



# newsletter

## Spring 2019

The mission of Feed1st is to relieve hunger among patients, families and caregivers receiving care at University of Chicago Medicine.

### About Feed1st

The Feed1st Program started as a food pantry in the Comer Children's Hospital after a chaplain at the children's hospital, alerted us to hunger among her patients' families. The program was founded by a group of Pritzker medical students, Comer Children's Hospital staff, and University of Chicago faculty.

We partner with the Greater Chicago Food Depository to supply food to patients and their families on four inpatient floors and the emergency room in Comer Children's Hospital, as well as the 6th floor adult outpatient Infusion Therapy Suite in the Duchossois Center for Advanced Medicine.

### Why is there a food pantry inside of a hospital?

Although the hospital attracts patients throughout the Midwest, it primarily serves patients from the South Side of Chicago. Our communities experience some of the highest rates of food insecurity in the city—in some neighborhoods, more than half of residents do not know where their next meal will come from.

Food insecurity has been linked to negative health outcomes in both children and adults. Feed1st aims to address the issue of food insecurity experienced by patients, caregivers and family members at University of Chicago Medicine..

## We couldn't do this without you!

Feed1st is led by researchers from the South Side Health & Vitality Studies of the Lindau Lab. This work is supported by the University of Chicago Medicine and generous individual and corporate contributions, including the American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation.



## Volunteer Spotlight

In this edition of the Feed1st newsletter, we would like to celebrate our Pritzker Medical School student volunteers who work hard behind the scenes to keep hungry patients and their families fed through the Feed1st program.

# Tracy Dinh

**Hometown:** St. Paul, MN

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

I think what Feed1st does is so necessary and impactful, and getting involved with such an organization in the 1st year of medical school was important to me.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

I love it when past users of the pantries consider the pantries important enough to later donate food or inquire about getting involved.

**Why is food security important to you?**

Being in the hospital with a sick family member is such a demanding time and people cannot adequately focus on caring for loved ones when they're hungry. Where their next meal is coming from should be the least of families' worries when they're at our hospital.



# Brie Farley

**Hometown:** Brighton, CO

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

I feel really strongly about making what is already an extremely difficult situation for families easier in any way I can. Families should not have to spend any energy figuring out where their next meal is coming from while they are dealing with the myriad of stressors that come from having their child in the hospital.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

I love seeing families in the break room while I'm stocking, especially when they take food items!

**Why is food security important to you?**

I worked as a health educator for a couple years before medical school and saw over and over how impossible it is to manage your health when you don't have access to basic needs, like food. This is totally unjust – no person should have to wonder where their next meal is coming from, and if they do, we are failing them as a society.

**Can you share any specific, meaningful memory from your time as a volunteer?**

The very first day I stocked the pantries, a mom in one of the break rooms was someone who uses the pantry often! She even had a favorite pantry item! It was super rewarding to be able to see how the pantries help people.



# Susan Feldt

**Hometown:** La Porte, IN

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

Food insecurity itself is a terrible problem, but no one should be hungry, particularly while taking care of a sick child. It's just such a clear way we can help our patients while they're handling a difficult illness.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

I love hearing from people who've used the pantries and seeing the how many people have benefitted from having this service accessible in the hospital.

**Why is food security important to you?**

Food is such a basic need and can make a huge impact on our health and wellbeing. Everyone should be able to know where their next meal will come from.

**What is your advice who those interested in getting involved with this issue?**

Just do it! It's a clear need, and anyone can make a valuable difference by volunteering or donating to a pantry near them.

**Can you share any specific, meaningful memory from your time as a volunteer?**

We received a comment card from our children's hospital that said this was the best hospital they'd been in so far. I think part of what makes Comer special is our community initiatives like Feed1st and it was so great to hear that from our patients.



# Juhi Gupta

**Hometown:** Lisle, IL

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

I spent a lot of time volunteering to prepare and hand out meals and other essential supplies to the homeless in Chicago, so I wanted to be able to continue this type of work in medical school. It astonished me to see how many people go unnecessarily hungry and I am passionate about reducing this disparity in many ways.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

Interacting with the patients near the pantries and educating them about the purpose of Feed1st is fulfilling.

**Why is food security important to you?**

Food is a basic human need and right. In a country like the United States, with excess food and a large amount of food waste, it does not make sense that people lack access to this resource.



# Anna Huang

**Hometown:** Houston, TX

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

I feel like food security specifically in the hospital is an issue that goes largely unnoticed/unaddressed and I wanted to do whatever I could to help out!

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

Getting to swing through the different floors of Comer and work together with my fellow volunteers.

**Why is food security important to you?**

Food security is so critical to not only physical health but also overall well-being—it's a basic human need and one that often goes unmet.



# Brianna Lambert

**Hometown:** Chicago, IL

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

I was drawn to Feed1st because I felt like I could make a tangible difference in patients' lives.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

I love being able to talk to families when I'm in a family lounge stocking a pantry.

