

# FOODSHARING

Holiday 2015

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BANK 



**"I'm so appreciative because I'm able to make quality meals that can last."**

- Mary with her daughter, Anjoné, at Sweetwater Mission, a partner agency of the Atlanta Community Food Bank

## Hope for the Holidays, and Beyond

The Food Bank is collaborating with many of its partner agencies on innovative solutions that not only provide nutritious foods, but also transform lives. Sweetwater Mission is one of those success stories.

[READ MORE](#) • PAGE 5

### IN THIS ISSUE:



#### From the CEO

Kyle Waide reminds us of the importance of keeping holiday traditions alive for everyone.

PAGE 2



#### Thanksgiving

Retired teacher gives thanks for her community and a special Thanksgiving gathering.

PAGE 3



#### Game Changer

This Morehouse freshman is on track to make a tremendous difference for the hungry.

PAGE 4

Continued from cover

# Hope for the Holidays, and Beyond

Mary recently experienced a job loss. The single mom received her bachelor's degree from Morris Brown College last year and is currently in the graduate program with Liberty University. She's actively seeking a new job and is excited about some promising prospects, but she's facing financial challenges in the meantime.

## A Beacon of Light in Tough Times

"The biggest challenge is being able to manage with what I have," said Mary. "I've always worked and I'm pretty good

about finding a job that pays decently. I see light, I just gotta get past the woods." Sweetwater Mission, a partner agency of the Atlanta Community Food Bank, has been a big part of that light.

"It allows me to know that we've got fresh fruit, we've got fresh vegetables. I'm so appreciative because I'm able to make quality meals that can last."

- Mary, Sweetwater Client

Mary first encountered Sweetwater Mission in Austell, Georgia when her family faced a potential housing crisis last spring and the organization's Stable



The Market at Sweetwater Mission is filled with bins of fresh produce, rows of staples and coolers of dairy products and meats. Clients are able to choose the items that best fit their family's needs, and volunteers like Nancy Russell are there to help. (Photo: Allison Young)



Mary and her daughter, Anjoné, at the ribbon cutting for The Market at Sweetwater Mission (Photo: Allison Young)

Housing Initiative came to the rescue. Sweetwater's Linda Van was instrumental in the process of getting the family into their current home. Mary told us Linda checks on her every week and recently encouraged her to come and get some food from Sweetwater's food pantry. When Mary expressed her concern that other people might need the food, Linda didn't hold back. "Well, you really need it right now!"

Mary agreed to come and was pleasantly surprised. She was one of the first to step into the pantry's newly renovated space in September. It has been transformed into a bright and colorful marketplace where clients can choose what foods they need. Mary is grateful to those who have donated funds to Sweetwater and to the Food Bank, making it possible for her to get nutritious food for her family. "I want to always make sure my children have what they need," said Mary. "I've got to be able to stretch dollars, and sometimes it's not enough. So, the donations, the gifts, the contributions being made - it takes that additional worry and stress off. It allows me to know that we've got fresh fruit, we've got fresh vegetables. I'm so appreciative because I'm able to make quality meals that can last."

## Together for the Holidays

In addition to their ongoing food distributions, Sweetwater will be offering special provisions for Thanksgiving and

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- Mary, Sweetwater Client

Christmas so their clients won't miss out on traditional holiday meals. "Because of Sweetwater Mission and the contributions, I'm able to host my family and some of my friends who have not been bold enough to say they need help. It's going to be great because I have two kids in college that'll come home and they won't have to wonder if we'll have anything to eat."

Mary looks forward to the day that she can be a regular donor. "When I get on my feet, I know there's a place where I can come and be involved in transforming someone's life as well, and not just from the standpoint of being a contributor, but also being one who has benefited."