

2022 IMPACT REPORT



HELPING HANDS FOOD BANK





THANK YOU

Robert & Rebecca Gates

"A real community is one where people look out for each other, and help friends and neighbors facing challenges. Helping Hands offers daily proof that Skagit County is such a community, where every person is treated with respect and dignity. We are proud to be a part of it."

Robert and Rebecca Gates

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



What type of community do you want? As I reflect on the impact you've made through the mission of Helping Hands, I sit on this question and think of what Helping Hands has done to be a good part of this community.

I want a community that sees the most vulnerable populations and makes it a priority to strengthen them. When you volunteer to deliver mobile food boxes to seniors, the disabled, and children, you are part of that. These families do not have access to nutritious food and need your help to meet them where they are. Helping Hands delivers to most cities in Skagit County weekly, and our volunteer drivers make this happen.

I want a community with a strong workforce that believes in the right to work for all. Our interns, work programs, volunteers, and job coaches believe that new and better job skills empower individuals helping them be self-sufficient through job training. Helping Hands is grateful for their hard work and dedication to feeding those in need. We needed them to do this work and would have struggled without them.

I want a community that believes everyone is a whole and complete person and that, with mentorship, path-finding, friendship, and accountability, people can and will make good choices to go from surviving to thriving. You have made it possible for the Solutions Team to do outreaches that find individuals outside the community to help them find their way back. These amazing people work hard to overcome so much, and Donors have made it possible for us to walk beside them on their journey.

I want a community that feels safe, cared for, and seen. Volunteers, Staff, Donors, Interns, and Partners work side by side to focus on delivering nutritious food, non-food life essentials, solutions, and more so that we can always be there for families in crisis. When the mother of 2 walks in with tears in her eyes, saying, "I need help," then the day she comes back and says, "I got that job," and beyond, we all as a community are there to help her.

What type of community do you want? I would love to hear from you and see how you want to continue impacting the kind of community you want.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca Skrinde".

REBECCA SKRINDE

Chief Executive Officer

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Whippo
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At the end of 2022, I was honored to be able to become a board member of Helping Hands Food Bank. Before COVID in 2019, I volunteered my time at the Sedro-Woolley location on Friday nights after work, and being part of such a fantastic organization is very fulfilling.



In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations everywhere were forced to cut down their time or close their doors altogether, but the community did not see that happening at Helping Hands. With the assistance of the staff, community, and National Guard, Rebecca Skrinde, Chief Executive Officer for Helping Hands, along with the Board of Directors, came up with a plan to continue to provide food for the community by starting a drive-through service; never allowing individuals to go without food during this challenging time.

Helping Hands has assisted not only with food but also with feminine hygiene products, diapers, formula, cleaning supplies, and other personal hygiene needs. In addition, they are also providing for the CHOW program so no child will go hungry. Helping Hands has also taken other Skagit County food banks and folded them into the organization, allowing those locations to remain open to serve the public.

Present-time inflation will only increase the need for food items, as people cannot afford those same items they may have been purchasing last year. Helping Hands Food Bank, because of the incredible partnerships with other Skagit County organizations and grants, can provide fresh produce, meats, dairy, and grains, all needed to maintain a healthy balance of daily nutrition.

Growing up, my family frequented food banks, mainly in the Whatcom County area, and I remember my mother being ambushed with questions, along with the look on her face as they wanted to know why she was there. She was there because she needed food for her children; why do you think? My mother ensured that we had food regardless of circumstance, but to be treated in such a manner because she needed extra help was horrible.

Having spent a lot of time volunteering at Helping Hands before becoming a Board member. When an individual walks through that door, the only question is, "How can I help you?" Participants get treated with respect. That is why they keep coming back. Everyone who visits gets treated like family. Staff and volunteers interact with the individuals, and the way distribution gets set up makes you feel like you are walking into the grocery store to grab a couple of items. I feel the staff goes above and beyond, even with deliveries to individuals that may not have a way or, because of disabilities, are unable to pick up the items they so desperately need.

The most significant way Helping Hands has impacted the community, besides feeding its residents, is the way individuals get treated. Participants know they can come through the doors, no questions asked, and be provided service with a smile, a cart full of food, and leave knowing that they will have food in their cupboards and on the table.

