

Generous Lifeline for Kids and their Families

Palm Beach County schools will soon be out of session for summer and many students won't have access to free and reduced lunches. With surging gas prices, soaring inflation and rent increases, the **Palm Beach County Food Bank (PBCFB)** anticipates that more children and families than ever will need food assistance over the summer. Thanks to support from long-time partner **Lois Pope** and her **LIFE Foundation**, the PBCFB will be armed with an additional \$450,000 in proceeds from this year's "*Lady in Red*" Gala to support Pope's namesake programming. Through this gift, it's estimated that 437,837 meals will be provided to students on break via the *Lois' Food4Kids* program.

Lois' Food4Kids is a year-round weekend and summer feeding program designed to help fill nutritional

gaps that children face out of the classroom. The program was prompted when the pandemic hit Palm Beach County in 2020 and Pope decided to give \$1 million to PBCFB. The program focuses on schools, camps, libraries and local Boys and Girls Clubs. Students are given a bag full of nutritious, easy-to-prepare foods to take home on weekends and school summer and spring breaks, when they do not have access to free and reduced lunches at school. Children are also supplied with a family meal because it's assumed that if a child is hungry, the family is hungry too.

"Last year, we distributed more than 131,000 meals through our 22 childhood hunger initiative partner agencies throughout



Lois Pope
and Marti LaTour

"No child should ever go hungry, especially right here in our own backyard." — Lois Pope

Palm Beach County," said **Jamie Kendall**, PBCFB CEO. "If that number astounds you, our distributed meals are projected to increase by at least two percent this year. While many families are making summer vacation plans, many more are dreading this time of year as they have reduced access to food assistance through the school system. This donation could not come at a more crucial time, and we are so grateful for Lois' and the LIFE Foundation's generous lifeline for kids and their families this summer."

"No child should ever go hungry, especially right here in our own backyard," said Mrs. Pope. So while we have a small dent in the problem, there is so much more to be done and particularly given the current economic circumstances. I'm committed to working with the Palm Beach County

Food Bank, and specifically the *Lois' Food4Kids* program, until we eradicate child hunger in the county."

The PBCFB procures food from grocery stores, farmers, food distributors, wholesalers and other sources and provides it to almost 200 local community partners, including food pantries, soup kitchens and residential housing programs. Palm Beach County Food Bank programs reach families, children and seniors, and connect those in need to available benefits and resources. Partner agencies distribute the products received, including culturally appropriate food and necessities like paper towels and diapers. This process ensures families have access to food when they need it most.

For more information about *Lois' Food4Kids* program email pbcfb@slatkowhusak.com or visit pbcfoodbank.org/programs.

PHOTO: CAPEHART