What Would You Choose?
Imagine that you have been diagnosed with heart disease and you require medicine to control your symptoms. If you could refill your prescription or buy food for your family, but not both, what would you choose?

If you only had enough money in your pocket to buy food for breakfast, lunch, or dinner — only one meal — which would you choose?

These are the kinds of choices our food-insecure neighbors make every day.

“We definitely rob Peter to pay Paul,” said the Wyches of Buena Vista, Virginia. A mini stroke interrupted Elaine’s job as a certified nursing assistant. The family relies on income from Malcolm’s job at Natural Bridge. To keep food on the table between visits to their local pantry, they pay only the most urgent bills that threaten to suspend much-needed services.

All of our neighbors in need make choices, and fortunately, so do you.

When you choose to give your time or resources, we can keep hard-working families, seniors and even children from having to make painful choices.

Together, we can solve hunger...and so much more.

Thank you!
64% choose between paying for housing or food
68% choose between paying for medicine or food
67% choose between paying for transportation or food
72% percent choose between paying for utilities or food
Choosing to Put Family First

Ten years ago when Thelma Gilliam’s five nephews needed a home she didn’t think twice about bringing them into hers, even though she and her husband Gary already had three children of their own.

With more young mouths in the house to feed, Thelma began to rely on Candlelight Ministries food pantry in Lynchburg, Virginia, one of the many pantries in the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank network.

“Candlelight does more for me than any other place,” said Thelma. “Without the food pantry, we would have a really hard time.”

Thelma worked in temporary jobs until a car accident left her injured and unable to work while she recovers. Her husband Gary is a grounds keeper for their church, House of Prayer. “If you keep God’s house, he’ll keep yours,” said Thelma of her husband’s work.

In addition to her injuries, Thelma also lives with diabetes. Candlelight Ministries provides Gilliam with healthy foods suitable for her medical condition.

In moments when Thelma realizes that her family can’t make ends meet, she feels worried. Sometimes she goes to bed hungry so the six children can have food. She lies awake, wondering what she’s going to do for her family the next day.

“I sacrifice. I sometimes have problems paying my light bill. I just don’t have the money to do it,” she said.

Because of Pastors Larry and Cheryl Randall, founders of the Candlelight Ministry food pantry, Thelma and her family find it a little easier to eat and keep the lights on.

With some worries alleviated, Thelma can also make sure her growing boys stay involved in after-school and summer time activities.

“The boys play football, basketball, and track. They make good grades and whenever our church is open, we are there,” she said. “When they finish school, one wants to go to Virginia State University, and one wants to become a police officer.”

Today, the polite and high-energy boys are thriving.
The Gilliam family

In addition to playing sports and keeping up with their academics, 16-year-old Courtney, 15-year-old Arthur, 13-year-old Jamal, 11-year-old Dakota, and 8-year-old Damantre enjoy singing for various churches in the gospel group they formed.
Across town, **ADLIN LOPEZ** sat patiently in the waiting area of Blessed Sacrament Food Pantry in downtown Harrisonburg. She was there to pick up food for herself and two daughters. A single mom, Adlin finds it hard to make ends meet with her minimum wage job. She often chooses to buy food for her family rather than pay all of her bills on time.

“My rent is more than $600 per month. With car insurance and other necessary bills, it’s hard,” she said.

It’s especially hard during the summer months when her girls, ages 15 and 16, are on break from school and don’t have access to the food served at their school.

Both daughters understand their mother’s financial circumstances, sometimes offering to help.

“My daughters tell me they want to get jobs to help me,” said Adlin. “But they are too young.”

Adlin is very proud of her daughters. Their health and well-being are her primary concern.

“My oldest is a cheerleader, and she joined her school’s ROTC program,” she beamed.

After receiving her food, Adlin rushed to leave so she could get to work on time.

**REBECCA WHETZEL** stood in the afternoon heat with her 3-year-old son outside the doors of Hope Distributed, a food pantry in Harrisonburg, Virginia. She was waiting to pick up food for her husband and three children. Her son is lively and active, despite a cast on his leg.

A medical condition keeps Rebecca from working, although she often takes care of her husband’s older family members in addition to her daughter and two sons.

Rebecca’s husband works hard every day; but after the bills are paid, there’s very little left over for other necessities. They must make trade-offs in order to afford everything they need.

But they are lucky, Rebecca said.

A little compassion from their landlord helps keep a roof over their heads when they must prioritize buying food.