JENNIFER WASHINGTON

Board Member

MEET OUR TEAM



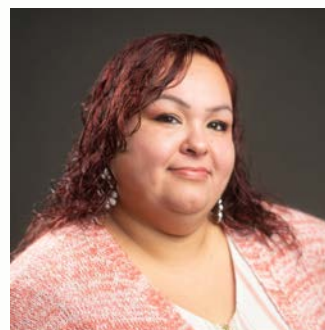
Rebecca Skrinde
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ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER



Miranda Wilson
SOLUTIONS MANAGER



Veronica Cortez
SOLUTIONS COORDINATOR



Lisa Niegowski
STREET OUTREACH SPECIALIST



Amanda Huffstetler
MARKETING MANAGER



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VOLUNTEER MANAGER



Erik Larsen
OPERATIONS MANAGER



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WAREHOUSE LEAD



Sherry Klander
DISTRIBUTION LEAD



**THANK
YOU**
for your
support!

Helping Hands
would like to
thank the Jerry
H. Walton
Foundation for
their support in
2022!

Their support
helps provide
nutritious food
and solutions to
our community.



THANK YOU

FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Helping Hands would like to thank
Janicki Industries and its employees for
their continued support.

JANICKI.COM

BY THE NUMBERS

86,048

volunteer hours
dedicated to fighting
against hunger

2.3 Million

pounds of food
distributed to our
neighbors facing
hunger

150,000

pounds of non-food
life essentials
distributed to local
families in need

197,292

visits across our six
Skagit County
locations

25,100

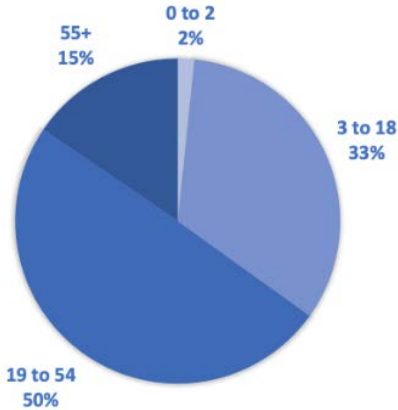
CHOW bags of kid-
friendly food
delivered to
children's doorsteps

6,833

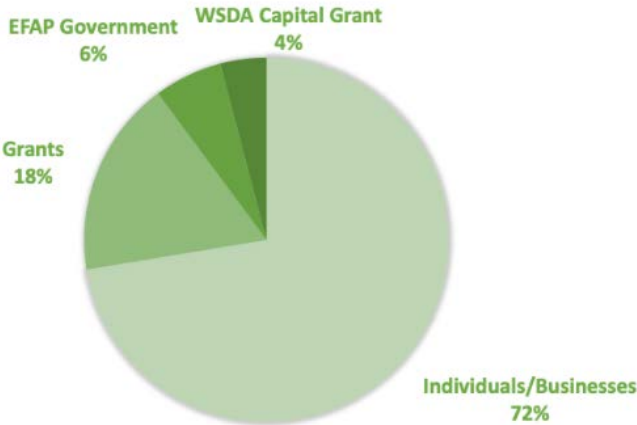
Mobile Food deliveries
to immuno-
compromised or
homebound
participants



PARTICIPANTS BY AGE



FINANCIAL RESOURCES



THE HEART OF OUR VOLUNTEERS



The volunteers at Helping Hands Food Bank are one of a kind. They give their time, talents, and heart to those in need in their community. They genuinely care about the well-being of others and how their volunteering affects them in their personal lives.

Volunteerism is a form of helping in which people actively seek out opportunities to

assist others in need, make considerable and continuing commitments to aid assistance, and sustain these commitments over extended periods, often at a high personal cost. At Helping Hands, Volunteers are referred to as superheroes. If you are interested in volunteering, contact us at (360) 383-8339 or Volunteer@HelpingHandsFoodBank.org.

A story shared by a Warehouse Volunteer

"My mother is the inspiration for my volunteering. She modeled the way and taught us to give generously to one's family and community. Volunteering at a food bank is one piece of the solution. We do interim work until all in our communities have the opportunities, education, and mental and physical support to pursue a meaningful, rewarding career. So here I am in my retirement years, still finding joy in volunteering at Helping Hands. Some of us have volunteered at Helping Hands for years, and others for just a few months. Friendships and a sense of family grow each week, which nurtures us as we hope the food nurtures our community. For all this, we are most grateful."

