment, food, community and Indigenous relationships, and replaced them with Americanized ideas of individualism and industrialization—sprinkled with white flour, sugar and lard.

Am I denying that many American Indian communities have higher than normal poverty rates? Higher than normal obesity rates? Diabetes rates? Food-insecurity rates? Absolutely not, but we can also choose to NOT claim those titles. In fact, focusing on those labels seems to exacerbate the problem. According to label theory, the self-identity and behavior of individuals may be

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determined or influenced by the terms used to describe or classify them. It is associated with the concepts of self-fulfilling prophecy and stereotyping.

So, as we spout statistics that claim over half of the American Indian generation is sick or fat and food-insecure, what about the other half? Are we paving the way for the healthy individuals in our communities to succumb to the labels we claim in the name of funding?

Even more disturbing, by claiming the obesity, disease and food insecurity statistics, we are focusing, as my friend said, on an issue that shouldn't be the focus. The real issue is coming to understand how directed social and economic policies have wounded our food systems. In addition, the real issue is the need for resurgence of traditional food systems, locally controlled food systems, healthy familial ties and—ultimately—the need for our native languages to increase the vocabulary of our young people to include words (preferably in our Native tongues) that strengthen our ancestral ties to our earth, to our land and to each other. This is, in fact, the true description of our health.

Ultimately, the word “obese” can sit in our mouths like greasy old donuts for years, resulting in the exact same effect on a person—a person who feels like his or her situation is a disease that cannot be helped. Or worse yet, he or she has no self-control, so he or she as the individual is the problem. Or use terms like “food insecurity” that focus on what we are lacking, like retail

The problem is that, once we started describing ourselves as “in poverty,” we began to believe it, rather than focusing on the many tools we have in our 5,000-year-old arsenal to address the issues that lead to labels like “poverty.”

food markets on reservations. Or we can choose to feed our children words like “resurgence” or “knowledge” (there are far better descriptors in our native languages) that remind our young people we have far too many advantages, tools, knowledge, access to Indigenous food system skills and resilient examples of even greater past challenges we have overcome as Indigenous people. And we can choose COMMUNITY solutions and action

to address our health and food needs, because our communities were the very target that was meant to be destroyed in the first place.

—Vena A-dae Romero-Briones, JD, LLM (Cochiti/Kiowa) is the Associate Director of Research of the Native Agriculture and Programs for First Nations Development Institute. She also co-directs the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative. She currently sits on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Standards Board.

Endnotes

1. *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*, 2017, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 1-10.
2. *American Journal of Public Health*, July 2012, Vol. 102 No. 7, pp. 1346-1352.

Left: A-dae Romero-Briones is the Associate Director of Research for the First Nations Development Institute. Photo courtesy of the First Nations Development Institute.



Reclaiming Native Truth

A PROJECT TO DISPEL AMERICA'S MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS

A GUIDE FOR ALLIES



Narrative is the broadly accepted story that reinforces ideas, norms, issues and expectations in society. It is created by stories passed along between family and friends, by the news media, by entertainment and pop culture, by education and public art, and by policies and much more. It often reinforces stereotypes and the status quo and allows oppressive systems and norms to stay in place.

Dominant narrative is the lens through which history is told from the perspective of the dominant culture.

Narrative change is an intentional effort to replace an existing narrative with something new. It is a powerful contributor to social change. Narrative change can lead to shifts in attitudes, behaviors, practices and policies—and can lead to deeper and lasting changes in systems and cultures.

Changing the Narrative about Native Americans: A Guide for Allies is a 23-page guide for people who want to learn the true story of Indigenous people in America. It discusses the harmful narrative about Native Americans that is currently accepted in the US and sets out a plan for building a new narrative that includes specific examples, including the success story surrounding the Standing Rock demonstrations. The final chapter invites allies to take practical steps to change the narrative in their communications.

—You can download this resource at <http://nmhep.org>.

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Tengo Hambre: The Realities of Hunger in the US Latinx Population

by Chelle Samaniego

In Jeremy Everett's new book *I Was Hungry*, he writes about the *colonias* in West Texas, where the families live in one-room homes with "one wall made of corrugated metal, another of plywood and another of rocks salvaged from the surrounding land." Where roads are rarely paved and where electricity and running water are rarely available. Where jobs are scarce, money is tight and everyone is working.

This is the idea we have about what poverty looks like. It is raw and basic and makes us think of other countries—not our own.

But hunger and poverty are real. Even in America. And hunger doesn't just affect people who do not work, who won't work or who don't strive for anything different. Poverty hits people with full-time jobs, retired seniors no longer able to work or whom ageism has deemed "not qualified." Poverty among Americans is real. No matter the racial background.

