



DOING THE
MOST GOODSM

Media Alert

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LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY FOR HUNGRY FAMILIES DWINDLES

*Salvation Army Reporting High Demand for Food
As the Unemployed Strive to Put Food on the Table*

With recent reports of longer periods of unemployment after job losses and the unemployment rate creeping up, The Salvation Army in Oklahoma City is seeing heavy demand for food relief. More and more, Oklahomans are arriving at the Social Services Office declaring they've finally reached the end of their savings. They need help.

"We don't feed statistics, we feed people," said Major Alan Hill, area commander, explaining his assessment of increased need and supporting what appears in the headlines.

"In this community, we are seeing a whole new population coming to us for food. Our regulars are now being joined by the formerly middle-class, a group that's just begun to embrace a nightmare they probably thought they'd never see - no money for food. With foreclosures and gasoline and utility costs rising, not to mention the fear of recession, times are hard for many in our community."

Unfortunately, this phenomenon coincides with a seasonal low in Salvation Army food pantry supplies. "We've used up our holiday donations feeding people through the holidays and beyond," said Social Services Director Toni Sanders. "We need a new influx of support."

"From everything I'm hearing, this is a scenario that may not let up, especially for older workers," Sanders said. "With out-sourcing, their jobs aren't coming back. Many have already scaled down their expectations. They're looking for entry-level work outside their fields. But they are being displaced by younger workers."

The Salvation Army provided:

***6,449 bags of food in February 2008. That number rose to 7,598 bags in February 2009**

*** served 5,783 people in March 2008. As of March 15, 2009, that number was already at 5,946**

"The Salvation Army has always served the neediest," said Sanders, "and we will continue to respond to cries for help from those who need it most. But we depend on the support of the community to do our work. We urge our friends to make a gift so we can help those who are hurting most of all."

To donate to The Salvation Army, call **405-246-1100** or mail your gifts to **P.O. Box 2095, OKC, OK 73101**.

Media:

For more information about the numerous programs offered by The Salvation Army or to arrange interviews with staff or clients, please contact **Heide Brandes** at **405-623-0665**.

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