

# **FOOD FOR ALL OF US: SOLUTIONS TO HUNGER IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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WITH FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE CHILDREN'S BOARD OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

# MISSION STATEMENT

Empowered by the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners, the mission of the Task Force on Hunger is to invite broad public comment in the development of recommendations to assure that all persons in Hillsborough County have access to the nutritious affordable food they need.

## LEADERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE WORKING GROUPS

### CHILDREN:

Chair: **Vicki Walker**, Deputy Director, Tampa United Methodist Centers

Vice Chair: **Darlene Rooks**, Concerned Citizen

Questionnaire Analysis: **Melissa Stephens**, Salvation Army

Town Hall Speaker: **Helen Gordon Davis**, Former State Senator

Children's Art Contest: **Joy Groetzinger**, Adult/Community Education, Hillsborough Schools

### DISABILITIES:

Chair: **Harriett Scott**, District Program Manager, Department of Children and Families

Vice Chair: **Linda Villagra**, Self Reliance

Questionnaire Analysis: **Deborah Guest**, Developmental Disabilities, Department of Children and Families

Questionnaire Analysis: **Bob Holm**, Drug Abuse, Department of Children and Families

### ELDERLY:

Chair: **Marilyn Carter**, Director, Meals on Wheels of Tampa

Vice Chair: **Gill Machin**, Senior Nutrition Program, Department of Aging Services, Hillsborough County

### FARMWORKERS:

Chair: **Evan Jorn**, Director, Beth El Presbyterian Mission, Wimauma

### HOMELESS:

Chair: **Dr. Jean Amusa**, School of Social Work Professor, University of South Florida

Vice Chair: **Tracy Gillette**, Metropolitan Ministries

Questionnaire Analysis: **Joel Pietsch**, Substance Abuse, Orient Road Jail

### WELFARE TO WORK / WORKING POOR:

Chair: **Donna Todd**, Vice President, The Crisis Center

Vice Chair: **Jane Allen**, Hillsborough Cooperative Extension

Town Hall Meeting Coordinator: **Katie McGill**, Centre for Women

Town Hall Meeting Coordinator: **Janet LaFloch**, Cafe Cristo, St. Christopher's Episcopal

### MEDIA / PUBLIC AWARENESS:

Chair: **Mary Figg**, Director, Chiles Center, University of South Florida

Co-Chair: **Gloria McNair**, WFLA, Channel 8 Television

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 1998, the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners charged the Task Force on Hunger with developing recommendations to ensure that all persons in Hillsborough County have access to nutritious, affordable food. In June, the Children's Board of Hillsborough County called for the development of this comprehensive plan for action against hunger. Nearly 1,200 persons from all walks of life, including 718 people at risk of hunger, participated in this creation of this plan.

## WHAT WE DID

The Task Force identified six groups at risk of hunger: children; the elderly; persons with disabilities; farmworkers; the homeless; and the working poor.

Working Groups were created to focus on each of these six groups. They were composed of eight to 25 persons representing a broad spectrum of human service professionals, leaders in the business and religious communities, concerned citizens and persons affected by hunger. (See Appendix A for a complete list of participants.)

Working Groups conducted a total of 11 town hall meetings across the county. Concurrently, they conducted 774 interviews with human service professionals and persons affected by hunger. To raise public awareness, members of the Task Force appeared in numerous television and radio shows and drew a steady stream of newspaper coverage.

Recommendations from each of the Working Groups were presented to the Leadership Team of the Task Force in July, which sought comments from community leaders to develop this report. In all, 1,181 persons participated in the development of these recommendations.

## WHAT WE FOUND

In spite of outstanding efforts by government and volunteer agencies, hunger persists in all six at-risk populations. (See Appendix C for a list of organizations addressing hunger in Hillsborough County.)

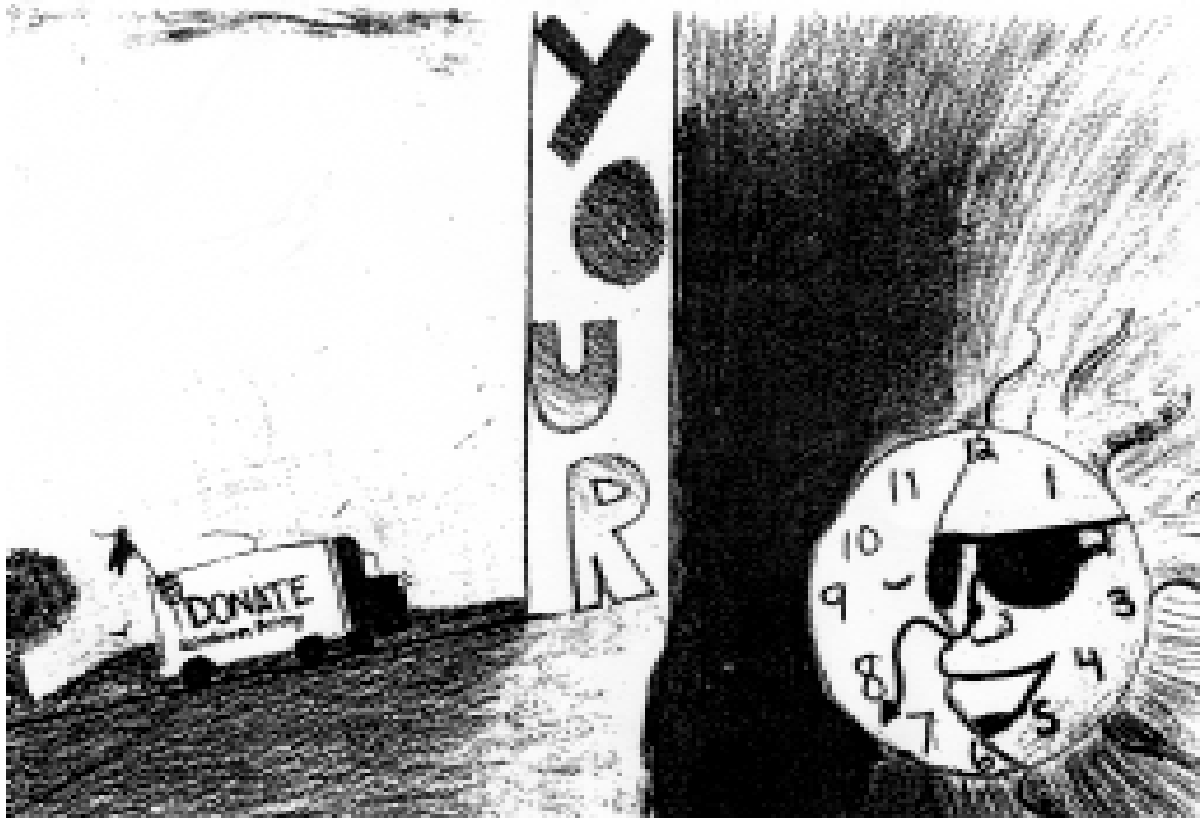
Key problems that remain include low incomes for many workers, sub-minimal benefits in SSI and food stamps, lack of affordable housing, low levels of education and job skills, inadequate transportation, and teen pregnancy. These challenges are compounded because many people don't know where to seek food assistance, and there is no coordinated approach to dealing with hunger.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force developed the following recommendations, listed in order of their priority.

1. Create the position of "Hunger Action Coordinator" to develop a strong collaborative that will build on the work of this Task Force and support cooperative efforts between various government programs and area organizations.
2. Expand life skills and nutritional education to help citizens learn to stretch limited incomes and improve their diets.
3. Conduct a survey on barriers to participation in SHARE Tampa Bay, and test methods to increase participation among persons with very low incomes.

4. Establish a Hunger Assistance Information Campaign including a 24-hour hotline, bi-lingual wallet cards and information guides to ensure that persons in need have information about available emergency, self-help and government food assistance programs.
5. Develop pilot programs that more effectively meet the needs of seniors, such as nutritional supplements and meals delivered on weekends, and fund a feasibility study of public/private “rolling stores” that deliver groceries to senior residences and low-income neighborhoods.
6. Create an interfaith hunger action training and networking program to make efforts by the faith community more effective.
7. Increase access to food and nutrition education in Hillsborough County Schools by piloting life skills training in summer and after school programs, expanding the summer food program to all neighborhood children who present themselves for meals, enhancing the use of free and reduced-price meals, and additional hunger assistance information.
8. The Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition becomes the primary hunger action collaborative by building on the work of this Task Force.
9. Increase business sector involvement in hunger programs by working with area chambers of commerce to enhance volunteerism.
10. The Agricultural Council expands gleaning efforts in Hillsborough County by further developing transportation, storage, labor and distribution systems making the huge resource of gleaned food available for persons who need it.



**“Donate Your Time” by Heather Gilliland**  
Age 12, Benito Middle School, Tampa, Florida

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>MISSION STATEMENT</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE WORKING GROUPS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>II. METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Inclusive Strategy	
Emergency Needs and Root Causes of Hunger	
Six Population Groups at Risk of Hunger	
Formation of Six Working Groups	
Five Questions About Hunger	
Task Force Process / Timeline	
Figure 1: Task Force on Hunger Methodology Diagram .....	11
<b>III. FINDINGS</b> .....	<b>13</b>
The Context of Hunger in Hillsborough County	
Substantiation of Hunger	
Health Consequences of Hunger	
Additional Findings of the Task Force	
<b>IV. RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>17</b>
The Goals We All Share	
Recommendations for Achieving These Goals	
<b>Recommendations for Hunger Action</b> .....	<b>17</b>
1. Coordinated Approach to Hunger Solutions	
2. Enhance Life Skills Education	
3. Increase Participation in SHARE Tampa Bay	
4. Establish Hunger Assistance Information System	
5. Enhance Food Assistance and Access for Seniors	
6. Development of Hunger Action Training Project for Religious Congregations	
7. Implement Programs that Enhance Student Nutrition in Hillsborough County Schools	
8. Hillsborough Hunger-Free Coalition Serves as Primary Collaborative Addressing Hunger in Hillsborough County	
9. Hillsborough County Businesses Encourage Volunteerism	
10. Expand Gleaning in Hillsborough County	
<b>Recommendations on Issues Related to Hunger</b> .....	<b>30</b>
1. Study Ways to Increase Transportation Access for Very Low Income Persons	
2. Hillsborough County Government and Other Groups Take Actions to Increase Decent, Affordable Housing	
3. Florida: Match Federal Dollars for SSI (Supplemental Security Income)	

4. Alter the Base Period for Unemployment Compensation Qualification
5. Private Sector / Chambers of Commerce: Take Action to Reduce Hunger Among their Employees
6. Expand Parish Nursing and Healthy Families Programs
7. Provide Information on Appealings Denials of Federal Assistance and Other Emergency and Self Help Opportunities
8. Enact Legislation to Expand Tax Advantages for Donations of Fresh Produce by the Food Industry

**V. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS ..... 37**

- Step 1. Identification of Solutions to Hunger
- Step 2. Transition from Identification to Action
- Step 3. Implementation of Task Force Recommendations
- Figure 2: Task Force on Hunger Implementation Diagram ..... 39

**VI. APPENDICES**

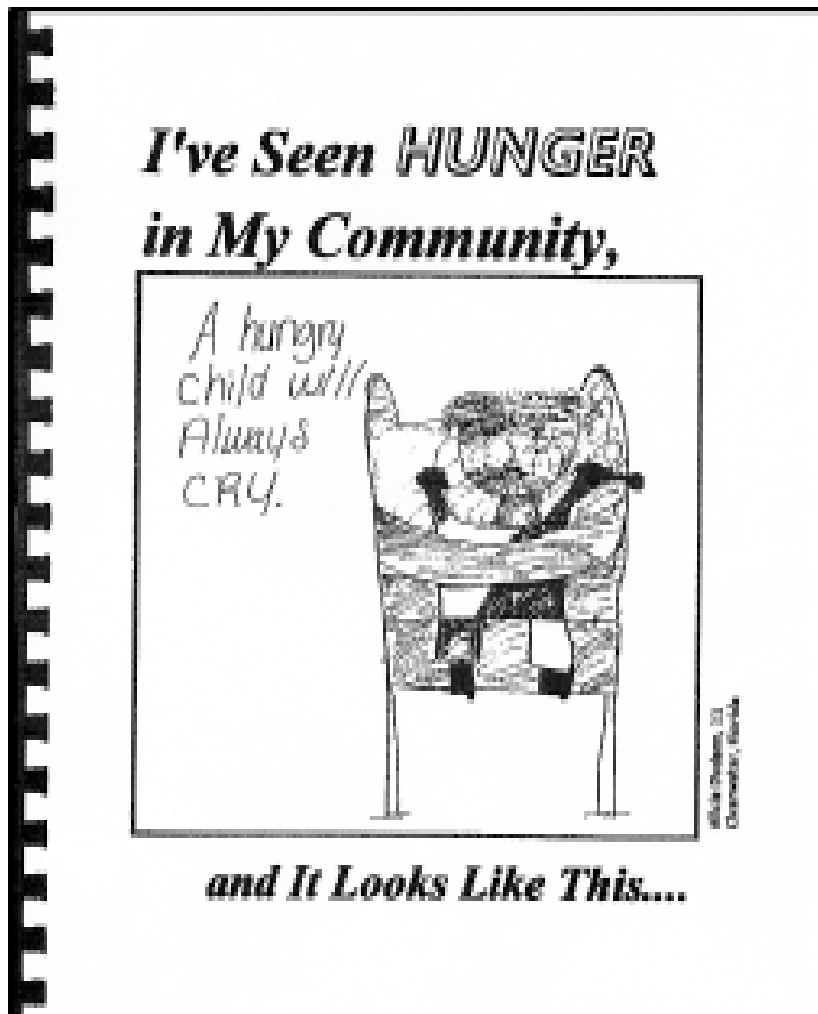
- A. List of Task Force Participants.....40
- B. Town Hall Meetings of the Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger.....42
- C. U.S. Census 1990. Income and Poverty Status in 1989 for Hillsborough County.....43
- D-1. U.S. Census 1990. Ratio of Income in 1989 to Poverty Level for Florida.....44
- D-2. U.S. Census 1990. Ratio of Income in 1989 to Poverty Level for Hillsborough County.....45
- E. Questionnaire on Solutions to Hunger Used by Task Force.....46
- F-1 to F-4: Findings of the Task Force
  - F-1. Current Efforts to Reduce Hunger in Hillsborough County ..... 48
  - F-2. Indicators of Hunger.....50
  - F-3. Town Hall Notes: Major Themes Often Repeated.....52
  - F-4. What Hillsborough Citizens Say About Hunger: Results from Hillsborough Task Force Questionnaires.....55
- G. The Radimer-Cornell Hunger and Food Insecurity Measurement.....56
- H. Good Samaritan Act (HR 2450).....57
- I. Florida Legal Services, Inc. Alternate Base Period for Unemployment Compensation Claimants (Support SB 220 and HB 1617).....58

**CONCLUSION..... 59**

# I. INTRODUCTION

## A LITTLE HISTORY: THE HILLSBOROUGH TASK FORCE ON HUNGER

“I’ve Seen Hunger in My Community, and It Looks Like This...,” a report by HALT Hunger Tampa Bay\*, was released in December 1997. It stated that 31,500 children in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties actually experience hunger. The Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners asked HALT Hunger to present its findings in January 1998, and empowered the Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger in February. The Task Force’s mission was to involve people and organizations from diverse segments of the county’s population to determine what is needed to ensure that every person in Hillsborough County has access to affordable and nutritious food. The Task Force made its recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners on October 7, 1998. As part of a grant from the Children’s Board, the Task Force completed this “Comprehensive Hunger Action Plan for Hillsborough County.”



