

Contact: Paul Mina
Phone: (508) 872-3291 x 4824
Fax: (508) 875-8862
Email: Paul.Mina@uwotc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2017

Summer Stretch Summer might be the hungriest season

Framingham, MA - Contrary to what most people think, the highest demand for food is in the summer. While many families are celebrating graduations and planning vacations, lower income families are wondering how to feed their kids this summer. Losing access to breakfast and lunch at school puts an added strain on an already tight budget, and families are left making tough trade-offs, like having to choose between food and rent, utilities, or medical care.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reports Framingham is one of many cities and towns in the Commonwealth to have 50% or more of their student enrollment eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits for Fiscal Year 2017. That's more 4,300 children who will now be eating those meals at home. At the same time food pantries and meal programs like the Pearl Street Cupboard & Café at Park in Framingham have seen their food donations dwindle, just when families need more food to get them through the summer months.

The United Way of Tri-County, which owns and operates the Framingham-based pantry and serves hot meals twice a week, has begun a new campaign, the Summer Stretch, to fill this void. "A \$50 donation will feed a family of four for a week," said Paul Mina, President & CEO of the United Way of Tri-County. "Many people think about hunger around the holidays, but don't realize hunger is a year-round problem. For this reason, food donations tend to be lower in the summer months. We want to remind the local community that we're still here, and families still continue to struggle. With the Summer Stretch, we're helping families stretch their food budget while giving them a little breathing room this summer."

Donations can be made online at <https://www.uwotc.org/summer>

###

The United Way of Tri-County is a community-building organization that brings people together to care for one another. We provide programs and services, connect volunteers, strengthen agencies, teach social responsibility, and meet the critical needs of the community with the help of people like you.