“We have a very understanding landlord who allows us to pay our rent late sometimes,” said Rebecca.

Rebecca doesn’t know what she would do without the Food Bank.

A group of pantry clients begin to filter out of the building. Rebecca scoops up her son and they head inside to accept the help they need this month.
Softening the Blow from Hard Choices

Years out from the end of the great recession, hunger is still a serious problem. Increasingly, our patrons are hard-working individuals in low-wage jobs struggling to make ends meet. To survive, they frequently choose between paying for food or paying for other items, such as medicine, rent, utilities and fuel. The parents of children who receive free or reduced breakfast and lunch while school is in session would face brutal summers without the Food Bank’s summer feeding programs and access to food pantries and soup kitchens. Factors such as inflation and drought have raised prices for certain foods, making it very difficult for food-insecure families to fill their refrigerators on their own.

This year, your generosity helped us relieve some anxiety and make their choices a little easier.

Here’s what you helped us accomplish.

**FOOD DISTRIBUTION: JULY 2014 – JUNE 2015**

- **118,600** People served each month
- **20.6 million** Meals provided
- **24.8 million** Pounds of food distributed
- **5.4 million** Pounds of fresh produce distributed
Our Outreach Programs

Choosing to Meet People Where They Are

Through several outreach programs, we distribute food directly to particularly vulnerable groups. The majority of our outreach programs focus on families with children, and seniors.

- The Family BackPack Program meets the needs of hungry children and their families by providing the components for family meals for weekends and extended breaks, when children cannot access school-based programs.
- Kids Cafe™ provides a nutritious meal or snack to children enrolled in afterschool programs.
- Operation Angel Food provides a nutritious take-home snack to at-risk preschoolers enrolled in school-sponsored, early childhood education programs.
- The Summer Food Service Program is sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture and provides children with nourishing meals and snacks throughout the summer at neighborhood recreation and community centers and churches.
- We drive our Mobile Food Pantry truck into remote, rural communities to deliver fresh produce and perishables to people in need. This service often supplements the food offered by small pantries. In some communities, the Mobile Food Pantry is the sole source of charitable food assistance.
- Reaching Elderly and Challenged Households (REACH) delivers nutrition to homebound and low-income seniors, as well as those with special needs.
- Super Pantry/Families, Food & Fun is a six-week course managed in collaboration with the Virginia Cooperative Extension. VCE program assistants instruct needy families in food preparation, basic budgeting, food safety and other life skills. At the end, participants take home a box of food provided by the Food Bank.

### AVERAGE PARTICIPATION BY MONTH: JULY 2014 – JUNE 2015

- **7,530** Children served through after school programs
- **460** Seniors served through the REACH program
- **530** Families participating in Super Pantry
- **3,530** Individuals served through Mobile Food Pantry
William Thomas lives with heart disease and has had numerous cardiac episodes; doctors are now contemplating surgery. For now, he takes medication to alleviate his symptoms. But he doesn’t always take it every day. To afford food and other necessities, William often chooses to take his medicine every other day so it will last longer. The Mobile Food Pantry at Crystal Cathedral in Dillwyn, Virginia has become a lifeline for him and his wife.

In addition to his heart ailment, he experiences seizures — the result of a 1990 car accident. Sometimes he wonders why he has faced such tough odds throughout his life. Then he quickly pivots and asks, “Why not me?” William relies heavily on his faith to cope with challenges. He believes that his survival can serve as a testimony to others experiencing hard times.

Thanks to the Mobile Food Pantry and other outreach programs, the Food Bank delivers food to William and many other seniors, ensuring access to meals that nourish them through a difficult period.
Our Partner Agencies

Working Together

Our partner agencies are stepping up and making choices every day to help their neighbors in need. Week after week, they place bags and boxes in the hands of our neighbors, and distribute hope and dignity one-by-one. We’re thankful to have the partnership of 208 food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and other nonprofits to take the food we acquire and deliver it directly to people in need.