\* HALT Hunger Tampa Bay (Hunger Action Leadership Team) is one of 20 economically diverse Transforming Anti-Hunger Leadership teams created by the Bread for the World Institute with funding from the Kellogg Foundation and Kraft Foods. HALT members from Hillsborough County have provided core leadership in the development of a process for broad community involvement in the Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger.



## II. METHODOLOGY

### **INCLUSIVE STRATEGY**

Members of HALT Hunger Tampa Bay who live in Hillsborough County comprised the core group of the Leadership Team of the Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger. They had learned the power of including persons from diverse economic circumstances in developing recommendations that are based on the real experience of hunger. Thus, a primary goal of the Task Force was to invite economically diverse participation in the Task Force. Additionally, the Leadership Team sought to include participation from all sectors of the Hillsborough community: human service providers, business and faith community leaders and interested citizens.

The basic premise of an inclusive strategy focused on the great community wisdom regarding how the problem of hunger could be solved, and the Leadership Team wanted to get as much input as possible so that the recommendations would reflect the knowledge of the whole community, and not be heavily weighed with the interests of a handful of organizations. There was a belief that the recommendations of a diverse group would tend to be more on target in solving the problems related to hunger, and that the citizens and organizations of Hillsborough County would receive the recommendations of the Task Force with a higher degree of confidence.

### **EMERGENCY NEEDS AND ROOT CAUSES OF HUNGER**

The Task Force Leadership Team wanted to address both the need for emergency food assistance and the underlying root causes of hunger. The Leadership Team knew that to continue to address only emergency needs would perpetuate the problem of hunger indefinitely. This report attempts to balance meeting the dire needs of persons experiencing hunger with the need of society to correct circumstances that contribute to chronic hunger.

### **SIX POPULATION GROUPS AT RISK OF HUNGER**

The Leadership Team of the Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger identified six population groups in Hillsborough County that are at risk of hunger:

#### **Children**

Of special concern are children in households living in extreme poverty with incomes at or below 50% of the official poverty rate. This population is the most likely to experience chronic recurring hunger. The Task Force wanted to determine what would be the best ways to assure them access to food. Additionally, there was a desire to explore ways to break generational cycles of malnourishment and chronic hunger.

#### **Persons with Disabilities / Health Challenges**

Many Hillsborough residents with disabilities, addictions or health challenges are served by a comprehensive social services structure of supports. Yet many persons on SSI frequently seek emergency assistance at food pantries. The Task Force wanted to involve persons with disabilities to discover what changes they think would help.

#### **The Elderly**

With improvements in basic services for the elderly, including Social Security, Medicaid and various congregate and home-delivered meals, the Task Force wanted to determine whether there are still problems with food access and hunger.

## **Farmworkers**

There seemed to be no definitive data on numbers of migrating farmworkers in Hillsborough County. The Task Force wanted to learn what changes could be made that would improve the severe conditions in which many Hillsborough farmworkers and their families live.

## **The Homeless**

There are good services for homeless persons in the downtown Tampa area. The Task Force wanted to know about services to the homeless in outlying areas, and what efforts the homeless thought would be of most help to them.

## **The Working Poor / Persons Moving from Welfare to Work**

The Task Force wanted to determine if workers, especially single head of households, were able to afford sufficient food. What changes in existing programs could help them purchase enough affordable food every month? As people move from welfare to work, do they have the support they need to make the transition, especially with increased costs for transportation and childcare?

## **FORMATION OF SIX WORKING GROUPS**

Working Groups were recruited from a wide selection of agencies, individuals who experience hunger, and business, religious, educational, and arts groups that have a stake in efforts to assure food access for all persons in Hillsborough County. Each Working Group gathered information about hunger among one of the populations at risk of hunger by conducting Town Meetings (see Appendix B for list of town hall meetings) and conducting interviews (see Appendix E for sample questionnaires).

## **FIVE QUESTIONS ABOUT HUNGER**

The Working Groups were charged with seeking answers to five questions about hunger. The intent of the questions was to encourage the Working Groups to seek solutions to both emergency food needs and long-term solutions that address the root factors of hunger.

- 1) Why do we still have hunger in this population group, in spite of all these efforts to reduce hunger?
- 2) How can existing resources be used more effectively or can existing programs form new partnerships?
- 3) What additional resources are needed to deal with the current problem?
- 4) What is needed to create social, economic and political infrastructures so that the amount of hunger in this population group is greatly reduced over time?
- 5) What would it take for every person in this population group to have access to nutritious affordable food?

The answers to these questions often helped the Working Groups formulate recommendations to the full Task Force.

## **TASK FORCE PROCESS / TIMELINE**

Working Groups made recommendations on July 9, 1998 to the full Task Force with breakout sessions where participants from all the Working Groups critiqued other reports. The Task Force's Leadership Team sought comments from county staff, Task Force advisors and chairs of the Working Groups from August to September. They then fashioned a final set of recommendations for the Board of County Commissioners and other groups. The County

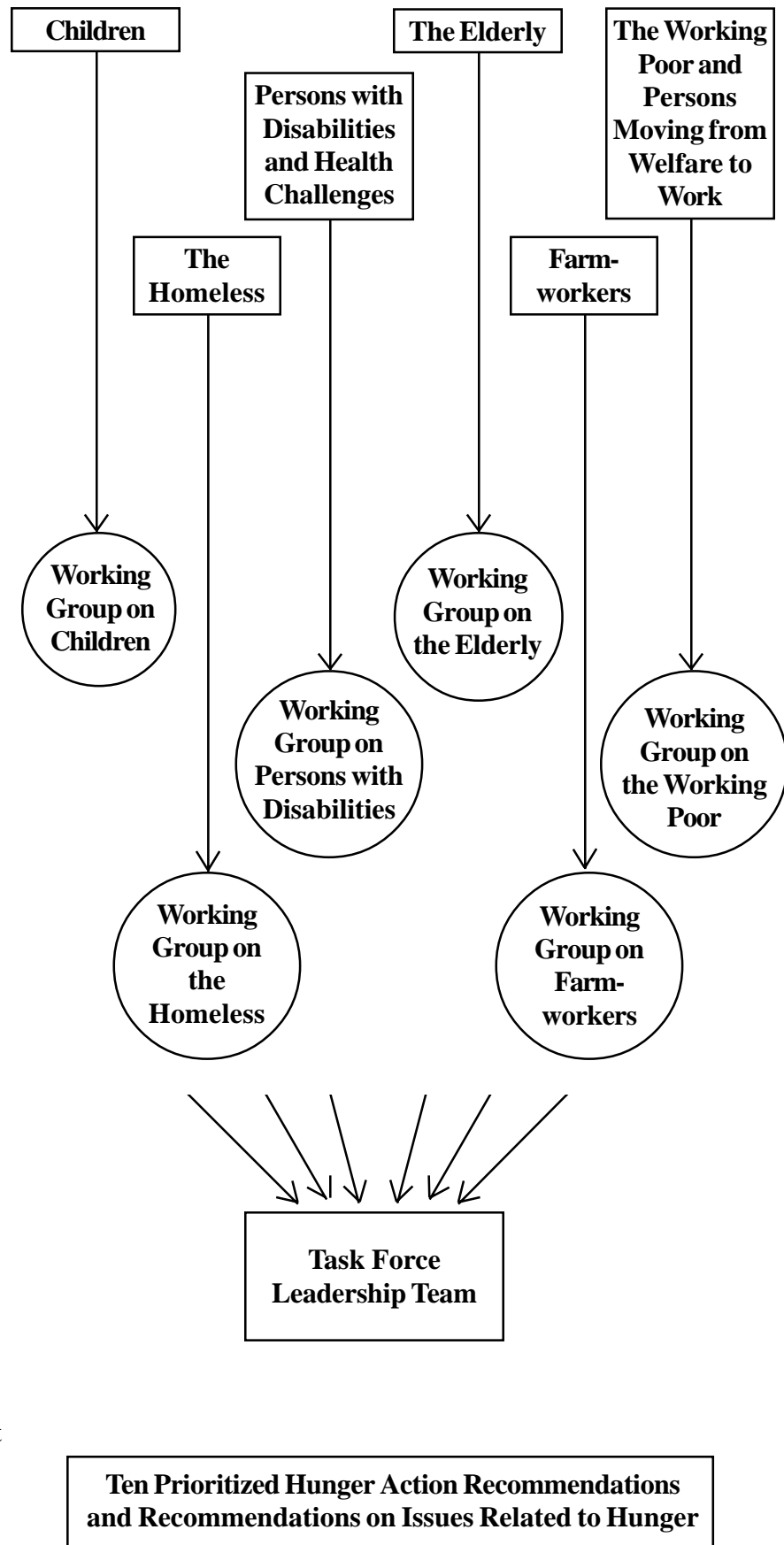
# FIGURE 1: TASK FORCE ON HUNGER METHODOLOGY DIAGRAM

**Step 1:** The Task Force identified six populations at risk of hunger in Hillsborough County.

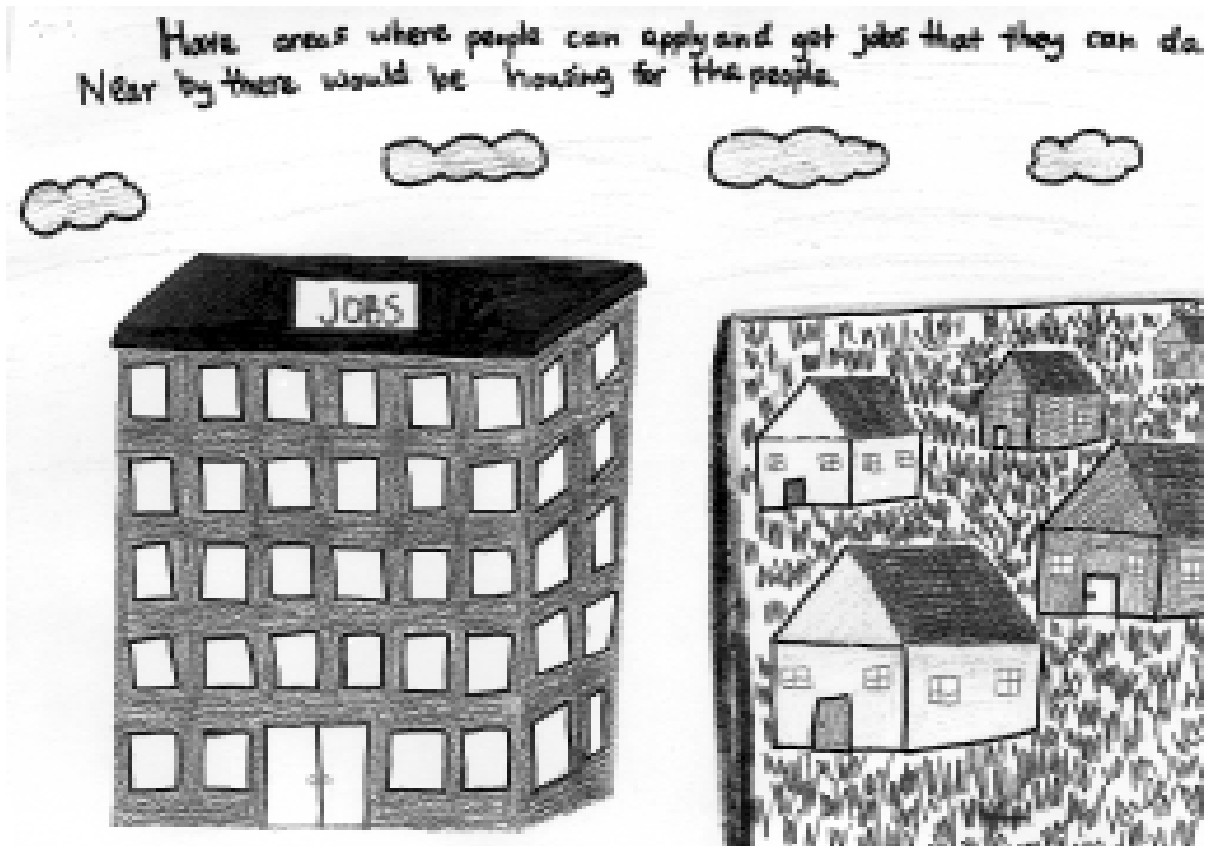
**Step 2:** The Task Force established Working Groups and recruited participants from human service, business, religious, and governmental organizations as well as persons at risk of hunger in the population.

**Step 3:** Each Working Group held Town Hall meetings and conducted interviews. They each formulated their own recommendations.

Those recommendations were edited into a set of ten prioritized hunger action recommendations, and recommendations about issues related to hunger by the Task Force Leadership Team.



Commissioners referred the recommendations to county staff, which responded with \$40,200 in additional funding and other programmatic reconfigurations to address specific elements of the report. Task Force recommendations were also presented to other groups in Hillsborough County including Hillsborough County Schools, the Coalition for a Hunger Free Hillsborough, SHARE Tampa Bay, the faith community, area chambers of commerce, etc.



**“My Solutions to Hunger” by Natasha Clarke.**  
Age 11, Tampa, Florida

# III. FINDINGS

## THE CONTEXT OF HUNGER IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Hunger in Hillsborough County is not isolated from trends beyond our county line. If other industrialized and developing countries, and other states and metropolitan areas in the United States, are making progress, our potential to systematically address hunger is enhanced.

## HUNGER DECLINING IN WORLD'S POOREST COUNTRIES

According to the Alliance for Global Community, Interaction, hunger in the world's poorest countries declined from 941 million people in 1970 to 785 million in 1990, a 17% drop. This trend is continuing. According to just-released information from Bread for the World Institute, from 1970 to 1998, the number of hungry persons has been reduced from one-third to one-fifth of developing countries' populations, even as the total population has grown. Main reasons for this improvement are the spread of democracy, increased government spending, and the use of basic technologies that are appropriate to people at local levels.

## HUNGER ON THE RISE IN THE UNITED STATES

In the United States, however, the number of hungry persons grew from 20 million in 1985 to 30 million in 1995, a 33% increase. The United States rate of poverty among children is twice as high as any other industrialized country, according to Bread for the World Institute and United Nations statistics.

