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FEEDING THE SOUL:
VOICES OF KENTUCKY WOMEN COMBATING CHILD HUNGER

THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Community and Leadership Development in the College of Agriculture at the University of Kentucky

By

Mya Price

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Patricia Dyk Professor of Community and Leadership Development

Lexington, Kentucky

2017

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

FEEDING THE SOUL:

VOICES OF KENTUCKY WOMEN COMBATING CHILD HUNGER

This study addresses the overarching topic of food insecurity by giving voice to individuals who are dedicating their careers toward combating child food insecurity throughout their communities. Voices are uplifted through the representation of narratives by volunteer coordinators overseeing child feeding programs, which have been established throughout Kentucky as an effort to help alleviate child hunger. This study is guided by London's theory on career motivation, with the outcomes of this study serving as a pilot for future research centered around individuals working to combat child food insecurity. The narratives collected from this study will be used as a resource for generating public conversation, spreading awareness, and to "tell the story" in regards to child hunger across Kentucky.

KEYWORDS: Food insecurity, child hunger, alleviate, narratives

_____ *Mya Price* _____

_____ 04/25/2017 _____

FEEDING THE SOUL:

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Chapter I: Introduction

Food insecurity is defined as limited or uncertain availability of nutritiously adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways, is still a problem in the United States (Ashiabi et al., 2008). In 2014, there were reportedly 48 million people (15.4%) who were food insecure in the United States (Feeding America, 2014). Of the 48 million who were food insecure in 2014, in the year of 2015, Feeding America reported that 13.1 million children lived in food-insecure households (Feeding America, 2015). Some of the top states in which were reported to have some of the lowest rates of food-insecure children under 18 included North Dakota, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Virginia, but unfortunately not the state of Kentucky (Feeding America, 2014).

While most may consider the United States to be a thriving nation with an abundance of job opportunities and available food resources, as of 2014, an overall total of 743,310 (16.8%) people were considered to be food insecure and 222,380 (21.9%) of children were considered to be food insecure throughout the state of Kentucky (Feeding America, 2014). To this day, statistics such as these continue to be pertinent in many households across the United States, as adults continue to struggle to provide food on the table for their children. Instead, many adults across the nation are faced with the decisions to either pay their light, water, or car payment bills as a replacement of putting food on the table. Making tough choices such as these cause many households to struggle with accessing food resources for their families, especially for their children who have no choice in the matter.

According to the Kentucky Food Bank Association, there are over 700,000 Kentuckians, or 1 in 7, adults who do not always know where their next meal will come from (Kentucky Food Bank Association, 2016). Additionally, close to 1 in 4 of Kentucky's children lack consistent access to enough food for a healthy, active lifestyle (Kentucky Food Bank Association, 2016). In March of 2013, Governor Beshear announced that Kentucky was awarded a \$3.2 million grant award to help reduce childhood hunger. The funding that Kentucky received through this grant would go toward a project that will focus on poverty and food insecurity among children in southeastern counties and would test the impact of providing households with children with an additional transportation deduction that may increase the amount of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and food benefits they would receive (Kentucky.gov, 2016). Beshear noted that, "This pilot project takes into account the high cost of transportation to and from the grocery stores for families in rural communities, where a trip into town is not an easy task. Additionally, he stated that, "We expect this project to enhance the lifeline of food benefits and help keep children from going hungry" (Kentucky.gov, 2016). Prior to receiving the grant funding to help combat food insecurity throughout the state, Kentucky has consistently ranked as the 4th highest state in the nation for poverty (Feeding America, 2013).

Overall Context of Food Insecurity

In addition to Kentucky, from Kentucky, high rates of food insecurity are a significant problem throughout the United States (Heflin et al., 2015). Current estimates show that almost 49 million people live in food-insecure households, meaning that at some time during the previous year they were unable to to acquire enough food or were uncertain of having enough food to meet their basic needs due to inadequate household resources (Heflin et al., 2015). Although food insecurity is a growing concern nation wide, estimated rates and patterns of food insecurity remain tenuous because food insecurity is difficult to measure amongst low-income families (Bartfield et al., 2006). Many households effected by food insecurity, exist in undernourished low-income communities, that may lack resources, compared to communities that aren't geographically or physically considered to be in low-income areas (Jenson, 2002)

In the United States, food insecurity is assessed in the United States using an 18-item scale developed by the USDA in which questions ask about several dimensions of food deprivation and include a blend of psychological consequences of food insecurity and hunger (Ashiabi et al., 2008). Households are classified as food secure, food insecure without hunger, and food insecure with hunger. In stating this, food insecurity does not revolve around reducing the quantity of food intake but emerges in the concern of the sufficiency of food supply, diet quality, and variety of intake. For example, at moderately severe levels, adults reduce meal or serving sizes and/or skip meals, which sometimes

leads to hunger (Ashiabi et al., 2008). At more severe levels of hunger, families with children face the greatest challenges in that children's intake are reduced, along with adult intake, in which creates a lesser capacity of food intake by both populations. As these labels were deemed to be ineffective to the inclusion of the child population, in 2006, the USDA re-introduced new labels for ranges of children's food insecurity.

These labels included high or marginal food security, low food security, and very low food security, in which replaced "food insecure without hunger" and "food insecure with hunger" (Ashiabi et al., 2008). In a continuing process of developing a more effective survey to measure both adult and child food insecurity, the weakness of the 18-item scale, overestimates the rate of children's hunger in households with no child aged 5 years and underestimates the prevalence of hunger for children aged 6-17 years (Ashiabi et al., 2008). The following updated thresholds have been established by the USDA when measuring food insecurity within a household:

1. *Food security*: All household members had access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.
2. *Low food security*: At least some household members were uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food because they had insufficient money and other resources of food.
3. *Very low food security*: One or more household members were hungry, at least sometime during the year, because they couldn't afford enough food.

4. *Marginal food security*: All households falling into the marginal, low, or very low food secure categories are said to be “marginally food insecure.”

(Gundersen, 2015)

According to Gundersen et al., (2015), much of the work of understanding hunger comes from the Research Program on Childhood Hunger at the University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research, which was underwritten by the Food and Nutrition Service of the USDA (Gundersen, 2015). According to Jenson (2000), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that, 10.5% of households (11 million households) faced food insecurity in the past year. These households represent over 33 million individuals in the country who experience hunger (Jenson, 2002). While understanding food insecurity in the context of the United States’ economic and social environment is complex and food is widely available in stores and is relatively low priced (by world and historical standards), low income households report having concerns that their food supplies would not last, or skipping meals because of the lack of financial resources (Jenson, 2002). Food insecurity, in both urban and rural communities, causes people to have inadequate nutrients and to then rely heavily upon foods that increase health risks, along with the ultimate challenges in living a healthier lifestyle (Zhang et al., 2013). Not only do risks such as these affect the parents, but creates a generational effect, in which their children also suffer (Zhang et al, 2013).

Key Contributors of Food Insecurity

Relation to Poverty

According to Raphael (2014), hunger is principally caused by poverty. Though the populations affected by poverty and food insecurity overlap, they are not identical in the fact that not all poor people are food insecure, and the risk of food insecurity extends to people living above the federal poverty level. In stating this, food insecurity plays a major role on the financial resources available within a household. In 2012, 10% of US households had food insecure children, meaning that access to adequate food for children was limited by their households' lack of money and other resources (Miller et al., 2014). Lack of access to adequate food by U.S. households increases the demand for financial resources such as resources derived from cash and in-kind assistance provided by public and safety-net programs. These public and safety-net programs include food assistance programs, housing subsidies, and energy assistance programs (Cook et al., 2008). A household's access to food assistance programs is measured by poverty thresholds and are predetermined amounts in which the federal government estimates to be approximate levels of necessity for families of different sizes and composition (i.e. number of people in the household and number of children or elderly) (Cook et al., 2008).

While these thresholds have been predetermined (financial assistance amounts set by the federal government), both the definition of poverty and its thresholds have been criticized on the grounds that they do not accurately reflect a families' true financial resources or the amount of financial assistance a family may need to be economically

stable. As a note, people who are homeless or living in marginal housing when surveys are conducted throughout the U.S. in regards to evaluating food insecurity may not be included (Gundersen et al., 2015). Additionally, many overlooked groups are likely to have substantially higher food insecurity rates than those of the general population when it comes to understanding food insecurity through hard-to-reach groups (Gundersen et al., 2015).

For families affected in some level by food insecurity, many of these families' incomes exceed the eligibility cutoff for federal food assistance programs and may be unable to avoid food insecurity without assistance, if the cost of competing needs such as energy or housing are overwhelming (Cook et al., 2008). Additionally, in the year of 2005 there were 35 million food-insecure people (12.1%) lived in food-insecure households and there were 24.3 million in households without hunger. Of the 35 million people who were food-insecure, there were 12.4 million who were children that were younger than 18 years (Cook et al., 2008).

Rural vs. Urban Food Deserts Access to Food

“It’s about overwhelming access to really-bad-for-you foods”, says Mark Swanson, a social anthropologist at the University of Kentucky (Quick, 2014). In addition, “people tend to buy and eat what’s available”, noted Swanson (Quick, 2014). Rural areas have some unique characteristics affecting food availability and acquisition that greatly contribute to the higher prevalence of food insecurity in nonmetropolitan areas, in which include the limited number of supermarkets, limited availability of food

items, and high relative costs of food (Olson et al., 2004). Specifically, Appalachian communities are disproportionately affected by the leading causes of morbidity and mortality, and the region has some of the nation's highest heart disease death rates, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Quick, 2014). In rural America, a food desert is as 10 miles or more from the nearest supermarket and it's estimated that there are more than 23 million people, more than half of them low-income, living in food deserts (Quick, 2014).

Four aspects of rural poverty and well-being are discussed and compared with urban poverty areas. These include the rural poverty rates, the socioeconomic well-being of rural children, levels of food security in rural households, and housing problems in rural America (Poverty and Well-Being in Rural America, 1999). Sharkey et al., (2011) suggest that rural residents have a socioeconomic disadvantage and the worse access to local and healthier food sources. Lack of availability has increased their risk for chronic disease, food insecurity, and poor dietary behaviors. It was noted from the results of the study that a greater proportion of rural adults infrequently consumed a regular breakfast meal and ate less than three daily servings of fruit and vegetables (Sharkey et al., 2011) In stating this, lower level fruit and vegetable intake among rural adults may be the result of limited access to fruit and vegetables, store availability, and transportation infrastructure (Sharkey et al., 2011).

Compared to rural areas, in urban areas the U.S Department of Agriculture considers food deserts an an area with no ready access to a store with fresh and nutrition food options within a mile (Quick, 2014). Access disparities in urban areas has different

characteristics to poverty than in rural areas, in terms of relatively high market prices for basic goods and services (Shaw et al., 1994). While urban dwellers have to cope with the relatively high market prices, rural dwellers are vulnerable to food insecurity as a result of both chronically low incomes and sudden disruptions in the food system (Shaw et al., 2011). Due to the higher prices that low-income residents find themselves paying, poor urban dwellers are highly vulnerable to food insecurity as a result of both chronically low incomes and sudden disruptions in the food system (Shaw et al., 1994). Not only do risk such as these effect parents who are living within the households, but this creates a generational effect, in which the children of the households also suffer (Shaw et al., 1994).

Food insecurity in urban neighborhoods causes residents to suffer from dietary needs and then rely heavily upon foods that increase the health risks in living a healthier lifestyle (Zhang et al., 2013). Just as people living in rural areas face barriers such as transportation infrastructure, people in urban areas also face some of these common challenges in accessing nutritious foods. However, Nancy Schoenberg, a medical anthropologist with the University of Kentucky suggest that, “Peoples’ lives in rural America look in many ways like urban or suburban peoples’ lives’.” Additionally, noting that people in urban areas, “have jobs, soccer practice, ballet. They are spending their time working and doing but not necessarily cooing in their kitchens and healthy convenience stores aren’t available” (Quick, 2014).

Case Study. Beginning in 2005, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene used the social-ecological model to develop a multifaceted effort to

increase fruit and vegetable access citywide, with emphasis in low in-come neighborhoods (Sacks, 2015). The results from this research showed that the overall percentage of New York City adults who reported consuming no fruits and vegetables in the previous day decreased slightly over a 10-year period (Sacks, 2015). The price, the availability, and other structural factors serve as barriers to fruit and vegetable consumption in the general population, and particularly in low-income adults that are most likely to live within urban neighborhoods. In low-income neighborhoods, small corner grocery stores are most likely to be located in predominantly African-American neighborhoods (Love, 2008). Higher food prices in poverty areas could be explained by a greater cost of shopping for food, smaller size of food retailers, small package size, or the level of market concentration (Finke et al, 1997).

Smaller grocery stores such as corner stores create an economic barrier for low-income residents, because a majority of items are highly priced; therefore, making it difficult for resident low-income neighborhood to purchase (Love, 2008). Due to the higher prices that low-income residents find themselves paying, poor urban dwellers are highly vulnerable to food insecurity as a result of both chronically low incomes and sudden disruptions in the food system (Shaw et al, 1994). In stating this, low-income urban dwellers often have to cope with relatively high market prices for basic goods and services (Shaw et al., 1994).

Effects of Food Insecurity

Effects on Household

Household income has been a traditional measure of economic well-being used in poverty statistics; however, needs (both basic and non-basic) are not identical across families and therefore, income alone does not explain if a family can afford housing or adequate food or personal care (Mammen et al., 2009). Lack of adequate income is a major reason why families experience food insecurity and as of 2005, there were more than 42% of households with incomes below the federal poverty line (\$19,350 for a family of 4) were food insecure (Mammen et al., 2009). Households with children experience rates of food insecurity that are double those of the household without children, while black and Latino families experience food insecurity at rates that are three times higher than those of white families (Silverbush et al., 2010). According to Miller et al., (2014), traditionally households headed by single mothers have had the highest rates of child food insecurity (CFI) whereas married-couple households have had the lowest rates (18.7% versus 6.3%, according to the most recent data from the USDA. Gundersen et al., (2015) notes that food insecurity among children was more than twice as prevalent among households headed by black and Hispanic persons, than among those headed by white non-Hispanics. Additionally, with households with very low food security among children, was made up of nearly equal number of white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, and Hispanic households (Gundersen et al., 2015).

As of today, there are 1 in 5 children throughout the United States who are born to cohabiting, but not married, parents (Miller et al., 2014). For children in this type of household, previous research has suggested that stepparents may be underinvested in nonbiological children, because they may be less committed to children who are not their own (Family Structure and Child Food Insecurity). In stating this, the dynamics of food insecurity suggest that the decisions that are made regarding food purchase in strongly dependent on decisions driven in part by the family members living within the household and also their goal of maintaining consistent food consumption over time. In the decision making process, disabled persons within the households also play a major role decision regarding food purchase along with financial decisions. Gundersen et al., (2015) states that families who do not receive public benefits for which they are income eligible (either because of bureaucratic barriers or because the programs are not entitlements and are insufficiently funded to reach all who are eligible), may be more likely to be food insecure. Therefore, families who face these types of barriers are households who are facing the greatest struggle with food insecurity.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Federal Programs Working to Combat Food Insecurity

In order to ensure that food-insecure households have greater access to food resources, federal nutrition assistance programs represent a major policy commitment to meeting the food-related needs of vulnerable segments of the populations (Barfield et al., 2006). While each federal program may differ from state to state, and even from

community to community, different geographic locations differ in the availability of these programs as sources to support (Barfield et al., 2006). The U.S. Department of Agriculture is aware that throughout the United States, food insecurity is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, don't have physical, social, economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy lifestyle (Zhang et al, 2013). As a way of helping to combat food insecurity throughout the United States, each year the USDA spends 60 million annually on domestic food and nutrition assistance programs to ensure access to nutritious, healthful diets for all Americans (Bartfield et al., 2006). The largest programs SNAP, WIC, and NSLP has a combined budget of almost \$100 billion, as these programs were established to increase food consumption and, in the process, improve children's health by, for example, reducing food insecurity (Gundersen, 2015). Federal programs such as these have play a vital role in the reducing childhood hunger amongst children who are residing in low-income families throughout the United States. According to Gundersen (2015), food assistance programs have long been an important part of the social safety net for U.S. children, especially SNAP that has increased over the past 20 years, while nonfood assistance programs have decreased over the years.

SNAP/WIC

Compared to the other federal food assistance programs provided in the United States, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is viewed as the most powerful and effective anti-hunger program for approximately 23 million children nationally (Raphel, 2014). Previously called the Food Stamp Program, provides food

assistance nationwide to all households solely on the basis of financial need and is central to the food assistance safety net for low-income children (Gundersen, 2015). SNAP improves children's wellbeing in various ways that reduce poverty, improves birth outcomes and general health, and increases the survival among low-weight infants (Gundersen, 2015). In helping to break the barriers that low-income residents face in accessing healthier options, local neighborhood food initiatives are geared toward helping to serve low-income residents who naturally wouldn't have access to localized fresh produce options. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is the single largest component of the U.S. Farm Bill and as of 2011, SNAP provided almost \$72 million in benefits per year to just over 44 million recipients (USDA, 2012) – (Jerry, 2014).

In addition to SNAP, the federal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides more than 9 million pregnant and breast-feeding women, infants, and children up to age 5 annually with food deemed essential to proper growth and development (Hillier et al., 2012). This federal program is intended to help reduce the prevalence of iron-deficiency anemia in infants and children and has increased intakes of certain targeted nutrients for program participants (Devaney et al., 1997). Additionally, this federal program is a public health program that provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health referrals, and nutrition education. In addition to this, the participation in this program is expected to result in improved outcomes for pregnant women, their infants and young children (Metallinos-Katsaras, et al., 2011).

In 2013, WIC served 8.7 million people, at a cost of \$6.45 billion and with an average monthly benefit of \$43 (Gundersen et al., 2015). According to Harris (1990), WIC food includes milk, cheese, eggs, vitamin C-rich juice, iron-fortified infant formula, infant cereal, beans and peanut butter. In addition, the WIC program has been shown to be cost effective and to improve birth outcomes, especially for high risk pregnant women; those who are minorities and with the least education (Harris, 1990). As an effort to increase the access to recipients receiving SNAP or WIC benefits, recent studies have shown that twelve states decided to require WIC participants purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, whereas the rest of the states have allowed frozen and/or canned food options to meet program requirements (Hilliner et al., 2012).

Child and Adult Care Food Service Program (CACFP)

Aside from other federal food assistance programs that are fully operated through the school (NSLP and SBP), the Child and Adult Care Food Service Program provides cash reimbursement to family day cares, child-care centers, homeless shelters, and afterschool programs for meals and snacks served to children (Heflin et al., 2015). In conducting the study on examining the association between CACFP provider's participation and food insecurity, Heflin et al., (2015) found that accessing child care through providers that participate in CACP resulted in a small reduction in the risk of household food insecurity. Along with the intended targeted population for this program, four central criteria determine the eligibility and benefit levels of those participating in this program and that includes the type of care (center vs. home-based, for profit vs.

nonprofit, licensed vs. unlicensed), neighborhood income, provider income, and also household income of children in care (Gordon et al.,2011).