A story shared by a Marblemount Distribution Volunteer

"It all began in 2012 when my daughter Nicole was attending college; I suggested she start volunteering. I wanted to live by the example, and that's when I began volunteering once I retired to try to make a difference and give back to my community. Volunteering helps with my peace of mind, and it makes me feel accomplished that I can do something for my community, for the people that so desperately need assistance. Helping Hands makes a difference in helping our community with food and assisting those who truly need it. Through the years, people come and go; when they get on their feet, we don't see them anymore; that feels like I have served my community with impact when they don't need our assistance."

A story shared by a CHOW Volunteer

"There are a few fundamental reasons why my children and I Volunteer. One of them is I have chosen to incorporate serving into our Home Studies. I feel it's essential to raise my kids humble, kind, and with servant's hearts. We as a family needed food assistance before and in the past when I was a single mother of two. There are many positive impacts Helping Hands has provided for myself and my children. It has brought us closer as a family and given them a better understanding of why mom does what she does, but we get to do this together! Learning to work together as a team and with people they don't know very well. It has filled our hearts with gratitude for all the love we have gotten from everyone at Helping Hands, whom we have gotten to know and work with. Volunteering has given my kids pride and joy to be trusted, taught new skills, and the ability to jump right in to work on tasks."



FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY

In 2022, Helping Hands increased its impact on the community by expanding the Mobile Food program, sustaining other local food banks by integrating them under the Helping Hands umbrella, and building partnerships with local organizations to enhance services.

New local partnerships include Cowboy Church, Harvest Vision Ministries, and Chicken Coop Ministries. Intended to support community members facing hunger, each partnership started as an outreach. Participants could receive food from the food pantry at each location after being provided a hot meal. The support Helping Hands provides these food pantries fluctuates. Currently, we distribute approximately **180 boxes weekly** between the three programs.

Helping Hands expanded its Mobile Food and Cutting Hunger on Weekends (CHOW) programs county-wide. In 2019, the Mobile Food program served, on average, 45 individuals who were medically unable to come in and shop. When the pandemic occurred, the program was opened county-wide for anyone who needed it, including those who have tested positive for COVID-19. The Mobile Food program currently serves approximately **135 families a week**, many of whom are immunocompromised, have medical concerns, or are homebound. Similarly, CHOW, which delivers nutritious supplemental food for the weekends to kids' doorsteps, was opened county-wide in response to COVID. This program currently serves **450 children every week**.

"Because of the amazing support of Erik and his staff at Helping Hands Food Bank, we have successfully met the physical needs of many community members in the Bow area. Our Food Pantry has become a wonderful extension of the generosity and hospitality from Helping Hands Food Bank." – Ron Swihart, Cowboy Church





Helping Hands values its partnerships with Skagit County programs that support children facing hunger. In 2022, Helping Hands continued supporting the Cub Pantry at Sedro-Woolley High School and partnered with LaVenture Middle School, creating a new pantry. In addition, Helping Hands formed a new partnership with the Burlington Morning Rotary Club's backpack program for kids, which supports approximately **90 families each week.**

A driving principle of Helping Hands is to promote resilience within our community. Helping Hands partnered with Community Action of Skagit County to create a new coalition devoted to assisting those affected by natural disasters. Having a staff member as the board chairman allows us to develop this community resource alongside community partners. The Skagit Long-Term Recovery Coalition will help build resilience in

our community and support our participants on their pathways to self-reliance. If you want to learn more about our partnerships, please call our office at (360) 856-2211.

"Sedro-Woolley High School's Cub Pantry has been a big success these past few years. It has been maintained and kept up to date by a group of Leadership students. The Food Bank has been a tremendous help, providing us with food boxes. By doing so, we have been able to set food out for students and families to have access to food when needed. The pantry is outside the High School doors, making it accessible to everyone anytime." – Cub Pantry Leadership Students





HYUNDAI

THANK YOU
for your support!

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THANK YOU!

Helping Hands would like to thank Jack Carroll's Skagit Hyundai for their support in 2022!

JACK CARROLL'S
Skagit Hyundai

STUFF THE BUS FOOD DRIVE

Helping Hands holds Stuff the Bus food drives twice yearly in partnership with Skagit Transit. While we accept all non-perishable and non-food life essential donations during the Stuff the Bus in February, the fundraiser in August focuses on supporting the Cutting Hunger on Weekends (CHOW) program, which delivers kid-friendly food to children's doorsteps for the weekends. Donations of food, non-food life essentials, and funds from these events significantly impact our local community.



