



Give Local

FOOD BRINGS US TOGETHER. It acts as the centerpiece for family and social gatherings. Yet the celebratory quality that most of us frequently associate with food is unfortunately not shared by many in this country. For 46 million Americans, with almost 1 in 4 being children, living with food insecurity is a part of daily life. And for many seniors and those on fixed incomes, painful choices have to be made between purchasing much needed medicine, paying utility bills, or buying food.

According to a nationally commissioned 2014 study on hunger in America, there are 405,000 people in the Mid-South (defined for purposes of the study as consisting of Memphis and Shelby County, along with 30 surrounding counties in western Tennessee, northeast Mississippi, and Arkansas) identified as food insecure. Yet these people are not alone in their struggle, as there is an established 501(c)(3) charitable organization whose entire mission is to address this critical issue—the Mid-South Food Bank. Founded in 1981, the Mid-South Food Bank distributes food to those in need through a partnering network of over 200 food programs consisting of food pantries, mobile pantries, and on-site meal programs, providing food for an estimated 230,000 different people annually in nearly 94,000 unique households within these 31 counties.

This massive level of food assistance is achieved through their efficiently run regional network that is able to provide three meals for every \$1 in donations, resulting in the distribution of 15.6 million pounds of food to those in need in the fiscal year for 2013-2014.

As identified on the front cover, the underlying theme of this book is *Dine Local/Give Local*, and consistent with this theme, the title of **Feeding Memphis** was intended to take on a double meaning. Not only will you be able to join in this celebration of those who create the diverse cuisine of the Bluff City that feeds Memphians every day, but through your purchase of this book you will be also be actively participating in helping to feed those in this area who live with food insecurity. With each purchase of **Feeding Memphis**, the publisher and I will be jointly donating \$10 to the Mid-South Food Bank.

My hope for **Feeding Memphis** is that the transcendent power of food will be the force that draws people to want to purchase the book, so in turn their buying decision can help those who regularly face not having enough to eat. To those who have elected to acquire a copy, let me thank you for your decision to *Give Local*, as we aim to reach the goal of providing donations to the Mid-South Food Bank that will allow for the purchase of 150,000 meals.