Compared to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), this program operates over the course of the academic school year and has a set of different regulations required in operating this program. If a provider has chosen to operate this program throughout the school year, during the summer months they may chose to continue the operation of their feeding program through SFSP. For feeding sites choosing to operate year around, this allows those sites to continue work on combating food insecurity throughout the entire year.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Diets rich in fruit and vegetables are associated with better health status. Coyle et al., (2009) suggest that consumption of fruit and vegetables among adolescents is generally below recommended levels, supporting the need to identify effective strategies for promoting fruit and vegetable consumption, among other healthful dietary patterns. Compared to other federal food initiatives that have been established throughout the United States, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program began in 2002 as a pilot program that included four states (Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio) and one Indian Tribal Organization (in Zuni, New Mexico) (Clark, 2012). The purpose of this program is identify the best practices in increasing fruit and vegetable consumption among elementary school students and specifically targets elementary schools with high rates of free and reduced lunch price lunches.

As of July 2011, the program was funded at \$150 million a year, with participating schools receiving \$50-\$75 per student each year (Clark, 2012). Schools that are participating in this program across the United States, typically distribute the snacks in the classroom or in central areas, but the most common methods of distribution include distributing by baskets, trays, and carts during the children's morning break (Coyle et al., 2009). In a part of of distributing healthy snacks to children, teachers and school personnel (e.g. nutrition services staff), while other administrators provide assistance to students during the time of distribution (Coyle et al., 2009).

The Special Milk Program (SMP)

Although that highly known as compared to other federal children's programs, the Special Milk Program (SMP) has been established to provide milk to children in schools and childcare institutions who do not participate in other Federal meal service programs throughout the United States (USDA, 2016). The program reimburses schools for milk they serve to children on a regular basis. Schools that are already participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs may also make the decision to participate in this program. By participating in this program, schools can provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meals programs (USDA, 2016). In the year of 2012, this program reimbursed 3,647 schools and residential child care institutions participated, along with 571 summer camps and 482 non-residential child care institutions. In addition to other federal children's programs, the Food and Nutrition Service administers the

program at the Federal level, the SMP is usually administered by State education agencies, which then operates this program through various state institutions.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federal program that operates in over 100,000 public and nonprofit private schools across the United States (Gundersen et al., 2015) In 2013, just under 31 million students participated in the NSLP; nearly 19 million of them received free lunches and nearly 3 million more received reduced price lunches (with the remaining 9 million students paying full price for their school meals on a daily basis). In addition to this, the federal government gave schools \$1.2 billion in free food for programs in 2013, along with an additional \$11 billion to reimburse the cost of providing the meals (Gundersen et al., 2015). The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) are federally sponsored nutrition programs operating daily in school systems throughout the United States (Vinluan,2006). Prior to the establishment of the SBP, the NSLP was created in 1946 to provide nutritious foods, either free or at a low cost, to children during the critical school-age years (Vinluan, 2006).

Compared to the SBP, this program is intended to meet child hunger needs during the school day, by offering children who participate in this program free, reduced-price, or “full price” meals, depending on their family’s size and also the amount of income the family has generating into their household. In addition to the program’s prices for meals, the Community Eligibility Option allows schools in high-poverty areas to provide free

breakfasts and lunches to all students if the percentage of households in the community participating in SNAP are high enough (Gundersen et al., 2015). Lunches that are provided through NSLP must include five items: meat or meat alternate, two or more vegetables and/or fruit, whole-grain or enriched bread or bread alternate, and fluid milk (Raphel, 2014).

While the NSLP has been designed to combat the hunger needs of children through meal provided during the school days, in 1966 Congress established the School Breakfast Program (SBP) as a pilot program to provide funding for breakfast in “poor areas where children had to travel a great distance to school.” (Vinluan, 2006). Gundersen (2015) notes the SBP operates much like the NSLP, but while most schools in the U.S. serve lunches, about 75% of U.S. schools serve breakfast. In 2013, 11.2 million received their breakfast free or at reduced prices and the remaining children paid full prices for their meals (Gundersen, 2015). The purpose for establishing the SBP was in response to the large number of children who were attending school without eating breakfast and/or were skipping their breakfast meal.

Not only did skipping this meal result in behavior disruptions in the classroom, but this impeded on the children’s school performance. What makes each of these programs so enriching to the lives of majority low-income children, is that the NSLP and the SBP are successful at achieving the basic dietary objectives of providing one-third of the Recommended Daily Allowance for lunch and one-fourth of the RDA for breakfast (Vinluan, 2006). Gundersen (2015) suggest that the SBP’s ability to help children in need is limited, but most of the schools serving predominantly low-income populations do take

part in ensuring that this program is greatly serving the population that needs it the most. Although the NSLP aims to provide nutritious foods to school age children, there has been concern in delivering on the promise of achieving the RDA, as the lunches are likely to be higher in saturated fat than recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (Dunifon et al., 2003).

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

Even though the NSLP and the SBP are highly effective federal programs for children living in food insecure households to utilize, the downside is that each of these programs are not available when school is not in session (Gundersen, 2015). In stating this, during the year school, more than 21 million children rely on access to free and reduced-price lunches eat year, but over the course of the summer months, only 3.2 million of these children actually receive meals (Colman, 2015). As research notes, there is a large gap between meals that are consumed throughout the year by children, versus the number of meals that are consumed by children throughout the summer months. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides meals to children participating in camps and other recreational programs, but the availability and participation in SFSP continues to lag considerably behind that for meal programs during the school year, and overall nationwide participation has decreased (Bartfield et al., 2006).

Currently, it is a relatively small program, with a budget under \$400 million in 2012, so it has room to expand to serve more children if policy makers are inclined (Gundersen, 2015). While many may not know SFSP is the single largest federal resource

available for local sponsors who want to combine a meal program with a summer activity; however, many schools and summer recreation programs are not aware that federal funds are available to provide free meals during the summer (Vinluan, 2006). Although millions of children depend on nutritious reduced-price meals at school for nine months out of the year, just a fraction of the children who receive school lunch also receive summer food when school is not in session (Vinluan, 2006). To note, only two in 10 low-income children who receive school lunch also receive summer food when school is out of session (Vinluan, 2006).

The low use of SFSP may be attributed to the lack of knowledge about the program, as a recent federal government study found that more than half of the parents of guardians who children were non-participating, were not aware of the SFSP location in their area (Vinluan, 2006). Just like CACFP, there are eligibility requirements for participating in this federal program, but regulations are much more relaxed during the summer months, because policy makers know that food insecurity rates among children rise over the summer when they aren't receiving up to 10 meals a week from the NSLP. For sponsors across the U.S. participating in this program, sponsors receive payments for serving healthy meals (most SFSP sites can provide up to two meals; breakfast and lunch or breakfast and dinner) and snacks to children and teenagers, age 18 and younger, at approved sites in low-income areas (Vinluan, 2006). Additionally, all sponsors will receive training prior to starting the program to learn how to plan, operate, and monitor a successful food service program (Vinluan, 2006).

The SFSP encourages communities to provide safe places for children to go to be with other children and supportive adults who are volunteering their time toward operating this program. As the largest public provider of out-of-school-time meals, park and recreation agencies are feeding hungry children in low-income and underserved communities (Colman, 2015). Additional large sponsoring sites of SFSP include schools, private non-profit organizations and other public agencies that may apply to sponsor the program specifically during the summer months (Vinluan, 2006).

Role of Food Banks in Combating Child Hunger

Since the 1980's emergency food support in many areas has become an established resource to support those who are food insecure and since 2010, there have been at least 75% of households served by food pantries (Kicinski, 2012). Food banks are named as so because these umbrellas organizations serve as centralized warehouses for the collection of emergency food, which is distributed to smaller agencies (e.g. food pantries). In this process, food banks then distribute their goods to member agencies, such as food pantries, meal programs, and shelters, of which will then turn to provide these resources to low-income families (Bhattarai et al., 2005) When there is limited resources available for the SNAP, food books along with food pantries serve as an optional resource for those who are in dire need of an additional food resource. In receiving food sources from pantry locations, those participating will usually received items such as canned tuna and vegetables, tomatoes, spaghetti, rice, peanut butter, dried beans, and so on (Greenberg et al., 2010).

In addition to donated items that food pantries supply (usually items donated by community members), food pantries also carry TEFAP commodities that are provided by the federal government. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) was formalized in 1983 and provided charitable agencies with a steady source of food, enabling the growth of private food assistance (Bhattarai et al., 2005). There is no federal law regulating the distribution of privately donated foodstuffs; however, emergency food assistance providers who receive TEFAP commodities must comply with state criteria for determining which households are eligible to receive food for home consumption (Bhattarai et al., 2005). The eligibility to participate in TEFAP, is usually set at a percentage of the federal poverty level, up to a maximum of 185% of poverty (Bhattarai et al., 2005).

Food insecure families that have limited resources to food accessibility, are in dire need to food assistance programs such as food pantries. Food pantry participation is often associated with low-income women, with low education levels; single younger mothers with children living at home; and older women living in the rural areas (Bhattarai et al., 2005). Additional factors include that users are more likely to have difficulty feeding their families, run out of money for food, and serve less nutritious foods than non-users (Bhattarai et al., 2005). When it comes to the transportation means that pantry utilize and getting to and from the pantry locations, those who own cars are much less likely to use the food pantry than those who do not own their own car (Bhattarai et al., 2015). According to Bhattarai et al (2015), participating in one food assistance program increases the likelihood of participating in other, as food insecurity appears to push

motivated families to look for more than one possible sources of food assistance. Food assistance programs such as pantries, gives typically low-income households the option to rely on another food access option, especially when a household's food stamp income has diminished.

The Kentucky Association of Food Banks (KAFB) provides food and quality services to increase the capacity of Kentucky's Feeding American food bank to end hunger. With 120 counties that make up the state of Kentucky, there are a total of 7 different food banks that have been established in different regions across Kentucky in order to combat the issue of hunger. Under the umbrellas of the KAFB is God's Pantry Food Bank, in which the Food Bank's mission is to reduce hunger in Kentucky through community cooperation making the best possible use of all available resources (www.godspantry.org). The Food Bank oversees programs that are working to combat hunger throughout Central and Eastern parts of Kentucky, overseeing a total of 50 counties. The Food Bank's programs include the Backpack, Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Fayette County Pantry Program, Food for Underserved Counties, Kids Cafe, School Based Pantry Program, Sharing Thanksgiving, and also the Summer Feeding Program. Program that are specifically youth oriented include the Backpack, Kids Cafe, School Based Pantry, and Summer Feeding Programs.

Backpack Program

Alongside these formal, national programs, schools have a variety of less formal responses designed to link families to outside food resources or to augment child and

family food supply through direct distribution. Schools offer a number of formal and informal services aimed at reducing food insecurity, but the problems associated with identifying children in need, addressing issues of stigma, and matching specific child family food-related needs to appropriate intervention responses limited schools' capacity to effect positive change in children's food situations (Fram et al., 2014). In a recent national survey, teachers reported that children who do not get enough food exhibit problematic behavior in the classroom, including a lack of concentration, stomachaches, irritability, disciplinary problems, and increased aggression (Fram et al., 2014). In order to combat the issue of children being under fed, some teachers buy and give out extra food to children they identify as being hungry; some schools offer "food backpacks", holiday food baskets, or may refer children and their families to food pantries (Fram et al., 2014).

By implementing food assistance programs such as the Backpack Program, usually the Family Resource Coordinator (FRC) and/or Youth Service Center (YSC) coordinators will be knowledgeable about the needs of the student and will also serve as the link between the student and the family. Family resource centers (to serve children up to age 12) and youth services centers (serve age 12 and older) are charged with developing relationship and program linkages among agencies that serve children and families, including social services, health department, employment services, mental health workers, juvenile justice, and colleges and universities (Smrekar, 1996). Centers are staffed by a center coordinator with the assistance of an advisory council comprising parents, school staff, community members, and service providers (Fram, 2014).

Although these coordinators are involved in various effort to serve their students, efforts to promote the flow of resources and support to families in ways to strengthen the functioning and enhance the growth of development within students, are driven by resources programs such as the backpack initiative (Smrekar, 1996). Through the establishment of a Backback program within a school setting, FRC's are in charge of overseeing that children who are in need of food assistance, will bring home weekly backpacks filled with easy-to-prepare, non-perishable foods that will help to reduce the hunger needs of that child throughout the week. In addition to the Backpack Program, so schools have established permanent on-site food pantries, and many teachers refer families to community resources to help with food-related problems (Fram, 2014). Although there has been little research on school based programs such as the backpack and school pantry programs' effects on child development, some evidence suggests that school-based efforts are helpful (Fram, 2014).

Dryfoos (1999) suggest that will support efforts mounted at the federal, state, and local levels, schools today are beginning to respond to food insecurity needs, by partnering with community agencies to open their doors in earlier in the morning as well as after school and on evenings, weekends, and even throughout the summer months. As an example, in Central City, KY there were 18,080 backpacks distributed with a total of 45, 200 pounds of food values at approximately \$36,000 distributed, in order to provide hundreds of children with backpacks filled with nonperishable food items (Peterson et al., 2014). In Stanton, KY projects that were led through 4-H provided backpacks not only filled with perishable food items, but information about healthy meals and snacks, in

order to encourage lifestyle changes and increase well-being (Peterson et al., 2014). As another example, Warsaw, KY relationship with food assistance programming has been developed through faith communities, in which volunteers from local churches collect money and in-kind donations, in order to purchase food for the backpacks along with ensuring that all backpacks are delivered (Peterson et al., 2014). In addition to developing a strong community foundation, the church worked with a community to develop a community garden filled healthy produce for those in need. Along with ensuring that those in need receive fresh produce, community members hoped that this produce would change the attitude and behavior of those in need (Peterson et al., 2014).

After-School and Summer Food Assistance Programs

Afterschool food assistance programs such as the Kids Cafe Program, SFSP, AfterSchool Snack Programs (CACFP operated), are free afterschool feeding programs that offer children a protected space for play and exploration ages 6-19 years of age. After-school oriented programs such these offer homework help, a hot meal and/or snacks, free time, arts and crafts, table games, gym or playground time, a weekly activity in music or dance, cultural awareness activities, and field trips (Dryfoos,1999). According to Dryfoos (1999), there are some 10 million children ages 6 through 13 years of age throughout the United States that are living in families with incomes less than 150% of the federal poverty threshold, with a large estimate of these children who need after-school programs. For typically low-income parents, the interest in food assistance programs such as these are usually high, due to the supervision, meal that is offered, and security component that comes with their children attending programs such as these.

While transportation may serve as a barrier for low-income households to get their children to and from the after school feeding location, both types type of feeding program is usually housed within underserved neighborhoods, within walking distance to neighborhood households.

Halpern (1999) suggest that many low-income children today are too much on their own, both physically and psychologically, and could benefit from safe, protected spaces to play, an extra measure of adult attention, additional help with homework, and greater opportunity to participate in tart and sports activities. Alongside the expansion of school-administered programs, the past 20 years have brought growing efforts by community-based organizations (CBO's) to organize activities for children and families in their local school buildings (Dryfoos,1999). In operating a food assistance programs, a majority of these programs are centralized housed in churches, neighborhood community centers, and other community based facilities. The largest provider of afterschool programming to low- and moderate-income children are schools and private nonprofit social service agencies such as the Boys and Girls Club, YMCAs, and Police Athletic Leagues (Dryfoos, 1999). On the other hand, churches and community associations (particularly ethnic mutual assistance associations), are providing more and more after-school programs as a by-product of responsiveness to community needs (Dryfoos, 1999).

Afterschool program volunteer staff are not authority figures in the traditional sense, and they usually have less of an agenda than parents or teachers (Dryfoos, 1999). In stating this, community-based organizations such as afterschool feeding programs, tend to believe that children need respite from school-related pressures, opportunity to

experience and explore other domains, and time to just be children (Dryfoos, 1999). The flexibility that is permitted within programs such as these, allow volunteer staff to incorporate their own ideas, permits them to fill in gaps in children's experiences and between the institutions in children's lives, protect children, and provide enriching activities.

Importance of Volunteer Involvement in Combating Child Hunger

Although food assistance programs such as SNAP, WIC, CACFP, FFVP, NSLP/SBP, and SFSP have been established as programming at the federal level, in order to ensure that no household is food-insecure, it takes volunteers at the local level in order to ensure that each of these program missions are carried out to their fullest. The idea of volunteering is part of a cluster of helping behaviors, entailing more commitment than spontaneous assistance, but narrower in scope than the care provided to family and friends (Wilson, 2000). In expanding on this concept, those who dedicate their time toward providing resources to another individual and/or group is not benefitting from their work in devotion to their mission. One of the most important resources of small, voluntary organizations is the participation of members who dedicate their time and energy toward being active residents in their communities (Ohmer, 2007).

What is unique about operating federal programs and a local initiative such as a food pantry, is that it takes residents from all various backgrounds to work together toward a common mission of combating food insecurity in their neighborhoods. Locally operated community initiatives recognizes that people are part of a community and are

trying to find strategic points of entry into this interrelated framework, in order to leverage changes on many different levels (Brown, 1996). An initiative whose purpose is to bring more food into their community, encompasses economic opportunity, adequate physical development, safety and security, well-functioning institutions, and social capital (Brown, 1996). Along with federal programs being established at the national level, local food driven initiatives such as food pantries, also operate on a voluntary driven basis. At the heart of combating food insecurity, is individuals within a community facing food insecurity to work together in combating this issue. Dreier (1996) suggest that community empowerment involves mobilizing people to combat common problems and increase their voice in institutions that affect their lives and also their communities. The development of a community involves the neighborhood-based efforts to improve an area's physical and mental conditions, such as the construction or rehabilitation of housing and the creation of jobs and business enterprise (Dreier, 1996).

Citizen participation and voluntary involvement is essential in changing problematic conditions in communities and influencing the policies and programs that affect the quality of their lives and the lives of other residents (Ohmer, 2007). Programs that promote community participation and indigenous leadership and empower decision-making processes may provide more sustainable positive outcomes for families who are living in low-income neighborhoods (Brisson et al., 2005). In operating federal and local food assistance programs, it takes people within a community who recognize that there is a need for neighborhood-based initiatives and who are trying to find strategic points of entry into leveraging these changes within a community. Each of these programs geared

toward combating food insecurity cannot successfully operate and be successful in making a huge impact within their communities without the assistance from residents.

