



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

Vasco A. Smith, Jr., Administration Building
11th Floor, 160 North Main, Memphis, Tennessee 38103

MEDIA ADVISORY

December 20, 2021

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MAYOR LEE HARRIS AND COMMISSIONERS EDDIE S. JONES, JR. AND WILLIE F. BROOKS, JR. DELIVER \$3 MILLION CONTRIBUTION TO MID-SOUTH FOOD BANK AND CELEBRATE VOLUNTEERS

This \$3 million represents one of the largest single contributions the Food Bank has received and will provide nine million meals.

- WHAT:** Shelby County Government delivers \$3 Million to Mid-South Food Bank
WHO: Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris, Shelby County Commission Chairman Emeritus Eddie S. Jones, Jr., Shelby County Commission Chairman Willie F. Brooks, Jr., Cathy Pope, President and CEO of the Mid-South Food Bank
WHEN: Tuesday, December 21, 2021, 8:30 a.m.
WHERE: Memphis University School, 6191 Park Avenue, Memphis, TN 38119 (Enter at Ridgeway Road Entrance)

Shelby County, TN – On Tuesday, December 21, 2021, at 8:30 a.m., Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris, Commission Chairman Emeritus Eddie S. Jones, Jr., and Shelby County Commission Chairman Willie F. Brooks, Jr. will deliver a \$3 million check to the Mid-South Food Bank. This is one of the largest single donations the food bank has received and will be funded through the County's American Rescue Plan Act allotment. It will provide 9 million meals for families across Shelby County. The event will kickoff the Food Bank Mobile Pantry distribution at Memphis University School and will also recognize the student volunteers.

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Since the pandemic, the challenges for the Mid-South Food Bank mirror those of food banks across the nation. According to Feeding America, a nonprofit with a network of over 200 food banks, the number of people being served by the nation's food banks has increased by 55 percent since the pandemic began. In the first full year of the pandemic, the country's food banks distributed 6 billion meals.

Locally, the Mid-South Food Bank has lost distributions from the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency and the USDA Farmers to Families Food Boxes. Before the pandemic, the Food Bank distributed about 16 million pounds of food a year. At the height of the pandemic, that amount rose to 55 million pounds in one year and continues to see a high level of need.

Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris: “We have all seen the lines of cars that trail through the neighborhoods near area food pantries. This is tragic. What’s even more tragic is that Feeding America reports that food insecurity has soared during the pandemic and shows no sign of letting up. The pandemic and the economic crisis that followed created food insecurities for many families that had never needed help before. The growing need in our community, coupled with the conclusion of several federal and state emergency food resource programs, created the perfect storm. I’m happy that we were able to find the resources to help the Food Bank feed families across Shelby County.”

Shelby County Commission Chairman Emeritus Eddie S. Jones, Jr: “The Mid-South Food Bank has been a lifeline for Shelby County residents throughout the pandemic. When we heard that the state and federal governments cut the Mid-South Food Bank’s distribution, we knew we needed to step up. The County Commission worked closely with Mayor Harris’ administration to get these funds approved. I had a special interest in this funding and I’m happy to see it moving forward.”

Cathy Pope, President and CEO of Mid-South Food Bank: “The need in our community was great before the pandemic, and it is even greater now. There isn’t a corner of our county that has not been impacted by illness, loss of income, and strained resources. The end of a few temporary federal and state emergency food programs only made that situation worse for us and our distribution partner agencies. This donation is very timely and with it, we will be able to serve our community better. We could not be more grateful.”

(End of Release)

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