



KATE MAEHR BIOGRAPHY

Kate Maehr became chief executive officer of the Greater Chicago Food Depository in 2006. Her leadership is demonstrated by a number of strategic initiatives and significant accomplishments to address hunger in Cook County.

Under Kate's guidance, the Food Depository has vastly expanded operations and distribution to meet rising demand throughout Cook County. Since the economic downturn of 2008, the Food Depository has increased its distribution by more than 20 million pounds of food while developing new programs to better serve priority populations.

Kate's vision for the organization led to the development and current implementation of a five-year strategic plan – *Growing the Field* – that launched in 2010. With this plan, the Food Depository is increasing access to nutritious food, strengthening community responses to hunger, mobilizing the public to end hunger, implementing new outcome measurements and strengthening its infrastructure. Significant progress has already been achieved, including the expansion of produce distribution to 33 percent of all food.

Kate has overseen the creation and growth of several innovative programs. In 2007, the Mobile Pantry program was launched to distribute fresh and shelf-stable food to communities with high need and limited local resources. That same year, the Food Depository started distributing food boxes to older adult residences. In 2009, the Food Depository began offering SNAP Outreach services to help families and individuals apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – formerly known as Food Stamps. In 2010, the Food Depository launched its Lunch Bus program to deliver nutritious lunches to children during the summer months. In 2013, the Food Depository partnered with Jesse Brown VA Medical Center to open one of the nation's first food pantries in a VA hospital. This program model was replicated in 2014 at Hines VA Hospital.

The Food Depository has conducted a number of studies under Kate's leadership to identify and connect priority populations and communities with the nutrition they need. In 2012, the Food Depository released *Hunger Among Seniors in Cook County*. In 2010, the Food Depository began highlighting community food insecurity data in unprecedented detail. The same year, the Food Depository and the SOCIAL Impact Research Center examined nutritional access for Cook County children in *Running on Empty*.

A leading voice in the fight to end hunger, Kate is co-chair of the Illinois Commission to End Hunger, a board member of Feeding Illinois – the state's coalition of food banks – and a member of the State of Illinois Social Services Advisory Council. Kate is also a member of the Economic Club of Chicago and The Chicago Network. In 2013, Feeding America presented Kate with the Dick Goebel Public Service Award, which is given annually to one individual in the national network of food banks.

Kate holds a bachelor's degree from Macalester College and a master's degree in Public Policy and Administration from the University of Wisconsin. She received an honorary doctorate from Knox College in 2011.