Most comprehensive neighborhood initiatives are designed to promote participation by residents and other stakeholders in the process of identifying problems and prioritizing the goal for their communities (Brown, 1996). John Gardner (1991) asserts that community breakdown often causes people to lose the conviction that they can improve the quality of their lives throughout their own efforts (Brown, 1996). When residents of a community come together, residents are then able to carry out a common mission and also build leadership capacity within a community-drive effort. While a majority of food-insecure people are considered low-income, studies have found that those who have more income, who have advanced education, and who own a home are more likely to be engaged and also socially engaged via volunteering, associational participation, and group membership (McBride et al., 2006). In addition, according to the U.S. Census (2002), the characteristics of voters reflect “the attributes of people with the biggest stakes in society: older individuals, homeowners, married couples, and people with more school, higher incomes, and good jobs (McBride et al., 2006). However, McBride et al., (2006) claims that this does not mean that those with low incomes and low wealth are not civically engaged or that they do not contribute to their communities and the efforts done to combat issues.

McMillian and Chavis (1986) defined sense of community as “a feeling that members have a belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be

together” (Ohmer, 2007). Residents who are participatory in their local churches, neighborhood associations, and other community driven efforts are pertinent in leading food assistance programming within their communities. Typically, households in low-income neighborhoods, by themselves, often do not have the resources to meet the multitude of daily needs, and they are forced to seek help from others to meet these needs (Brisson et al., 2005). When it comes to community participation involvement from residents, there may be disproportionate number depending on area. In stating this, the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital is especially pertinent for families living in low-income neighborhoods. For example, from a bonding social capital perspective, a family that has overspent its monthly budget because of an unexpected car repair can rely on neighbors for help with both transportations and means of support (Brisson et al., 2005). In stating this, residents who are food-insecure rely on the assistance of volunteers operating food assistance programs to assist in combating their need and can not support themselves independently. Especially, children who are living within households in which both parents can not independently support themselves and are having to rely on food assistance programs. In addition to this, the sense of community theory suggests that a residents’ identification with a neighborhood and the ways in which their connections to their community influences their involvement in local organizations and buffers feelings of isolation (Brisson et al., 2005).

Ramadurai et al., (2012) discusses that while poor health and hunger are direct outcomes of poverty, it should be noted that poverty is not just the lack of money but also the lack of social networks and support included in social capital. By investing in

relationship within a community, members of a community are able to stay connected and this connection helps residents learn about store sales, mobile produce vendors, and health fairs that may occur (Ramadurai et al., 2012). The importance of finding residents in a community who are going to regularly ensure that all residents have consistent access to food will be determined by the trusting relationships and the network ties that exist within the community. Brisson et al., (2005) suggest that bonding social capital is the network of trusting relationships, or social cohesion and trust among members of a neighborhood and outside organizations and institutions. The more social capital that exist within a neighborhood, the greater level of intra-community relationships (social capital that exist within a neighborhood) and extra community relationships (systems that serve the need of the individuals in the system and as open systems that build relationships with policy makers, service organizations, and local businesses) (Brisson et al., 2005).

Case Study. As a way of examining the effectiveness of children's feeding programs, Williams et al., (2003) conducted qualitative study was conducted on the 'wonderfulness' of children's feeding programs in order to inform health promotion programming and policies. The term 'wonderfulness' was defined as the widely held perception of program administrators/operators, volunteers/staff, participating children and parents that program are 'great' or 'wonderful', i.e. that they have remarkable ability or are unusually good. This study specifically analyses the 'wonderfulness' of children's feeding programs by examining the language used to describe these programs, and the features of a 'wonderful' program through an analysis of a multi-site, qualitative study of

nine diverse programs in Atlantic Canada. When participants justified their comments about the ‘wonderfulness’ of children’s feeding programs, they did so based upon five perceptions of program strengths: enhanced family coping, providing good food nutrition, socializing and making friends, behaving well in school, and volunteerism.

When the people involved in children’s feeding programs were asked to describe them, without exception they were described using phrases that reflected the perception of ‘wonderfulness’. Results from this study reported that programs can be designed to be innately ‘wonderful’ if they are community and charity-based, support a noble cause such as the elimination of child hunger, engage good people as donors and volunteers, and provide a direct service to children apart from their families. Williams et al., (2003) also found that children’s feeding programs also receive unconditional acclaim as ‘wonderful programs’ from professional (e.g. teachers and principals), and the public including parents, sincerity of donors, and the willingness of program staff and volunteers to give it their best. (William et al., 2003)

Thus, it is important to examine the roles in which volunteer coordinators play across the state of Kentucky in working to combat child hunger through various child feeding programs. Without their direct service and oversight of child feeding programs such as the BackPack Program, we neglect to ensure that there is sufficient dedication being put toward combating child hunger. As noted previously, feeding programs that work to combat child hunger throughout their communities, also thrive in their nature to prompt community engagement, the recruitment of additional volunteer coordinators, in addition to the overall mission of eliminating child hunger.

Chapter III: Methodology

Research Purpose

While there is an abundance of research that focuses on food insecurity, there is a lack of research that takes on the perspective of volunteer coordinators who are working to combat child hunger throughout their communities. In stating this, the purpose of this study will be to understand the reasons as to why individuals dedicate their careers toward combating child hunger throughout their communities through the collection of coordinator narratives. These narratives will serve as a way to inform the public, create awareness, and to “tell the story” in reference to the prevalence of child hunger that greatly impacts the lives of children throughout the state of Kentucky. The story will be told from volunteer coordinators who are on the ground working each and every day and who serve as witnesses to this issue. It’s important their voices be uplifted and heard. No story can be told on its own without acknowledging the women of Kentucky who are immersed in this mission, committed to ending child hunger, and dedicated to saving the lives of children throughout the Commonwealth. It’s important that we highlight and uplift their voices, because without their commitment and dedication, children would continue to fall victim of hunger.

Research Question

Why have volunteer coordinators chosen to dedicate their careers toward combating child hunger throughout their communities?

Theory of Career Motivation

As a lens through which to examine the stories the dedicated volunteers and the underlying motivation for their participation the Theory of Career Motivation will be employed. The career motivation theory (London, 1983), applies motivation theory to understanding career plans, behaviors and decisions of employees, such as searching for and accepting a job, deciding to stay with an organization, revising career plans, seeking new jobs, and setting and trying to accomplish career goals (relationships between career motivation, affective commitment and job satisfaction). Career motivation is defined in terms of three major components: career identity, career insight, and career resilience. Each component has multiple elements and contributes to the overall understanding of how each element is related to the employees' commitment to the organization, their job satisfaction in fostering employee motivation, and their overall effectiveness (relationships between career motivation, affective commitment and job satisfaction).

Manuel London's theory of career motivation is a multidimensional construct that includes components in which consist of individual characteristics (career identity, career insight, and career resilience domains) and corresponding career decisions and behaviors (London, 1983). According to London (1983), the term motivation often is used to explain decisions and behaviors that cannot be explained by ability alone. Motivation is

concerned with the direction, arousal, amplitude, and persistence of an individual's behavior (London, 1983). The term *work motivation* is a construct that generally refers to motivation to do one's current job and managerial motivation refers to the desire to engage and in and meet managerial role requirements (e.g. exerting leadership, conducting routine administrative activities). While these two components of motivation have their own perspective, London (1983) notes that these two constructs are limited in their scopes and do not specifically reflect many individual characteristics and associated decisions and behaviors relevant to one's own career.

Instead, the term career motivation encompasses the terms work motivation and managerial motivation and goes further to include motivation associated with a wide range of career decisions and behaviors (London, 1983). The term itself is defined as as the set of individual characteristics and associated career decisions and behaviors that reflects a person's career identity, insight into factors affecting his or her career, and resilience in the face of unfavorable career conditions. (London, 1983). In order to understand career motivation, it should be understood in terms of the relationship among individual characteristics, careers decisions and behaviors, and situational conditions. Additionally, there are three different components that reflect and individual's characteristics toward their career and these include career identity, career insight, and career resilience.

1. *Career Identity*: This is how central one's careers is to one's identity and it consists of two subdomains: work involvement and desire for upward mobility. A

person's view of their work environment includes their job involvement, professional orientation, commitment to managerial work, and identification with the organization. The upward mobility component of career identity includes the needs for advancement, recognition, dominance, money, along with gratification of the job.

2. *Career Insight*: This is the extent to which the person has realistic perceptions of him or herself and the organization and relates these perceptions to career goals. Along with the goal of flexibility, other relevant dimensions of career insight include goal clarity, path goal clarity, social perceptiveness, self-objectivity, realism or expectations, career decision making, and future orientation.
3. *Career Resilience*: This is a person's resistance to career disruption in a less than optimal environment. To understand the meaning of career resilience more clearly, it should help to have a conception of its opposite –career vulnerability. The dimensions under career resilience fall into three subdomains and these include self-efficacy (includes the dimensions of self-esteem, need autonomy, adaptability, etc.) risk taking (fear of failure, need security, and tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity), and dependency (need for superior approval, and need for peer approval). While those who are low on career resilience are likely to be motivated to avoid risk, be dependent on others, seek structure, and avoid situations in which organizational outcomes depend on their behavior, those high on career resilience are likely to do the reverse in which includes taking risk,

being independent of others, creating their own structure, and thriving on situations in which outcomes are contingent on their behavior.

In addition to London's discussion on individual characteristics that will effect an individual's career motivation London (1983) also notes that there are additional components of the work environment that could effect an individual's willingness to participate. In addition to characteristics, these include a persons' situational variables, and career decisions and behaviors. In reference to a persons' situational variables, many elements of a person's work environment are likely to be important to career motivation and these include staffing policies and procedures, leadership style, job design, group cohesiveness, career development programs, and the compensation system (London, 1983). In regards to career decision and behaviors, these behaviors include generating alternative course of action, seeking information about them, evaluating the information, setting goals, making decisions to behave in various ways, and carrying out the decisions (London, 1983). The career decisions and behaviors that are made within an individual's career, is linked with one's career identification, insight, and their career vulnerability (London, 1983).

Thus, for the purposes of this study this theoretical framework can be applied to volunteers' perceptions of their dedication to the "job" of volunteer coordinator. In the following analyses and discussion, interviewees' responses will be examined as to their Involvement (Career Identity), Challenges (Career Insight) and Perseverance (Career Reliance.)

Participants

Since I already knew each of these women through my previous work with God's Pantry Food Bank, I choose to employ convenience sampling, in order to recruit participants. To note, convenience sampling (also known as availability sampling) is a specific type of non-probability sampling method that relies on data collection from population members who are conveniently available to participate in a study (citation). In this case, volunteer coordinators of child hunger programs were invited to participate. I conducted a total of twelve volunteer coordinator interviews with women who are overseeing feeding programs to help combat child hunger throughout their communities were selected to participate in this study. Six of the coordinator interviews were conducted with those overseeing feeding programs in the Eastern Kentucky counties of Estill, Rowan, and Owsley. Additionally, six volunteer coordinator interviews were conducted with those overseeing feeding programs throughout Fayette County.

Each feeding program had at least one main volunteer coordinator overseeing that program on a regular basis. For some of the feeding programs, especially the Eastern County locations, there were at least two to three volunteer coordinators assisting on a regular basis to help oversee those programs. The women who shared their stories represented three prominent child hunger combatting programs: BackPack Program, School Pantry Programs and the Summer Food Service Program.

The volunteer coordinators selected to take part in this study, were chosen based on my previous work with each of these feeding locations through my previous role at

God's Pantry Food Bank. In reference to the demographics of the population, along with being women, many of the women were Caucasian, fell between the ages of 30-65, had overseen their programming for at least two years, and had at least been residents of their community for an extended amount of time. Each of these demographic factors play an important role in who these women represent both in their programming and throughout their communities. Additional demographic information isn't disclosed due to my effort to protect the identities of each of these women. Again, as previously noted, these women are volunteers who are overseeing child feeding programs throughout their communities. They are not compensated for their time through any monetary efforts, but see their reward in serving their children through their programming. Many of these women hold additional jobs outside of their role as a volunteer coordinator. For instance, the women who oversee the Backpack and School Pantry Programs serve as Family Resource Coordinators and Youth Service Center Coordinators. Hence, they oversee the child feeding programs as an additional effort to give back to their communities.

In addition to building a close relationship with each volunteer coordinator through my Food Bank role, these feeding sites were also selected based on the relationship build over time with each coordinator, the coordinators verbalized passion for their continual work in this field, along with some of the highest indicator of child hunger need per site. Each volunteer coordinator was invited to participate in this study on a voluntary basis and was asked to answer a series of pre-set interview questions based on their personal involvement in overseeing their feeding sites. Each volunteer coordinator responded to interview questions to their best of their knowledge, interaction,

and ability and were not forced to provide responses to questions they felt they could not provide an adequate comment toward. To set the tone of each interview and to make each volunteer coordinator feel comfortable, all interviews chose to be interviewed at the location where the feeding program is housed. All interviews regarding the Summer Feeding and Afterschool Programs took place at the library conference area (Owsley County), waiting room of the organization (Rowan County), housing authority common room (Estill County). Each School Pantry Program interview took place in the common area of the Youth Service Center (Bryan Station High School) or Family Resource Center (Leestown Middle School). In stating this, each of these interviews took place on the school premises, along with each of the Backpack Program interviews. Just like the School Pantry Program volunteer coordinators, each of the Backpack Program volunteer coordinators are recognized as Family Resource Coordinators (FRC) and have their own area of their school designated to them, due to maintained security that must be implemented when working with students.

Data Collection

Prior to commencement of the interviews, each volunteer coordinator signed a consent form to confirm their voluntary participation in the research and to have their responses digitally recorded (Appendix A). After consenting to their participation in the study, each volunteer coordinator was asked the same series of interview questions (Appendix B) developed to provide insight into the programs and motivations for serving. There were a total of twenty-two questions asked of each volunteer coordinator

during the course of their interviews. Since London's Career Motivation was employed for this study, I used London's career motivation components (identity, insight, and resilience) as the framework for the interview questions. Under the heading 'Identity', I asked each volunteer coordinator a total of eight questions. Under the heading 'Insight', I asked each volunteer coordinator a total of five questions. Under the heading 'Resilience', I asked each volunteer coordinator a total of nine questions. Again, overall each volunteer coordinator was given the opportunity to respond to a total of twenty-two interview questions.

In regards to the overall setting in which the interviews were conducted, all interviews were conducted in person. Even though the interview questions served as guidance, many of the interviews with the volunteer coordinators were conversational. Many of the volunteer coordinators enjoyed talking about themselves along with their child feeding programs, so many of the women offered this additional feedback in addition to program insights. At points, some of the volunteer coordinators did not respond to certain questions due to their lack of ability, knowledge, and insight to provide an efficient answer to the question. During circumstances such as this, the volunteer coordinator would signal or verbally indicate to pass and move on to the next question. Most interviews were conducted within an hour to hour and a half of time. However, there were a couple of interviews that took nearly two hours to conduct, based on the amount of feedback each volunteer coordinator wanted to provide. In stating this, there were no breaks within each interview. All interviews took place in one setting and not multiple settings.

As a way of organizing all program files for each individual program location, consent forms, field notes, and other information were stored in a separate file for each location. From each file I was able to track both field notes and all interview responses that were gathered.

Data Analyses

Since all interview questions had already been placed under their headings (identity, insight, and resilience), drawing the response from each of the volunteer coordinators wasn't a difficult process. By creating these headings prior to the analysis piece of my overall research, I was easily able to track the responses per question and under which heading the interview question fell under. By creating this systematic structure, I was able to track their responses based on what London perceives within each component of motivation theory.

For the purposes of adapting the theoretical framework to the population that is being examined under each of London's career motivation components, I decided to reframe each of the London's three components to better fit this research. The terms centered around "career" were not adequately reflecting the framing of their career identity as volunteer coordinators. Through the analysis of the research, I generated new labels for the emerging components which I felt best coupled the data collected from the volunteer coordinators. In stating this, I transitioned London's three components into the following: Involvement, Challenges, and Perseverance. While the overarching theoretical umbrella speaks to the motivation behind the path that each volunteer coordinator has

taken in their efforts to combat child hunger, each subtitle (Involvement, Challenges, and Perseverance) sets the stage for why each volunteer coordinator continues to dedicate their time and energy to this field of work. Creating headings under London's career motivation theory, allowed me to glean insights into how these women view themselves, their work, and their continuation for devoting their lives to what can be perceived as informal work. From the creation of the three main headings, I was then able to create emergent codes based on the coordinator responses under each heading. As a note, emergent codes can be referred to as a grouping system in which ideas, concepts, actions, relationship, meanings, etc., come up in the data and are different than pre-set codes (Dudovskiy, 2012). In many cases, the "surprise" emergent codes form the basis of interesting stories and indeed become part of the major storyline told in the overall evaluation (Dudovskiy, 2012).

For Involvement, the following were identified as subtitles under this heading: childhood relations, discovering their paths, extended community roles, previous education, and setting the path: leading by example. For Coordinator Challenges, the following were identified as subtitles under this heading: more programs like ours, prevalence of hunger throughout community, and more community participation and awareness. For Coordinator Perseverance, the following were identified as subtitles under this heading: empathy toward childhood hunger, servant leaders to others, greater impact on life, and committed beyond barriers. Many of the emergent codes in which arose through the interviews with each of the volunteer coordinators, served as the foundation for much of the heart behind the overall research. These emergent codes not only inform

the overall research question, but will serve as major proponents for future research ideas that are centered around the topic of child hunger.

Again, through the grouping of emergent codes under the three main components, I was able to begin capturing the voices, perspectives, and overall highlights from each of the volunteer coordinators. Each perspective and highlight that was captured through these interviews, allowed me to develop a new perspective on career motivation, and gain insight into the passion, devotion, and mission that goes into the efforts and the need for the continuation of this volunteer work. Without a systematic grouping process such as the one in which has been outlined above, much of the data collected through each of the coordinator interviews would have been overlooked without specification to major detail. Through the implementation of this system, I've been able to make sure that each piece of the coordinator's feedback is uplifted and heard.

In addition to digitally recording responses, field notes were taken throughout the interview process with each volunteer coordinator and immediately following completion of the interviews. These notes included comments on location of site, program setting, program logistics, the volunteer coordinators themselves, along with information. Field notes were kept with the consent forms in each of the program files, so they could be easily accessed and used for reference points after the completion of each volunteer coordinator interview. All individual program files were stored at my home in a lock box throughout the entirety of the data collection period.

Chapter IV: Findings

Program Insights

While there are efforts being taken to combat child hunger across the nation, there is a lot of combating taking place in my own backyard across the state of Kentucky. Some of the programs noted below are just a few of many feeding programs that have been implemented across the state of Kentucky to alleviate child hunger. As compared to a lot of independent feeding programs that have popped up across this state, listed below are the child feeding programs I've come to familiar myself with, assist in implementing, and knowing through my work with God's Pantry Food Bank. Each feeding program, its location, along with the volunteer coordinator overseeing the operation, has her own story to tell. In stating this, each of these feeding programs hold a special place in my heart. Not only did I assist in the establishment of each, but I also feel in love with the true authenticity, devotion, and passion each of these women carry in their heart for their true commitment to each of these programs.