## FLORIDA'S RANK IN THE UNITED STATES

Florida has the highest rate in the U.S. of children experiencing hunger or being at risk of hunger. Only the District of Columbia is worse, according to CCHIP, Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project, the only scientifically based study of hunger in US history. The Florida situation is getting worse. There was a 19% increase in children living in poverty from 1985 to 1993. Families living in extreme poverty are likely to experience recurring food shortages. The rate of extreme poverty (less than 50% of the poverty level, or \$8,000 for a family of four) among Florida's children is 13% as compared to 9% nationally. This is 44% higher than the national average, according to Kids Count 1996, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. At the same time, Florida ranks 19th among the 50 states in wealth, well above the median.

## HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY'S RANK IN FLORIDA

Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties straddle the average for childhood poverty in Florida. According to the 1990 census data, the percent of children under six years old living in poverty in Pinellas County was 17%, in Florida, the percent was 20%, and in Hillsborough County it was 22%.

## EMERGENCY NEEDS STILL STRONG

Despite a strong economy and record levels of employment, the demand for emergency food assistance has not declined, according to a Second Harvest report released in March 1988. Part of the need can be attributed to the 1.3 million people who were cut from the food stamp program in 1997. Additionally, many persons moving from welfare to work are challenged by increased transportation and childcare costs which must be met while working in low-wage jobs. Parents seeking assistance with food, healthcare, housing, or childcare frequently must choose between seeking needed assistance and being docked (or fired) for taking time off to seek assistance.

# **SUBSTANTIATION OF HUNGER**

## **HUNGER IS A HIDDEN REALITY IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**

Most people driving to work or to shop never think about hunger or where families earning less than \$8,000 a year would live. Findings by the Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger strip away the illusion that no one is hungry in our community.

- 48,900 people in Hillsborough County live in households at extreme poverty levels. The federal government defines extreme poverty as less than half of the official poverty rate. The official poverty rate for a family of four in 1997 was of \$16,050; extreme poverty would be \$8,025 or less, or \$2000 per individual. Chronic hunger, repeating day after day, becomes more likely as a household income approaches the level of extreme poverty.
- 27,000 children in Hillsborough County live in extreme poverty, representing 12.5 percent of the total number of children in the county, according to Kid's Count 1996 data. A conservative estimate of children who have gone hungry in our community this year is 24,000 to 28,000.
- More than half of the 160,000 children in Hillsborough County are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches through Hillsborough County Schools. In Hillsborough County, 22% of children under five and 19% of children under 18, live in poverty, according to the 1990 census.
- In Hillsborough County 16.5% of all workers earn less than \$5.50 per hour. A single parent with three children working full time at \$5.50 still earns less than 70% of the poverty level. Six percent of all Hillsborough workers earn less than \$5.00 per hour, which is below minimum wage, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for Florida.
- 24,000 people in Hillsborough County receive Supplemental Social Security (SSI) payments, averaging about \$337 per month, primarily as disability income. For more than half of the recipients, SSI payments are their only source of income. Even at the maximum rate of \$494 per month, the annual income is 50% to 70% of the poverty level. Chronic recurring hunger is a frequent problem for many people who depend upon SSI income.
- There are 9,100 migrant farmworkers in Hillsborough County documented by the Florida Department of Labor, but some DOL staff estimate that the number of undocumented farmworkers could be nearly as high. Using a conservative estimate of two dependents per worker, more than 30,000 migrant farmworkers and dependent children could live in Hillsborough County. The official average wage for documented farmworkers is \$6.77, but because the work is seasonal, the annualized income may actually be less than someone who works full-time at minimum wage. Although no estimate of earnings of undocumented workers is available, it would obviously be lower.
- There are 3,600 homeless people in Hillsborough County, according to the 1998 Governor's Report on Homelessness. A census conducted by the Hillsborough Homeless Coalition earlier this year found 2,400 homeless people, and they estimate that the

real number on any given day ranges between those two figures. Most homeless people indicate that services in downtown Tampa are good, but 40% of homeless people stay outside the downtown district and have no access to services. There is no way to know how many of our residents are homeless, since many are temporarily living with others.

## **HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF HUNGER**

- Hungry children suffer two to four times as many health problems as do low-income children who do not experience food shortages, according to the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP). These problems include unwanted weight loss, fatigue, headaches, irritability, inability to concentrate and frequent colds.
- Hunger interferes with the ability to learn from a very early age and hungry children are more likely to miss school than other children, according to CCHIP. They also are less likely to interact with other people, explore their world, or learn from their surroundings.
- In adults, undernutrition in the workforce results in lost knowledge, brainpower and productivity, according to the Tufts University Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy.
- Hunger and malnutrition exacerbate chronic and acute illness and speed the onset of degenerative diseases among the elderly, thus raising health care costs, according to the Food Research and Action Center.

## **ADDITIONAL FINDINGS OF THE TASK FORCE**

### **Appendix F-1: Current Efforts to Reduce Hunger in Hillsborough County**

A list of government and non-profit programs that assist persons with food and nutritional needs. The list includes brief descriptions of emergency, self-help and educational programs available to Hillsborough County residents, along with current numbers of participants.

### **Appendix F-2: Indicators of Hunger**

Additional hunger-related statistics and information about the six population groups at risk of hunger in Hillsborough County as well as subsidized housing availability and waiting lists.

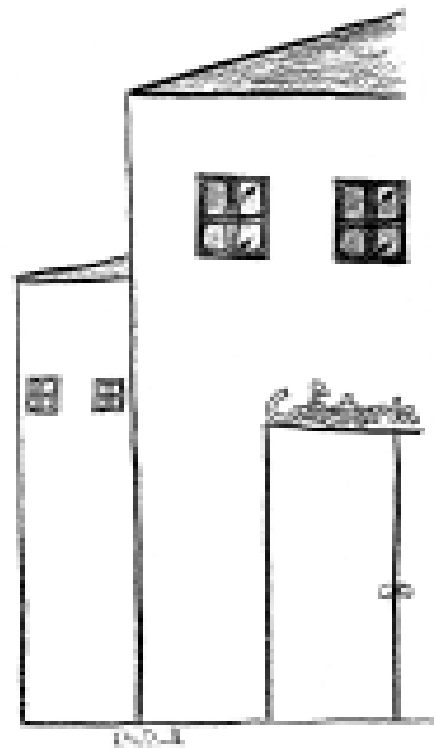
### **Appendix F-3: Town Hall Notes**

Main themes about hunger and solutions to hunger that emerged from the 11 town hall meetings held across Hillsborough County by the Working Groups.

### **Appendix F-4: What Hillsborough Citizens Say About Hunger**

Results from Hillsborough Task Force questionnaires in which 718 persons, many at risk of hunger, were interviewed including tabulation of their responses to questions such as: “How often do you have problems feeding your family?”

# Schools Could donate their leftover Food



**“Schools Donate Food,” My Solution to Hunger by Adam Carroll**  
Age 12, Benito Middle School, Tampa, Florida

# IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

## THE GOALS WE ALL SHARE

- That Hillsborough County becomes a quality community where providing ALL residents with easy access to nutritious affordable food is a cornerstone of its foundation.
- That special efforts address the needs of at-risk populations including the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, farmworkers, the homeless, and the working poor (those who have no discretionary income up to 125% of the official poverty line).
- That ensuring access to nutritious affordable food for all persons in Hillsborough County is firmly within our ability to achieve because of the abundance of organizational resources, food, human responsiveness to incentives and good will in our community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACHIEVING THESE GOALS

Ten of the prioritized recommendations of the Task Force relate directly to solving hunger. No single sector of society is responsible for solving the problem of hunger. All sectors—including business, government, non-profits, the faith community, education, and the health care community—must play a significant role to meet the challenge of hunger effectively. After many drafts, the Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger has identified ten hunger-related actions as the most important steps toward ending hunger. They are listed in order of priority.

Other recommendations address issues related to hunger. The Task Force's participants identified issues such as transportation and affordable housing that have a significant impact on households experiencing hunger. Hunger action volunteers and staff have a unique perspective on how these unmet social needs contribute to Hillsborough residents' lack of access to nutritious affordable food. The Task Force urges strong participation of hunger action volunteers and staff in the coalitions, collaboratives and governmental oversight bodies which are dealing with the issues covered in these recommendations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUNGER ACTION

### 1. COORDINATED APPROACH TO HUNGER SOLUTIONS

Establish the position of Hunger Action Coordinator to develop a systematic collaborative approach to hunger in Hillsborough County.

**Finding:** Many different groups are addressing hunger in Hillsborough County, often without knowledge of how their efforts could complement each other and enhance services overall. Our interviews with hundreds of human service workers, and comments from participants in many Town Hall meetings, indicate a strong call to coordinate efforts to address hunger and its related causes in a systematic way.

**Discussion:** The Hunger Action Coordinator would work closely with a Hunger Task Force Follow Through Committee composed of participants in the Task Force on Hunger, the Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition, and administrators and staff from appropriate Hillsborough County government departments. The Follow Through Committee would be a Working Group of the Hillsborough Hunger-

Free Coalition, and would provide advice to and oversight of the Hunger Action Coordinator. Hillsborough County government would provide part of the funding for the Hunger Action Coordinator. A lead agency would be identified to manage and audit funds from non-government sources.

**Description: Role of the Hunger Action Coordinator related to Hillsborough County government**

- A. Work in collaboration with Hillsborough County government departments to help develop, implement and evaluate actions recommended by the Task Force and approved by the BOCC.
- B. Develop conversations between Hillsborough County government and area non-profit food providers like SHARE, Hillsborough Gleaners and the Society of St. Andrew to determine whether additional food cost savings can be found for Hillsborough County government residential and site meal programs.
- C. Organize training to implement the use of the Raidmer/Cornell Hunger and Food Insecurity Measurement (Appendix G ), a scientifically based hunger assessment tool, in government programs which assist persons with low incomes. Changes would be monitored and results reported to the BOCC. In collaboration with the Hunger Free Coalition, the Coordinator also will encourage other organizations that provide food assistance in Hillsborough County to routinely use the hunger assessment tool.
- D. Develop additional links between Hillsborough County government social service programs and all other programs to help fill in gaps in services to persons experiencing hunger.
- E. Establish an Inter-Agency Hunger Education Exchange as a systematic method of exchanging presenters from area hunger-related agencies. The long-term goal of this effort would be to integrate area hunger resources more effectively by educating line staff through hands-on learning experiences.
- F. Collaborate with the Haven Poe Center to continue efforts to develop a “Teen Canteen” which would provide food and a safe daytime environment for homeless teens.
- G. Work with grants writers from the county, the Children’s Board and area non-profits to secure funds needed to implement Task Force recommendations.

**Role of the Hunger Action Coordinator related to community-based hunger efforts**

- H. Serve as a liaison to raise awareness about hunger issues with:
  - 1. Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board, Hillsborough County Specialized Transportation, HARTLine and area transportation research groups to collaborate in the development of transportation solutions that improve access to food for Hillsborough residents. (See Recommendations on Issues Related to Hunger, #1.)
  - 2. The Hillsborough Homeless Coalition, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders to create a Working Group on Day Labor Pools. (See Recommendations on Issues Related to Hunger, #5-E.)

3. The Agricultural Council, the Hillsborough County Agricultural Liaison, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Hunger Coalition to form a Working Group on Expanding Gleaning in Hillsborough County. (See Recommendations on Hunger Action, #10.)
  - I. Assist the Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition in its transition to a broad hunger action collaborative.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough County, Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition, Tampa United Methodist Centers

**Cost:** \$55,000 (Includes staff, travel, office supplies and phone costs)

**Possible Funders:** Hillsborough County, area religious congregations, Banyan Foundation, Bread for the World Institute, Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church

**Outcome:** Even though this position will not provide direct assistance to hungry persons, saving a Hunger Action Coordinator is vital if Hillsborough County is to achieve the comprehensive recommendations of this Task Force. The position will minimize duplication of services, focus energy on developing hunger action partnerships among private and public organizations, and coordinate support for collaborative actions taken by Hillsborough County government, Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition and other partner organizations.

## 2. ENHANCE LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

**Finding:** Effective training on budgeting, finding sources of emergency food help, comparing food prices, using shopping lists and preparing nutritious foods helps households on limited incomes avoid hunger.

- A. Hillsborough County government could allocate funding for nutrition education and budgeting training. Several of the 10 paraprofessional trainers should be bilingual; their goal would be to help persons with limited resources acquire the skills, attitudes and behaviors necessary to better manage their food budgets and prepare nutritionally sound diets.
- B. Area agencies which train clients in life skills would be encouraged to include training in stretching food dollars, locations of emergency and self-help food and nutrition education.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough County, Hillsborough Cooperative Extension Service, Hillsborough County Schools, Healthy Start, Healthy Families, Woman's Infant's and Children's (WIC) Program, Maternal Child Health Coalition

**Cost:** \$350,000

**Possible Funders:** Hillsborough County

**Outcome:** Increased family food self-sufficiency; reduced instances of hunger; improved nutrition; children of parents who receive training will have increased school attendance and enhanced classroom attentiveness; lower public health care costs in families that receive training.

### 3. INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN SHARE TAMPA BAY

**Finding:** Persons with very low incomes who could benefit the most, especially families with children in extreme poverty, do not participate in SHARE in large numbers.

**Discussion:** SHARE Tampa Bay provides \$25 to \$30 in meats, fresh produce and grocery items in exchange for \$14 and two hours of volunteer service. With unlimited sources of food, and no qualifications for participation, they have the potential to help thousands of persons at risk of hunger in Hillsborough County. The majority of SHARE'S participants are seniors and families with low and moderate incomes.

- A. SHARE is seeking resources to study barriers to participation among persons with very low incomes. By networking within organizations that participated in the Task Force on Hunger, focus groups could be organized to ask professional social workers and persons at risk of hunger to identify barriers they see to participation in SHARE by persons with very low incomes.
- B. SHARE could field test ways to better meet the needs of persons at risk of hunger, including the working poor, persons with disabilities, farmworkers and the elderly.
- C. In collaboration with local marketing schools, advertising and public relations agencies and media outlets, a marketing campaign could be developed and tested using formulas that appeal to persons with low incomes.

**Possible Partners:** Share Tampa Bay, Tampa United Methodist Centers, USF Anthropology Department, Centre for Women (Strategies for Success), Healthy Start, Urban League, Hillsborough County Department of Health and Social Services

**Cost:** \$30,000 for student assistants, low-income assistants and consultants to conduct the study, vouchers to test marketing plans and printing marketing materials

**Possible Funders:** TECO, Conn Foundation, Hillsborough County Department of Health & Social Services (Vouchers), USF Collaborative for Children and Families, USF President's Fund

**Outcomes:** For a relatively small amount of money, this action has the potential to provide significant benefits for thousands of Hillsborough households most at risk of hunger. Implementation of this recommendation could help find ways for those families to tap into the vast resource of high-quality, nutritiously balanced foods available through the World SHARE (food) Purchasing Department at deep discounts.

### 4. ESTABLISH HUNGER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION SYSTEM

This would serve as a one-stop point for information to help Hillsborough County residents access all the food assistance available in our county.

**Finding:** Many hungry persons do not know how to find help.

**Discussion:** When 625 Hillsborough residents were asked by this Task Force if they knew whom to call to get information on finding food help, 42% said they did not.