On January 2, 2022, our community suffered a significant loss when Community Champion Ryan Welch passed away. From a young age, Ryan expressed his love for his community in many ways; one of those

ways was to hold food drives for Helping Hands as a Boy Scout, ensuring no one in his community had to worry about access to food.

February 2022 Stuff the Bus Food Drive was held in his name to honor his legacy and his heart for our community, encouraging the community to give from their hearts like Ryan. As we enter 2023, we still receive gifts in honor of Ryan, and as of this report, his legacy has provided **\$14,928** in support of our

participants. We hope Ryan would be proud that his legacy continues to impact Helping Hands; we know we are.

For the past few years, Marathon Petroleum Corporation in Anacortes has made the August Stuff the Bus food drive a company-wide affair. In 2022, they assisted Helping Hands by collecting kid-friendly food and raising funds for the CHOW program. Impressed by this generous gift, Helping Hands took it to the community and asked them to help match the money raised by Marathon. This match helped move the needle toward the goal of each kid in our community never having to worry about an empty belly. The organization is beyond grateful for Marathon's commitment to the littlest participants Helping Hands serves.

If you would like to host a fundraiser or partner with us on a Stuff the Bus event, contact us at (360) 856-2211 or Development@HelpingHandsFoodBank.org.



POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Being present for the participants, donors, community, and volunteers is paramount to Helping Hands. We want the community to know Helping Hands is here to work together and lift one another up so that we all can thrive, and as an organization, Helping Hands does this in several ways!

Many staff members sit on boards to help craft policies and procedures, helping bring participants' voices to life. Our Solutions Manager, Miranda Wilson, sits on the board for Essentials First and DSHS. Operations Manager, Erik Larsen, chairs the Skagit Long-Term Recovery Coalition. Käären, our Engagement Manager, is part of the Sedro-Woolley and Burlington Chamber Boards and focuses on the needs of our elderly population. In addition, several staff and board members are in service clubs across the county, sharing what Helping Hands is doing to support the participants and the impact felt by them.

Helping Hands supports other impactful non-profits in their endeavors because we believe that **TOGETHER**, anything we dream for our community is possible. In 2022, Helping Hands supported the Friendship House, attended Senior Day in the Park, participated in Drug Take Back Day, and partnered with classrooms throughout the county, creating student-run pantries.

Helping Hands also snuck in some fun! Alongside our community, we drove in parades, attended festivals, hosted kids' activity tables at partner and community events, provided advocacy, and danced at concerts held by our incredible partners.

If you would like to learn more about partnering with Helping Hands, contact us at (360) 856-2211 or Development@HelpingHandsFoodBank.org.



Rotary 
THANK YOU!

Rotary Club of Anacortes
Rotary Club of Burlington
Rotary Club of La Conner
Rotary Club of Mount Vernon
Rotary Club of Sedro-Woolley

The support of the Rotary Clubs in
Skagit County significantly help fulfill our
mission and feed our community!

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OF ANACORTES**

THANK YOU

FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Helping Hands is so grateful for supporters like
United Methodist Church of Anacortes that help
ensure our community continues its vitality!

UMCANACORTES.COM

SURVIVING TO THRIVING

The Helping Hands Solutions Team's approach to addressing participants' needs is unique. Navigators work individually with participants providing pathways, creating plans, and addressing barriers they face, shifting participants from surviving to thriving.

Our Solutions Team works throughout Skagit County, reaching from **Marblemount to Anacortes**; genuinely meeting people where they are. With the increase in fuel prices, lack of transportation, and an increased population of homebound participants, bringing services to them is sometimes necessary.

In 2022, the Solutions Team connected with over **200 households** assisting each one with needs beyond our typical food distribution. Already we have seen an increase in needs compared to previous years due to a combination of factors, and many programs that supported those facing hardships have ended with more ending in the coming months.

If you would like to connect with the Solutions Team, contact us at (360) 856-2211, ext 17 or Navigators@HelpingHandsFoodBank.org.



**THANK
YOU**
for your
generosity!

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DeWAARD & BODE
THE APPLIANCE & MATTRESS GIANTS
Since 1946

A HUGE thank you to
DeWaard & Bode for their
support in 2022!

Their support will help
enable Helping Hands to
continue to feed our
community!