Below is a detailed outline of the feeding program, locations, logistics, and coordinator names, in which will be addressed throughout the analysis. This program chart has been presented, as a way to guide you, the reader, through a journey of these women in their effort to combat childhood hunger throughout their communities. The program chart will include the type of program, location of the program, estimated timeline for kids served, along with the volunteer coordinator's name. As a note, the true names of the coordinators will not be revealed. Each coordinator has been given a

pseudonym for the protection of their identity. Hopefully, this chart will serve as a guide for, you the reader, in journeying through the stories of each volunteer coordinator

Volunteer Coordinator Program Scope

Type of Program	Location	Timeline of Kids Served	Coordinator (Pseudonym)
BackPack Program (Fayette Co.)	William Wells Brown	School Year	Kimberly
BackPack Program (Fayette Co.)	Breckinridge Elementary	School Year	Sandy
BackPack Program (Fayette Co.)	Cardinal Valley Elementary	School Year	Carla
BackPack Program (Fayette Co.)	Mary Todd Elementary	School Year	Barbara
School Pantry Program (Fayette Co.)	Bryan Station High	School Year/Summer Months	Susan
School Pantry Program (Fayette Co.)	Leestown Middle School	School Year/Summer Months	Karen
Summer Feeding/Afterschool Program (Owsley Co.)	Owsley County Library	Summer Months/ School Year	Shirley Jennifer
Summer Feeding/Afterschool Snack Program Independent BackPack Program	Irvine Housing Authority Complex	Summer Months	Grace Claire Gene
Summer Feeding Independent BackPack Program	Helping Hands	Summer Months	Rita

Figure 1. Volunteer Coordinator Program Scope

Hunger is faced by many children across the state of Kentucky year around. As a way of continuing to ensure that child hunger needs are being combated all year around, each of the child feeding programs noted above, have contributed individually to the fight against child hunger. Each programs strives to combat child hunger, by providing a safe haven for children to come and participate in programming that is paving the path to end child hunger. Although each program is designed to serve children who experience hunger needs, each program has its own unique characteristics and have been designed to have a major impact on child hunger in various ways. For instance, the Backpack Program was designed to help combat child hunger over the weekends, by encouraging volunteer coordinators to send children home with a sack filled with kid friendly food items. While most children are provided with a meal throughout the time they're in school, accessing food resources can be difficult for food insecure children who don't have access to the same food resources as they would during the school period. A program such as this, alleviates a majority of the hunger needs that food insecure children face during these weekend periods, until they return back to school the following Monday. This program operates throughout the academic year and ends prior to the conclusion of the academic year. A majority of the volunteer coordinators interviewed in this research, conclude their Backpack programming before the end of the school year and then will begin the program the following year of the academic year. Compared to the other feeding programs, this program has been greatly implemented within many communities across Kentucky.

In addition to the Backpack Program, the School Pantry Program is also housed in school entities and works to combat child hunger, by providing food insecure children with kid friendly food items that are more meal based. As compared to the Backpack Program, the food resources provided through the School Pantry Programs are given to not only serve the food insecure student participating in this program, but also the additional siblings within the household. In comparison to the Backpack Program, this program makes a larger impact on the household and works to alleviate child hunger needs at a higher standard. When a student participates in the School Pantry Program, they receive food resources such as canned chili, frozen meat, fresh fruit, bread, and other meal based food items as compared to fruit snacks, applesauce, and nutria-grain bars distributed through the Backpack Program. Aside from the Backpack Program concluding toward the end of the academic year, each of the volunteer coordinators who were interviewed and who also oversee this program, operate their programming throughout the academic year and also throughout the summer months. As compared to the Backpack Program, the School Pantry Program, is a newly introduced program of Kentucky and many coordinators overseeing child feeding programs across the state, are beginning to see the stability in operating a programs such as this in comparison to the Backpack Program.

As referenced in the program child chart, Owsley County was the only feeding site interviewed, in which has a Afterschool Snack Program. This program is designed to provide children with a nutritious snack, upon the completion of the school day. While there are additional Afterschool Snack Program in which have been implemented across

the state of Kentucky and that are sponsored through God's Pantry Food Bank along with other food banks in throughout the state, there is a greater need for more after school feeding programming for children. Aside from the Afterschool Snack Program, the Summer Feeding Program is overseen by many of the volunteer coordinator interviewed throughout the summer month period. When school is out, child hunger is still present during the summer months and aside from the summer feeding sites that have already been implemented across the state, there is a need for an increased quantity of sites. Typically, the Summer Feeding Program is overseen at location sites such as housing authority complexes, libraries, in addition to other entities outside of the school setting. The volunteer coordinators who were interviewed and oversee this program, typically will also provide a feeding program throughout the academic year, in addition to this feeding program over the course of the summer months.

While much can be addressed about each feeding program along with its purpose and operation, each volunteer coordinator knows their own program the best. They are able to attest to their involvement, program highlights and barriers, along with the internal strength they possess to continue the operation of their programming. No outsider, such as myself, can provide the as much details, insights, along with feedback to their programming then themselves. Not does each woman play an important role in their communities in providing programming to food insecure youth, but a lot of their strength and empowerment comes from their ability to acknowledge and understand how their programming how and will continue to shape along with influence the face of child hunger. From their own stories, each coordinator is able to reflect upon their own

programming in a way that will overall provide much insight to the overarching issue of hunger, by detailing their own experiences through their own feeding sites.

As a way to combat the major need at W.W.B., Kimberly has worked with God's Pantry Food Bank and another church entity to distribute backpacks to over three hundred students who continue to struggle with food insecurity on a regular basis. *The God's Pantry bags are received better by the students, where the meal bags are received better by families. The students don't like to take the meal bags because they're large. They are carrying home loads of bread...like they're carrying home boxes of cereal...Students complain, so they like the snack bags.*" Specifically, with her BackPack Program, Kimberly adds, *So we've tried to find ways...we've tried to be innovative...we've tried to find ways to cut down on the shame base or the embarrassment but when you don't have the families participate in that, we can't combat alone...and we don't have the funds or the resources to keep purchasing bags to conceal the food. We don't want the children to be embarrassed, we don't want that...*

I first started the program where the product was delivered to me...and we had like draw string bags in where labeled 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B and that became more work for me that it was to keep up with all that.. Sandy then goes on to reference at her school how there is much excitement around the program, especially each Friday from the students who are participating in the BackPack Program. *There is excitement! Friday doesn't come soon enough sometimes..they're like 'when do I get a bag? And I'm like, Well you know we pass the out on Fridays...and they're like 'Oh! Ok!' ...* She also notes, *And the kids want*

to help, they always want to help...when I was doing it, the kids would help pass out the bags..

Barbara at Mary Todd Elementary school has a 96% Free & Reduced Lunch percentage amongst her student population. In addition to the volunteer coordinators who were interviewed whose school populations also have a high Free & Reduced lunch percentage, at her school, a lot of the students who participate in her Backpack Program suffer from needs because they have been neglected at some point throughout their childhood or a type of disability in the household. This has inadvertently affected their access to food resources based on the challenges throughout their households. *The child isn't getting proper food because of those situations...And then maybe the mom is not able to actually..physically get up..move around and get in the kitchen...and do a whole lot...so then it would be easier to pull like a pot pie out of the freezer...*

Just like the other Backpack Program volunteer coordinators, Barbara also works with entities outside the Food Bank to provide additional backpacks to students who are struggling to have their needs met. *Now were up to 280...that just increased this last school year...I believe last year we ended up having less than 200 students, so I think we were able to only do 3 out of 4.*

The Backpack Program was started umm in 2009...late 2009...we've been doing that program for a little over 6 years..going on 7...it will soon be 7 years...The program actually came about when we found a family of 7 kids living in a house with dirt floors, with no beds to sleep on, no refrigeration, no electricity, no running water, no bathroom

in the house...at that point, I realized childhood hunger was not the only program I was going to help solve, but I realized childhood hunger is much worse, then I thought it was..

Even though my intention was to interview Rita about her Summer Feeding Program, her career in this field of work initially began through her own establishment of her independently ran Backpack Program. She then went on to address her perspective of her Summer Feeding Program by stating, *I found out about the Summer Feeding Program...of course I was anxious to jump on that because of free food for the children all summer long...and so I jumped on that...decided to try to do that...*

In addition to Rita herself, a lot of the volunteer coordinators who were interviewed, either heard about the sponsorship of these feeding programs by God's Pantry Food Bank through a community partner, or were specifically contacted by the Food Bank based on the high levels of child food insecurity that is present within their communities. Barbara chats about the initial start of her Backpack Program by referencing, *Well we started it out and just went with God's Pantry...the model they had in place...which was we had the number of bags and so we give it to this number of kids every every single week...and I just felt like we should ask the parent's input, instead of asking the teacher you know for 50 names...and so when we did that, the number started growing as to how many people were wanting this...* By receiving the parent's input and feedback about their child receiving a backpack through her program, Barbara was not only able to begin building close relationships with each of the families, but was also able to increase the number of backpacks she was overall distributing. For Carla, she too acknowledges how beneficiary receiving parent input would be for the overall success of

her Backpack Program. *I would get those parents always calling me... 'make sure my child is on that list!' ...you know and then I use to be asked by the kids, 'when would I have a chance?', 'when would I get that?' It's not always the same 60 faces you know...and I just love it...I tell them if you don't need it, just give it to somebody else or bring it back.* She then goes on to note, *It's not always the same 60 little faces you know...and I just love it...I tell them if you don't need it, just give it to somebody else or bring it back...*

Even for the School Pantry Program, many of the students who participate in this program are referred by a parent, social worker, a teacher, or the volunteer coordinator herself to receive food resources from this program. *Families can make contact with us you know...to be able to serve the pantry...so for instance, on a typical day, a parent may call me in the morning umm and say umm, 'I'm calling because we're having problems being able to get food. Will you call me a referral into God's Pantry?' Umm, I'm able to at that point identify you know..have a good conversation with that family about all the different areas they may be struggling with...and then identify if they have transportation or not...and umm how they're going to access food and then we're able to let them know we have food here...* As many of the volunteer coordinators expressed throughout their interviews, it only takes that one conversation with a parent to change that parent's entire food challenges. Even for many of the children participating in these feeding programs, who come from food stricken households, it takes that one child to know they have access to food resource programming such as program like this on a daily basis. *What we determined was that years ago, when we were making the decision to do this (referring to*

School Pantry Program), everyone is doing the Backpack Program..and that's wonderful...we love that that's an option for families...and it works for...in particularly elementary school umm who have 50 kids that they've identified who might have sustainability issues with food...we on the other hand, have 1200 kids on free lunch...out of the 1800/1900 kids that we have at school.. It would have been an impossible task to try to figure out which 50 kids would get a food box stated Susan as she discusses as to why she made the decision to oversee the School Pantry Program at her school location.

While each type of feeding program and county has its own niche when it comes to their specific location, the overall setting on the program itself has made a major impact on the children attending each location and also the overall county each program is housed within. Karen talks about the need at her school by stating that Leestown Middle School, whose Mascot is the Charge, is noted as one of the most diverse schools in the Fayette County district. *We're probably the most diverse school in Fayette County. We probably have 30% of Latino population, 30% African-American...probably like 30 something...20 or 30...I mean we are very diverse..* She then goes on to express, *I would probably say we have like a 86 or 87 Free & Reduced Lunch rate, so that tells you right there how needy we are...* Throughout our interview, Karen not only talked about the high need at her school, but also how she feels the school is family focused and creates an atmosphere for families to participate. *We're like a family...I really feel like it's a family atmosphere here .we have a principal, we have two associate principals, and one administrative dean and umm...they're really close and they're a really great*

administrative team..’ In taking ownership of her school location and the program along with the pantry program, “we have a pantry...it’s called the Chargers’ Pantry...

One of the most insightful components about the coordinator interviews, is that each volunteer coordinator was able to recognize their student needs based on their locations and oversee a feeding program that fits their population’s needs. While one feeding program may be the best fit for one site, doesn’t mean that it will naturally fit amongst the needs of another site. *It’s just a blessing...I mean this pantry...like I said...education is important but just as important are the basic needs for students and families...if a student doesn’t have food or if they don’t have those basic needs, it’s really hard to come in a school environment and sit in a classroom worried about when are you going to get your next meal...* referenced Karen about her School Pantry Program and the need of the students at her school location.

For a program such as the Summer Feeding Program, many of the volunteer coordinators in these counties currently operating this program, were approached either by the God’s Pantry Food Bank initially or decided to become their own community champions and lead this program on their own. Rita never hesitates to do more programming in order to meet the needs of children throughout her community. *I never worry about adding new onto our programs...like Saturday backpack snack bags that are awesome...that program is ahh going to be around for a while...every Saturday for a child that comes into the building, can get a bag of backpack snacks...the returning children...the children that need the food...I don’t know what lead me other than God to add programs on...new programs on...to reach out a little further...to go a little deeper...*

For the volunteer coordinators in Estill County overseeing their Summer Feeding Program, they were able to create an atmosphere of innovation and creativity, by welcoming community partners into their program. *We had different places coming in...so we would have Smokey the Bear come in or we would have the fire department come in, so they would kind of take over a little bit...while we cleaned or whatever...*

For Gene helping to oversee the Summer Feeding Program in Estill County, she immediately recognized the continual need to serve more meal based food items, instead of snack oriented food items. *But we decided with the children we had coming, a lot of them didn't have a whole lot of food and stuff...so we decided to do more of a meal instead of a snack...so we had more things...crackers, juices...we had more things like cheeseburgers and French fries...more things like that...And then we did this past summer and that's about it...* Aside from their Summer Feeding Program, she then referenced their Afterschool Snack Program by noting, *It was kind of stressful but I had about 12 kids...so I think that was like the perfect time and by the end of the program...it was kind of hectic at first...but by the end of the program...I kind of knew which ones needed that push because I knew them...'ok...this person is going to forget their homework!...'this person isn't going to bring their backpack!'*...

Not only was Gene able to get to know the children she was serving through her Summer Feeding and Afterschool Snack Programs, but she's begin to develop a relationship with some of the most food insecure children within her county. Many of the coordinators allowed to their relationship development that has not only taken place over the course of the years with parents, but the children they are serving on a regular basis.

Insights such as these will provide more insights as to why these women have dedicated their career toward their commitment in overseeing their program based again on their program involvement, barriers, and perseverance in which will be addressed moving forward.

Coordinator Involvement

Each of the volunteer coordinators are deeply immersed in the programs in which they oversee and also within the children they continue to serve. In taking a step back to pay tribute to their overall involvement in their programming, also comes with the task of reflecting on their own personal identities and how their perceived identity transfers over to their commitment to their work.

The women who were interviewed for this research and who are working each and every day to combat child food insecurity throughout their communities, all come from a host of different background experiences that have helped shaped who they are today. The identities of these women have been fostered by an array of different contributors in which include personal background experiences (previous professional opportunities, life changing situations that have served as stepping stones into their current careers, educational opportunities, childhood experiences, areas of residence, school experiences throughout their childhood) along with other contributing factors of their career decisions. Each factor has widely contributed to who these women are today and why they have decided to participate in such a challenging area of work that has not

only impacted youth who are suffering from hunger throughout Kentucky, but throughout this nation.

Childhood Relations. Prior to diving into previous career paths along with educational opportunities each of these women have been a part of throughout their lives, a majority of the women come from unique childhood backgrounds that have served as the foundation for many of their lives. Some women have come from a middle class way of living, but a majority of the women come from shaky childhood background, in which has fostered the sense of devotion, passion, empathy, and relation these women have with the population of children they each work with in their programming on a regular basis. Some of these women have not only come from broken households, army kid lifestyles, welfare families, but childhoods that have allowed them to develop a greater understanding to the importance of helping children who have faced the same needs as themselves. While a majority of the women in the interviews tried to steer away from reflecting on the some of the deepest and most detailed experiences of their childhood, most found that revealing their childhood stories and liberating themselves of some of their most haunting experiences, have found that it's made them stronger as a leader throughout their adulthood lives. Even in their current positions as volunteer coordinators, some of the coordinators reveal that that too have experienced some of the same challenges, barriers, and struggles that the majority of the children currently enrolled in their programming are facing each and every day. There is a sense of empathy that shines through the women and their childhood stories as they express through their words and gestures the details of not only their lives, but their child hood lives.

Kimberly referenced a part of her childhood in which greatly shapes the person she is today. *Umm...from birth to eight, we lived in the projects. We were on our probably...oh my gosh...probably one of sixty families in the projects then...ahh we were probably one of five white families...* She then goes on to note, *In the projects at that time...Umm so my first eight years...first two years of school were rough.. Um living in poverty, living in the projects. Waking up at night my mom gone because she is working the late shift so she could be home with us during the days before we went to school on certain summers...ummm so I mean it was good...It was just rough...and then she met my step father and he adopted me when I was eight and bought a home...* While living in the projects wasn't one of her brightest sides of her childhood, Kimberly did note that when living in the projects as one of the only white families, she did get bullied a lot throughout her childhood.

Well there was just a lot of bullying...Umm when I was young living in the projects I was beat up a lot...just because I was one of like four or five white families living in the area so...I wouldn't say beat up a lot...I would say just picked on a lot...and then I had a friend who...just kind of took me under her wing...She is where I learned how to do hair, how to cook, her mama (Miss Ellen)...I will never forget Miss Ellen...and I'm still in touch with that family...still friends with that family...ummm but Miss Ellen took me under her wing because Mama was gone a lot working... Just as Kimberly talked about her experiences of growing up in the projects as a child, Claire (volunteer with Estill County Summer Feeding), referenced her experience as a child growing up in the projects as, *um as a child, you don't realize that you're in low-income housing you*

know...It was nice actually there was always kids around to play with...ummm...I had a lot of friends that lived herethat are still friends of mine today... For Claire, she spent a majority of her childhood years growing up in the low-income housing authority complex and just like Kimberly, this type of lifestyle is one she came to fully know along with understand.