(See Appendix F-4 for Task Force Interview results.) In Town Hall meetings across the county, many residents at risk of hunger indicated that they do not know where to get food assistance. This was the most consistent theme in all six of the Task Force's Working Groups.

**Description:**

- A. A comprehensive database would be developed in collaboration with the Hunger Coalition and Hunger Task Force participants.
- B. All data would be shared with appropriate Hillsborough County entities including Community LINK and the Department of Health and Social Services.
- C. Data would be updated biannually by phone.
- D. A "Hunger Action Guide" would be published with detailed information about where help is available, eligibility requirements, etc. in English and Spanish so social workers can make appropriate referrals.
- E. A 24-hour Hunger Hotline in English and Spanish would have two main functions:
  - 1. One staff person would be aware of all hunger-related resources available in the community, and would train volunteer hotline workers to direct hungry persons (or agencies calling on behalf of hungry persons) to the most appropriate resources.
  - 2. The hotline would offer more than information, linking hungry persons to a client ombudsperson, helping clients negotiate the referral system to access the food and related resources they need.
- F. Widely promote the Hunger Hotline including regular television and radio public service announcements like: "Are you hungry tonight? Call the Hunger Hotline at \_\_\_\_\_." Significant volume is expected once the hotline is established.
- G. Use already established distribution systems for updating, printing and distributing posters, information pages, wallet cards, rolodex cards and bus ads in English and Spanish with information about where to get food assistance. Existing distribution systems may include schools, human services, religious congregations, police, fire, clinics, HARTline, etc.
- H. Hillsborough County government programs could provide information about self-help solutions to hunger for very low-income households to break recurring needs for emergency food assistance.
- I. Printed information about where farmworkers can get help in Spanish and English would be posted in areas frequented by farmworkers, specifically Plant City, Dover, and Ruskin/Wimauma.
- J. We recommend the Hunger Assistance Information Campaign, including the Hunger Hotline, be funded by Hillsborough County government and administered by an area agency with expertise in developing, marketing and updating information systems for the public with collaboration from the Hunger Action Coordinator.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough County departments of Health and Social Services, Public Information and Aging Services, along with Hillsborough Crisis Center, Hunger Free Coalition, area chambers of commerce, area hospitals and Hillsborough County Schools

**Cost:** Original estimates were \$65,000. (Hillsborough County has allocated \$5,000 to develop a pilot project.)

**Possible Funders:** Hillsborough County, area chambers of commerce, area hospitals, area chefs association

**Outcomes:** Enhanced access to food assistance resources by hungry people; central location for referral information for food assistance providers; regular updates keep information current; more efficient utilization of available resources.

## **5. ENHANCE FOOD ASSISTANCE AND ACCESS FOR SENIORS**

**Finding:** Hillsborough County administers several quality programs that aid good nutrition for seniors. There are several ways those programs can be modified slightly to provide improved services to seniors with special needs.

**A. Establish pilot projects to enhance nutrition programs:** Seniors who participate in the Hillsborough County Senior Nutrition programs (SCNAP, Home Delivered Meals) have differing nutritional needs. Some, like cancer patients, may have lost interest in eating bulk foods and need nutritional supplements. Others may need home-delivered meals on weekends. The Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Board of County Commissioners direct Aging Services department to develop pilot projects using nutritional supplements, adding breakfasts and meals delivered on weekends. After a year, the effort should be assessed by monitoring improvements in the diets of the participants.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough County Aging Services

**Cost:** \$35,200 to Hillsborough County for adding breakfast. (Actual cost for 320,775 breakfasts per year is \$214,938. The \$32,200 leverages \$179,858 in USDA funds. Actual cost to Hillsborough County is 11 cents per breakfast.)

**Funder:** The portion of this recommendation relating to adding breakfasts was approved by Hillsborough County for implementation in January 1999.

**B. Communications systems and materials should be easy to use:** Many seniors who seek assistance through Hillsborough County government have age-related disabilities and lack experience dealing with complex telecommunications systems. As a result, recorded telephone menu systems may confuse them and they may not get the help they need. The Task Force on Hunger recommends that humans continue to answer phones in its Aging Services programs. Additionally, all materials designed to be read by seniors should be printed in large type. Materials in Spanish should be widely distributed and bilingual phone service and case management should be consistently available throughout the system of services.

**Implementation:** Hillsborough County Aging Services

**Cost:** \$0

**C. Hillsborough County Aging Services and Meals on Wheels should work together to identify and document observed problems:** Volunteers delivering meals observe the conditions of seniors who receive the food. There are thousands of meals delivered to seniors every week by Hillsborough County Aging Services and Meals on Wheels. This corps of volunteers is a valuable first line of eyes and ears for agencies who need to know when problems arise. The Task Force on Hunger recommends that Hillsborough County Aging Services work collaboratively with Meals on Wheels to develop a training and tracking program to identify and document observed problems. Information on problems would be channeled to the appropriate agencies. Agreements among the collaborating agencies would stipulate timelines for written responses reporting on actions that have been taken to address the problems.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough County Aging Services, Hillsborough Meals on Wheels, area agencies with oversight of problems that are identified by visiting volunteers, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department (Crimes Against the Elderly Division)

**D. Examine feasibility of grocery delivery, "Rolling Stores":** The Department of Aging Services, in collaboration with the Hunger Action Coordinator, should invite area food retailers to form a Working Group to determine the feasibility of "Rolling Stores" which would bring grocery items for sale to senior residential complexes and to neighborhoods where access to transportation is limited. The Working Group also may explore the financial viability of teaching un- or underemployed persons to start grocery delivery businesses.

**Possible Partners:** Hunger Free Coalition, major supermarket chains, Hillsborough County Aging Services, SHARE Tampa Bay, ESCOT, WAGES Coalition members

**Cost:** \$50-\$60,000

1. \$20,000 for feasibility study and grants writing (six 6 months) to cover consultant services
2. \$40,000 for pilot implementation project (12 months) to cover part-time staff, transportation, marketing and experimentation with food items. Assumes donated vehicle.

**Possible Funders:** Area supermarket chain, Hillsborough County, area foundation. For a small amount of money, a feasibility study could determine if there is a sufficient market to launch a pilot public-private rolling store that, if successful, could provide thousands of disabled and elderly residents with regular access to groceries at supermarket prices. The study could determine if it is more cost-effective to take food to the people or to transport people to supermarkets.

**Outcomes from Senior-Related Recommendations:** Lower public health care costs for seniors; improved nutrition for seniors in targeted programs; early intervention

on unmet needs of seniors identified by home food delivery volunteers; access to food at supermarket prices.

## 6. DEVELOPMENT OF HUNGER ACTION TRAINING PROJECT FOR RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

The Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition should develop a hunger action training project on efforts that local religious congregations can undertake in their neighborhoods to address hunger across Hillsborough County.

**Finding:** Because hunger is found in all quadrants of the county, and in multiple population groups, the strategic locations of religious congregations could make them effective players.

**Description:** Possible actions to address hunger identified by the Task Force:

- A. The major providers of services to the homeless have identified where homeless populations exist in outlying areas. These service providers could inform the congregations about the locations of the homeless that need free meals. Also, congregations could distribute information about homeless services.
- B. Establish four to eight free restaurants county wide. Congregations would take turns preparing meals while volunteer organizations and civic clubs serve the food. An important side benefit to this effort is that direct human contact is the best way to raise awareness of hunger and its root causes.
- C. Link the faith community with organizations such as the City of Tampa and Hillsborough County neighborhood programs and the Point Programs to:
  1. Organize use of congregational vans and volunteers from congregations to provide transportation to supermarkets.
  2. Set up delivery systems for groceries to seniors and persons with disabilities.
  3. Organize countywide weekend food programs for children at religious facilities.
- D. Build on the successful “Kid’s Cafe” model developed by Divine Providence Food Bank, which serves hot dinners for children. Establish additional “Kid’s Cafes” across Hillsborough County.
- E. Encourage congregations to become “Host Sites” for SHARE Tampa Bay.
- F. Establish a “Cars for Success” program that helps people obtain their own cars so they can move off welfare rolls and get to work. Members of congregations may donate or sell cars at below market value. The effort would be coordinated with other programs helping people move from welfare to work. Cars for Success, Inc. has been developed to respond to this recommendation.
- G. Promote “Offerings of Letters” on hunger-related legislation in area congregations. Develop advocacy groups in clusters of congregations across Hillsborough County.
- H. Write grants to support efforts of area congregations.
- I. Develop a “Training Exchange” in which congregations already doing hunger ministries train others. Also provide training in how congregations can find out where there are hungry households in their neighborhoods and learn what those households need.

- J. Establish networks for collaboration among congregations and neighborhood programs across the county.
- K. Encourage groups within congregations to volunteer with area gleaning organizations.
- L. Request information from national religious and hunger action organizations about what congregations are doing in other locations, and share it with congregations in Hillsborough County.

**Possible Partners:** Tampa United Methodist Centers' Golden Keys Training Program, Hunger Free Coalition, Interfaith Clergy Association, other area congregations and judicatories

**Cost:** \$28,000 For contractual services, transportation, program and training materials.

**Possible Funders:** Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, Hyde Park United Methodist Church, Board of Global Ministries: United Methodist Church, Bread for the World Institute

**Outcomes:** Area congregations learn additional ways to reduce hunger and its causes; increased participation of the religious community in human service coalitions; more religious congregations bring their physical, human, and financial resources to bear in the fight against hunger; heightened awareness of hunger and its root causes. Golden Keys Training Program has been created to respond to this recommendation, and now offers training to congregations on 16 ways they can do hunger action.

## **7. IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE STUDENT NUTRITION IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOLS**

Hillsborough County Schools should enhance the nutrition of students through programs that increase participation in school food programs and educational programs that teach life skills and good nutrition at an early age.

**Finding:** Childhood hunger can be significantly alleviated when food and nutritional education are provided directly to children who are at risk of hunger. Hillsborough County Schools are the primary direct point of contact with children.

**A. Life skills and nutrition education:** Enhancing life skills education (budgeting, comparing food prices, using a shopping list, knowing how to cook and prepare nutritious foods) linked to summer school food programs and after-school programs are the top recommendation of the Children's Working Group of the Task Force on Hunger to break the generational cycle of hunger. The working group recognized that these settings are likely to have the highest concentration of children with food/ nutrition needs.

**B. Create a pilot tutoring program in life skills during regular school hours in several schools with very high rates of students eligible for free and reduced meals:** Offer hands-on classes in cooking, planning, budgeting, teen pregnancy prevention and nutrition with food or field trip incentives for participation. Ultimately, all children at risk of hunger in Hillsborough County Schools would have classes in life skills.

**C. Hire nutrition educators:** Hillsborough County School Food Service, in collaboration with other interested area groups, should hire nutrition educators to develop this and other life skills educational models for parents and children. Nutrition educators would adapt these models to supplement what is currently available in GED and adult basic education classes.

**D. Expand summer food program:** As recommended by the Task Force on Hunger, the Hillsborough County's Summer Food Program has been consolidated with the Hillsborough County Public Schools program to increase efficiency and to provide more children with hot meals. The Task Force further recommends that the school system designate all schools, except for those in very high-income communities, as "open" summer food sites. "Open" sites would allow all children in the neighborhood to eat at the school even if they are not participating in school activities.

**Discussion:** In summer 1998, the county's program reached 6,500 children and 30,000 children participated in the school system's food program. Combined, the programs reached 40% of Hillsborough's children who qualify for free or reduced meals. There is a clear need to greatly expand the Summer Food Program to children who are not registered in summer school and county recreational programs.

**E. Enhance use of free and reduced meals program:** Hillsborough County Schools should explore approaches to preserve the anonymity of students participating in the free and reduced-price meals programs. For example, a debit card or other system could pay for all meals served through School Food Service. Adoption of a system like this would also provide cost savings to the school because it would receive immediate payment for purchased food. The most significant advantage, however, would be the increased number of children who would take advantage of the free and reduced meals, have better nutrition, and consequently be better able to focus on learning.

**Discussion:** Children are very sensitive to peer acceptance, and in many cases will not use free or reduced-price meals, even when they need it, because they are embarrassed. A Tufts University study, (Nutrition and Cognitive Retention in Children), directly links cognitive retention to nutrition. When students do not take advantage of free and reduced-price meals because of embarrassment, it may affect learning and encourage behavioral problems. In Task Force interviews, many young people indicated they are irritable and act out when hungry.

In Hillsborough County last year, 49% of students qualified for free meals and 5% for reduced-cost meals, 87,000 students in all. But only 57,000 actually participated in the program. There are many reasons why 30,000 students who qualified did not participate, but embarrassment may have played a significant role.

Use of debit cards would also have benefits beyond hunger reduction: reducing paper work, making it easier for

parents to pay for a whole semester with one check, saving time in lunchrooms and reducing time spent counting cash register change and currency.

**F. Enhance food/meals for after-school programs:** Assess the feasibility of increasing the food provided from a light snack to a more complete snack or meal. Investigate the rule that prohibits students taking uneaten food off-campus, and work for changes to allow students who do not use buses to take uneaten food home with them. Explore the possibility of, and need for, brown bag meals to take home for some students, especially if parents work at night.

**Discussion:** Many students spend extended periods of time in after-school programs in schools across the county, waiting for their parents to pick them up. Currently, students receive a very light snack. Rules prohibit students from taking any food served in these programs away from the school. Students may not be hungry at the time food is served, but may want food later after leaving the school site. Unused food is thrown away.

**G. Print and distribute hunger assistance information:** Schools, especially those in areas with high risk of hunger, can be excellent conduits of information for parents who may need food assistance. Hillsborough County Schools can collaborate with the Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition to print and distribute flyers to targeted schools four times a year for students to take home. The information flyers will be prepared by the Coalition and will feature programs that may help households at risk of hunger have access to nutritious affordable food.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough County Schools, Hunger Free Coalition, Beth El Presbyterian Mission, Rural Social Services Partnership, East and South County Social Services Coalitions

**Outcomes:** Increased food made available directly to students at risk of hunger; children learn life skills that can break the generational cycle of malnutrition and poor use of available resources for basic household needs; households with children in communities most at risk of hunger receive information about the emergency and self-help food assistance available to them.

## **8. HILLSBOROUGH HUNGER-FREE COALITION SERVES AS PRIMARY COLLABORATIVE ADDRESSING HUNGER IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**

**Finding:** Formation of partnerships, cooperative relationships and training programs to address hunger will be enhanced by a strong coalition of area hunger action groups.

**A. Coordinate hunger action research and bring partners together to support new efforts, training, public awareness and advocacy programs:** The coalition should determine the organizational structure which will best support its purpose: to incorporate as a non-profit organization or to partner with other agencies for various program components and provide advisory guidance to them.