Lord Fairfax Area
A Small Hand at Edinburg Christian Church
Backpack Buddies
Bread of Life Food Pantry
C Cap
Catholic Charities
Centenary United Church of Christ
Christ Episcopal Church
Church of Christ at Mt. View
Columbia Furnace Love Center
Community Touch
Compassion Cupboard, Inc.
Crums United Methodist Church
Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church
Dynamic Life
Fauquier Community Food Bank
Fauquier County Food Distribution Coalition
First Assembly of God
First Baptist Church
Fish of Clarke County
Fishnet Christian Center
Front Royal Church of Christ
Front Royal United Methodist Church
Front Royal-Warren County C-Cap
Grace Ministries at Crossroads
Grace Ministries at Crossroads United Methodist Church
Greenway Spirit and Word Fellowship Church
Hayfield Assembly of God
Highland Food Pantry, Inc.
Keep the Change Food Pantry
Lighthouse Baptist Church
Life in the Word
Louisa County Catholic Charities
Louisa County Emergency Shelter/ Volunteers of America
Louisa Interfaith Relief, Inc.
Louisa Mobile Hope
Messiah’s Market
Middleburg Town Council
Mission Christian Ciudad Desedas
Mobile Hope
Mt. Olive Baptist Church
My Church - Keep the Change Food Pantry
New Beginnings Community Church
Open Door Food Pantry, Inc.
Page One of Page County
Phazz One Ministries, Inc.
Rappahannock Food Pantry
Reston Bible Church
Restore Hope House Food Pantry
Riverton United Methodist Church
Salvation Army
Seven Loaves Services, Inc.
Seventh Day Adventist Church
Shenandoah AAA
St. Paul’s On the Hill
Stephens City United Methodist Church
Sterling Park Baptist Church
Strasburg Presbyterian Church
Streetwise Ministries
Victory Church
Wellmont United Methodist Church
White Chapel United Methodist Church
Winchester Church of God
Winchester Union Rescue Mission

Lynchburg Area
Alliance for Families and Children
Amazing Grace Ministries PHC
BEAM
Bedford Christian Ministry Association
Bedford Church of God
Bedford County Christmas Station
Burning Bush Church of God
Candlelight Ministries
Central VA Alliance for Community Living, Inc.
Chapel Grove Baptist Church
Chesnut Grove Baptist Church
Court Street Baptist Church
DAWN
Fairview Christian Church
Fairview United Methodist Church
FARRR Foundation @ Lighthouse Community Center
Fellowship Church of Christ
First Assembly of God
First Baptist Church
First Baptist Church of Monroe
Grace Community Church
Helping Hands
Human Kind
Hunting Creek Food Pantry
Hyland Heights Baptist Church
Jesus Center Way of Cross Church
Love and Truth Community Church
Lynchburg Community Action
Lynchburg Daily Bread
Lynchburg First Church of the Nazarene
Lynchburg S D A Church
Miriam’s House, Inc.
Missionary Chestnut Grove Food Bank
Nelson County Food Pantry
New Land Samaritan Inns, Inc.
New Prospect Baptist Church
Oak Hill Baptist Church
Park View Community Missions
Piedmont Community Impact, Inc.
Rivermont Area Emergency Food Pantry
Scott Zion Baptist Church
Shekijah Prep Assembly
Solid Rock Baptist Church
Symrna Seventh Day Adventist Church

Shenandoah Valley
Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church
Bethany United Methodist Church
Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
Blue Ridge Chapel Church of the Brethren
Calvary United Methodist Church
Campus Kitchen at Washington and Lee University
Central United Methodist Church
Churchville Community Food Pantry
Community Ministry Food Pantry
Community Table of Buena Vista
Cornerstone Church of Augusta
Craigsville Area Food Pantry
Crimora United Methodist Church
Crossroads Baptist Church
Edom United Methodist Church
Elkin Area United Services
Elkin Seventh Day Adventist Church
Emmanuel Episcopal Food Pantry
Emmanuel Episcopal Church
ERMA Food Pantry
Faith Point Christian Center
First Presbyterian Church of Staunton
First Presbyterian Church of Waynesboro
Fishersville United Methodist Church
Glen Kirk Presbyterian Church
Greenbriar Baptist Church
Harrisonburg Seventh Day Adventist Church
Hebron Baptist Church
Helping Hands Food Pantry @ Mint Spring United Methodist Church
Hope Distributed, CDC
Kingsway Help Center
Kingsway Ministries
Kingsway Prison and Family Outreach
Lee Robbins Ministries, Inc.
Linden Heights Baptist Church
Lyndhurst United Methodist Church
Main Street United Methodist Church
Manor Memorial United Methodist Church
Marquis Memorial United Methodist Church
Massanutten Presbyterian Church
Massie Memorial CODIC
Memorial Baptist Church
Mercy House Inc.
Natural Bridge-Glasow Food Pantry, Inc.
New Directions
Open Door Gospel Church
Patchwork Pantry
Potters House Worship Center
Rejoicing Life Baptist Church
Restoration Ministries of Virginia
Rockbridge Area Relief Association
Salvation Army
Shiloh Baptist Church
Spring Creek Church of the Nazarene
Staunton Seventh Day Adventist Church
Stokesville Community Pantry
Trinity Episcopal Church
Valley Aids Network
Valley Church
Valley Mission
Valley Program for Aging – Harrisonburg
Valley Program for Aging – Staunton
Verona Community Food Pantry
Verona United Methodist Church
Victory Worship Center
West Waynesboro Church of Christ
Windy Cove Presbyterian Church
Word of Faith Church

