



## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### 2nd Annual 'Stop Senior Hunger' Food Drive Kicks Off

Nearly one in nine American senior citizens are at risk of hunger, and 2,000 older adults die from malnutrition each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC).

To combat stark statistics like these, five local agencies are partnering to sponsor the second annual "Stop Senior Hunger" food drive, running March 19 through April 9.

GRADD, Independence Bank, Comfort Keepers, Specialty Foods Group and Canteen held a press conference yesterday at the GRADD office in Owensboro to launch this year's campaign, which aims to feed at least 500 low-income individuals in Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union and Webster counties.

"Hunger is a silent crisis among seniors nationwide and in our local communities," said Darrell Higginbotham, Independence Bank's Daviess County president.

Nonperishable food items may be dropped off at any area Kroger, Hometown IGA, or Sureway supermarket, as well as at local senior centers, Independence Bank, Comfort Keepers or GRADD.

Those wishing to make a monetary donation may also mail a check to: Independence Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 988, Owensboro, KY 42302. One hundred percent of proceeds go toward the food drive.

All food items and monetary donations collected within each county will go to benefit the seniors of that specific county.

There are currently 600 individuals on the "Meals on Wheels" waiting list in our seven-county region; and approximately one-third of GRADD aging services clients report that they have had to choose between food and paying for their medical care or utilities.

"This project is desperately needed in our area because of the lengthy waiting list," said Jeanette Woodward, GRADD contracts manager. "Due to limited program funding, people often have to wait one year or longer for services."

Local seniors who have an income at 150 percent of the federal poverty level or who are currently receiving public assistance are also eligible to obtain food through this initiative.

Last year's food drive, which included Daviess and Henderson counties, netted 4,500 food items—enough to feed 300 seniors for approximately one week.

For more details about contributing to the "Stop Senior Hunger" food drive or to refer a senior who may need assistance, please visit [www.GRADD.com](http://www.GRADD.com) or call (800) 928-9093.

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*The Green River Area Development District (GRADD) is a regional planning agency serving the communities of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster counties. GRADD offers assistance in the fields of aging, health, and social services; community and economic development; transportation planning; and workforce development. Our mission is to afford local governments and citizens a regional forum to identify issues and opportunities, and to provide leadership in planning and implementing programs to improve the quality of life in our district.*

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