**Description:** The Hillsborough Hunger-Free Coalition would:

1. Create a Working Group on Gleaning in Hillsborough County. The focus of this working group would be on how to expand the basic components of gleaning: transportation, additional gleaners (labor), storage (including cold storage), a distribution system for gleaned product, and funding for staff and operations. (See Recommendation Section I, #10 in Gleaning.)
2. Work with the Hillsborough Homeless Coalition, the Rural Social Services Partnership, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and area banks/ financial institutions to investigate the feasibility of a farmworkers and homeless money exchange to cash checks, hold money and provide other basic banking functions.
3. Support collaborative efforts for direct involvement of area organizations and individuals to reduce hunger. Some examples: “Freedom from Hunger” July 4th food drive, neighborhood food exchanges, Cars for Success and free restaurants.
4. Link to and maintain ongoing involvement with area groups, such as the Rural Social Services Partnership, the Hillsborough Homeless Coalition and the Hillsborough WAGES Coalition, to raise and maintain their awareness about hunger and to collaborate with them in joint initiatives that affect food access and underlying causes of hunger. Topics for collaboration could be day and farm labor pools, alternative transportation for persons without personal autos and increasing decent affordable housing. In collaboration with these and other groups, the Coalition would write grants to fund the startup and implementation of initiatives identified by the Task Force on Hunger.
5. Encourage area farmworker missions, the Hillsborough offices of the Florida Department of Labor and area computer training schools to work with appropriate national groups to develop a Farm Labor Internet Web Site. The web site would be a regularly updated listing of labor needs from farmers in Hillsborough County. Missions could be the main sites for farmworkers to access the information. The web site could be expanded to include information about labor needs throughout the migrant stream nationally.
6. Develop “New Arrival” information packets for migrant farmworkers in Hillsborough County.

**Possible Funders:** USDA, Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church

**Possible Lead Partners:** Tampa United Methodist Centers, Divine Providence Food Bank, Beth El Presbyterian Mission

**B. Help human service programs routinely assess hunger needs:** The Hunger Free Coalition should recommend that area human service programs regularly use the

Radimer/Cornell Hunger and Food Insecurity Measure as part of their intake to develop a base line of hunger and food insecurity in Hillsborough County and to monitor progress toward food access for the entire population. Training sessions on how to use this measure would be held by the Hunger Free Coalition for interested groups.

**Possible Partners:** USF Anthropology Department, Tampa United Methodist Centers

**Cost:** \$10,000 for materials, trainers, ongoing monitoring and measurement for one year

**Possible Funders:** USF Collaborative for Children and Families, USF President's Fund

**C. Coordinate advocacy training:** Collaborate with CARES and TUMC's Golden Key's Training Program to coordinate advocacy training for area congregations and non-profits serving hungry persons. The Coalition also would provide training on information and opportunities for their congregants (as well as participants/clients in hunger-related programs) to write, call, visit and advocate decision-makers for hunger-related legislation.

This recommendation would involve persons at risk of hunger in the democratic process to bring changes in systems that impact their lives. U.S. Senator Paul Simon has said that, "One letter written about hunger will surely save a life." This is because so few letters are written by constituents on this subject, and significant resources are channeled through the influence of active citizens who take the time to contact their elected officials.

**Description:**

1. Provide training for area congregations and human service providers on what they can and can't do with advocacy, and how to integrate advocacy of hunger program participants and congregants into the routine of their organizations.
2. Heighten awareness among human service providers that hunger may be an issue for many of their clients, and that they need to include this in intake interviews.
3. Encourage government and other appropriate agencies to agree to prioritize access to food as a key objective then aggressively implement strategic planning to meet that goal.
4. In collaboration with CARES and other organizations, develop a program of ongoing education for politicians about hunger. Help shift the view of politicians so they realize that "getting a job" is not the universal answer to hunger, but one of many, and that underlying systemic causes need to be addressed.
5. Find ways to fund advocacy programs such as Hunger Advocacy Drives at WMNF concerts and the MAZON Foundation.

**Possible Partners:** CARES, Tampa United Methodist Centers, SHARE Tampa Bay, Florida Impact, Bread for the World, WMNF Community Radio

**Cost:** \$29,000

**Possible Funders:** MAZON Foundation, WMNF Radio, individual donors, national foundations that fund advocacy training

**Lead Partners:** CARES of Hillsborough County, Tampa United Methodist Centers

**Outcomes for all Hunger Free Coalition Recommendations:** Provide follow-up on Task Force recommendations by designated group; form Working Groups to develop collaborative projects that will implement Task Force recommendations; advise Hunger Action Coordinator; empower participants in area human service programs to advocate for changes that will directly affect their lives; establish a base line for the extent of hunger in Hillsborough County.

## **9. HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY BUSINESSES ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERISM**

Hillsborough County businesses encourage their executives and employees to volunteer in area programs that are addressing hunger and its root causes.

**Finding:** When persons from the business sector volunteer in hunger action programs, it can raise awareness of the humanity of people in difficult financial circumstances and refocus their attention on the underlying root causes of hunger. This can lead to innovative solutions that link the vast human and creative resources of the business community to the needs of the poorest of the poor.

Businesses could encourage their employees to be actively looking for innovative ways the resources and expertise of their company can be utilized to address root causes of hunger, and provide recognition for employees who volunteer 100 or more hours per year.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition, area chambers of commerce, The Volunteer Center, area businesses, civic clubs

**Cost:** \$2,500 for promotional materials, recognition events, coordination

**Lead Partner:** Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition

## **10. EXPAND GLEANING IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**

The Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition and the agricultural community in Hillsborough County should form a working group to expand gleaning in Hillsborough County. The Working Group would seek donations of vehicles, storage and distribution space, and other resources to support current gleaning efforts and develop a long-range plan to support expanded gleaning. The Agricultural Council would recognize the value of gleaning that builds community cooperation, while helping reduce hunger and could encourage area growers to allow gleaning in their fields and groves.

**Finding:** Several groups have developed gleaning programs in Hillsborough County. They organize volunteers to pick produce from fields and groves, and pick up groceries from area stores. Then they distribute the food free of charge to community organizations which serve persons who need food help. One group, The Gleaners of Hillsborough, began in 1995 by gleaning and distributing 20,000 pounds of food. That has grown to 128,000 pounds distributed in the first eight months of 1998. There is a real need to further develop this capacity because the potential for much larger volumes of highly nutritious gleaned food is very large.

**Possible Partners:** Hillsborough Gleaners, Hillsborough County Farm Bureau, the Hillsborough County Agribusiness Council, the Hillsborough County Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee, SHARE Tampa Bay, Divine Providence Food Bank, Hillsborough Cooperative Extension Service, the Hillsborough County Agricultural Liaison, Society of St. Andrew, Beth El Baptist Church of Balm

**Cost:** \$25,000 (First year: July 1999–June 2000) to cover part-time coordinator, transportation and storage costs. Estimates for expanding operations are \$50,000 for second year and \$75,000 for third year.

**Possible Funders:** Could be included in Hunger Coalition grant request to USDA, Society of St. Andrew

**Lead Partner:** Society of St. Andrew

**Outcome:** Hundreds of tons of fresh produce that otherwise would have been wasted will be available annually to programs, food pantries and residential centers serving persons at risk of hunger.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS ON ISSUES RELATED TO HUNGER**

### **1. STUDY WAYS TO INCREASE TRANSPORTATION ACCESS FOR VERY LOW INCOME PERSONS**

**Finding:** The lack of adequate transportation is a cause of hunger for many Hillsborough County residents.

**Discussion:** For many persons with low incomes, especially the disabled and the elderly, public transportation is not adequate to get to supermarkets and then return home with bags of groceries. Many persons who can least afford it must purchase food at neighborhood convenience stores where prices are generally higher than at supermarkets.

The Board of County Commissioners would request that the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board studies how the current transportation disadvantaged system could be improved to meet the needs of persons experiencing hunger.

**Description:** This study should involve members of the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board, Hillsborough County Specialized Transportation, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority and the Hunger Action Coordinator. The study should investigate alternative systems and make recommendations that will improve access to affordable food for residents who do not have access to transportation. Preliminary research and recommendations should be presented within six months to the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board and the Board of County Commissioners. The final report, including any recommendations, should be completed within one year.

The overall goal is to provide transportation at the neighborhood level, directly serving those in need. Also, as much as possible, make these transportation solutions self-sustaining through fees, rather than wholly dependent on government or foundation funding, so that they are long-term solutions.

## **2. HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND OTHER GROUPS TAKE ACTIONS TO INCREASE DECENT, AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**Finding:** The tremendous backlogs of families on waiting lists attest to the high demand for decent, affordable housing in Hillsborough County.

**Discussion:** Over 2,000 persons are on the waiting list for Hillsborough County's Section VIII Program even though the list has been basically closed since 1994. Over 5,000 households applied for the City of Tampa's Section VIII housing assistance program during the week of January 27 to 31, 1997. For the last nineteen months the waiting list has been closed. The City of Tampa's Section VIII Program has a waiting list of 1315 and 526 are waiting for homes in the Tampa Housing Authority. Many of those applicants, and others who could not apply because lists are closed, are paying such high percentages of their incomes for housing that it may jeopardize the household's ability to purchase enough nutritious food. Coordinated efforts to reduce hunger must include increases in affordable housing for households with the lowest incomes.

- A. The Board of County Commissioners would establish affordable housing as a strategic goal.
- B. Current Hillsborough County efforts to increase affordable housing have reached the maximum, given limitations of federal regulations and funding. The BOCC should inform our members of Congress of the chronic need for additional affordable housing, and urge them to support legislative efforts that will open the door for additional private-public partnerships such as the successful La Estancia and Grove Point complexes.

Some specific changes that would allow this are increases in the federal volume cap and the per capita allocation of low-income housing tax credits, changes to which the BOCC could give its full support.

### 3. FLORIDA: MATCH FEDERAL DOLLARS FOR SSI (SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME)

**Finding:** Chronic hunger among some of the 24,093 persons in Hillsborough County on SSI (Supplemental Security Income) is a result of inadequate allotments to persons who qualify for the assistance.

**Discussion:** The average allotment is \$337 a month. The maximum someone can receive is \$494 with an additional \$10 to \$20 in food stamps. This is a cause of hunger among Hillsborough County residents who are not able to provide for their own needs. Many states provide matching funds to federal dollars for SSI. Florida provides none.

The BOCC would inform the Hillsborough Legislative (State of Florida) Delegation of this finding, and request the Hillsborough County lobbyist work with members of the delegation to sponsor legislation that the State of Florida supplement Federal SSI funding.

### 4. ALTER THE BASE PERIOD FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION QUALIFICATION

**Finding:** Florida's "base period" for calculating Unemployment Compensation qualification excludes at least three, and as many as six, months of a person's most recent work. The result is that many unemployed persons do not receive enough money to survive, are often faced with eviction and may be forced to rely on welfare.

**Discussion:** Legal service offices throughout Florida and in Hillsborough County see hundreds of clients whose jobs have been terminated and are seeking unemployment compensation. These claimants generally were in low-wage positions, or were in seasonal farm work, and have no savings to rely on. They need unemployment compensation to support their families until they can secure another job. Many of these clients had been working continuously for up to a year prior to termination, or throughout the farm season. They fully qualify for unemployment compensation in terms of length of employment.

However, because of the "base period" exclusion, these families are placed at risk of hunger, even though they have played by the rules. This is especially true for farmworkers, who do some of the most demanding labor in Hillsborough County.

The BOCC would request that members of the Hillsborough Legislative Delegation (State of Florida) support legislation to alter the base periods for unemployment compensation qualification. This would allow the minimum earnings requirement to be met on the basis of the four most recently completed quarters of work if it is not met using the standard base period. This helps fulfill the mission of unemployment compensation, which is to provide temporary and partial wage loss replacement for those unemployed through no fault of their own.

## 5. PRIVATE SECTOR / CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE: TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE HUNGER AMONG THEIR EMPLOYEES

**Finding:** Many corporations, utilities, medical and educational institutions in Hillsborough County employ workers who earn wages that place their households below the poverty line. In addition, many of their employees do not know where to go for food assistance, or how to learn basic life skills such as budgeting, pricing food, stretching food dollars, preparing nutritious meals on limited incomes, and finding child care at costs they can afford on incomes below poverty.

- A. Form Working Group to raise awareness among executives:** Area chambers of commerce would form a Working Group on Ending Hunger among employees. The Working Group would be composed of area executives, leaders of area hunger action programs and professionals in nutrition/ life skills education. The task of the Working Group would be to raise awareness among Hillsborough executives that some of their employees may be experiencing hunger or at risk of hunger. The Working Group would help area employers organize in-house campaigns to inform their employees about where to find food assistance and provide training opportunities for basic life skills such as budgeting, stretching food dollars and nutrition education.
- B. Reduce cost of child care:** The Working Group would also work with employers to help develop strategies to reduce the cost of child care among their employees, especially those with very low incomes.
- C. Encourage employers to provide training and promote from within:** The Working Group would encourage area businesses to promote from within and provide job training for their employees so that over time the earnings of Hillsborough workers will be raised. When there is a concerted effort to hire from within, and provide job training for current employees so that they become more productive, there is a tendency for earnings in a work force to gradually rise. This is particularly true if persons who had previously been on welfare or employed at lower wages are given opportunities for job training.
- D. Encourage small businesses to creatively explore benefit options:** The Working Group would investigate options, such as employee leasing, that will make it possible for more small businesses to provide health insurance for their employees, especially employees with low wages.
- E. Establish Day Labor Working Group to move workers toward self-sufficiency:** The Working Group would collaborate with the Hillsborough Homeless Coalition to invite representatives from the day labor industry and area business and governmental leaders to establish a Day Labor Working Group. The purpose of this group would be to determine ways day labor pools can collaborate with area programs to help workers move toward self-sufficiency. According to the Hillsborough Homeless Coalition, our county has one of the largest day labor industries per capita in the United States.
- F. Print “My Solution to Hunger” placemats:** Restaurants that usually use placemats would print positive, uplifting “My Solution to Hunger” placemats. Illustrations could be from Hillsborough County students who have won local art contests. A

printing company would agree to print 100,000 placemats for use in schools and other restaurants that do not usually use placemats.

- G. Distribute information to get others involved:** Businesses, chambers of commerce and utilities would print information in newsletters and billings, and post notices on bulletin boards, about solutions to hunger in Hillsborough County and how their employees and customers can become involved. Businesses would ask their public affairs and marketing departments to work with the Hunger Action Coordinator to help prepare quality materials that assist collaborative efforts to reduce hunger.

## **6. EXPAND PARISH NURSING AND HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAMS**

**Finding:** The Parish Nurse program has proven to be an excellent conduit of information about food assistance and nutrition education. The Healthy Families Program helps households at risk of hunger access the resources they need to move toward self sufficiency.

- A. The Task Force on Hunger commends St. Joseph’s Hospital for initiating the Parish Nurse and Healthy Families programs in Hillsborough County even in the midst of economic change and constraint in the health care system. We recommend that St. Joseph’s Hospital and other Hillsborough hospitals and clinics work collaboratively to build on these successful programs, and expand the collaboration between the faith and health care communities.
- B. As part of the expansion of the Parish Nursing program in Hillsborough County, special attention should be placed on food access and good nutrition as preventative health care. Specifically, Parish Nurses and Healthy Families staff should be encouraged to use the Radimer/Cornell Hunger and Food Insecurity Measurement whenever they suspect a household is at risk of hunger.