Aside from growing up in low-income housing or experiencing bullying issues throughout their childhood years, Carla (volunteer coordinator at Cardinal Valley Elementary School), is a Puerto Rican native and moved to the United States when she was ten years of age. *I remember as a child I was a welfare recipient child and I remember my mom going to pick up the food they gave at that time...it was kind of like big packages...you know...big bag of rice, can meat and stuff like that...so I know what's...I walked in those shoes...not having enough food in the house and depending on help and assistance...so I work here at Cardinal Valley and I've been here almost 20 years and I know who of the families are most need is or they need food...I can always tell and I can always approach what resources we have out there...* Since her program location serves a majority of Hispanic students, Carla's familiarity with the Spanish and English languages has allowed her to build close relationships with the students who are enrolled in her BackPack Program and their families. *And I'm just lucky that...I'm bilingual even though in the Caribbean our Spanish is really different in Spanish spoken in South America or European Spain or Mexico...so I've learned how to distinguish....and what words not to say that are OK in the Caribbean, but that are not good in Mexico.* Carla's childhood background closely mirrors the background of some

of the student's she serves through her Backpack Program on a regular basis. *I grew up with a single mother, even though my father would come and visit everyday...that use to break my heart...so I grew up with her and she was very really strict...I was always locked up in the house...I wasn't allowed to go anywhere without her...So it was hard, but you know, I look back now and say, 'look at the woman I turned out to be' ...I'm no wimp (she laughs)...I'm strong willed and umm I's just the way life is...ummm you learn as you go and you just do your best...and those members back then always guided me and told me to go to school, you can do this, and you can do that...*

For Rita, she began to understand her identity and the person she wanted to become at an early age, especially with being raised in a poor large household with other siblings her age. *Well I grew up poor and I know what it's like to be hungry...I know what it's like to be you know...to need someone uhh...to turn to for help...I know what it's like..when I was a kid growing up I was like some of the families we help right now. I could see myself in some of these kids who come through here. I could see my past, I could see my childhood growing up poor...so I know what they're feeling...you know how hard it is to not know where your next meal is going to come from and we just knew that meal was going to be there...my family was strong believers in God umm for the most part...Christian people...we just relied on God...food did come in...clothing did come in...things did come in...things that I give to the families right now...It's like I'm going back to my childhood and someone is giving me those things...it's just like living a childhood back over, but through them and I always want to be...I always want to be humble and to care about others. I don't ever want to get to the point where I don't care*

anymore...I mean and some people do...passions run thin and wear out...mine won't...mine won't...

In addition to growing up poor, Rita also talked about her household unit as a whole and like some of the other coordinators, she too grew up within a army household. *Well when I grew up, everybody faced the same problems...Like my father had been in the army...you know for a couple of years...it was hard times for him and his family and basically ahh we weren't the only poor in our community. We grew up in a poor community uhh we didn't have transportation and it does back to what we're seeing today. If you have no transportation, you pretty much have to make due with whatever you can find. We didn't have proper transportation to get to the grocery store either...So we basically grew up sheltered with morals and things that are hard to find anymore and umm but we survived and umm not we see others you know struggling to worry about the ones who don't have transportation...ahh we have some that are 25 miles out in the country and they cannot get a vehicle started just to get to a food pantry or grocery store...so...*

As compared to the volunteer coordinators who grew up in more urbanized towns with an abundance of resources (Fayette County), Rita along with other volunteer coordinators who have resided in Eastern Kentucky throughout their lives, have faced many of the same challenges as compared to other volunteer coordinators who have resided mostly in Fayette County. Shirley (volunteer co-coordinator in Owsley County) referenced about her childhood, *Well we were...we were poor! I didn't have running water in my house until I got married. We had a well that we drewed water out of, but I*

don't remember having a sad childhood... We didn't have a lot, but I remember we always had food on the table, a clean bed to lay in, and that's all we needed....And we ahh...my dad always did a lot of fishing and he was a farmer...we ahh grew tobacco and my mom was a stay at home mom.. In addition to Shirley's childhood story of how she was raised throughout Eastern Kentucky, Gene spoke a lot of about her childhood and just like many of the volunteer coordinators, she too can relate very well to the children she serves in her programming. Ummm we moved a lot of different places...umm I came from a different generation I guess so umm...Social Services and things for children have changed a lot since I was a child...I was abused...so we moved a lot...if the teachers asked a lot of questions about bruising or something, we'd move in the middle of the night...She then she added after many of years of moving around as a child, she was able to then come back to Kentucky, where she was originally born to teach, met and married her husband, and just kind of stayed here and made our family...

Discovering Their Paths. Sandy with Breckinridge Elementary School notes about her roles as a current FRC, *I help students and families to be successful while they're going through their educational process and so we're in place to help remove barriers for the individual or the family that might prevent the student from being successful.* Prior to discovering her current role, Sandy had interest in pursuing other career paths in which were not related to her current position. At the start of her career, she really wanted to work in early childhood education and development, but instead began working with a different organization within the Fayette County community. *Originally I thought out going into early childhood development and my other worked for*

Community Action and she was like, 'you're not going to make any money doing that' ...so I took the business route and uhhh...I was going to be a business major or marketing...that was going to be my passion and degrees or whatever... And then I changed to...from EKY to (excuse me) it's BCTC now and completed a two year Business Administration degree and then just started working in different areas and then a clerical position came open at Crawford Middle School and the Youth Services Center and then that is when I started working I guess more in the Social Service side and then I went back to school to complete my degree and here I am...I ended up with kids the way I thought I might...

The women came no short of having plenty of experience in working with youth in some type of capacity, prior to taking on their current roles as volunteer coordinators. When asked about why they decided to take on the roles they have as a volunteer coordinator, Kimberly stated, *I think it was a natural kind of fit. It wasn't in place when I got here...* and then she noted, *It's kind of like which came first, the chicken or the egg (we both laugh). Because I mean, I got this email... 'hey, hey, hey' ...we got this program...I don't know if you're interested'...* For many of the volunteer coordinators, they saw the programs they were overseeing as a natural fit to them and their lives. In addition to the Backpack Program that Kimberly oversees at one of the highest Free & Reduced Lunch school locations in Fayette County. In her now position as the FRC, Kimberly chats about her current role by noting, *I try to formulate as many relationships as I can.* Kimberly along with many of the other Backpack Program volunteer coordinators have acknowledged the importance of their roles within the school setting.

She also reflected on her personal identity and how she has incorporated the understanding of herself into the role she plays at her school location and with the Backpack Program. *Ummm I'm not the sugary sweet personality, so I've struggled here because I'm not the...I'm not just a very genuine person... I mean what you see is what you get. I'm no different here then I am at home. I don't treat these children differently then I treat my own.* Her personality is reflected in the way Kimberly operates her Backpack Program, in that she has set expectation and standards not only for herself, but also for her motivation in serving more of her students. *My name is on the door. I'm responsible for everything that comes in and everything that goes out. I have to hold people's feet to the fire because it won't work unless we work it...that's just the way I feel about it so...*

Prior to their current positions in helping to combat food insecurity throughout their communities, most of the volunteer coordinators have worked in other career areas throughout their lives, in which they have been able to transfer those experiences over to their current job role. Kimberly (volunteer coordinator W.W.B), referenced throughout her interview that she has worked with multiple diverse populations outside of the school system and that education for her is a new field of work based on her previous career path. *Most of my social work has been more reactive because of my history in corrections and drug court...substance abuse.. In other words, the issue has already been significant in their lives as an adult...so I'm trying to come around from the backside now and kind of get the kids when their kids and uhh hopefully try to make an impact umm before the problem sort of solidifies for them as they age..* She goes on to note her previous work by

stating that she worked in a prison as a parole officer for drug core and then she went on to work in a state prison as a substance abuse counselor. *It's a very corrupted entity...And that's the reason why I left...it's just it's own beast...*

Carla came into her position as first an ESL instructor answering phones in her school office, and then she was offered the Family Resource Coordinator (FRC) position at her school. *The principal and the Social Worker offered me that...cause the coordinator at the time was...I guess due to have her baby in November and the baby came in October...so the Assistant to the coordinator ran the center from that time from October all the way until March when I took over...* Due to her willingness and passion to help others, the principal and other school officials saw within Carla a sense of leadership. *We were trained on how to run this center...and oh...I was like, "omg this is serious!* Due to the high percentage of Spanish speaking students and families that Carla interacts on a regular basis at her school location, any materials that she hands out through any of her programming, including her Backpack Program, she always makes sure that all materials have been translated into Spanish too. *I always keep like 5 or 6 dictionaries...all English, or English-Spanish, Spanish-English, all Spanish...and I tell my parents that...it don't matter how...you know...when your language is something else, it's you know...whatever it is...not English, you're never going to be fluent 100%..never. You're always learning...*

For Susan, it was also not a coincidence how she stumbled upon her role as the Youth Services Center Coordinator and also the volunteer coordinator of the School Pantry Program. What is unique about Susan's school location, is that she has been the

Youth Service Center Coordinator for the past 23 years. Currently, she works with a total of 1300, but in the past has worked with both the high school and the middle school location, serving a combined total of 1500 students from each school location. Just like Karen at Leestown Middle School, they both operate a School Pantry Program that serves a mass array of students with high needs. Susan notes, *So I was hired to work both schools, ummm which was very hectic because it was 1500 kids here and 700 kids at the middle school...so it was quite a bit...you had to go back and forth each day to try and meet all those needs and do all those programs...*

As referenced previously, Susan worked as a ‘Flex Response Coordinator’ prior to taking on her current position. *A very good friend of mine had applied for the FRYSC were just starting...that was 25 years ago...this is our 25th Anniversary for FRYSC and so she was applying for a job and was gloating about it...like how wonderful you know these opportunities were...so I looked into it and applied and umm got an interview... At the first level of her entry into the FRYSC realm, she began working in a position within a middle school and eventually accepted her current position at the high school level. And I camp up to the high school...It was the best thing I ever did...I love it here, I love the people, I love the kids, I love the families, I know the community...umm I’ve invested a lot of time umm so it’s a good experience...I like it when I go out to Kroger somewhere and I hear, ‘Ms. Massey, Ms. Massey’...my kids hate it! They’re like ‘omg’ Can we go somewhere were you’re like anonymous?’* She then goes on to add that her presence not only amongst the population of students she serves but amongst her community, has allowed her to make her imprint of the lives of others. *...so I just think that’s a legacy*

that I'm really happy I have and that I get to leave behind...not just touching lives, but doing things that really impacts lives...it matters to me...the whole civil service kind of thing...and umm being a servant...and so I really feel good about that...

Even through encouraging themselves to become leaders of not only their program but their communities, did some of the volunteer coordinators inspire others to join their mission. Grace came into her current volunteer coordinator position through her previous involvement and residents of the Housing Authority complex. *It's actually kind of a funny story...And Debra had...both of her people that were doing the cooking out one day...and she just called me up and asked me if I could do it that day...And I did it that day and I think the next day and I helped the rest of the summer...* Grace enjoyed her involvement in the program so much during the first summer the Housing Authority hosted the Summer Feeding Program, that she continued to come back each and every day to serve the children in her community. *well like I said...she called me and needed somebody and then I came and once I got here...I enjoyed it...I enjoyed the kids...I enjoyed the other ladies that were helping...* For Karen, her eagerness for helping others and finding herself in her current position came from intrinsically at a young age. *I feel like I've always had a passion you know...even coming to middle school, I use to be a mediator and I use to help kids with mediation and solve problems and that's just what I do...And at church...the church I go to, I serve umm children at church...I love kids umm they're our future...um, we're here to help them be successful...umm we were all kids one day and when you get adults, you know...it's just like giving back because we've been in*

their situations, we've been in their shoes...you know, we want to make sure they don't go down the road we've been down... and so that's just a little bit about me...

By discovering their career paths, each of the coordinators are not only able to become more familiar with themselves and what they want to do, but they are able to give back to their students by working to meet their needs. Their passion for their food programs, has spilled over to their high involvement throughout their communities.

Extended Community Roles. For many of the volunteer coordinators, overseeing their feeding programs is their number one priority when it comes to reducing the number of children suffering by the challenges of hunger. In addition to their passion of working with these programs, these women are also highly involved in other areas of their communities, in which their involvement is also dedicated toward helping others. Not only do they see themselves as staples in their dedication of feeding children on a consistent basis, they also see themselves as staples in the community because they are able to extend their passions into each of their own communities. By extending their work, dedication, and passion throughout their individual communities, they have been able to create a community audience in which not only respects the work they do for their programming each and every day, but are able to gain community involvement around their passion for their work. Through her work with her Backpack Program, Sandy has also been involved in a various array of opportunities throughout her community. Specifically, for the feeding program, Sandy has served as the volunteer Backpack coordinator for 8-10 years. *I do serve...I've served on a couple of boards...through my career so that would be extra-curricular...Carnegie Center Board at one particular time,*

umm I was on...I was a member of the Junior League of Lexington, I participated in Leadership Lexington, and I currently serve on Growing Peaceful Families board...oh...umm., I also served on the board of umm Urban League of Young Professionals.

In addition to Sandy's engaged involvement in her community, in addition to Susan's role as the School Pantry Program volunteer coordinator, Susan also serves as the, *Title I Coordinator, Student Assistant Team Leader, umm Senior Class President (well, I'm not President...Senior Class Sponsor), and umm I'm also on the MTSS Leadership Team, I'm umm a Department...I've been President, Vice-President, and a member of Lex Care (which is a program within our network of Social Workers within Fayette County...um that work together to solve problems of sustainability like housing, food, those kind of things)...* In addition to these roles in which she oversees in her community, Susan also noted that she has been on the Resource Mother's Advisory Board and the Home Network Advisory Board.

Having a continued involvement in their communities has not only allowed the women to expose themselves to new opportunities, but it's allowed women like Susan to continue to build her skills, so that she is able to continue her mission in serving others. *I think I have a lot of skills as a leader to move us forward in the direction where support for families in the community are provided or umm as a resource provider...So that's it in a nutshell...* In addition to Sandy and Susan, Karen also talked about her additional roles when it comes to overseeing her School Pantry Program, but also overseeing additional responsibilities within her main role as a Youth Services Center Coordinator. *Usually I am the...ILP (Individual Learning Plan) Coordinator where students are able*

to start thinking about focusing on college and career readiness and just kind of getting them...you know...in their mind at an early age...I'm trying to think of other things...And just with the Youth Services Center, we do programs...I run a lot of groups...This year I'm excited...I'm going to try the Career Fair next Spring...so I'm excited about that. We do some Parent Learning Nights and I'm going to try and do a Social Media night for parents...ahh this semester...work with PTSA...connect with them...collaborate with them to see how we can better assist them in school. And so I wear a lot of different hats...

In addition to her role as a volunteer BackPack Program coordinator, Carla has also dedicated nine years to assisting with Back to School Rallies at the nearest park in the neighborhood where her school is located. *And every year I get the jitters...but it's just that you want to be the vest for the community, the families, the kids, and it's just the way I am...I guess personality wise...not that I'm a perfectionist...but you want to do better or I've never...I was brought up to be humble and to not to think you're the greatest or you know it all...it's like I'll give the trophy to someone else or the paton.. but yea, always willing to learn...*

Through their dedicated work with each of their feeding programs, the volunteer coordinators are able to transfer a lot of the dedication they have for the feeding programs, to the dedication they have in working throughout their communities. Taking their passion into the community, has allowed the coordinators to see what needs exist in their communities, continue to build relationships with community members and parents,

become a presence amongst the leaders of their community, and also gives them a way to promote their own programming and mission for working to combat child hunger.

Previous Education. In addition to various career paths serving as the stepping stone to the volunteer coordinator's current positions in helping to combat child hunger, some of the coordinators referenced a lot about their educational background and how their degree has served as their stepping stones into their career paths. Barbara, the volunteer coordinator overseeing the BackPack Program at Mary Todd Elementary School, noted that she moved from Jessamine County to Lexington, in order to attend the University of Kentucky. *I grew up in Jessamine County and moved to Lexington to go to UK and umm I attended for my undergraduate...I took a year off after I got married and got a Bachelors in Social Work and I wanted to work in the school Social Work field, so I took a position here at Mary Todd Elementary School.* Prior to her decision to take a job at Mary Todd Elementary school and choosing to work with children, Barbara felt that she wanted to go into ministry. *I knew I wanted to help people...honestly, I felt like I wanted to go into ministry at one point in my life and I guess I heard from my husband and other sources that often people were going to get their theological degree and it was very expensive to get that and they ended up in just a secular job at Ehow...and so he encouraged me to just go ahead and get my Masters in Social Work and maybe I could serve in that capacity...* Throughout the period of getting her Masters in Social Work, Barbara picked up an internship, while in the mist of gaining her Masters degree.

Karen, the volunteer coordinator overseeing the School Pantry Program at Leestown Middle School, talked about her love for her family and how her connection to

her family helped shape her decision in choosing the education path of Social Work. *I'm just a family oriented person...And I love being around my family. Umm I love helping. I think that's why I got into Social Work, cause that's my major...I have my Bachelor's in Social Work and I just graduated with my School of Social Work certificate...umm and I love helping people...that's my passion...and I think we're put on this earth to serve others...So that's just what I love doing and not only here at school or just with my job, but even in my family..* On the other hand, while Kimberly (W.W.B Elementary School) didn't enjoy her high school experience due to "teenage stuff going on", so did enjoy most of her college experience, of which she positively reflected on during the mist of her interview. *I dropped out in 11th grade and immediately...in December...turned 18 in February and took my GED...and immediately started college! I hated high school...hated it! I didn't like school...college!* For Shirley and Rita, the volunteer coordinators overseeing programming throughout Eastern counties, they each attended Morehead State University to receive their Bachelor degrees.

While some of the volunteer coordinators didn't reflect on their education experiences during the interview, the coordinators who addressed prior education experiences in their interviews, have been able to tie what they've learned in the classroom and apply to their current work as coordinators. Many of the coordinators received their Bachelor's Degree and then some went on to pursue their Master's Degree in Social Work. By receiving their degrees in this field, many of the coordinators were thankful for their educational experiences and what they were able to learn in the

classroom about working with low-income populations, youth, and about the subject on poverty.

Setting the Path: Leading By Example: In addition to overseeing their feeding program at their site locations and also striving to help others throughout their communities, each coordinator is truly dedicated toward the time they invest into their programming and also their vision of being a servant leader to others. When asked how much time each volunteer coordinator has dedicated toward overseeing the full operation of their programming, a majority of the coordinators didn't hesitate to outline the logistics that go into the overall operation of their programming. Sandy noted her dedication toward her program, especially when she began to oversee the operation of her program. *So I guess when I first started the program maybe I spent umm anywhere from packing the bag... I'm going to say roughly 2 hours in coordinating deliveries, packing, and all that. And then now as time has evolved and were different agencies have picked up...we went from the product being delivered to me, to the product being delivered to the church, and then they would pack and bring it to me...and then it went back to the pantry, where volunteers packed it...* Through her dedication and networking throughout her community, Rita is fully dedicated to her Summer Feeding Program and dedicates four hours per day toward gathering supplies, getting everything ready, coming up with plans on how to entertain the kids during meal time. *From start to finish it was about 4 hours a day, 2 days a week...So we dedicated about 8 hours a day. We had an average of 10 volunteers each time.* In addition to noting the efforts that Rita and her volunteers have put into overseeing her program, she also referenced the dedication she has put toward

the operation of her Backpack Program. *But with the Backpack Program itself, we spent 2 days a week just concentrating on childhood hunger...figuring out how to get money for food...how to fill the shelves...ummm...bagging up the food...you know getting it ready...making sure we have some for everybody...so nobody has to be left out...And so we spent 2 days a week just on the Backpack Snack Program...*

For Carla, she not only goes out into the community to spread more information to others about her Backpack Program, but she also dedicated to implementing new programming into her school, in which she finds will be beneficial to her along with her students. *I bring programs to the school when I go visit other places when I see something that will benefit the kids and their future...one year I was asked to come to Southland Christian Church...they packed our school and they had gloves and hates for our kids, so I was asked to come to their dinner and what I saw there, I loved it... As of Kimberly, throughout her interview she expressed a greater need for much more involvement from the community moving forward in her programming. *We need bodies here! We need people here...Because how are you ever going to know what we deal with unless you're in this building. At least sometimes...so umm we struggle with that. Again, I don't know. I've never had a council member come here and introduce themselves to say, 'hey, what do you do?' 'what exactly is this?' 'what is this program?' 'what do you do here?' 'what goes out of here?' 'what comes in here?' 'who do you serve in our community?' ...you know I've never had that...I would love to have that!...* Specifically for her programming, Kimberly has felt much more support and involvement from the state level by Senators than from those who are governing the local level of issues. *I've**

never had...like for example the William Wells Brown Neighborhood Association and they have an East End Neighborhood Association...I'll hear from her once a school year, but it's never about hunger...it's really about 'hey! We've collected some school supplies and we would like to drop them off!'" They don't come to my advisory council meetings...they don't come and ask 'hey! hey! what do you need? They don't do that. They just bring what they've gathered. Which we appreciate, don't get me wrong, but I would much rather have a conversation with someone to say, 'hey! You know, let's talk about what you need...let's talk about what we can do. A lot of people want to help out, but they consider volunteering as donating. And donations are good, but this population in this particular building...sometimes we need bodies more than we need your stuff...if that makes sense...