Thomas Jefferson Area
Albermarle Housing Improvement Program
Antioch Baptist Church
Arvonia Christian Fellowship
Beaver Dam Baptist Church
Bethany Seventh Day Adventist Church
Bethel Church of God In Christ
Blue Ridge School at Gibson Memorial Chapel
Boys & Girls Club of Charlottesville
Boys & Girls Club of Orange
Buck Mountain Episcopal Church
Buckingham Church of the Nazarene
CALM White House
Calvary Baptist Church
Calvary of Greene
Calvary Seventh Day Adventist Church
Caring Friends Pantry

10  www.brafb.org
The Highland Food Pantry began in 1990 as a mission of the Highland Memorial Presbyterian Church in Winchester, Virginia when a church member became concerned about those in the community who did not have enough food. In the beginning, five volunteers from the church served between 400 and 500 people a year. Today, the pantry “employs” 50 to 60 volunteers; last year, they served 15,770 individuals.

It was during that time of growth that Highland decided to become a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization so that they could accept donations and reach even more hungry neighbors in their community.

Highland chose to begin the food pantry because they saw a growing need in their community.

“Every day, we saw neighbors and friends who did not have enough food for their families and who did not know where they were going to get enough food,” said Jenny Callis, coordinator for the pantry. “In the beginning, the pantry served only those in the church neighborhood. Today, 75 percent are from other parts of Winchester and Frederick County,” she added.

Highland chooses to do more by helping clients in crisis with financial aid, often to prevent losing basic utilities or eviction. In some cases, the pantry even helps clients buy medicine. This year, they sponsored a dental care project, during national dental health care month.

“We provided dental health kits to 374 families,” said Jenny. “Toothpaste, floss, and information about low-cost dental health services were distributed – along with 1,600 toothbrushes.”

Their core mission to feed hungry neighbors remains strong.

The Highland Food Pantry
Choosing to Do More

One morning, a man Jenny recognized from the week before came into the pantry. Clients can only visit for food once per month. When Jenny greeted him, he asked to speak with her. He shared that his son was in prison; the son’s wife was running from the police, and the grandchildren had been left at his house. With a quivering voice, the man reported having no food to feed them.

“I told him I could put together an emergency food box that would help to get him through the week and that the following week was the beginning of another month and he could return for more food,” Jenny recalled. “With tears running down his cheeks, he said to me, ‘Can I call home and tell the children not to worry, we can eat dinner tonight?’”
Many companies encourage their employees to volunteer, but Hershey Chocolate of Virginia takes the call to action further.

Hersey’s employees not only encourage each other to get involved in the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, they also challenge other businesses in the region to help solve hunger in the community.

In 2011, Hershey extended its annual food drive at the Stuarts Draft factory into an initiative called Valley Businesses Give Back.

“We wanted to do something bigger,” says Lori Branch, labor coordinator at Hershey. “A lot of passionate people are part of the Hershey village.”

Hershey’s expanded the campaign into a friendly competition between local businesses and last year invited the Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce to help lead the cause. So far, it has generated enough food to provide more than 130,000 meals to people in need.

Employees at Hershey’s have spent a significant amount of time volunteering at the Food Bank’s headquarters and main distribution site in Verona, Virginia and at several “Stuff a Truck” events (food drives) at local grocery stores throughout the year. Since 2011 Hershey employees have donated a total of 425 hours, resulting in a savings of more than $10,000 for the Food Bank.

In the fall of 2014, Hershey selected the Food Bank as their non-profit of choice. During the 2014 annual Hershey Good to Give Back Week, volunteers helped with various projects, contributing 110 hours of service.