## **7. PROVIDE INFORMATION ON APPEALING DENIALS OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER EMERGENCY AND SELF HELP OPPORTUNITIES**

**Finding:** Some persons who seek assistance Social Security, food stamps and other programs may actually qualify, but are denied for lack of sufficient documentation or other reasons. Often they need assistance to avoid hunger.

- A. When persons are denied assistance by Social Security and food stamps, they would be routinely given a card in English or Spanish that lets them know where they can seek help to appeal the denial. The Task Force urges other agencies to provide this information as well.
- B. Additionally, information prepared as part of the Hunger Hotline materials would be provided to clients seen by case workers so that all persons (those denied as well as those approved for assistance) would be aware of additional food help available in Hillsborough County.

## 8. ENACT LEGISLATION TO EXPAND TAX ADVANTAGES FOR DONATIONS OF FRESH PRODUCE BY THE FOOD INDUSTRY

**Finding:** There is potential for significant increases in donated produce from Hillsborough County's fields and groves. However, unlike other businesses in the food industry, many farmers receive no tax deduction incentive to do so.

**Description:** Several groups have developed gleaning programs in Hillsborough County. They organize volunteers to pick produce from area fields and groves, and pick up groceries from area stores. Then they distribute the food free of charge to area community organizations that serve persons who need food help.

The Task Force recommends the BOCC write their members of Congress and ask them to sign on as co-sponsors of the Good Samaritan Tax Act. The Good Samaritan Tax Act (HR 2450) would expand the kinds of corporations in the food industry, including farmers, that may receive a deduction for donations of food to charitable organizations. It could significantly enlarge the amount of gleaning and food donations in general.



“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field to its very border, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner.”

—*Leviticus 19:9-11*

# V. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

There are three main steps that will move Hillsborough County toward food access for all its people.

## **STEP 1: IDENTIFICATION OF SOLUTIONS TO HUNGER**

The findings and recommendations contained in this publication reflect suggestions for solving hunger from over 1,000 residents of Hillsborough County who have wide experience in all sectors of the community. Those suggestions were distilled by the Task Force Leadership Team into a core set of recommendations to directly improve food access and to urge action on social needs related to hunger.

## **STEP 2: TRANSITION FROM IDENTIFICATION TO ACTION**

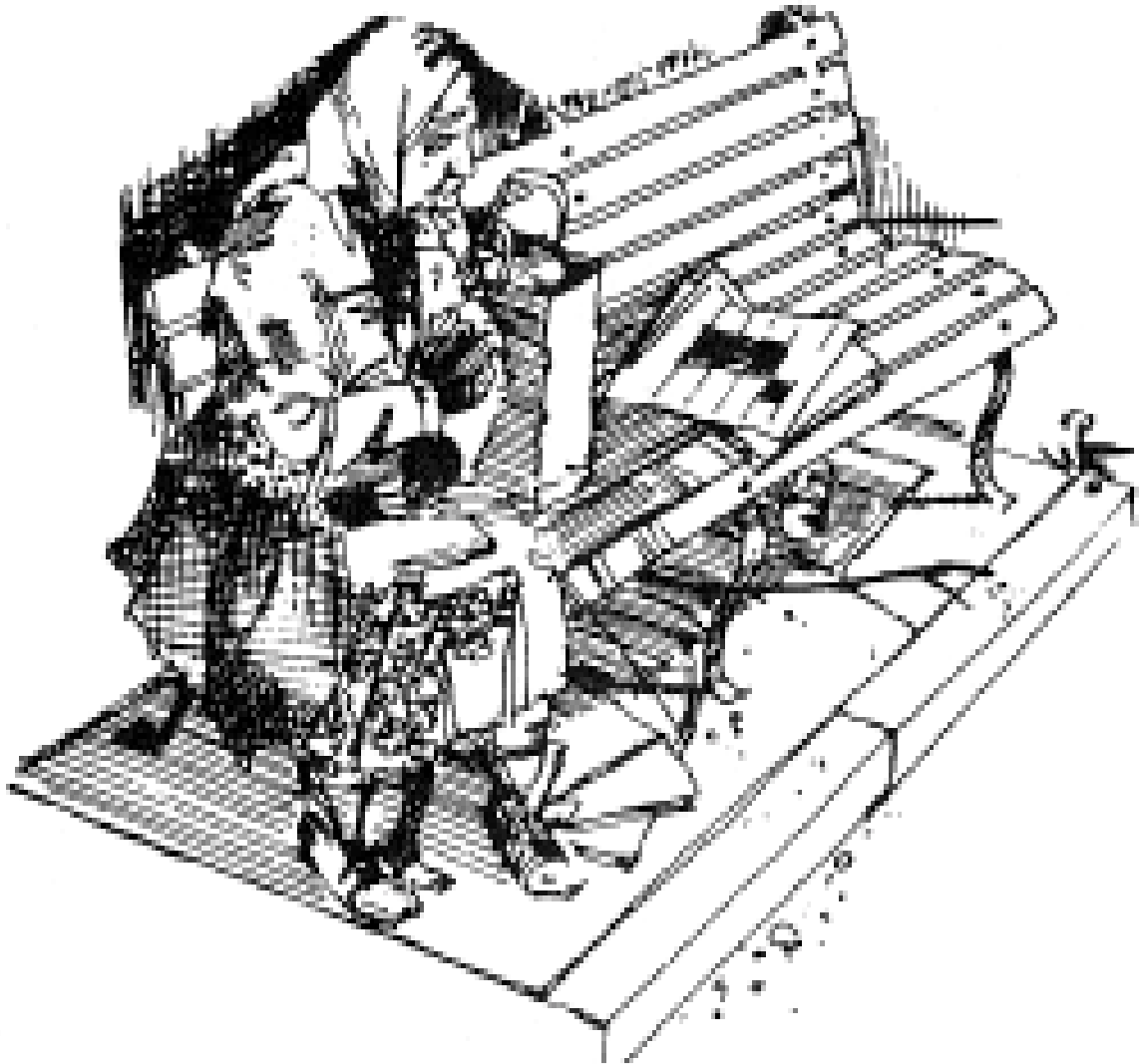
To move from the identification of solutions to hunger to actions that actually improve food access for tens of thousands of people in Hillsborough County, the following must occur:

- A. Presentation of the recommendations of the Task Force to groups who have the capacity to carry them into action. Members of the Task Force are currently presenting recommendations to Hillsborough County government, Hillsborough County Schools, area chambers of commerce, the Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition, area religious groups, and other organizations identified in recommendations, as well as the general public through wide media coverage.
- B. Establish a structure within the community to follow up on recommendations.
  1. The Task Force has recommended that the Hunger Free Coalition take steps to develop its capacity as the primary collaborative entity in Hillsborough County for hunger action.
  2. To accomplish this, the Coalition is encouraged to establish a Task Force Follow Through Working Group. This Working Group would involve many who have been active on the Task Force. It would support efforts to implement Task Force recommendations by Hillsborough County government (working closely with the county's Hunger Action Coordinator staff person), Hillsborough County Schools, and other groups. It would identify short- and long-term goals from the recommendations.
  3. The Coalition would determine staffing, office space, and material needed to effectively coordinate its efforts, and would seek funding to support those needs. It would determine the structure needed to support its efforts, and would seek out lead partner non-profit organizations.
  4. A partnership has been created between CARES, Tampa United Methodist Centers, and area clergy and laity involved in the Task Force to implement two of the Task Force's recommendations: training of religious congregations in hunger action, and training non-profits for advocacy by clients/customers/participants.

### STEP 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the short- and long-term goals it has set for itself, the Coalition will develop its capacity to:

- conduct hunger research,
- bring partners together around new efforts,
- provide hunger action training,
- identify funding sources and raise needed funds,
- provide follow-up support with groups that are implementing Task Force recommendations,
- involve persons with low incomes in Coalition efforts,
- promote public awareness of the root causes of hunger,
- help individuals and organizations become effectively involved in a comprehensive plan of action, and
- facilitate hunger action advocacy.

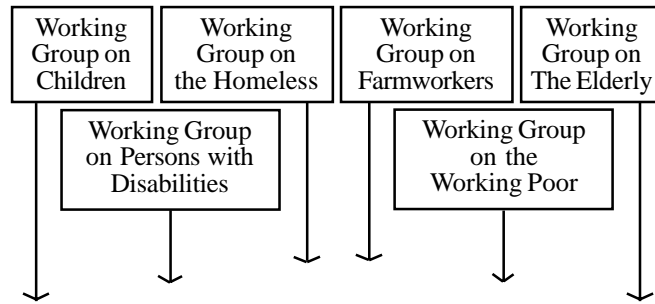


“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of themselves and their family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

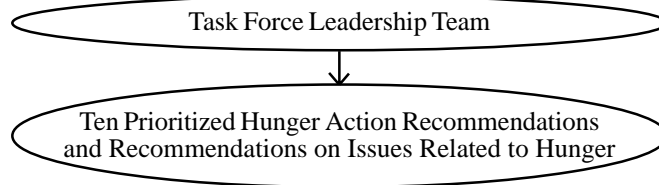
—*United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25*

## FIGURE 2: TASK FORCE ON HUNGER IMPLEMENTATION DIAGRAM

**Step 1:** The Task Force established Working Groups and recruited participants from human service, business, religious, and governmental organizations as well as persons at risk of hunger in our community. They each formulated their own recommendations.

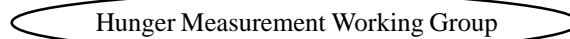
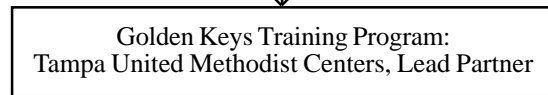


**Step 2:** Those recommendations were edited into a set of ten prioritized hunger action recommendations, and eight recommendations on issues related to hunger by the Task Force Leadership Team.



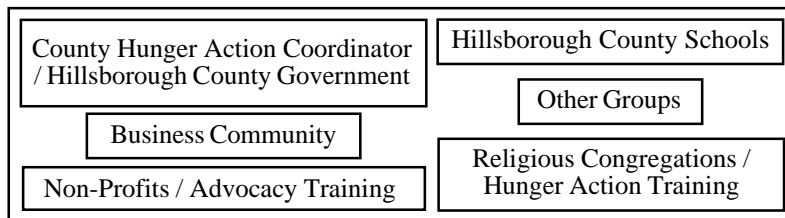
**Step 3:** The Leadership Team presented its recommendations to area groups, and recommended the Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition form Working Groups to follow up on the recommendations.

Additionally, Tampa United Methodist Centers, CARES and clergy and laity involved in the Task Force formed a program to implement several of the training recommendations from the Task Force.

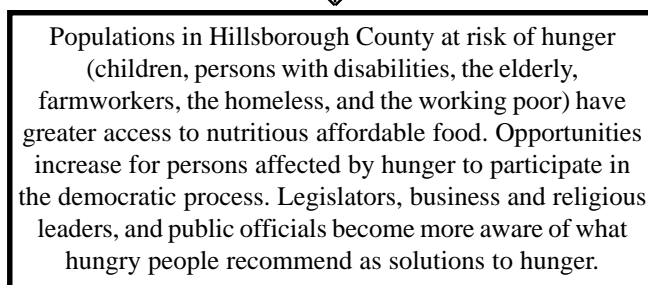


**Step 4:** The Hillsborough Hunger Free Coalition is considering forming several working groups to track and support the implementation of the Task Force’s recommendations.

**Step 5:** Groups in Hillsborough County study and decide how to respond to the recommendations of the Task Force.



**Step 6:** Recommendations of the Task Force are implemented by various groups.



# APPENDIX A: LIST OF TASK FORCE PARTICIPANTS

## Leadership Team of the Task Force

Baer, Dr. Roberta ..... USF Anthropology Dept.  
Harrison, Mary Kate ..... School Food Service  
Johnson, Cretta ..... Health and Social Services  
Jorn, Evan ..... Beth El Presbyterian Mission  
McKinney, Mike ..... Cooperative Extension  
McQueen, Mike ..... Divine Providence Food Bank  
Clark, Dr. Warren ..... Task Force Coordinator

## Advisors to the Task Force

Reddick, Doris Ross ..... School Board member  
Morrison, Bob ..... Hotel Owner's Association  
McBride, Bill ..... Holland and Knight LLP  
Mitcham, Lupe ..... Tampa General Hospital  
Frank, Pat ..... Former State Senator  
Rice, Julian ..... MHC / Baylife  
Chambers, Kelly ..... School Board Public Affairs  
Hester, Miria ..... First UMC Plant City  
Olson, Candy ..... School Board member  
Williamson, Jeannie ..... Bay Area Legal  
Overstreet, Ralph ..... DCAF Foodstamps  
Skelton, Phyllis ..... WAGES Hills. County  
Driggers-Sipple, Cathy ..... Food Stamp Supervisor  
Urbanski, Bill ..... Diocese of St. Petersburg

## Other Interested Persons

Hartsfield, Rev. Richard ... John Calvin Presbyterian  
Montella, Audrey ..... Trinity UMC  
Studstill, Kelleigh .... South Florida Baptist Hospital  
Jetson, Judith ..... USF Collaborative  
Uris, Ray ..... Food Stamp Employment  
Bexley, Eddy ..... Strategies for Success  
Swanson, Bruce and Julie ..... Hyde Park UMC  
Muhammad, Mavis ..... Islamic Society  
Muhammad, JoAnn ..... Islamic Society  
Deal, Rev. Steve ..... All Nations Outreach Church  
Higgins, David ..... MHC Homeless  
Garcia, Sonia ..... Neighborhood Service Center  
Pace, Earlene ..... concerned citizen  
Carter, Levi ..... concerned citizen  
Butts, Karl ..... grower  
Ramirez, Rosa ..... Catholic Charities  
Licata, Peter ..... Neighborhood Service Center  
McCray, Lu ..... concerned citizen  
Harmon, Moses and Betty ... Custodial Grandparents  
Eccles, Anna L. .... Sterling Heights Senior Center  
White, Rev. Bob ... St. Mark's United Church of Christ