The Helping Hands Solutions Team's assistance to community members is vast. It includes:

- Assistance with hygiene products
- Assistance with applications, such as jobs, DSHS, Social Security, energy assistance, and other government programs
- Providing clothes and showers for job or housing interviews
- Finding affordable childcare
- Connecting with treatment options for addiction and mental health challenges, without judgment
- And so much more

We aim to give them support, tools, and knowledge and help them arrive at a life where each one can live without food banks and public assistance.

Often people in crisis are dealing with situations they have never faced or have been facing for a long time and can feel overwhelmed or discouraged. The Helping Hands Solutions Team works to get to the issue's core and find unique solutions to take people from surviving to thriving. Through partnerships, strong connections with outside agencies, and community support, clear and well-designed pathways to success are possible.

Supporting Your Neighbor

A senior participant contacted Helping Hands in need of electrical repairs to her car. She called around and received a quote totaling over \$500 for this simple repair and was struggling to find the funds to pay for it. We connected her with a participant who knew how to repair it. He wanted an opportunity to support other participants, paying it forward, and offered his services to her for free.

Hope for the Future

A local, working young man came to Helping Hands struggling with mental health and asked for support finding a counselor. His job provides no medical insurance, and he couldn't afford to pay out of pocket. We assisted him with applying for low-cost medical and finding a counselor that accepts his insurance. He is actively involved in therapy, has a better outlook on his future, and knows where to find additional support if needed.

A Life-Changing Decision

Our Solutions Team met a gentleman who was struggling with chronic pain during street outreach. We learned he was self-medicating. After meeting with him several times, discussing options, and building trust, he decided he was ready to make a life-changing decision. He asked for our help getting him an appointment at a treatment facility, and an appointment for the next day was available. One of our dedicated volunteers offered to take him, and he is now actively enrolled in a treatment program. He has hope, feels seen, and has the sparkle in his eyes back.



LEADERS INSPIRING LEADERS

When planning started for the 2022 Leaders event, we knew it wouldn't be a typical gala experience and that we wanted to raise funds, and in the true spirit of Helping Hands, we also wanted to give back something to those who attended.

For the second time, Dr. Robert Gates, former US Secretary of Defense, shared his wisdom, experience, and heart for our mission. He not only spoke to everyone that attended but extended himself to a VIP experience where VIP ticket holders could ask him a question about leadership directly. What a gift of opportunity!

As thought leaders in our local community, Helping Hands also wanted to share Skagit County's diverse leadership. With that came the pleasure of having three impactful and influential female leaders speak to what being a woman in leadership is like and the unique challenges many women still face in the workplace today.

Surrounded by beautiful planes at Skagit's over Heritage Flight Museum, Helping Hands

staff and board members shared information about programs it provides to the community and shared stories from participants about their experiences. Widespread fellowship happened as we dined on local eats provided by two outstanding local restaurants, Skagit Landing and Skagit Provisions.

Most importantly, our community donors rose to meet the needs of our participants' challenges, raising **\$171,000**, assisting them from surviving to thriving, and assuring them that we are in this together and that no participant is facing this world alone, that their community wants to succeed.

This event is only possible and impactful with community donors' support, donors like Dimensional Communications. For years, they knew they wanted to impact Helping Hands but needed help finding a path as to how. Dimensional reached out and found a way to support Helping Hands by donating time to do all our sound, lights, and audio.

If you are interested in supporting Leaders 2023, contact us at (360) 856-2211 or Development@HelpingHandsFoodBank.org.



**SAVE THE
DATE!**

September 30th, 2023
Heritage Flight Museum

A VERY SPECIAL
THANK YOU
TO

DIMENSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS
Helping People Communicate Better Since 1973



**FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT DURING
LEADERS 2022!**

BUILDING THE FUTURE

Helping Hands works with many organizations, such as WorkSource, and Skagit Valley College. These partnerships enable us to train young adults, the handi-capable, and people with other barriers employing them in a safe place to learn computer skills, customer service skills, forklift operations, box truck driving, and basic warehouse operations.

In March 2021, WorkSource Grants partnered with Helping Hands, allowing us to employ those affected by COVID-19. The individuals we were connected to lost their job due to COVID-19, couldn't get a job due to the pandemic, or were stay-at-home moms wanting to join the workforce. This partnership ensures successful employment until the grant ends in June 2023. In December 2021, the Washington State Department of Commerce partnered with Helping Hands with a grant that allowed us to hire 12 laid-off workers.