And it's real for the Latinx population.

A statement on the Feeding America¹ website says, "Despite being more likely to be in the labor force and employed, Latinos experience higher food-insecurity rates than the general population." According to this, race

and poverty have innate cultural restraints. The Center for American Progress concurs, stating that Hispanic households "typically face lower median incomes and higher poverty and unemployment rates."

In a 2016 report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), food insecurity among Hispanic adults who were noncitizens was at 24.4 percent, as compared to those who were US citizens at 18.9 percent. The lowest food insecurity rate among Hispanic Americans was among those who became naturalized citizens at 16.6 percent.

A common misconception of Hispanic Americans is, according to Esther Morales, that "they are classified as being lazy, living on welfare and uneducated—which is all untrue." Morales is the program director for the SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] Outreach Program of Caritas of Waco (TX). She assists families and individuals in negotiating the paperwork to receive the federal benefits for which they are eligible.

She went on to say, "The Hispanic American population has risen higher educationally than any other in the past 10 years. They are very prideful and will not allow themselves to live on welfare programs. Primarily, this population would much rather have two to three jobs to provide for their children and family members." At least one family member is working in 81 percent of Latinx households with children who use the Feeding America network of food banks.

On average today, 16.2 percent of Hispanic households live in food-insecure households. Our national average is 11.1 percent. Even with this increased number, Hispanic Americans are continuously hesitant to participate in federal assistance programs, including SNAP and Women Infants and Children (WIC). The recent questions surrounding the policy changes to



A little boy enjoys a meal at the Gospel Cafe in Waco, TX. Photo by Susan Mullally.

Public Charge² are not helping the problem. People are scared. And for very good reasons.

Dave Thiel sees this every day as the Director of Child Nutrition at La Vega Independent School District in Bellmead, TX. Sixty percent of the 3,131 students in the district are Hispanic.

Thiel's district participates in the Summer Food Service Program sponsored by the USDA. In 2018, this program "provided more than 145 million nutritious meals and snacks to children during the summer when school was not in session," according to its website.

Hunger among our Hispanic population is not just about lack of food. It's about low-wage jobs, pride in one's culture and fear of a future where the color of your skin or the country of your birth determines whether you are worthy to live and thrive.

"We hear and see a lot of families that are very hesitant to take part in the Free Summer Meal program because of fear of having to fill out an application, give names, give Social Security numbers, etc.," Thiel said.

Social media and the circulation of good, old-fashioned gossip increase these fears. According to the Texas Department of Agriculture, which oversees the meal program in the state, anyone under 18 years of age may receive a free meal at any feeding site in Texas—regardless of citizenship status. And guidelines specifically state that no identification is required to partake of a meal. Thiel recalls, "I have witnessed many times that older, possibly undocumented, adults stay far away from our mobile feeding, almost as if they don't want to be seen or involved or even questioned."

"In many of our Hispanic families, both parents work," Thiel continued. "It is not safe for the younger children to walk unsupervised to a feeding site during the summer. Our communities in general are just not safe anymore." To combat these fears, La Vega ISD brings the food into the neighborhoods. A school bus is used to bring meals to parks, a church and an apartment complex to ensure as many children are fed in the district as possible.

More than 18 percent of Latinx children are at risk of hunger, compared to 12 percent of White, non-Hispanic children. Hispanic children make up more than one in four children in the United States and are considered our fastest growing population. By the numbers, 25.5 percent of America's children were Hispanic in 2018, compared to 50.3 percent White, non-Hispanic, and 13.7 percent

Black, non-Hispanic. By 2050, a third of our overall nation's population will be of Hispanic descent.

As seen in numerous studies, hunger deeply affects our older citizens as well. Hispanic seniors are accessing the SNAP program at a lower level than all eligible US seniors, according to a 2016 report by the National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA).

With increased hunger, higher instances of chronic health concerns—such as diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and HIV—and higher housing costs, older Hispanic Americans must choose between buying food or paying for medications during the month. Although many are eligible, the stigma and myths (that it's only for families with children), transportation difficulties, and cultural and language barriers stop seniors from getting the assistance they need. They are also discouraged by the belief that the benefits will be too low to justify the effort required to apply.

A 2012 report by AARP (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons) and the AARP Foundation reported that only 35 percent of eligible US seniors benefit from SNAP. And, in 2016, 18 percent of the nation's Hispanic older adults faced food insecurity, compared to 17 percent of African-American seniors and 7 percent of White, non-Hispanic older adults. Evidence shows that all seniors nationwide, regardless of race, are underserved by SNAP.