## July 9 Task Force Dinner, Feedback on Draft Recommendations

Shewfelt, Polly and Gene ..... Gleaners of Hills. Co.  
Bates, Loshi Kin ..... concerned citizen  
Hendrickson, Gerald ..... HCHV Program  
Griffith, Carol ..... HCHV Program  
Marti, Paul ..... Manna Program  
Morris, Janice ..... Palm River POINT  
Wascovich, Rev. Craig ..... First Christian Church  
Springer, Rev. Rosalind ..... First Christian Church  
Head, Vince ..... restaurant owner  
Anderson, Sibyl ..... concerned citizen  
Ross, Ed ..... Sulfur Springs Action League  
Hanner, Gwen ..... Sulfur Springs Action League  
Walker, Jr. Ed ..... Tampa Unity Choir  
Taylor, Steve ..... concerned citizen  
Eagan, Christine ..... concerned citizen  
Paxton, Cathy ..... concerned citizen  
Walter, Jimmy ..... concerned citizen  
Antle, Richard ..... Suarez Housing Corp.  
Hall, Johnnye ..... concerned citizen  
Mathias, Rosemary .. Urban Transportation Research  
Curtis, Dave ..... concerned citizen  
Pisacane, Frances .... Sulfur Springs Action League  
Nunez, Amparo ..... Palm River POINT  
Ward, Beverly ..... Urban Transportation Research  
Hellickson, Wendy .... Health Center for Homeless Vets.  
Gordon, Lois ..... Palm River POINT  
Rutkin, Maria ..... Metropolitan Ministries  
Russo, Bro. John Paul ..... Holy Redeemer Church  
Castor, Don ..... judge  
Lamm, Perri ..... concerned citizen  
Kocby, Betty ..... Divine Providence Food Bank  
Moss, Rev. Allen ..... Tampa Unity Church  
Mitchum, Doris ..... Palm River POINT  
Squallish, Bob ..... concerned citizen  
Wilson, Shelby ..... concerned citizen  
Putney, Karen and Lou ..... lawyer  
Sleczkowski, Bob ..... concerned citizen  
Gagan, Richard ..... concerned citizen  
Harvey, Charles ..... Best Insurers  
Sanders-Joyce, Dan ..... concerned citizen

### **Children Working Group**

Walker, Vicki (Chair) ..... TUMC  
Rooks, Darlene (Vice Chair) ..... concerned citizen  
Brown, Rev. Abe ..... Prison Crusade  
Burrows, Rev. Evan ..... Prison Crusade  
Medrano, Lydia ..... Children's Board of Hills. Co.  
Groetzinger, Joy ..... Adult / Community Education  
Martineau, Jane ..... retired citizen  
Banks, Rev. .... Lee Davis NSC  
Harris, Wayne ..... Rancher, Candidate  
McNair, Gloria ..... Channel 8 TV  
Colmenares, Nick  
Webb, Helen ..... Cooperative Extension  
Stephens, Melissa ..... Salvation Army  
Chotikul, Diane ..... Children's Board of Hills. Co.  
Anderson, Wallie ..... Carlton Fields Law Firm  
Dawson, Ann Gilman ..... Head Start  
Johnson, Willie Mae ..... Head Start  
Robinson, Leroy ..... Kimbell School  
Toohey, B., R.N. .... Healthy Child  
Cardozo, Diana de ..... Lutheran Ministries  
Armstrong, Loretta ..... Grandmothers United  
King, Bernadine ..... Summer Food Program H. C.  
Zella, Wendy ..... Kids Cafe - Food Bank  
Breen, Linda ..... Bay Area Legal  
Tribunella, Richard ..... Hillsborough Co. Children's  
Mitchell, Bill ..... Hillsborough Co. Children's  
Fernandez, Magda ..... Northside  
Keuler, Nick  
Jarrett, Carol ..... Kimbell School

### **Disabilities Working Group**

Scott, Harriett (Chair) ..... DCAF  
Villagra, Linda (Vice Chair) ..... Self Reliance  
Bell, Jim ..... Human Development Center  
Guest, Deborah ..... DCAF Developmental Services  
Edwards, Jay ..... TAN  
Davis, Marian-Laura ..... Adult Education / GED  
Erb, Edy ..... Mental Health Center  
Brown, Richard ..... ACTS  
Holm, Bob ..... DCAF Drug Abuse  
Rogers, John ..... MHC  
Woodside, Cecil ..... Northside MHC  
Norman, Mary ..... DCAF Developmental Services  
Allen, Pat ..... First United Church, Tampa

### **Elderly Working Group**

Carter, Marilyn (Chair) ..... Meals on Wheels  
Myles, Mary ..... MHC Residential ALF  
Polivka, Larry ..... USF Policy Center on Aging  
Valentini, Nicki  
Miller, Queen ..... Lee Davis Consumer Council  
Veitch, Det. Georgia ..... Hills. Co. Sheriff's Office  
Ciani, Gloria ..... Holy Redeemer - Nurse  
Cook, Reba ..... Life Enrichment Center  
Hattaway, Wanda ..... Citizen / Hyde Park UMC  
Johnson, Det. Earlene ..... Hills. Co. Sheriff's Office  
Cade, Edna York ..... Area Agency Aging  
Torano, Kay ..... Social Security Admin.  
Machin, Gil (Vice Chair) ... Senior Nutrition Program  
Melendez, Millie ..... concerned citizen  
Salkin, Eleanor ..... concerned citizen  
Kelly, Maureen  
Blakley, Marilyn ..... SCNAP Jewish Towers  
Cantor, Ester ..... Aging Services, Tampa Heights  
Duncan, Marie ..... Barksdale Center SCNAP

### **Farmworkers Working Group**

Jorn, Evan (Chair) ..... Beth El Presbyterian Mission  
Davis, Helen Gordon ..... Former State Senator  
Vales, Gloria ..... AHEC, Suncoast Clinic  
Gagan, Richard ..... ISS Program USF  
Valentine, Marisol ..... Urban League  
Gracia, Josie ..... RCMA Child Care Worker  
Pinzon, Maria ..... Hispanic Needs / Service  
Patterson, Ron ..... National Farmworker Min.

### **Homeless Working Group**

Amusa, Dr. Jean (Chair) .... Hills. Homeless Coalition  
Gillette, Tracey ..... Metropolitan Ministries  
McNally, Dan ..... Tampa Bay Homes  
Iken, Cynthia ..... Sine Domis  
Fahnestock, Jimmy ..... Homeless Web Page  
Mixon, Priscilla ..... Mary and Martha House  
Joyce, Jim ..... Homeless Recovery  
Snyder, Deputy Katie ..... Hills. Co. Sheriff's Office  
Miller, Vivian ..... Women's Circle of Hope  
Bowen, Jemisha ..... Mary and Martha House  
Forte, Anthony ..... homeless citizen  
Johnson, Mary ..... homeless citizen  
Pietsch, Joel ..... Jail - Substance Abuse  
Ramsey, Joe ..... Haven Poe Runaway Center

### **Working Poor Working Group**

Todd, Donna (Chair) ..... Crisis Center  
Allen, Jane (Vice Chair) ..... Cooperative Extension  
Ferrucci, Linda ..... SHARE Tampa Bay  
Lau, Grace ..... Dietetic Association  
Briggs, Halaine ..... Healthy Start  
Pate, Gloria ..... Citizens' Adv. Council  
Valentine, Marisol ..... Urban League  
Thompson, Grace ..... Urban League  
McGill, Katie ..... Centre for Women  
Wright, LaDonna ..... Child Abuse Council  
Frazier, Ray ..... Town & Country Chamber  
LaFloch, Janet ..... Witherington, LaFloch &  
Campbell, David ..... Latter Day Saints  
Ross, JoAnn ..... citizen  
Poole, Louise ..... Healthy Families  
Pender-Martin, Valerie ..... Strategies for Success  
Hudson, Mark ..... Planning Commission  
Klaasen, Karin ..... CCCS  
Clayton, Karen ..... Metropolitan Ministries

### **Media / Public Awareness Working Group**

Figg, Mary (Chair) ..... Chiles Center, USF  
Rissetto, Harry ..... TUMC  
Quaranda, Scott ..... FPIRG, Central FL. Coord.  
Unterberger, Alayne ..... USF Moffitt Research  
Everidge, Mary Jim ..... citizen activist  
McNair, Gloria ..... Channel 8  
Bates, Roshelle ..... low income citizen  
Franklin, Cheryl ..... low income citizen

## **APPENDIX B: TOWN HALL MEETINGS OF THE HILLSBOROUGH TASK FORCE ON HUNGER**

### **Eleven Town Hall / Focus Group Meetings were held across Hillsborough County:**

**Town and Country:** April 28, Hunger and the Working Poor, 70 persons, covered by Channel 9.

**Wimauma:** April 30, Hunger Among Farmworkers, 10 people, covered by the Tribune.

**College Hill Library:** May 2, Welfare to Work, standing room only, more than 70 persons.

**Lee Davis Neighborhood Service Center:** May 14, Hunger Among Children, 30 representatives of 15 different programs serving children.

**Dover:** May 19, Hunger and Farmworkers, 10 persons in the area, 6 organizations represented, and farmworkers.

**Downtown Tampa (Salvation Army):** June 1, Homeless Working Group, interviews with 10 homeless persons and 6 staff, covered by Channel 8 and the Tribune.

**Clair Mel:** June 2, Working Poor, 33 persons, Clair Mel Association, covered by the Tribune.

**Plant City Senior Center:** June 4, Hunger and the Elderly, 75 persons, covered by the Tribune.

**Plant City, Bruton Library:** June 8, Working Poor and Children, 15 persons, representing 12 different organizations.

**North Tampa:** June 11, Hunger and the Elderly, 22 persons, representing 12 different organizations.

**Wimauma:** June 11, Hunger Among Children and the Working Poor, South County Social Services Coalition, 20 persons representing 16 organizations.

### **Additionally, there were two meetings of the full Task Force:**

**Downtown Tampa, County Center Building:** April 7, Task Force Organizational Meeting and Formation of the Working Groups, 45 persons.

**Hyde Park:** July 9, Hunger Task Force Dinner and First Public Response to Draft Recommendations from the Six Working Groups, 100 participants.

**In all, approximately 475 people, representing more than 50 organizations, participated in the Town Halls and meetings of the Task Force.**

# APPENDIX C: U.S. CENSUS 1990 INCOME AND POVERTY STATUS IN 1989-1990

Census Tract or Block Number/ Area	Total Population	Income							
		100% Below	75% Below	50% Below	25% Below	25% Above	50% Above	75% Above	100% Above
001 TAMPA-01 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
002 TAMPA-02 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
003 TAMPA-03 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
004 TAMPA-04 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
005 TAMPA-05 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
006 TAMPA-06 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
007 TAMPA-07 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
008 TAMPA-08 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
009 TAMPA-09 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800
010 TAMPA-10 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA	10,000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800

001 TAMPA-01 PLYMOUTH-QUINCY, B, MSA

UNITS: TRACTS AND BLOCK NUMBER/ AREA

# APPENDIX D-1: U.S. CENSUS 1990 RATIO OF INCOME IN 1989 TO POVERTY LEVEL FOR FLORIDA

Source: 1990 U.S. Census Data  
Database: C90STF3C1  
Summary Level: State

## Florida: FIPS.STATE=12

### RATIO OF INCOME TO POVERTY LEVEL

*Universe: Persons for whom poverty status is determined*

Under .50	708,495
.50 to .74	389,776
.75 to .99	505,915
1.00 to 1.24	591,426
1.25 to 1.49	571,320
1.50 to 1.74	647,773
1.75 to 1.84	242,032
1.85 to 1.99	387,838
2.00 and over	8,596,911

Florida Population 1989:  
12,641,386

<p style="text-align: center;">Number of Floridians living in <b>EXTREME POVERTY</b> (less than 50% of poverty): <b>708,495</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Percent living in <b>EXTREME POVERTY</b>: <b>5.6%</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Number of Floridians living at less than 75% of the poverty rate: <b>1,098,271</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Percent living at 75% or less of poverty rate: <b>8.7%</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Number of Floridians living in poverty: <b>1,604,186</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Percent living at the poverty rate or less: <b>12.6%</b></p>
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# APPENDIX D-2: U.S. CENSUS 1990 RATIO OF INCOME IN 1989 TO POVERTY LEVEL FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Source: 1990 U.S. Census Data  
Database: C90STF3A  
Summary Level: State--County

**Hillsborough County:** FIPS.STATE=12, FIPS.COUNTY90-057

**RATIO OF INCOME TO POVERTY LEVEL**

*Universe: Persons for whom poverty status is determined*

Under .50 .....	48,990
.50 to .74 .....	26,406
.75 to .99 .....	33,376
1.00 to 1.24 .....	35,596
1.25 to 1.49 .....	36,254
1.50 to 1.74 .....	40,036
1.75 to 1.84 .....	14,049
1.85 to 1.99 .....	24,788
2.00 and over .....	559,030

Hillsborough County Population 1989:  
**818,525**

Number of Hillsborough County residents living in <b>EXTREME POVERTY</b> (less than 50% of poverty): <b>48,990</b>  Percent living in <b>EXTREME POVERTY:</b> <b>6%</b>
---

Number of Hillsborough County residents living at less than 75% of the poverty rate: <b>75,396</b>  Percent living at 75% or less of poverty rate: <b>9.2%</b>
--

Number of Hillsborough County residents living in poverty: <b>108,772</b>  Percent living at the poverty rate or less: <b>13.3%</b>
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## APPENDIX E: QUESTIONNAIRE ON SOLUTIONS TO HUNGER USED BY TASK FORCE

The Task Force is not able to solve the problem you are facing with food right now. Your answers to these questions will help your community learn what problems you and your family are having with food, and what you think would make it better. Are you willing to share what you know so that someday it may help more people get the food they need?

**Your Age:** 0-10\_\_\_ 11-18\_\_\_ 19-30\_\_\_ 30-60\_\_\_ 60-up\_\_\_ **Sex:**\_\_\_

**Number in My Household:** Adults:\_\_\_ Children Under 18:\_\_\_ Single parent family?\_\_\_

Neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_ of city / area: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you ever have a problem with transportation to get food?

No\_\_\_ Sometimes\_\_\_ All of the time\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

What would help you and others with transportation to get food? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How often do you have problems feeding your family?

Daily\_\_\_ Weekly\_\_\_ Monthly\_\_\_ Once or twice a year\_\_\_

Do you know whom to call to get information on finding food? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Do you ever have problems when you try to get help with food? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

What would make this better? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you participating in a food program that works well in helping you with food?

Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Why does it work well for you? \_\_\_\_\_

Program name: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX F-1: CURRENT EFFORTS TO REDUCE HUNGER IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

### MAJOR GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS:

**Food Stamps:** In 1997, 67,982 persons lived in households receiving food stamps in Hillsborough County. Although the provision of food stamps has been the most effective program to reduce hunger in the US, its availability has been cut back. In a 1997 survey of 386 Hillsborough residents who received emergency food assistance, 44 % had reductions and 12% had increases in food stamps in the previous year. —*Divine Providence Food Bank, Tampa*

**W.I.C. (Women's Infant's and Children's Program):** Provides food and nutrition education for pre- and post-natal women and children up to five years old. There are 29,000 approved recipients in Hillsborough County, but 6,000 do not participate due mostly to lack of transportation and job demands, according to WIC staff.

**Hillsborough County Schools Food Services:** There are 57,000 children participating in free and reduced-cost meals programs, and 30,000 participating in the Summer Food Program.