**Why is food security important to you?**

I believe that access to food is a basic human right and that no one should have to worry about where their next meal comes from. In order to improve our society, we must first meet the basic needs of our society's members.





# Lilly Lerer

**Hometown:** Dallas, TX

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

I got started with Feed1st by working in the Lindau Lab.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

I love how simple and straightforward this work is: make food available, no questions asked. No forms, no surveys, no screeners, no waiting, no questions.

**Why is food security important to you?**

The entire project of healthcare simply doesn't matter if people aren't able to feed themselves.



# Christine Mozer

**Hometown:** Port Washington, NY

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

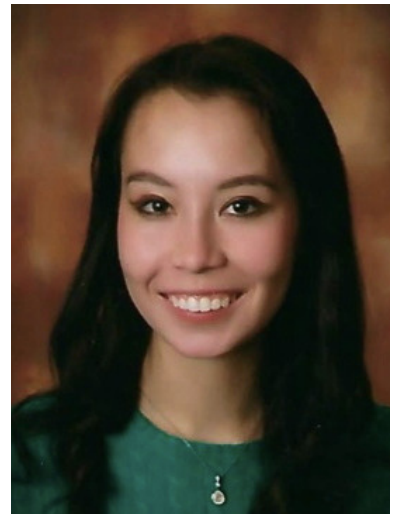
I learned about Feed1st when Dr. Lindau spoke to our Health Care Disparities class and the organization's important mission inspired me. No one should experience food insecurity during a loved one's hospitalization.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

I enjoy working with the Feed1st team to restock the pantries and support UCM's patients and families in a tangible way. I feel fortunate to work with a passionate group of people and especially enjoy opportunities to connect with those we serve.

**Why is food security important to you?**

Food security is important to me because access to nutritious food is critical to recovering from illness and maintaining health. Food insecurity is associated with negative health outcomes and addressing the issue of food insecurity is a way for UCM to care for the whole person and support the communities our institution serves.



# Olivia Schultz

**Hometown:** Chicago, IL

**What drew you to working as a volunteer for Feed1st?**

I volunteered at a food pantry in Nashville during my undergrad years and really enjoyed the experience. I wanted to find something similar when I came to UChicago. I heard one of my classmates, Lily, talking so passionately about Feed1st and I knew it was something I wanted to join.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

The feeling when you stock the pantry and come back later to see that it's empty. While you don't always have an in-person interaction with the population your serving, it's such an amazing feeling to see the empty pantry because you know the work you're doing is feeding people who are going through a difficult time in the hospital.

**Why is food security important to you?**

Food security is important to me, especially in the hospital, because I can't imagine having to face the life-altering events that go on within the hospital while hungry. People's lives are already turned upside down when a loved one is in the hospital; I can't imagine then having to worry about where your next meal will come from.



# Alison Schutt

**Hometown:** Alton, IA

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

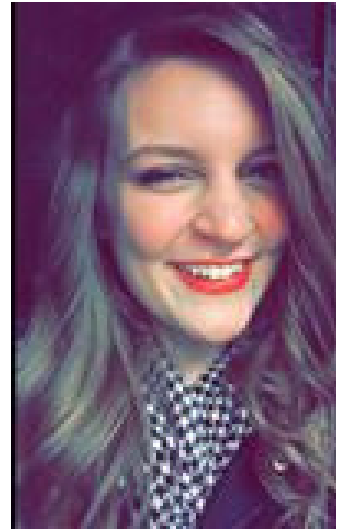
I was drawn to volunteering with Feed1st because of the program's view that when you notice a need it is important to work to fill that need first and then advocate to create change that could help eliminate the need.

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

I love the tangible nature of filling a need within the hospital.

**Why is food security important to you?**

I believe that providing food security for families in the hospital allows them to attend to other needs that inevitably come with a hospital stay. I believe that ensuring security in basic needs for our patients' support systems will help also help them feel more secure and supported which will allow them to heal.



# Kierstin Webster

**Hometown:** Parkland, FL

**What drew you to working as a volunteer with Feed1st?**

As a future physician, I find myself thinking more and more often about the obstacles that exist for many members of our communities in living their healthiest lives inside and outside of the healthcare system. Feed1st aims to combat one of those obstacles- food insecurity- and I value the opportunity to be part of that work!

**What is your favorite part of this work?**

My favorite part of this work is knowing that we're maintaining a resource that can be used by patients, families, and personnel alike, no questions asked and no judgements made.

**Why is food security important to you?**

The food we put in our bodies is central to our health and well-being. Daily life poses so many challenges and responsibilities for all of us and no person or family should have to add the worry of where their next meal will come from to that list.



## Donate to Feed1st!

**Here's how your donation can help:**

\$10 buys 30 meals

\$50 buys 150 meals

\$100 buys 300 meals

or, support our research!

To donate visit <http://giving.uchicago.edu/feed1st>

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