In 2022, one of our participants gained employment with the county, and others moved on to start their own businesses. One participant gained employment with Janicki Industries in 2022 to begin their career in 2023.

These grants provided a source of income for our interns and stimulated our local economy by bringing **\$637,052** into Skagit County.

Below are examples of the impact the program has had on them:

"I appreciate being able to financially support myself and have access to food. I am also grateful to be part of supporting and helping other people in the community. It's the same reason I joined the National Guard." – Kai

"I enjoy being part of the Helping Hands community and actively helping others. Like they say in the Navy, 'It's not just a job; it's an adventure.'" – Todd

"It's fun and challenging! I am glad to be at Helping Hands now that my National Guard orders have expired. At the end of each day, I'm tired but good tired." – Shawn



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Helping Hands is extremely grateful for the support from partners like Sedro-Woolley Soroptimist!

Their support helps empower our community with nutritious food and solutions.



THE POWER OF GIVING

Fun fact! Over **94%** of the food and non-food distributed by Helping Hands Food Bank is provided by community individuals, businesses, and foundation grants; the other **6%** is through government subsidies.

Every donor has a choice when they give, and we are... beyond words grateful for the support we have received throughout the county. In 2022, Helping Hands saw people reignite their giving when they hadn't given in years and saw current donors commit to becoming monthly sustainers. Churches and services clubs also reached out to help with projects and offer their talents and treasures to support the participants we serve.

Supporter Highlight:

Helping Hands has so many outstanding donors, and in 2022 were blown away by the support of so many. A special thank you to our friends from the Upper Skagit tribe. In 2022, they donated over **\$75,000** to support our participants, enabling Skagitonians to visit Helping Hands 197,292 times.

In 2022, Helping Hands received **2,222** financial donations, including **435** new supporters and **61** monthly sustainers.

Make an impact today; donate online at www.HelpingHandsFoodBank.org/donate or by mail: P.O. Box 632, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284



Upper Skagit Indian Tribe

THANK YOU

FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Helping Hands is deeply appreciative of the continued generosity and support of the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe.

UPPERSKAGITTRIBE-NSN.GOV

EXPANDING ACCESS

Being a resource for all means exploring ways to meet the needs of all, and in 2022, we knew the need for affordable access to food and non-food life essentials was vital to Skagit County residents. The cost of food went up, and honestly, everything went up, forcing Skagitonians to make a difficult choice. Do they buy food, or do they pay a bill?

To help mitigate the stress our community members are facing, we knew we needed to expand, and we knew we needed a powerful partnership to meet the need. Enter, Inspire Church! When COVID hit and the food banks needed a place to serve our East County participants, Inspire Church stepped up to the plate offering its North Cascades campus as a new distribution location.

So when they heard our participants needed more access county-wide, they

stepped up to the plate again, providing us with two new distribution locations at their Burlington and Swinomish campuses. These locations not only make food more accessible to our community, but they also offer non-food life essentials once a month. Not only do our participants not have to worry if their bellies will be full, but they also don't need to worry about paying for personal hygiene products or laundry detergent.

Our Solutions Team also took up residence in Anacortes in 2022, allowing our West County participants to quickly discuss their unique challenges with one of our Navigators closer to home. Our new space in Anacortes also allows our partners to meet the needs of their clients in that area because we lend out the space to them when they need it. We do this because we believe that **TOGETHER** we can meet the needs of all our community members.

"Expanding our partnership with Helping Hands was incredibly important to us! We exist to bless, care for, and show love to our community! Helping Hands has allowed Inspire Church to be the hands and feet of Jesus to our communities, and there's no better way to show love than to make sure people aren't living in a place of food insecurity! We are so thankful to have Helping Hands at 3 of our Inspire Church locations!"
- Pastor Josh



Helping Hands would like to thank the
Swinomish Tribe for their continued support!



swinomish-nsn.gov

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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Arliss Abbott
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Shirley Brown
Allen Brown
Sharon Brown
Diane Brown
Tyler Bryant
Kurt Buchanan
Thomas Buckingham
Eric Buher
Marlene Buller
DeVere Bunke
Fenicia Burke
Marjean Burke
Erin Burkholder
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Burlington Rotary Foundation
Burlington-Edison High School Education Association
Barbara Burnette
Janice Burwash
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Karen Butcher
Cathy Butler
Devon Butler
Ann Buzaitis
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