They’ve also hosted meetings for the Greater Augusta Chamber of Commerce during which the Food Bank provided information about hunger throughout the Blue Ridge region.

Hershey’s maintains its robust volunteering program for employees through its Quality through Engagement program, paying employees for 16 hours a year of donated time to charities.

Branch says the Food Bank is near and dear to the hearts of employees because of the nonprofit’s mission. “Food is a necessity of life – it’s such a basic need that should be met,” she says. “Children are especially a focus for Hershey. The cause is one that resonates with a lot of us.”
Volunteer Honor Roll

The Food Bank is deeply grateful to all the volunteers who lend a hand throughout the year in our warehouses and partner agencies; this year we are gratified to recognize those current volunteers who have made a long-standing commitment to the cause of hunger relief.

Volunteers with 3+ Years of Service:

**SHENANDOAH VALLEY**
- Stanley Abbot
- Paul Brown
- Jennifer Carter
- William (Bill) Crabtree
- Charles (Chuck) DeLa
- Jane Dove
- Harlan Eller
- Daniel and Neva Horst
- Lester Howell
- Debbie Ioia
- Vivian Jones
- Rick Kinkead
- Stephen Lockridge
- Nancy Mohme
- Delores Moyer
- Lloyd Pollitt
- Thelma Pultz
- Ed Stone
- David Wade
- Wanda Walter
- David Whitesell
- Scott and Sharon Wilson
- Jay Young

**THOMAS JEFFERSON**
- Robert (Bob) Canevari
- William (Bill) George
- Yvonne Gilbert
- Erika Raskin Littlewood
- Mark Newton
- Carolyn Pflug
- Barbara Rexrode
- Janet Yance

**LYNCHBURG**
- James Canody
- William Canody
- Kevin Hammonds

**LORD FAIRFAX**
- Joanne Babic
- James Givens
- Walter (Skeeter) Knee
- Walter Shaver
- Jimmie Shipp
- Thomas Morris
- Harry Newman
- Dick Dugan
- Joseph Schad

**TOP 5 Volunteer Groups**

**FISCAL YEAR 2015**

- Blue Ridge Community College Post-High Graduate Class
- Ameriprise Financial Services
- Olde South Village Subdivision
- Madison House
- Unitarian Universalist Church of the Shenandoah Valley

**23,428 TOTAL HOURS CONTRIBUTED BY ALL VOLUNTEERS**

**$583,357 DOLLAR VALUE OF ALL HOURS CONTRIBUTED**
Choosing Loyalty

There are a handful of charities that Elizabeth Frazey of Quickburg, Virginia supports regularly, including those making a difference in developing countries around the world. Locally, she gives to the animal shelter and the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank.

“It’s amazing to me how far the Food Bank can stretch every dollar I give,” she explained when asked why she is moved to respond when it comes to hunger relief. “And on top of that, I live in what might be called the bread basket of the East; it’s unconscionable to me that people living in my community don’t have enough to eat.”

What makes Elizabeth’s support remarkable is that she has taken the very long view. Until he passed away, her husband’s charity of choice was the Food Bank, and she has maintained that interest over the years.

Frazey makes the choice to contribute to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank each and every year, without fail. And she has done so for more than 10 years.

That’s a remarkable legacy and an important one because her gifts—and many others—provide a stable foundation for the Food Bank.

Frazey is not alone.

More than 1,440 donors are considered steadfast givers – giving every year to the Food Bank for more than 10 consecutive years.

“To me, long-term support is key – when I give regularly, the Food Bank can count on my support to provide services, to expand programs and to help as many people as possible.”

Frazey lives in Shenandoah County now, but travels extensively for her job implementing software solutions. She grew up in Missouri, “relatively poor, but I didn’t know it then. Many people helped me in my life—opening doors and providing opportunities. I think it’s critical that I give back.”

“If we all pull together, we can make a big difference for others in need.”
Choosing to Grow More and Give More

The Rohrers and other produce farmers are members of the Shenandoah Valley Produce Auction, which joined forces with the Food Bank to create the new Farm Fresh Program. Through this partnership, we can distribute even more fruits and vegetables to neighbors in need.

Clifford Rohrer and his wife Caroline own and operate Valley Farming in Dayton, just outside of Harrisonburg. For seven years they have grown potatoes and a few varieties of vegetables.

Three years ago, they began donating their extra crops to the Food Bank. The first year, they donated 10,000 pounds, and doubled their donation the second year. Now in their third year of giving, the Rohrers have provided the Food Bank with 20,000 pounds of food and counting.