Feeding America serves nine million Latinx adults, seniors and children each year—that's more than one in six people who live in our country, in need of stable food options. Hunger among our Hispanic population is not just about lack of food. It's about

Please see
"Tengo Hambre"
on page 11.

Right: Chelle
Samaniego is a
regular reporter for
Hunger News
& Hope.

Photo courtesy of
Chelle Samaniego.



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with other programs. In 2019, Bible Center launched On Your Own, an entrepreneurship academy, to jump start Black businesses in Homewood, including those supporting food entrepreneurs. About 100 strong, this one congregation continues to strategize, identify new partners and funders to complete the vision of creating a livable Pittsburgh for all and a place where no child goes to bed hungry.

Collective Empowerment, Asset Building & Food Sovereignty

According to Johns Hopkins researchers, 34 percent of Baltimore's Black residents live in food deserts, compared to 8 percent of its White residents.¹³ This means Black residents lack regular access to fresh, healthy and affordable foods to support a healthy life. In 2011, in response to the rising number of diet-related illnesses among his congregation members, Pastor Heber Brown III led his church, Pleasant Hope Baptist Church, to establish a garden on a 1,500-square-foot plot of land.¹⁴

In 2015, the riots that erupted after Freddie Gray died in police custody revealed other problems in Baltimore's food system—the absence of community-based food sources. The Baltimore uprising birthed Brown's idea to connect churches and farmers in Baltimore and as far as

Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia. The Black Church Food Security Network continues to connect farmers and urban growers with Black congregations to create a pipeline for members and local residents to access fresh produce from “soil to sanctuary.”

In communities throughout the region, this network starts new gardens on church-owned property, expands existing church gardens, operates pop-up farm stands at churches and leads Bible studies that focus on creation care, environmental stewardship, food justice and food sovereignty. Currently, 23 churches now partner with 20 Black farmers. Over 125 people attend the Soil to Sanctuary farm stands each week.¹⁵

This work revives the African-American tradition of churches supplying food to their communities and of-

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to the root of food insecurity
and food system challenges.*

fering Black farmers a sustainable business model. This network finds inspiration from the 1960s Civil Rights visionary Fannie Lou Hamer and the Freedom Farm Cooperative. It was Hamer's belief that the people who control their food also control their bodies and destiny. The Black Church Food Security Network teaches a theology of abundance that demonstrates that much more is possible when neighbors and churches work together to create community-based food sources.

Conclusion

Food is a foundational pillar to well-being and flourishing for the whole society. To comprehensively and completely achieve food security will require getting to the root of food insecurity and food system challenges. How do we create the conditions that would promote greater access to food? How do we create the opportunities that would allow people to feed themselves? How are people facing food insecurity engaged in designing solutions to food challenges?

The uneven progress in low-income communities and communities of color has caused some leaders to re-examine the role of the individual, faith-based organizations, nonprofits, businesses and government institutions in addressing food insecurity and promoting food justice.

Left: Lokia Scott is Assistant Professor of Urban/Multicultural Education and Literacy at Baylor University. Photo courtesy of Baylor University.



Certainly, individual responsibility and charity alone will not be enough to close the present food gap. What is the way forward to ensure that those without access to healthy food have the income, assets and supports to feed themselves and their families?

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—*Stephanie Clintonia Boddie is Assistant Professor of Church and Community Ministries at Baylor University. She divides her time between George W. Truett Theological Seminary, the Diana Garland School of Social Work and the School of Education. Having lived several years in Pittsburgh, PA, she was involved in health food ventures, including the Oasis Project. She has also achieved an impressive body of work on faith-based initiatives, including those working to address food insecurity.*

Endnotes

1. United States Department of Agriculture, "Food Security in the US," 2018 (www.ers.usda.gov).
2. No Kid Hungry, "Facts about Childhood Hunger in America." No Kid Hungry is a project of Share Our Strength. (www.nokidhungry.org).
3. USDA, "Food Security in the US," 2019.
4. Pew Research Center, "How Wealth Inequality Has Changed Since the Recession by Race, Ethnicity and Income."
5. Children's Defense Fund (www.childrensdefense.org).
6. CDF Freedom Schools (www.childrensdefense.org/programs/cdf-freedom-schools).
7. "Freedom School Students Protest Federal Budget Proposals in National Day," *Waco Tribune-Herald*, July 19, 2017.
8. Food Research and Action Center (www.frac.org).
9. Go to www.seedspublishers.org/freedom-school-press. Under "Writing to End Hunger," scroll down to *Freedom School Press*.
10. Oasis Project (www.biblecenterpgh.org).
11. RAND Corporation, "Community Health and Environmental Policy" (www.rand.org).
12. Just Harvest, "Food Deserts" (www.justharvest.org)
13. Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, "1 in 4 Baltimore Residents Live in a Food Desert" (<https://clf.jhsph.edu>).
14. Pleasant Hope Baptist Church (www.pleasanthope.org).
15. Black Church Food Security Network (<http://www.blackchurchfoodsecurity.net>).