When asked about the involvement of their local officials in child feeding programs such as hers, Shirley mentioned that their school system and local officials in their area are pretty aware of feeding programs for children taking place in their community. In addition to the Summer Feeding Program along with Afterschool Snack Program, there is a non-profit organization in their community in which also operates a Backpack Program. *Oh I...umm the school system and superintendent are very aware that we have the food program...And umm the Action Team...they know we have a feeding program...you have certain people...it's like certain people does everything and we have certain organizations that do everything and we are...we do a lot of PR for each other...we piggy back on each other because if I'm a success, then they're a success!...* Jennifer also piggy backed off of Shirley's comment and also highlighted some of the

promotional tools they've implemented into their programming over the course of the years. *We advertised in the summer and stuff that we did have meals and stuff available...lunch...snack available here...and we stress that...So the school helps us...we partner with several different businesses...* Speaking of the promotion that occurs around the gear up for the Summer Feeding Program, in Estill County, Grace mentioned that during their first summer of hosting the summer feeding program that the involvement of businesses and other organizations in their programming became a central highlight. *Like Smokey coming...he talked to them...the park rangers came and talked to them...sheriff came and talked to them...just to teach them a little bit about...some of those kids don't understand and don't get that either...they don't get taught that kind of thing.* Even Gene spoke to some of the Major's involvement in their programming. *Well I know the major of Irvine was aware of it...because he came a couple of days and had ice cream with the kids one day...mum they had a meeting here, so he came in and talked to them one day...so I know that they're aware of it, but I don't think they were really involved in it...*

Coordinator Challenges

Even with the high points that come in overseeing each of their feeding programs, there have also been challenges that have presented themselves along the way. In each of the coordinator interviews, each noted how there has been a barrier within their programming, in which has caused them to find a solution of think of another alternative to meeting the needs of food insecure children in their communities. When thinking about some of the barriers in which have always been present in their communities, is the overarching presence of hunger throughout their communities. This continual presence is

what has served as the catalyst for each of the volunteer coordinators working to find a solution by establishing a feeding program to alleviate child hunger.

More Programs Like Ours. Throughout each of the volunteer interviews, it was very clear that each of the women were truly committed to their programming, but also expressed need for additional feeding programs throughout their communities. For Kimberly, she emphasized the need for additional feeding programs by noting, *Have more! Changing my role, I don't know about my role...If there is anything I could ask for, it would just be more. Umm, I don't really know what that means exactly... change my role?...other than just being able to make more connections with more people and getting more food in here, that would be the only thing I would want...* In addition to Kimberly referencing the need for more programming, Rita also commented along those same lines by stating, *Basically, I wish...I would like to see the community come together and start helping more. When a food pantry becomes food insecure, you have a big problem. But I believe that if we had more...If I had a grocery store that would donate...I believe we'd be a lot more...well, better off! We wouldn't have to struggle as much...*

Aside from referencing the need for more feeding programs in the communities, some of the women noted the need for more food items/larger portioned items of food. For Shirley in Owsley County, where the child hunger needs are at its highest in this county, she stated, *I wish that the portions were larger...that we could give the kids more..* Even for Carla, overseeing the BackPack Program at Cardinal Valley Elementary, she noted, *I wish I could get more...a little more food...I know it can't be sent home*

everyday, but I think that we can...It's good for the kids you know...they're not in school and at least they have a little something...

Prevalence of Hunger Throughout Community. Child hunger needs are wide spread throughout many of the communities each of these volunteer coordinators are working tirelessly to serve each and every day. When asked about the prevalence of hunger needs throughout their communities amongst children, each coordinator didn't hesitate in responding to the need of additional feeding programs in their communities. *I don't just serve the students at the school and their families, but I serve the whole entire community as well.* In addition to serving the students who suffer from hunger needs at their school, Kimberly also works with God's Pantry Food Bank to make sure her families are receiving monthly food baskets with perishable items. *I still do God's Pantry referrals and I still do Shiloh Baptist Church...they give us a monthly food basket, so that usually goes to an elderly or adult umm a person who has requested assistance.* In addition to Kimberly expressing the hunger needs that students face at her school, she too referenced the hunger needs that are highly visible in her community. *It's pretty prevalent with the economy and people losing their jobs...Earlier in the summer I volunteered at the pantry in Cardinal Valley and so umm that was a different experience...just a different group of people...encountering all the people who came into the pantry...And I've gone to St. Luke to pick-up food for some of my families who maybe didn't have transportation of who were disabled and couldn't get there. And when you're there, you just see a wide variety of people. It's not one demographic. It's just spread across...the young, the old... different races...you know...*

For a majority of the food insecure children the volunteer coordinators are serving through their feeding programs, many of them live in families who receive fixed incomes along with other assistance resources from the government. A lot of the children are currently being supported by grandparents who are struggling to support themselves, due the overflow of grandparents in their households and lack of guardianship from primary parents. Susan states that, *out of the 1900 kids we have attending Bryan Station, we have umm 1200+ of those who are Free Lunch...which means that their income is 200% above the guideline that is set federally...in cases of that, that means that our families are anywhere from living with grandparents who are on fixed incomes to living with unaccompanied minors...* She then goes on to talk about the amount of homeless children who are enrolled in her school and the barriers they also face. *We have students who are homeless...we currently have 36 students who are identified as homeless within Bryan Station...so the numbers are significant when you're looking at the data on what families are struggling with..*

Aside from the feeding programs that are overseen by the coordinators themselves, a majority of the coordinators spoke about additional food resources available throughout their communities, but also expressed a need for more food resources. *We have the WIC program...you know WIC?...for mothers who are pregnant or children who are food insecure...umm or sickly...whatever...I'm not sure how you say that...but WIC has also been cute...One of the things is this that I can tell you...Some of the parents with little kids...little babies...and it's sad to think that programs that are actually doing so good to keep a baby fed, are being cut. And there is not any way we can*

change that... In addition to WIC, other volunteer coordinators expressed the need for additional programming such as SNAP ED. She noted that educational programming such as this, would be beneficial. *I think I hear parents say things a lot of times that a lot of times I wish they would utilize the resource center more. Because a lot of them will say things like, "you know I need a food pantry referral because you know they've been eating me out of a house and home all summer and we have a free hot site for feeding in the summer for free lunches, so that might of helped them if they would have utilized that or...sometimes they will say, 'Oh I need help with my utility bill, because I bought my kids new clothes..' when that's something that I could have helped them with the clothing so that they wouldn't have the utility issue...* In addition to the types of food assistance programs mentioned over the course of the volunteer coordinator interviews, again some of the coordinators mentioned the needs of the grandparents who are raising a lot of grand children. *It's a lot of these grandparents that are raising these grand kids...because they have raised their kids and now they have to come back and do it again...but only thing is, this generation...it's changed...these kids are not the same like they use to be when we were kids...you know? They don't have a lot of income coming in you and know and then umm...so food is you know a struggle and then you have another mouth to feed..*

The volunteer coordinators are also working to combat other unmet needs of their student in which include unsustainable housing (families living in homes that are not properly maintained or rent is high, that they are struggling to be able to afford it), lack of education, poor employment opportunities, transportation issues, childcare needs, along with other barriers. *We have lots of families that are clearly living in situations were the*

ahh family earns perhaps maybe \$1200 in income and she has to pay maybe \$300.00 in childcare, so that reduces her ability to afford an apartment, which is probably what she can afford, because houses are beyond their income level...so she is living in substandard housing in my opinion for multiple children noted Susan. Even for the volunteer coordinators operating a child feeding program throughout Eastern Kentucky counties, they too feel the pressure of food insecurity that has blanketed the youth of their communities. *There is not a dent being made in food insecurities or childhood hunger, or hunger in Rowan County.. Um there is not a dent being made in it... What we do is about 50 families a month...sometimes more and sometimes less... Ah so food insecurity is just spreading...it's not getting better...it's not being taken care of...it's just getting worse...*

As Rita highlights the hunger needs in Rowan County, Rita states that hunger needs have been ear marked amongst all populations within her community. *It's a problem! We're the second poorest county in the nation. My mother is on a fixed income and she and if it was not for my husband and myself, she would have \$6 a month to eat on...that's...that's shameful!...that's disgraceful!..* For Grace in Rowan County, she continues to see the prevalence in her community through their faces, interactions, and other actions. *I see a lot of homeless people...I don't know if they're really homeless, but I see a lot of homeless kids with em' and then I see the kids up here and you can just tell by the way they eat, that their not eating like they should at home...because I mean we don't cook for like the whole four course meal up here...that is just your snack or dinner kind of thing...* Claire, another volunteer with the Estill County feeding program, also stated *,being in the school system...watching the children at breakfast time and lunch*

time...and you know that you can tell there is kids that probably don't get much more of what they're getting from school... Even Gene, the main coordinator of the program, provides her perspective of the Summer Feeding Program through her participation with the programming as a child. Umm I remember being a kid, they use to have a summer program when I was little and I remember going to the school and eating lunch there...and that was like really cool because I knew that I would have something to eat at that point and umm by all means I was not a skinny kid either...I was a plump little girl, but you know there were just some things you just couldn't eat...when I did get to eat, I would eat as much as I could...Now as a mother, I don't want my child or any other child to feel that hunger...I don't want them to ever feel that way...

As there is also the prevalence of hunger that exist throughout these communities, there is also additional food resources aside from the child feeding programs that exist in these communities, but not enough. The prevalence of child hunger throughout each of these communities at some of the highest and even with some of the additional food resources available, there is need that is still present. *Umm...I really can't say too much about the other...you know...resources for food here. I do know that a lot of our clients do draw food stamp. Food stamps are available but they have been cut. And people that were not food insecure before because they had food stamps, are now food insecure...* noted Rita. She then adds that Rowan County along with a lot of these communities have a WIC program as an additional food resource available. *WIC has also been cut...where they can get maybe 7 cans of formula for a baby to get through an entire...now they only get 5...we have clients...these families that come to us for nothing other than formula for*

the babies...and it's sad to think that programs that are actually doing so good to keep a baby fed, are being cut. Ad there is not any way we can change that...

Just like the families who are receiving food resources through Rita's pantry, many of these families also have children who are participating in her Summer Feeding Program along with additional child feeding programs that she is overseeing. With programs such as SNAP and WIC being cut, this directly affects not only the families receiving these benefits, but also the children living within the household. In stating this, the entire family is affected by the lack of food resources many of these communities across the state of Kentucky are facing.

More Community Participation & Awareness. Specifically, for the BackPack Program, Sandy suggested that more school should think about partnering with outside organizations such as God's Pantry Food Bank, to also implement a feeding program for children. *I definitely think there are more schools that could partner with a BackPack Program and some school sights are doing it own their own...which frees up another school that didn't have the program before, but I'm sure there are pockets that aren't being served...* When referencing child feeding programs such as the Summer Feeding Program, Rita noted her thoughts by stating, *I'd love to see more programs like this that are free to do ahh...to meet the immediate need. See, this is one thing! It doesn't matter how many programs you have in place. If their programs don't meet the immediate need when people walk through the door, then those programs aren't working efficiently.*

Combating hunger takes a community effort, especially when it comes to assisting children in fighting child hunger. While there can be more of a community rally around the push for each of the feeding programs throughout these counties, there is a need for community participation and awareness around the child hunger topic. For Kimberly, much of the support around her BackPack Program has come from her being internally motivated to continue feeding students in need at her school location. When asked about the involvement of her community, local officials, along with the state efforts in helping to combat child hunger, she stated, *they're not! We have community partners who are involved...we have some sororities and fraternities, churches...and I don't know if those community leaders are involved through their personal entities that they work with, but as far as the Lexington Fayette County Urban Government (LFUCG) coming to say 'we're going to supplement this', doesn't happen.*

Even though she didn't highlight receiving any local support from local officials, she did state that she has received some support from the state. *Well I will say that Senator Reggie Thomas represents us well here. He pushes...he comes to read to our babies...her pushes for funding...for our FRCYSC funding...her is probably our most...as far a Senator goes...he probably our most instrumental voice when it comes to being out there and talking about us...* She even goes on to note the involvement of the Neighborhood Association, but referenced how they could do more as an association to support her BackPack Program.

For Rita in Rowan County, she indicated that she has a host of community partners assisting her with her program over the course of the year. *Partners! We have*

multiple partners in Rowan County. We have a lot! Churches...businesses...just individuals umm other organizations like for instance...veterans program...we just did a veteran's feeding program...we received a grant for a veterans feeding program...As far as state official involvement in her programming, just like many of the other volunteer coordinators, she expressed a need for more of their participation in her programming. We don't have any state officials umm involved with Helping Hands...Um... We have a few community officials I guess...umm that are concerned about the same problems we're concerned about...how they choose to be involved umm in that is yet to be seen...because they aren't yet helping Helping Hands...we aren't taking any government money, so umm I choose to instead of depending on the government, depend on God...But the whole community has rose up to the need...as many communities from here...ah we have supporters...in almost...pretty much...we almost every state... She then goes on to indicate that, We have supporters...for our programs...not only will they ship food in here for Helping Hands or the families, they will ship in umm Christian gifts, winter coats, school clothing, ahh school supplies, Easter baskets, umm were not limited just to this community of Rowan County when it comes to supporters...we work local but we don't think local...

While Rita is currently receiving much of her support at the community level as compared to Kimberly, Rita did mention how important it would be for her community to come together as a whole to support her efforts. *Basically I wish...I would like to see the community come together and start helping more. When a food pantry becomes food insecure, you have big problem. Yea and so on occasion you know we have been food*

insecure and we're a food pantry. But I'm sure all food pantries are like that...umm the supply and demand goes up and down. For Rita, she has been able to gather community supporters through various outlets, of which their able to donate more than food to her non-profit organization.

For other volunteer coordinators, much of the community support and awareness has been drawn through word of mouth through their programming, but much community awareness can be done. For Karen and the School Pantry Program she oversees, she noted how there are hurdles she must travel through in order to a great participation from school, local, or state officials' participation in her programming. *"Well actually the Youth Service Center umm we actually operate from Frankfort...so not only do I have uhh someone who is over me in Fayette County, I have someone who is over me in Frankfort...so I have a Regional Director who is over me...ummm like I said we have a budget, so everything is from the state level...that's where we get our money from is from the state...and so I do think that they are involved with us as a FRYSC so umm...but a lot of times I always feel like you know...people up here can make all the decisions and do whatever they need to do, but some of them have never stepped foot in a school or...or really see like, 'do they really see food insecurity'... 'like do they really see somebody struggling with a bill?' ...or 'really do they see or care that over here in one of our rooms that's umm emotional behavior.. 'like do they really see that'...like it's OK you can make all of these decisions from up here, but until you actually can see you know what I'm saying...and see what you really need to see the difference that you need to be or see the decision or policy you really need to make and why you need to do that...because it*

effects this, this, and that...I just...I just don't know...I think it's a difference story...so I just feel like when we're talking about education and we're making these laws, I just feel like a lot of times people just need to come in the school and spend some time here and so they can see...you know? (she laughs)...because I...I don't know...I just think it's hard to go off with what you think...and you really don't know..."

As Karen has already mentioned, it's difficult for decisions to be made at the state and local levels around child hunger, especially if there has not been any participation along with involvement from those levels. This issue is rooted within the community and can only be addressed from those who are working each and every day to combat the issue from the foundational level. At the end of the day, in addition to community involvement, there is also the awareness piece that plays a key role in the work of these volunteer coordinators. The coordinators are continuing to push the mark on bringing awareness to their communities, by continuing their commitment toward combating child hunger.

Coordinator Perseverance

Each of the volunteer coordinators are motivated differently through their current work in helping to combat childhood hunger. Depending on the motivation they have for their work, this will determine their resilience level for continuing their work in this area. The lower the resilience level of the coordinator, the less dedication and motivation they may have toward continuing their work in combating child hunger. While each volunteer has gotten to the place they are today through various paths of life, each know they play

an important role within their schools, organizations, and throughout their local communities. They know there is a certain population that depends on the resources and programming they provide and without their specific programming, this population would continue to suffer from hunger needs. When asked what was their motivation in helping children who face food insecurity, many of the coordinators eluded to the fact that, *it's just the right thing to do!* And others indicated that there is a higher spiritual figure which is guiding them to lead this type of work throughout their communities.

Empathy Toward Childhood Hunger. The reason as to why community involvement and participation is very important to many of the volunteer coordinators when it comes to their current work, stems from what has previously been mentioned earlier in reference to childhood experiences, relations, and how they have been able to transform those experiences into their adulthoods. When asked if any of the volunteer coordinators have faced any challenge with hunger issues throughout their childhood or adulthood era, many of the volunteer coordinators noted they've never had challenges with hunger. For Kimberly, her response was very different as compared to the other responses from the volunteer coordinators. Well again like I said when I was younger...being from a single parent home, my parents struggled, my mother struggled...umm being a farm family...we... we had everything we needed, it just wasn't an excess. And then when I went through my two years...I'll take this back...I got divorced when I was 33 and for five years I was on public assistance while I finished my degree...and umm so I got food stamps for five years to help feed my children as I went to school and then worked...and then ummm the two years when I left corrections...umm

I didn't seek public assistance but my son and I we lived on the bare minimum... Due to her strong ties to the issue of having witnessed hunger throughout a period in her life, Kimberly along with some of the other volunteer coordinators are able to translate those experiences and empathize with the families and children they serve in their programs. That's the word right there. I do empathize for the families. I do understand. I'm very quick to tell families that I've been on both side of the desk. I'm not in any way, shape, or form...I mean financially I'm better off but I'm in this because I've worked, put myself through school, got my Master's degree, and went on and one and one...but I understand what it's like to have a hungry child...I understand what it's like to do without so you can feed your child...I get that...so for me when they come and say their hungry, I'm on it...like we have to find something...somewhere...like again I wish we had a place we could send them for the good stuff.