They’re choosing to give even more.

“The Food Bank is a valuable partner to any produce grower, because we always have surplus,” said Clifford Rohrer. “We appreciate being able to send more.”

The Food Bank’s ability to transport produce in bins also makes it cost effective for growers like the Rohrers to donate food.

“Potatoes tend to be a low-value crop, so the easier the packing process, the better it is for us,” Rohrer added.

The Rohrers, who grew up on their farm, enjoy what they do. In addition to the cabbage and squash they provide, they look forward to providing more of their potatoes to the Food Bank.
The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank receives many generous gifts throughout the year that ensure the success of our core mission—food distribution to families in need. We appreciate each and every donor and donation.

Each year we also secure funding designated for specific purposes, like the operation of several outreach programs, the purchase of food and produce, and this year we also asked our friends to help us renovate our main distribution warehouse in Verona.

We sincerely thank you—whether your gift was unrestricted or designated, you helped us feed families and nourish hope.
To all of our donors and volunteers —

Thank you! Because of the choice you make to invest in our work, a child will not go to bed hungry tonight. Because of the choice you make to contribute bags of food, a senior won’t have to choose between buying medicine or buying food. Because of the choice you make to lend a helping hand, a hungry neighbor will get the nourishment she needs to make it through her work day. All year long, you have helped us feed our neighbors across the Blue Ridge region. We are grateful for your generosity and hope through the pages of this publication you will see what a difference you make.

Together, we can solve hunger.
Financial Summary

JUNE 30, 2014

ASSETS

Current Assets
Cash and cash equivalents $ 624,169
Accounts receivable, net 217,406
Inventory 1,468,541
Investments - designated for future capital needs 2,700,000
Investments - other 1,510,381
Prepaid expenses, deposits and other 59,599
Total current assets $ 6,580,096

Investments in marketable securities $ 1,526,184
Depreciable fixed assets, net of accumulated depreciation 1,297,676
Non-depreciable fixed assets 164,086
Total non-current assets $ 2,987,946

TOTAL ASSETS $ 9,568,042

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities $ 200,427
Accrued payroll and related liabilities 91,441
Compensated absences 95,547
Total liabilities $ 387,415

Net assets
Unrestricted $ 4,532,216
Designated - funds held for long-term Investment 1,526,184
Designated - funds held for future capital needs 2,700,000
Total unrestricted $ 8,758,400
Temporarily restricted 422,227
Total net assets $ 9,180,627

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS $ 9,568,042

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014

Revenues
Public support $ 38,194,518
Donated food 5,232,607
Contributions 1,525,502
Handling fees 717,677
Total revenues $ 45,670,304

Expenses
Program services $ 43,627,466
Fundraising 1,026,750
Management and general 662,044
Total expenses $ 45,316,260

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS $ 354,044

NOTE: Financials include the value of donated food. Donated product on hand at year-end is valued at the national wholesale value of one pound of food, as determined by the most recent study conducted by Feeding America. Food donations and distributions of donated product are recorded at the weighted average wholesale value in effect during the year. The Information in this summary was excerpted from our complete audited financial statements, which are available upon request.

Audited Financial Summary - Fiscal year ended June 30, 2014
Do Some People Choose Hunger and Poverty?

That question can lurk in the back of the mind even in the most giving and compassionate among us. Yes, people in need struggle with circumstances beyond their control – job loss, poor health, unexpected bills – and as a result are forced to make painful choices between eating and paying for other basic necessities.

But couldn’t it also be suggested that their circumstances are sometimes the result of other choices they might make – the decision to drop out of school, to run up debt, or to start a family without the financial means to support one?

We were both raised with similar, parental advice about financial stability – “it’s all about the choices you make.” And so perhaps it’s not surprising that when we think about poverty, we sometimes wonder how much need and suffering could be avoided.

But then we are reminded of this reality: Everyone makes poor choices in life... it’s the human condition. Whether or not we fall victim to our poor choices depends a lot on those who surround us, show us the way, and help us climb back up when we stumble and fall.

So many of the people we serve may never have had positive, empowering role models, and the support of family and friends. They’re going it alone.

And so it falls to complete strangers – us – to help them up when they fall, no matter the reason. That, too, is the human condition.

It is indeed about choices, including the choice to be compassionate. On behalf of those we serve, thank you for making that choice with us.