

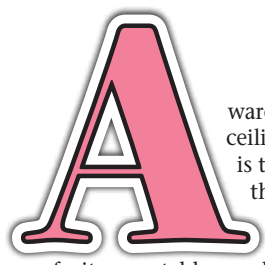


Sandra FRANK

She's the CEO of the 27-year old All Faiths Food Bank that sorts and distributes eight million pounds of food—equal to 7.4 million meals—every year to agencies that serve the 51,000 people who do not have the means to purchase food for themselves and their families.

What's the answer to ending hunger in Sarasota County? "First we have to bring awareness to the community that 170,000 people in the county (most of whom are educated and hold a job) cannot afford sufficient food and basic living necessities. My frustration comes from people who tell me there is no hunger problem here."





warehouse stacked to the ceiling with donated food is the epicenter of assuring that the hungry of Sarasota have access to nutritious food, fresh fruits, vegetables, and meat. The 27-year old All Faiths Food Bank sorts and distributes eight million pounds of food—equal to 7.4 million meals—every year to agencies that serve the 51,000 people who do not have the means to purchase food for themselves and their families.

With a passion for healthy families, CEO Sandra Frank oversees the logistics of storing and sorting donated food, the operation of eleven 24- and 36-foot trucks, 3,000 volunteers, and numerous partnerships. A \$3 million expansion due to open in 2016 will double the size with the addition of 20,000 square feet that includes 4,000 square feet of freezer and cooler space for fresh foods. All Faiths Food Bank receives funding from a large donor base, grants, contracts with Sarasota and DeSoto counties for food distribution, contracts with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Sarasota and DeSoto counties, and a few grassroots events such as the Bowls of Hope on November 8 which is expected to draw between 1,200 and 1,500 people.

Sandra says, “A new vision of food banks has emerged from feeding the line to ending the line by stabilizing families thereby leading to independence. The 200 food banks in the United States all served the line in the moment—people were hungry so they served them. The new perspective is to connect with local healthcare partners to address issues such as diabetes and stroke. We need to address the people who live in food deserts—low-income areas that have no grocery with fresh fruits, vegetables, and meat. Long-term goals include becoming the connective tissue that links families to service organizations with a focus on improving health and well-being.”

Sandra became the CEO in 2012 after a career as an attorney, a gubernatorial appointee as Director of Health Care Access project in Michigan, and Director of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) in Michigan. She practiced law for eight years, but didn’t find it personally rewarding so she faced a choice: practice law or be a parent. Her son was the reason for her decision to leave law and join the non-profit world at MADD which she found more gratifying.

Describing herself as focused, compassionate, mission-centric, and data-driven, Sandra talks about her role at All Faiths. “I provide vision, direction, encouragement, and support to the organization. I’m the public voice of the food bank. My goal is to advocate and raise awareness, empathy, and passion around hunger. Much of my time is spent building. We have a very talented staff and strong programs. And as in every association executive job, I do fundraising.”

“All Faiths Food Bank has been transformed into one of the most effective nonprofits in our region thanks to Sandra’s outstanding leadership, intelligence, and passion,” says Keith Monda, former Chief Operating Officer and President of Coach, current member of the Board of Directors of both All Faiths Food Bank and Feeding America, and local philanthropist. “We’re feeding more children and families than any other time in the food bank’s history. I credit this success to her foresight and thoughtful development of a Board of Directors and executive team that share her dedication and

commitment to a mission that ends hunger in our community.”

The scope of the food bank’s operation is extensive. Food bank trucks leave the warehouse every morning to deliver food to nearly 180 agency partners such soup kitchens, pantries, churches, community centers, schools, and programs. The trucks also serve as mobile pantries where 300-400 people receive food at specified sites and the Sprout Route that distributes fresh produce at 11 sites.

Sandra talks about the 20,000-plus (52%) school children in Sarasota County who receive free or reduced meals and how the Backpack Kids program supplies kid-friendly nutritious meals at schools on Friday for the weekend (a total of 120,000 meals for the year) and the Campaign Against Summer Hunger to meet children’s hunger needs during the summer.

What is the answer to ending hunger in Sarasota County? “First we have to bring awareness to the community that 170,000 people in the county (most of whom are educated and hold a job) cannot afford sufficient food and basic living necessities. My frustration comes from people who tell me there is no hunger problem here. When 57% of people we serve choose between buying food or paying for housing, 68% choose between buying food or medicine, 61% of hungry households have at least one person who is working, and 87% purchase the least expensive food without consideration to nutritional value, there is definitely a hunger problem. In addition 59% of households have someone with high blood pressure and 60% have someone with diabetes. Sarasota has the resources to get its arms around the problem, but not when people deny that anyone is hungry,” she explains. The 51,000 people who receive food are self-identified as white (67%), African American (14%), and Hispanic or Latino (12%).

Her greatest supporters—other than her husband—are other women who, she says, have done it. There were only two women in her law school class and two women in the law firm where she worked. She says, “I’m an advocate for women’s rights and the impact that women have. I was tested by fire in law school and at the law firm. Today’s women are on the shoulders of generations of trailblazers who were smart and athletic and paved the way.”

Sandra received a Bachelor’s degree in biology and her JD from Wayne State University, has additional professional development in fundraising management and is a Certified Association Executive. She was born and raised in Detroit as the only child of an engineer father and a bookkeeper mother. Her husband Dennis Campbell is a retired engineer. One son is in construction marketing in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and another son is a packaging engineer in Chicago. Sandra manages to exercise one hour a day and says she loves to dance—something she has been doing since she was a little girl.

With a thoughtful and soft-spoken demeanor, Sandra is attacking the challenge of hungry individuals, families, and children head-on. The staggering food bank statistics indicate that the challenge is being met, but the need remains. With a CEO and board that are committed to eliminating hunger in Sarasota County, more people will receive the assistance they need on their road to independence. 🍷

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