In addition to translating some of the adulthood experiences into her current role today, Kimberly also learned the importance of communication and the power of inclusion when it comes to working with various different populations. *But the way I speak to them...I speak to them in terms of us and we and not as in you...when you have a more inclusive attitude...when you work with people...umm so again for me it's about having an inclusive attitude...I've never had that said to me...Like I said, with any population I've worked with...even inmates. With inmates you'll get, 'you don't know how it's like to be in prison' and 'no I don't. But like I said, I've just never had anybody say that to me...* Even for Carla who grew up in a different area of the world, she too was closely connected to the challenges of accessing food as a child. *I remember my mom*

didn't have a car for us, so we had to do a lot of walking...carrying heavy stuff umm when I was little and she would get that...I forgot what they use to call that food...we had to go to some kind of warehouse like and people lined up and umm we did it in Puerto Rico too...She cooked maybe it really wasn't really...could have been on the greasy side you know...being Hispanic, but you know...things were fried...it looked like SPAM.

While Susan has never personally faced the challenges of accessing food throughout the childhood and adult stages of her life, through her current role as the volunteer coordinator for her School Pantry Program, she has gained enough perspective and understanding of the situation. *I think everybody goes through that point at some point or another but I don't really ever remember having seen it as something that was maybe necessarily an unmet need...umm...I had good support...I know lots of people don't have grandparents or siblings or anyone to rely on...you know...they feel survival is is you know not is...being in the middle of trying to survive and surviving alone...umm survival kicks in and they will do what ever they can to help their kids, but if you don't have a way to get through, what do you do? You know...you do without...And I just don't like the idea that our kids are doing without...when it's so easy for us to find a way to figure that out...Umm...we have to be creative about it... We did it!* For Shirley, she talked specifically about her childhood experience and some of the staples her family had throughout rough periods in her life. *I've been very fortunate...ahh...cause my mom and dad growing up...we had it rough...we might have to eat soup beans five days a week and fried taters and cornbread...but that was food and it stuck to you...we raised our own garden...I think that's what a lot of people around here...they don't raise gardens*

anymore and I think that would help too if they raised their own vegetables...But you know I could survive if I had all these...if the restaurant shut down and stuff...I have green beans, I have tomato juice, taters, and beans...I can survive and I think...I think the kids need to be..go back to the old days...that's what I talk about teaching and stuff...they need to be taught how to survive without Pizza Hut or McDonalds...

Even for the volunteer coordinators who have not had a close interaction with hunger as a child or even as an adult, they now have a perspective in which they can share with the world. For these volunteer coordinators, the issue of child hunger is something they witness through the interactions of the students and families they serve. Rita emphasized her perspective not only through challenges she faced as a child, but through her the interactions she has held with some of the families she currently serves. *It's always a challenge when you ask for food for someone else...now this I can tell you for myself, I can eat a bake potato and go to bed...ahh...it's always a challenge when you ask for something for another person...it's an uphill battle. you know...it really is an uphill climb...but at the top...when you get to the top of that ladder...everything is here that needs to be here for everybody that comes in...but the main thing is, I want to always be able to have a prayer of circle with a homeless family...a family that has lost a loved one and comes here for help...or a family that has not had anything to eat for like a couple of weeks. I always want to be able to have a prayer circle with these people...*

Servant Leaders to Others. Being a servant leader to others means that we are able to put our personal needs aside and attend to the needs of others. Each of the volunteer coordinators have already been immune to meeting the needs of others,

whether it's through their personal lives, within their work in their feeding programs, or through other opportunities. Susan's response to her motivation for participating in combating child hunger needs, served as the overarching response as to why a majority of the other volunteers are motivated to participate in combating this issue. *Doing the right thing you know! Being a servant leader is so important to me...ah I think my journey in life isn't just to take care of myself and do for myself, but umm to do everything I can to make things umm better for not just people in my own area, but umm people in general...umm as far as the umm human race...I don't want to leave this world worse than it was...I'm doing the best I can to leave it better than it was..I feel very strongly that I want to leave my name as positive you know...create good karma for myself...you know?" She then added, "we don't have to go through this alone... We may be born by ourselves and alone...we may die by ourselves and alone. As far as that part of the journey, but the journey in between is not alone...And so do the best with what you have...*

Doing the best with what the volunteer coordinators have, is what they've done thus far in their programming. While they may not be able to serve every single child who is experiencing childhood hunger in their communities, they are making a mark that can withstand many barriers and challenges. *I wouldn't want to see any person...you know any human...you know go hungry... a value that I have...you know so and working with kids...you know...you never know when they leave here...we know that most of the kids that are in poverty...when they are in the school they get most of their meals at school...whether that be breakfast and lunch...or if they're in an afterschool program... it*

would be breakfast/lunch, then a snack...and so ummm I just wouldn't want any child not to have access to food...

For Susan, she goes deeper to note how food serves as a major need to the survival of any human being on this earth. Without food and other certain needs, we wouldn't be able to function and fully have the capability to take care of ourselves. *Because food is so important (voice begins to get emotional)...it's the first tier to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs...it's the first thing...and none of the other things...learning can't happen, umm success can't happen, brain development can't happen unless they have good nutrition and they have good food...and have access to that food...umm so ahh you know that's my number one thing...is that every kid when they walk in the door..if they say I'm hungry and I don't have a way to get food, then that's my number one priority is to go figure out how to get food...so that...and not just one time, but on an ongoing basis...so that need is now, no longer a need...it's now facilitated and there is a way to make that happen...so that's why...*

Many of the volunteer coordinators put themselves in the perspective of the children they serve and mentioned how they wouldn't want to go to bed every night thinking if they should have done something different that day in working to make sure their programming is more effective. *I just feel like that's important...ummm and I don't want to go to bed every night thinking if I should have done something that would have been important...Instead I did... you know...something for myself...I don't know, I just don't live that way (she laughs)...That's just not the way I am..." For Karen, she specifically talked a lot about some of the personal interactions she's had with some of*

the children she works with through her program. "At the end of the day, kids shouldn't be worried about all these problems and all these other stuff...all these adult issues that they worry about that our kids worry about all the time...or they're trying to get jobs because they're trying to help mom pay for this or pay for that...when they should be worries about being kids...and that's the saddest part of all, because a lot of them...they have to grow up so quick and try to do all these adult things that some of them missed out on the opportunity to go to college or do these things because they have to take on adult opportunities and that is so sad..."

She then notes, "Just to be able to help anybody...you know just motivates me you know...because like I said...we never know what could change...it's not just for somebody that's just needy...it's for anybody. And just being able to help any family here at Leestown that needs help or has that food insecurity ...that we can just be that resource for them or they're able to come in here with no judgment you know...And this is a safe place...you know what I'm saying? If you need help, it's ok...you know, it's ok! We might need help! Sometimes you know things get tight for me...I might need help...you know I might need something...I mean, I've had to ask people for help..."

For the volunteer coordinators living throughout Eastern Kentucky, as previously mentioned, a lot of the children they serve have grown up in single parent households, in which one parent is out of the picture due to drug related activities and other challenges. For a lot of the women overseeing child feeding programs throughout these sectors of Kentucky, feel that their programming has served as a solution for many of the potential challenges the children they serve may face. *Umm I worry about a kid going hungry,*

cause I see them come through this door and their moms and dads is blown out of their mind...and then they're wanting their snack...It's been a blessing! She then notes that her program has sparked a lot of educational growth within the population of children she serves, because prior to the participation in her program, a lot of the children were not on their reading levels. *I don't care if they're not reading a book, but I have seen during this program you have kids that aren't reading a book, that are picking up a book. And I feel like that's going to further their education, because if you can read...you've just opened up to new vocabulary and umm...it's just going to make school a lot easier and they're getting a snack and they're going to learn...If you're sitting in school and you're sitting in a meeting and your stomach is growling you're not going to comprehend any of that... definitely...*

As servant leaders to the children along with families of their communities, they have put their lives, interest, and passion on the line to serve others. Making the decision to take on this role in their community, isn't the easiest each day, as they can visually see how the detriments of hunger has impacted the physical and mental development of the children who are being impacted by their programming. *We're ahh a helping community, a friendly community, and a willing community...And there is one goal that we want the children to be successful. They're our future!* stated Shirley. She then goes on to note, *Umm I want to take the pain and worries away from them..*

While some of the volunteer coordinators related their motivation and resilience for continuing to do their work to either prior personal experiences or other factors, some of the volunteer coordinators spoke a lot to their love for working with children. For

Grace, she noted that much of her experience through her work with her feeding program has come through her natural love for working with youth. *I love kids!...I've always been like that...even during school and when I was little... and when we moved up here...I bought my son and I've just been stuck by her side ever since then...we both moved out of here and we're still doing what we can to help Debra...* Even for Claire, also a core volunteer with Estill County, she too enjoys working with kids and their needs. *I just enjoy working with kids...period...no matter what it's trying to help them do...you know whether you know...if I see a kid that needs something...I just try to help kids...I've always been that person...so coat driver you know...I use to have a Girl's Scout group myself...* For Emma, who serves as the main coordinator for the Estill County feeding program, her motivation for doing what she does also stems from the motivation of children. *I just love kids...basically! And umm once I know your kids, I love them and whatever I'd do for my child, I would do for your child...And that's just basically who I am I guess...*

Greater Impact on Life. For most, it's as simple as being able to serve the children themselves, assist them, and also meet their needs, because at the end of the day, these children may not be receiving the same support from others in their lives. *I think that everybody has a purpose and for mine, that is being able to serve others...a lot of times we get concerned about our own circumstances and our own worries, but whenever...for me personally when I'm serving others, it makes me feel like I'm fulfilling what my purpose is...and that's a hope I have for other students when they can be involved in serving...I hope that day...they start to see that they have a purpose as well...*

referenced Barbara in her interview as she deeply talked about her role as a volunteer coordinator and how that has shaped the person she is today. Much of the impact that has been made on the lives of the volunteer coordinators comes from their continual emphasizes on assisting with the needs of others. While most coordinators have not thought about how their work has made a greater impact on their lives along with their communities, some of the coordinators were able to make a close connection. Kimberly noted this in her interview when asked in what ways she feels her work has made an impact on her community.

Oh gosh! That's a million dollar question! I don't know if many of us really know...we just get up every day and do the best we can and hope that...I mean obviously we do because they keep coming back...umm they keep asking for these programs...they keep asking 'where can I get the food?' 'Where can I find certain resources?' and then in the respect of food, 'where can I find these resources?' So they keep coming back, so I think were being productive in helping them secure at least some resources. Because they wouldn't keep coming back to use if we weren't able to help them...As far as a personal impact in which her feeding program has made on her life, Kimberly talked about her emphasizes of never giving up, no matter to what extent she has to go through to get those resources. I think just knowing...I mean as far as a personal impact just knowing when you walk in this building and hand out personal sacks of food, you know at least that child is going to get something...you know what I mean...It's never going to be enough for me... for me it's never going to satisfy me personally...but I think that try to...

just knowing that you at least assisted in some way to make sure they get something...because I know again in a broken system...

For Rita, taking on a volunteer coordinator role to ensure children are being fed throughout her community, is a role she never would have imagined herself taking on any day. *I never pictured as having any mean or any way that I could make a difference for anybody...I just thought I could just... you know work and eat and live my life...and work and eat and impact my life and impact my families' life... but I never ever dreamed that I could impact other people's lives from being able to give them food, to being able to give them kind words anywhere else..from Christmas gifts to Winter coats...I have people who call me and say, 'hey, can you help this family? 'The kids are getting on the bus in short sleeve t-shirts in the dead of the Winter. Can you find coats for them?' But I never thought I could make a difference in anybody else's life outside my family until God called me and humbled me to step up and start feeding children...that's all He said that's all I was supposed to do...that's what I thought I was to do...but a hungry child that doesn't have a Winter coat, now what are you going to do?...Ahh and it was like He said to me, 'I want you to feed them. I want you to step up. Stop what you're doing for yourself and I want you to feed these kids.*

Even for Barbara, she believes that everyone has a purpose in their lives that God has earmarked for them to achieve. For her, she began to recognize how she could make an impact of herself, her Backpack Program, and her community at an early stage in her career. *I think that everybody has a purpose and that being able to serve others...a lot of times we get concerned about our own circumstances and our own worries, but*

whenever...for me personally when I'm serving others, it makes me feel like I'm fulfilling what my purpose is...and that's a hope I have for other students when they can be involved in serving...I hope that day...they start to see that they have a purpose as well...

Champions for Change. *I wouldn't want to see any person...you know any human...you know go hungry...that's just...a value that I have, you know so and working with kids...you know...you just never know when they leave here...we know that most the kids that are in poverty...when they are in the school they get most of their meals at school...so umm I just wouldn't want any child not to have access to food... referenced Sandy.* From the perspectives of the coordinators, it's about working to bridge the gap between the hunger needs of children along with their continual goal to provide feeding programs to food insecure children. Throughout many of the volunteer coordinator interviews, most noted their dedication and passion for working in their communities. As noted previously, a lot of the volunteer coordinators have either grown up in the communities they serve or have either migrated to their communities at an earlier stage in their lives. For many of the coordinators, they see their current role of feeding children, as something they were put on this earth to do. *Oh I think for everybody that you meet is for a reason and I believe that you can learn something from everybody that you meet. That is why God put people into your life. For instance, when I was first called. ahh.. to open a pantry and start feeding the kids, God spoon fed me information* noted Rita in her interview when she was asked as to way she continues to dedicate her career toward combating child hunger.

She then goes on to place emphasize on her dedication to the mission and how she wants to continue her career path in this type of work. *You can enough and you can never do too much...ahh with the numbers as high as they are right now for children going hungry...umm I'm not afraid to step out and to take a leap of faith in God that her will supply...you know if I add a program on God has led me to do that...and if he leads me to do that, then He will supply...and He does supply...* She then adds, *Well basically we all know kids who are hungry...you probably know some too...but when I get up in the mornings...before I get out of the bed, I thank God for waking me up again. It give me a reason to get out of bed in the mornings because there is people relying on me...you know there...there is people coming in here who if I turn a blind eye to their hunger and to their children ahh going hungry ahh you know...what would they do...what would they do...*

Even as many may note them as “champions” of their communities, some of the volunteer coordinators didn’t see themselves in that light, but saw themselves as just being an extra support system for someone else *and sometimes we think we’re poor and we’re doing so bad, but you always have to look behind you. Umm...you know... there are other people in such worse shape... so I’m more aware of working this position helps me bond...the way I do things maybe...umm I go beyond I think* noted Carla as she talked about how serving others has given her an entire new perspective on life and it’s challenges. While each of the women have their own stories to tell and also come from various backgrounds, they have become “champions of change” for their communities.

For many of them, they don't categorize their roles and what they do for children who are stricken by hunger as "work". *I just feel that I've been able to umm meet so many people...like...and build an impact...like one lady that comes through the pantry...comes through the pantry every week...I've been building a relationship with her...I even know her by name... like I see her in the store and I'm like, "hey girl!"..* noted Karen about the School Pantry Program she oversees at her middle school. She then goes on to add, *I also let them know that I'm not above them...I'm on the same level...like you know what I'm saying...like you're people just like I am you know... not just you cause you're coming in here for the pantry...you have no judgment...I want this to be a place of no judgment.*

Even for Rita, references how she doesn't judge any child or family participating in the Summer Feeding Program she oversees in Rowan County. *"Those children become just like family to us. Those families just blended in and there is no discrimination in our organization. None of us discriminate against each other...no matter what situation and I think umm we've brought kids together who are African-American...we have kids who are Latinos or all different races...but to see them all interact... I guess that's a high point of the day..."* For Claire with Estill County, she referenced, *"I don't know that I've made that much of an impact on one person, but I hope that I have...yea...to one kid out there somewhere will grow up and do the same thing...you know...or help people or hopefully may own children...you know...cause I try to teach them that no everyone is a fortunate as we are...yes...there is sometimes that we don't have the big seven course*

meal on the table ourselves you know...ahh but there is kids out there that don't have a meal at all..."

Committed Beyond Barriers. In regards to the advice these women would provide other volunteers who are thinking about establishing child feeding programs throughout their communities, each have their own suggestions, but all emphasize the importance of finding purpose, community support, and passion for the mission. *Just keep trying...don't be discouraged if you ask one group and they're not umm willing to participate or willing to help...just keep asking...* stated, Sandy. *Umm...I think the biggest thing is try...again...try...to come in with an unbiased opinion about how people get 8000 a month in food stamps and how they are still hungry...that is not for you. So for me I guess try to come into it...if you're going to start a program...start it with the understanding that there is so many facets of poverty...so many levels...it's never black and white...it's never this or that...there are so many gives and takes...hits and misses...always all these things that people don't understand unless you've lived it...* quoted Kimberly. *Make sure you're up for the challenge because it is a challenge...it's an uphill battle. If you were to start a Backpack Snack Program in the community where you live...where nobody knows about the program, then you would have to..*

Even for the volunteer coordinators who have made the commitment to oversee their own feeding program, they each took this task on knowing that there would be both successes and challenges that would come with establishing programming that would help to combat child hunger. Through their immersed experiences in this realm of work,

are they able to provide in-depth advice to others who also want to commit their lives to alleviating child hunger. Many of them have felt discouraged in their work at one point on another on their journey, but have never once given up on these children that need them in their community. *How did I feel? Discouraged...but then I keep saying well somebody will...you know and I just meet people if they say 'hey! I'm thinking about doing such and such with your school. What is your need?' I say, 'we need such and such, can you do this and can you do that?'* referenced Sandy when she along with the other coordinators were asked about what advice would they give to other community members who are thinking about starting a child feeding program in their own communities.

With establishing a child feeding program, comes acknowledging and understanding the great lengths it takes to establish such a need based and much needed program. Along with much thought put into the logistics of the program, comes recognizing and assessing the needs of one's community prior to the program establishment. *With poverty there is realness to that...So I guess if you come into it with that understanding and coming into it with a willingness to want to feed and no other reason, then I think you know...can pass that message on to all those who donate, deliver. And all those who do all different pieces of getting the food out there...* stated Kimberly. In addition to recognizing the needs that exist within a community, also comes with the being intentional and having a purpose for choosing to establish a feeding program for children. *You have to have a really solid understanding of your own intentions...like 'what is your intention in this...you say 'well, all I want to do is feed the babies..' and I*

say, 'what does that look like?' 'what do you need to do in order to accomplish that?' 'what kind of people do you need around you to make that happen?' ...it's a lot to look at...it's not like 'I'm going to do this and see what happens!' ...It's a lot deeper than that...