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low-wage jobs, pride in one's culture and fear of a future where the color of your skin or the country of your birth determines whether you are worthy to live and thrive.

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Sources: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (www.childstats.gov); United States Department of Agriculture (USDA.gov); Center for American Progress (AmericanProgress.org); Bread for the World; Feeding America; National Hispanic Council on Aging (www.nhcoa.org).

Endnotes

1. Feeding America is a US-based, nationwide network of more than 200 food banks that feed more than 46 million people through food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and other community-based agencies.
2. "Liable to become a Public Charge" is an official term referring to someone seeking entry in the US who is deemed likely to become primarily dependent on cash aid or long-term institutional care from the government. Current immigration policies are seeking to rely heavily on this classification to deny entry or citizenship. ■

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Food insecurity in the US has reached a record high, affecting many low-income people, particularly people of color....Furthermore, food insecurity and food deserts are prevalent in areas where other racialized policy outcomes are visible, such as areas impacted by home foreclosures, lack of funding for public schools, lack of adequate public transportation and high levels of health disparities.

In this issue, sponsored by the Alliance of Baptists, you will read about food justice issues among African Americans, Native Americans and the Latinx population—and from people who are themselves members of those populations. Our hope is that we will all learn from these voices and respond in a way that will address the injustices that exist in our society. ■

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Statement of Purpose

Seeds of Hope is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for the poor and hungry people in God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to be optional. The group seeks out people of faith who feel called to care for poor and vulnerable people; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of poverty.

Quotes, Poems & Pithy Sayings

What a sad era when it is easier to smash an atom than a prejudice.
—Albert Einstein

Hating people because of their color is wrong and it doesn't matter which color does the hating. It's just wrong.
—Muhammad Ali

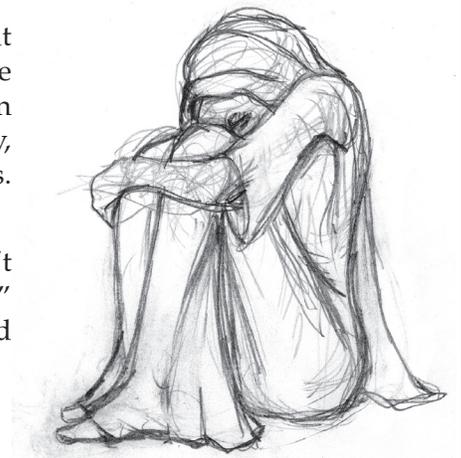
The happiest people I've ever met, regardless of their profession, their social standing, or their economic status, are people that are fully engaged in the world around them. The most fulfilled people are the ones who get up every morning and stand for something larger than themselves. They are the people who care about others, who will extend a helping hand to someone in need or will speak up about an injustice when they see it.
—Wilma Mankiller, Cherokee Chief

I couldn't help but to think back to my classmates at Thomas Jefferson High School in San Antonio. They had the same talent, the same brains, the same dreams as the folks we sat with at Stanford and Harvard. I realized the difference wasn't one of intelligence or drive. The difference was opportunity.
—Julian Castro, Candidate for US Presidency

No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background or his religion. People learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.
—Nelson Mandela

I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for the minds and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

When people were hungry, Jesus didn't say, "Now is that political, or social?" He said, "I feed you." Because the good news to a hungry person is bread.
—Desmond Tutu



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Editorial Address

Seeds is housed by the community of faith at Seventh & James Baptist Church. Mailing address: 602 James Ave., Waco, TX 76706; Phone: 254/755-7745; Fax: 254/753-1909; E-mail: seedseditor1@gmail.com. Web: www.seedspublishers.org. Copyright © 2019; ISSN 0194-4495. Seeds of Hope, Inc., holds the 501(c)3 nonprofit tax status.

Seeds also produces *Sacred Seasons*, a series of worship materials for Advent, Lent and an annual Hunger Emphasis—with an attitude "toward justice, peace and food security for all of God's children." These include litanies, sermons, children's and youth activities, bulletin art and drama.

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