For Rita she talks about some of the challenges you make keep in mind when starting a feeding program. While it may seem like an uphill battle at the forefront, she notes the following that, *What I'd say is this, make sure you're up for the challenge because it is a challenge...* For Rita she recognizes that in addition to the establishment of her Summer Feeding Program, there are additional programs that are needed in surrounding counties such as Lewis, Fleming, Elliot, Carter, Menifee, and Bath counties. *I've had four people contact me and say, 'I'm going to start one, I'm going to start one and never did!' ...So, it's much needed in all these counties...* She then goes on to talk about how her role along with commitment to her program and how God has always been able to provide for her. *But first get God on your side...whatever you're going to do...if God is on your side, nobody can tear that down...see that's why Helping Hands is still here because it's God's house...it's not mine!...*

When Karen talks about what advice she would provide for others who are considering starting a feeding program for children, she notes how important it is to create a safe environment for the people she is serving. One that is welcoming, non-judgmental, along with one that genuinely invites everyone in that is suffering from some type of need. *Just make sure you're creating a space for non-judgment environments that families...when families step I here...that they feel welcomed and they feel like this is the*

place you can come and get groceries and there is no judgment... Through her experience with her program, she notices how much courage it takes for students and parents to come to her and receive food resources. Parents get that vibe...kind of like you don't want to help them...you know...that's just not a good vibe...because I had parents tell me about you know how they umm maybe they couldn't get help and that really hurts my heart...

Even with the successes and challenges that may present themselves through the journey of being committed to this type of work, comes pure passion. Even though the volunteer coordinators have outlined a long list of things to consider when establishing feeding programs, much of the experience comes from taking the first step and establishing a feeding program. By overseeing their own feeding programs, the coordinators have been able to gain a new perspective, feedback, and insights into their programming, in which they would not have been able to provide without taking their first steps.

Chapter V: Discussion

I hope that your research can help someone else along the way to be a better servant to God and that your research will be seen as favorable...that you're...you know interested in knowing...because some people don't want to hear about poverty and hunger...I respect you greatly because not many people want to hear my story...encouraged Rita at the conclusion of our interview.

In initially contacting each of the volunteer coordinators for an interview, a lot of them were taken back as to why I wanted to spend time interviewing them about their work with their feeding program and also throughout the community. One of the major key components that emerged from the volunteer coordinator interviews was the prevalence of empathy. Empathy is defined as the experience of understanding another person's condition from their perspective in placing yourself in the shoes and feelings of others (Empathy, 1991). These volunteer coordinators are not motivated out of sympathy, but out of understanding of the challenges child hunger presents. These women are able to empathize with the population of children they serve each and every day as a result of their previous experiences and circumstances they've each gone through in their own ways to get to the place they are today. Hence a persistent theme of empathy emerges from the voices of these dedicated interviewees. Each of these volunteer coordinators truly care and have a deep heart for the population of children they serve. Their genuine and selfless roles as volunteer coordinators, serve as a key piece for the work that is being done around child hunger and for generations moving forward.

While there is not much research that examines the topic of child hunger through the lens of London's Career Motivation Theory, Day and Allen et al., (2002) examine how career motivation mediated the relationship between career mentoring and performance effectiveness. This study was the first to reveal linkages between mentoring, career self-efficacy, career motivation and protégé career success (Day & Allen, 2002). Hence, career motivation can serve as the linkage between the mentorship and overall effectiveness. While this study does not reference the child hunger topic, it does reference

the importance of mentorship, in which can be strongly tied to the volunteer coordinators and the role they play in overseeing their child feeding programs. To the children who are participating in these programs, these coordinators play a strong role in their lives, in which they may recognize the coordinators themselves as much needed mentors in their lives. Many of the children who participate in these programs see and interact with their coordinators on a regular basis. These relationships are clearly significant to the coordinators as many shared stories of the close knit relationships they have built with the children they serve. These volunteer coordinators attribute program successes to having generated as a result of their personal interactions with ‘their’ children.

As previously noted, many of the volunteer coordinators I interviewed for this research, I’d come to know through the relationship I built with them through my work with God’s Pantry Food Bank. In building those relationships with each of the coordinators, I began to capture the needs of their communities through my ongoing site visits, acknowledge and understand the needs of their communities, and gain an entire new perspective on the amount of passion, dedication, compassion, and devotion it takes in overseeing a feeding program for food insecure children. Each and every volunteer coordinator should be commended for their work in bringing light to an issue such as this, that tends to unconsciously go unacknowledged.

Throughout each and every one of the volunteer coordinator interviews, I continued to circle back to my research question as to why these women have chosen to dedicate their careers to an issue that is bigger than themselves. Through these interviews, I realized that each of these volunteer coordinators are truly dedicated to the

mission of this work, because of a personal decision they have made for themselves. There is no job description, set standards, or specific characteristics that one must have in order to do something bigger than themselves. Each of these women come from a wealth of different backgrounds that have shaped them into the person they are today. Their backgrounds, personal circumstances, education experiences, childhood insights, along with other factors have inadvertently created a pathway, in which has led them to take on an overseer of a child feeding program. For many of the women, they didn't know which career paths they wanted to take at an early stage of their lives, but all had a passion for working with children. For some of the volunteer coordinators, based on some of the life circumstances they were challenged with, they couldn't see their destiny.

Aside from their own personal experiences and a reflection of their background, they were presented with an opportunity to make their communities better and each of them decided to pursue this opportunity. For many of the volunteer coordinators who are overseeing Backpack Programs, much of their commitment to their programming can in addition to their roles as Family Resource Coordinators. As a part of this role, their purpose is to help children within their school location who are in need of resources. These resources may vary from a child needing a coat, to a child needing food resources. In stating this, each of these Backpack Program coordinators could have turned down their decision to participate in the Backpack Program when requested to do so by God's Pantry Food Bank. Even for the volunteer coordinators overseeing the School Pantry Program, their role as Youth Service Center coordinators is to also help alleviate many of the needs of students at their school locations. Instead of participating in the Backpack

Program, Sandy and Karen made the decision to participate in the School Pantry Program, when the offer was requested by God's Pantry Food Bank. Again, each of these volunteer coordinators took on the role of overseeing their programming based on their own personal decisions.

Even for the volunteer coordinators overseeing feeding programs in Eastern counties, these coordinators didn't hesitate to begin establishing and overseeing their feeding programs, because they knew how much need existed throughout their communities when it came to child hunger. To even note, many of these women were grateful and appreciative in knowing that an overarching organization such as God's Pantry Food Bank that works with so many counties throughout Kentucky, wanted to work with them in establishing a feeding program for children in their communities. Their eagerness, drive, and passion for establishing their feeding program in their community, has made a major difference in the lives of the children throughout their communities. As compared to Fayette County, many Eastern Kentucky counties have some of the highest child food insecurity rates in the nation. In addition to having some of the highest rates, there are also a short supply of resources available such as means of transportation, employment opportunities, along with plenty of other additional factors.

Now that the women have established their role in overseeing their feeding program, they have earmarked all successes, challenges, and solutions they must attest to in order to make their programming more efficient. In stating this, a lot of the women talked about the importance of knowing their program inside and out, acknowledging the importance of help from the outside community, along with any additional resources they

can implement into their programming moving forward. For these women, it's about meeting the need by meeting the children half way, no matter what type of circumstances are present within that child's life. In the eyes of that child, they may see the volunteer coordinator as an influential figure in their lives. For the volunteer coordinators themselves, they recognize that every child deserves a fair chance in life. Each volunteer coordinator's mission falls in giving back to their children, their community, and themselves. For the volunteer coordinators, there is no game plan for them each and every day. As Rita references, *we don't need to write it down on paper. We just need to get off our butts and go and do it. And that's what we do here. We get up from the table. We go and do! We don't need a game plan! Our game plan is taking care of the need immediately.*

Throughout my interviews with each of these women, I was inspired by the high energy and positivity, in which internally along with externally existed within each of these women. As they talked about their role in combating child hunger, each woman couldn't help but to glow. I asked myself, "How does this happen? I mean, how are these women so positive in their work?" By the conclusion of my interviews, I realized that each woman made the decision, before diving into this type of work, to put on their happy faces. Then after coming to this conclusion, I realized that in doing this type of work, how can you not want to be the best you? Their selfless comments and feedback, changed my entire perspective on even my work in helping to combat child hunger.

As volunteer coordinators, they carry the needs of other on their shoulders, because they know the impact their programming has made on their community and how

children are able to benefit from this type of programming. Many of the women spoke about some of their interactions with the children they serve and how that first interaction has led to an even greater impact. The children who initially started in their program, continue to return and continue to participate in the program. One coordinator talked about how she has seen a little boy grow up through her program and how he is now able to read. Another volunteer coordinator spoke about how she has been able to see children participate in new activities through her Backpack Program and try new things.

Through the stories from each and every volunteer coordinator, is a way to bring awareness to the issue of child hunger across the state of Kentucky. The point of this research is again to tell the story as to why the women who were interviewed have decided to dedicate their careers to combating child hunger. While London's career motivation theory is presented in a formal and structured way, through my journey with these women, I realized that these women have informally made a decision to dedicate their careers toward this field of work. Their work around child hunger wasn't preplanned or anything type of work they ever dreamed of taking on throughout their younger adult lives. Instead, the area of work was introduced to them through many of layers of finding their own paths within their own careers and who they personally represented. These women do not consider themselves as heroes of their communities, but coordinators who want the best for "their children" along with their community. They each take pride in knowing that they are catalyst for change and find it necessary to continue to implement additional child feeding programs across the state of Kentucky.

Based on the findings from this research and feedback from the women, the goal of this research is to spread child hunger awareness across the state and even throughout the nation. While there are many conversations around this topic take place at a national and state level, more conversations need to take place at the community level. A vital piece that is currently missing amongst the child hunger conversation, is the lack of input from the community these programs are serving. A question in which I've asked myself over and over again over the years are the following: How are you going to implement a child feeding program without having community champions on board to oversee these programs? A child feeding program cannot exist without having the backbones of the community to support such a need based community programs.

The volunteer coordinators are the champion of their community, because they have stepped out of their comfort zones and have went beyond the call of duty to make a difference in the lives of others. From my perspective, these women represent vital gems, in which are so difficult to find within communities who have been nationally recognized as having some of the highest needs. In order to be effective in striving for change, these women may acknowledge the barriers that exist within their communities, but they don't allow these barriers to serve as road blocks in their programming. Until we are the world recognize that women such as these volunteer coordinators are working to scrap away the mark of child hunger, our attention will continue to focus on the things going wrong in our communities, instead of these women who are working hard to make things right in our communities.

Without saying, there have been challenges in which the women have faced throughout their journey of establishing feeding programs in their communities. As noted in the findings, some of the barriers have stemmed from the lack of community engagement along with awareness. As many of the women addressed in their interviews, a key piece to operating their program comes from the involvement of the community when it comes to the creation of a strong volunteer base, donation of food items, community partnership/collaboration, and additional joint efforts from the community. Although these barriers never created a permanent stumbling block for many of the women, as they are proactive in their endeavors and don't allow opportunities to pass them by. Especially, when it comes to their personal goals for their own programming. For them, a lot of the women foresee the strengths of their communities and the potential of their programming for their communities.

A lot of the women are able to foresee many of these community strengths, understandings, and perspectives, due to their own personal journeys. For many of these women, their own childhood stories were not pitch perfect. Their own personal backgrounds varied from growing up in a single parent household to being bullied throughout their school aged days. In going through trials and challenging situations like these, many of these women are able to relate to the trials and tribulations in which the children they serve through their programs face. Through their personal ties, many of the women are able to establish a deeper connection with many of the children they serve and find joy within their roles in serving others. For these women, it's never been about their

personal gain and what they're going to receive out of their program, but it's always been about "their" kids.

Through their passion for creating an open environment for the children they serve, they are able to surpass anything challenges they face, because they've each build a foundation of knowledge of their programming and childhood hunger, in which no one can bring down. There is much power that lies within their direct service and interaction with the children they serve. These women have built an empire of knowledge around an issue that is rarely noted. These women have invited and guided me on a journey in which I knew existed, but some of the things I didn't expect to learn through our conversation. Each woman recognizes the difficulty of their work, but they also see their work as purposeful and meaningful to them and also for the children they serve. Their committed work to combating child hunger shouldn't go unnoticed, but should go beyond and inform others who may or may not be working to establish their own child feeding programs. At the end of the day, their work is centered on the needs of the children, not themselves. These women have been selfless in the deliverance of their work to make to the issue of child hunger a non-factor in their communities.

Their eagerness, passion, and dedication to the mission of helping to eliminate child hunger, brings hope to my heart in knowing that these Kentucky women along with others throughout this nation are just as (or if not more) passionate about the mission just as I am.

Research Implications

In general, there is a need for additional research around the topic of child hunger. This study is a window into the subject through the perspective of women intimately engaged in meeting the food security needs of the children in their communities. Though rich insights into the challenges of combatting child hunger were shared by the volunteer coordinators who are overseeing the feeding programs, future research can be expanded to include interviews with the children who are participating in the feeding programs, the parents/guardians of these children, and also the organizers and community leaders who are working to implement feeding programs for food insecure children across the nation.

Additionally, future interviews with volunteer coordinators of child feeding programs can be expanded to include who are men overseeing child feeding programs, additional targeted age populations, diverse geographic locations, and variance in ethnicities of the volunteer coordinators and populations served. These further insights can contribute in further understanding the richness of employing London's theory as a guiding framework.

Career Motivation Theory was an appropriate lens through which to examine why volunteer coordinators have chosen to dedicate their careers toward combating child hunger throughout their communities. By gaining more insight into these women's involvement, challenges and perseverance through their rich narratives, I was able to identify common themes within each of these components to gain deeper understanding of the "why" behind their dedication. As noted above, I would recommend continuing to

use this theory as the framework for future studies focusing on child hunger topic particularly as a broader network of volunteers and supporters combating child hunger are interviewed. As their stories continue to be told, greater awareness of the severity of child hunger can be awakened. Hopefully through these efforts community members, policy makers and concerned world citizens will rally to combat child hunger throughout their communities.

Appendix A

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Feeding the Soul: Voices of Kentucky Women Combating Child Hunger

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are being invited to take part in a research study that will address food insecurity. Your voice along with other women's voices will be uplifted through the representation of narratives by your experience as a volunteer coordinator in helping to combat child hunger throughout Kentucky. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be one of 10-15 volunteer coordinators who will be interviewed.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is Mya Oneisha Price, a graduate student of the Community and Leadership Development (CLD) program, housed at the University of Kentucky. She will be guided in this research by Dr. Patricia Dyk (chair of research.)

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

The purpose of this study is to understand the reasons why individuals dedicate their careers toward combating child hunger throughout their communities. These narratives will serve as a way to inform the public, create awareness, and to "tell the story" in reference to the prevalence of child hunger that greatly impacts the lives of children throughout the state of Kentucky.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

There are no barriers in this study that will put subjects at risk in their decision to participate in this study.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The interview will be conducted at a location convenient for volunteer coordinators. The interview will take place between 1-1.5 hours.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

As the participant for this study, you will be asked to participate in a 1-1.5-hour interview, in which the interviewer (Mya Price) will ask you a series of questions related to the volunteer coordination of your feeding program. Questions will specifically cover your background, experience, involvement, and feedback you have concerning the participation in your program. You will only be expected to provide your input on the program in which you help to coordinate. The responses that you give will be digitally recorded.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no guarantee that you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. Your willingness to take part, however, may, in the future, help society as a whole better understand this research topic.**DO YOU**

HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the interview.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in the study.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will not receive any rewards or payment for taking part in the study. Your participation in this study will strictly be done on a voluntary basis.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

We will make every effort to keep confidential all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be personally identified in these written materials. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information private.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. The interviewer (Mya Price) will store all data collected from each interview on a jump drive, in which will remain in a secured area in her home. In stating this, all research will remain private and in the hands of the interviewer (Mya Price). However, the researcher (Mya Price) may need to show information which identifies you to people who need to make sure she has done the research correctly. For example, the researcher (Mya Price), may need to receive guidance from her research advisor, Dr. Patricia Dyk, on data collected throughout interview process. Additionally, the interviewer (Mya Price) may be required to to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from such organizations as the University of Kentucky.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator, Mya Oneisha Price at myaprice10@yahoo.com or Dr. Patricia Dyk at pdyk@uky.edu, Mya's research advisor, with the

University of Kentucky's Department of Community and Leadership Development (CLD) . If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the staff in the Office of Research Integrity at the University of Kentucky between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Mon-Fri. at 859-257-9428 or toll free at 1-866-400-9428. We will give you a signed copy of this consent form to take with you.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

Name of (authorized) person obtaining informed consent

Date

Appendix B:

Interview Questions

Identity

1. Tell me a bit about yourself ----
2. How long have you been a resident of this community?
 - Is your family from this community? How long have they been connected to this community?
 - What was your childhood like growing up in this area?
 - What was your experience like attending school?
3. If not, where are you from?
 - What was your childhood like growing up in this area?
 - What was your experience like attending school?
4. Briefly tell me about your organization and the role you play?
5. What are your responsibilities in this role?
6. How long have you served as volunteer coordinator for this program?
7. How many hours per week do you dedicate toward overseeing this operation of this program?
8. Do you have volunteers working with you to operate this program?

Insight

9. How prevalent do you think food insecurity is within your community?
 - Amongst the adults/elders population?
 - Amongst children?
10. Are there food assistance resources available in your community?
 - If so, what food assistance resources are available?
11. Why did you decide to become a volunteer coordinator specifically for a child feeding program?
12. Have you or your family ever faced a challenge in accessing food?
 - If so, could you briefly tell me about that?
13. How involved is your community, local officials, and state officials in efforts working with this program?

Resilience

14. What motivates you to help children who are food insecure in your community?
15. In what ways do you think your work has made an impact on your community?
16. How would you evaluate the overall effectiveness of your program?
17. In what ways would you say your life has been impacted by your role as the volunteer coordinator in helping to combat food insecurity amongst children throughout your community?

18. If there is anything you would change about role as the coordinator or about your feeding program, what would it be?

19. What are your thoughts on the expansion of more programs like yours throughout your community and/or Kentucky?

20. What advice would you provide for others who are interested in helping to combat food insecurity amongst children throughout their communities?

21. Could you share a personal story or interaction you've had with a child/children attending your program that you would like to share?

22. Any additional comments?

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Vita for Mya Oneisha Price

1. Place of Birth:

- Lexington, Kentucky

2. Educational Institutions Attended:

- Bachelor's Degree from Centre College, Danville, KY 2013

3. Professional Positions:

- YMCA of Central Kentucky: Youth and Family Director, 2016-Present
- Tweens Nutrition and Fitness Coalition: Community Liaison, 2015-2016
- Feeding America: Child Hunger Corps Member, 2013-2015
- YMCA of Central Kentucky, Member Services Representative, 2014-2016
- Partners for Youth, Assistant Community Partner Coordinator, 2014-2015

4. Scholastic and Professional Honors

- Alumni of Leadership Lexington, 2015-2016

5. Professional Publications

- Not Applicable

6. Typed Name of Student Final Copy

- Mya Oneisha Price