**Hillsborough County Health and Social Services:** In 1998, 6,500 children participated in the Summer Food Program at a cost of \$360,000; \$560,000 is distributed through the Ryan White program to assist AIDS patients with food; \$204,000 goes for food vouchers for a variety of programs; and \$12,500 is budgeted for emergency food bags.

**Aging Services:** There are 1,200 participants in the SCNAP Program at 28 senior congregate meals sites and 1,600 receive home-delivered meals five days a week.

**Hillsborough County Cooperative Extension Service:** Nutrition education, food shopping training and budgeting training for limited-resource families; public policy education on hunger issues.

**Lutheran Ministries of Florida:** Manages funds for USDA food program to 375 home daycare providers as reimbursement for meals served. Funds have recently been deeply cut.

### NON-PROFIT PROGRAMS:

**Metropolitan Ministries:** Serves 1,875 meals a day and provides 535,625 pounds of emergency food per year.

**Tampa Bay Harvest:** Volunteers picked up 1,355,808 pounds of prepared foods from restaurants, bakeries, etc. in Hillsborough County and delivered it to charities in 1997.

**Divine Providence Food Bank:** Collects donated food and distributed 1,350,000 pounds through 120 churches and charities in Hillsborough County in 1997. Churches and charities pay 14 cents per pound in shared maintenance fees and give the food to the hungry for free.

**SHARE Tampa Bay:** Self-help food program. Participants pay \$14 and give two hours of volunteer service to receive \$25 to \$30 in meats, produce and groceries. In 1997, approximately 1,200,000 pounds of food were distributed through 80 “host sites” with savings of approximately \$600,000 and 84,000 volunteer service hours.

**Meals on Wheels of Tampa:** Provides 550 home-delivered meals and 350 meals to residential human service providers five days a week.

**Salvation Army:** Serves 400 meals a day and provides approximately 120,000 pounds of emergency food per year.

**Hillsborough Gleaners:** Organizes volunteers to pick produce from area fields and groves and distributes it to area non-profit organizations. More than 120,000 pounds were collected in the first nine months of 1998.

**Hillsborough Hunger-Free Coalition:** Service providers meet monthly. Publishes Hunger Resource Guide.

**Some additional emergency food providers include:** Nativity Catholic Church, ECHO, St. Anne’s Catholic Church, Beth-El Presbyterian Mission, Good Samaritan Mission, Christian Resource Center, Prison Crusade, St. Vincent De Paul Society, Daystar, East Hillsborough Neighborhood Center Non-Profit Food Pantry, Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, Tampa AIDS Network, The Spring, Redlands Christian Migrant Mission, San Jose Mission.



“I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits. I still believe that we shall overcome.”

—Martin Luther King

## APPENDIX F-2: INDICATORS OF HUNGER BY POPULATION GROUP

This analysis found three indicators for risk of hunger to be consistent for all six populations identified in this study: 1) extreme poverty, 2) affordable housing, and 3) transportation.

1. Extreme poverty is less than 50% of the official poverty rate. For a family of four in 1997, that would be \$8,025 or less. Chronic hunger, repeating most months, occurs with increasing frequency as households approach or live below extreme poverty. The 1990 US Census reported that the number of persons living in extreme poverty in Hillsborough County was 49,000 (out of 818,000).
2. Affordable housing: Over 5,000 Hillsborough households applied for the City of Tampa's Section VIII housing assistance during the week of January 27 through 31, 1997. For the last nineteen months the waiting list has been closed. Hillsborough County's waiting list for Section VIII housing has been basically closed since 1994. The backlogs of families on long waiting lists attests to the high demand for decent affordable housing in Hillsborough County:
  - 2,000 persons are on the waiting list for Hillsborough County's Section VIII program.
  - 1315 are waiting on the City of Tampa's Section VIII Program list.
  - 526 are waiting for space in the Tampa Housing Authority.Many of the applicants, and others who could not apply because of closed waiting lists, pay such high percentages of their incomes for housing that it may jeopardize their household's ability to purchase enough nutritious food.
3. Transportation: The Women's Infant's and Children's (WIC) Program in Hillsborough County reports that approximately 6,000, or 21%, of its participants do not receive benefits, primarily because of lack of transportation and conflict with work schedules.

### **From the Divine Providence Food Bank's 1997 Report:**

Of 386 respondents who received emergency food assistance:

- 41% said employment was their primary source of income.
- 80% said food stamps do not last the entire month. In the past year 12% received increased food stamp benefits but benefits were cut for 44%.
- 31% said that adults in their household missed meals in the past month.
- In households with children, 8% reported that children had missed meals.

(While this study was conducted in the Tampa Bay area, most of these statistics would be very close to Hillsborough County numbers. There is a 95% confidence rate that these figures are accurate for all persons who received emergency food assistance through Divine Providence Food Bank, by far the largest provider of emergency food assistance in this area.)

### **Effects of hunger on Hillsborough County residents from interviews of the Task Force:**

- Physical: Sick, headaches, tired, "I act out," dizzy, kids cry, weakness, can't focus on anything but getting food, crime: "I steal."
- Emotional: Angry, irritable, depressed, mood swings, low self-esteem, sad, embarrassed that the neighbors know we have no food.

## **FINDINGS BY POPULATION GROUP AT RISK OF HUNGER**

### **Children**

In the 1997-98 school year, 160,325 children were enrolled in Hillsborough Public Schools. Of those, 87,000, or 54%, were determined to be economically needy and qualified for free or reduced-priced meals. —*Hillsborough County Schools Food Service*

The Women's Infant's and Children's (WIC) Program in Hillsborough County has approved 29,000 persons for food supplements and other benefits. However, as previously mentioned, only 23,000 participate. Approximately 6,000, or 21%, do not receive benefits, primarily because of lack of transportation and conflict with work schedules, according to WIC staff.

### **Persons with Disabilities**

In a survey of 269 disabled persons who already get services from a variety of agencies, 145, or 54%, said they run out of food at some time during the year (over half of the 145 indicated this happens monthly or weekly). —*Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger*

Persons with disabilities on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) receive an average benefit of \$337 a month, the maximum is \$494 per month.

### **Elderly**

In a survey of 328 elderly persons, 81, or 25%, said they run out of food at some time during the year; of these, 46, or 14%, said they run out monthly or weekly.

-Hillsborough Task Force on Hunger

13,420 persons over 65 live in poverty in Hillsborough County (13.7%) —*US Census, 1990*

### **Farmworkers**

Florida's "base period" for calculating unemployment compensation excludes at least three and as much as six months of a farmworker's most recent employment. This means that they are often denied unemployment compensation, given the seasonal nature of their work, even though they fully qualify in terms of the length of employment. The result is that many farmworkers and their families are at risk of hunger in the off seasons, and must rely on welfare if they can qualify for it.

### **Homeless**

Based on the 1988 Hillsborough Homeless Census and the Governor's Report on Homelessness, approximately 3,000 homeless persons are in the county. Only 60% are in Tampa's downtown area where there are consistent services. Recent changes limit food stamps for able-bodied homeless persons to three months.

### **Working Poor**

Persons working full time at minimum wage (\$5.15 per hour) earn \$10,506 per year. For a single parent with three children, that is 35% below the poverty rate. A person working full time with three dependents would need to earn \$7.87 per hour to reach the poverty level. "I would hate to be a single parent with children, and not be able to qualify for food stamps. Persons working for \$10,000 to \$20,000 a year fall through the gaps," according to a food stamp staff member in Hillsborough County with years of experience.

## APPENDIX F-3: TOWN HALL NOTES: MAJOR THEMES OFTEN REPEATED

### INFORMATION

“Many people do not know where to get food help.” This was the most consistent theme heard in all the Town Hall meetings.

- Persons who need food assistance:** A one-stop center is needed where persons can call to find sources for food assistance as well as other assistance that relates to the underlying causes of hunger such as transportation, housing, etc. A 24-hour Hunger Hotline was requested in many Town Hall meetings. A television and radio campaign to get the word out about the Hotline also was noted.
- Human service workers:** An information system about where to get help for food is needed, including posters, wallet cards to give to clients with basic kinds of food help and phone numbers, a one-page information sheet for case managers to have on their desks to make referrals and a web site for service providers.
- Children:** Flyers could be distributed to parents of school children. If given to all children, there is no stigma.
- Seniors:** Information in large print is needed for seniors. Use Spanish radio to reach Hispanic community. There is a need for bi-lingual printed information and agency workers.

### DUPLICATION OF SERVICES / COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

- Collaborative approaches should be encouraged among human service programs, churches, food cooperatives and prepared meals sites to reduce redundancy and to reach populations not being served. Churches could feed the homeless in areas beyond downtown.
- Food assistance programs each focus on their own areas of expertise and there is no real coordination of efforts. A method to coordinate activities is needed.
- Government programs have been cut as part of welfare reform. Hillsborough County has the potential to be more flexible and to help fill in gaps. “They could bend the rules, and they need to,” according to a food stamp staff person.

### THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND BARRIERS TO FOOD SECURITY

- “There’s not enough money to pay the bills and eat on Social Security. Social Security needs to be increased.”
- “We are creating more hunger with our changing (welfare) system. There is enough food. The delivery system is faulty,” said one human service worker. People often qualify for and receive assistance from various government entities in Florida, only to run out of food every month because the level of assistance is so low.
- “Most lawmakers don’t know what it’s really like out here. They make rules for political reasons, not always what’s best for the people.”
- Other comments: A concerted long-term effort is needed to raise the awareness of lawmakers and to put them in direct contact with the people who are affected by the laws they write.

### DIGNITY / RESPECT FOR PERSONS WHO NEED HELP

- “How you are looked at by whomever you ask for help affects whether or not you get it. I work at Burger King. I was pre-judged by the agency worker. People in agencies lack sensitivity.”
- Other comments: Humanize. Human service agency people need to better understand and empathize with the situations of the persons they are serving. Red tape should be cut

because there are too many restrictions and qualifications to get too little help.

- “Sometimes embarrassment keeps people from asking for food.” It’s embarrassing to use food stamps. Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards may help. EBT cards also could be used for kids at schools who get free and reduced-price meals.
- “Studies have shown that when people eat with others, they eat more, and more nutritious food.” Develop multiple networks for socialization among the elderly at mealtimes such as buddies and support groups to relieve isolation and increase nutrition.

## **CO-OP PROGRAMS TO DEAL WITH CHRONIC HUNGER**

- Emergency food pantries, which were initially set up to deal with families’ temporary and sporadic food shortages, are increasingly depended on as a consistent source of food for the chronically hungry. Some pantries recognize this shift toward more habitual need and are working to address the trend.
- SHARE needs to work within the needs and life patterns of the working poor.
- There needs to be a kind of food co-op that targets persons living in or near poverty.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD SOLUTIONS / FOOD PANTRIES**

- “Food pantries should provide a usable bag of groceries.”
- Create an “Add A Can” Community Food Basket. In neighborhoods, groups could collect food at hairdressers, barber shops, churches or stores, then distribute it within their own community. People who have been through hard times could put in something to share with those who have less.
- There is a need for information in neighborhoods about resources that are available in those neighborhoods.
- Some churches are not open enough to assist people who need food. Churches are good community resources to identify those in need and to provide help.

## **INCREASE INCOME FOR WORKING FAMILIES SO THEY ARE NOT EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HUNGER (REPEATING MONTH AFTER MONTH)**

- “A living wage is different from a minimum wage.”
- Force absentee parents pay child support by eliminating long delays at the Department of Revenue. This needs to be a priority. It would make a big difference for single-parent households, a group at high risk of hunger.
- Increase food stamp access for low-income workers.
- Develop grass roots methods for average citizens to support workers who are taking action to demand better working and living conditions.

## **PROVIDE FOOD DIRECTLY TO CHILDREN**

- Change rules so kids can take food home from after-school programs.
- Expand summer meals sites, and open kids cafes at churches and other sites.
- Scholarships are needed for after-school care in 50 elementary schools where the program is fee-based.
- Lutheran Ministries channels funds for food to 375 day care providers but this funding has been deeply cut. It needs to be supplemented or restored.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- “A man I just saw was very hungry. There are no buses. He walked seven miles to ask for help. He was turned down.”
- “We need transportation to get groceries with lower prices.” Lack of transportation is a major problem because there is no easy access to major grocery stores. People are

- forced to shop in neighborhood stores that charge a lot more.
- No public transportation is available in rural areas to get to supermarkets, clinics, work or food pantries. The concept of privately owned “Micro Bus” companies could be explored. What about using school buses when schools don’t need them?
- “We could encourage people to be more aware of their neighbor’s needs.” For instance, one neighbor takes others shopping. Use television and radio spots to encourage this neighborliness.
- More information about how to use bus service is needed. One suggestion: put customer service phone numbers on buses and at bus stops.

## **EDUCATION**

- Literacy, English and jobs training are key issues.
- “It takes a lot of training to help people move from welfare to work. It isn’t easy.” Also needed are mentors who can help persons get started to make changes in their life, help fill out forms, etc. Funding for life skills training through the Cooperative Extension Service has not increased since 1969, so trainers have been cut.
- “Don’t throw away left-over food. Make soups.” Education on buying food, stretching food dollars and good nutrition can make a major difference. Also needed is information on where to go for food help and general budgeting.

## **CHILD CARE, CUSTODIAL GRANDPARENTS, BANKING**

- “How can a single mom, who works 40+ hours a week with no transportation get to the store, fix meals, etc.? What we expect of them is incredible.”
- Comprehensive quality child care is needed. Focus on preventive programs for child nutritional development and medical care, as well as improvements in transportation and job skills.
- Develop a public awareness campaign to garner general support for comprehensive child care. It helps build self-esteem so taxpayers won’t be as likely to support the person later in life as a prison inmate. For every inmate later, we can provide comprehensive child care for six or seven children now.
- Develop child care standards for WAGES participants.
- Persuade more businesses to match costs and subsidize child care. Currently, only the YMCA and Boys and Girls Clubs do so in Hillsborough County.
- “My wife works full time at a hospital, and I had a lawn business for years. When I got disabled and on SSI, it dropped our income way down. Now we are taking care of grandchildren, and it’s really rough.” Kinship Care Legislation was just passed in the Florida legislature to help custodial grandparents with more support. There needs to be more outreach to let grandparents know about this.
- “There is no bank in our community. Bank charges keep people from using bank accounts.” To help low-income persons open banking accounts, set fees on sliding scale based on income. Set up a community program that gives people with very low wages access to some basic banking services, like a trust account\* for farmworkers, day labor workers and minimum wage workers.

\* A “Trust account” provides a safe place for a person to keep money that can be accessed on demand, but that may not have all the services of a regular checking or savings account.

## APPENDIX F-4: WHAT HILLSBOROUGH CITIZENS SAY ABOUT HUNGER: RESULTS FROM HILLSBOROUGH TASK FORCE QUESTIONNAIRES

A total of 718 persons, many at risk from hunger, were interviewed. The purpose of the questionnaires was to help each of the six Working Groups make recommendations that reflect the specific needs of their target population: Children, Persons with Disabilities, Elderly, Homeless, Farmworkers, and the Working Poor.

### 1. How often do you have problems feeding your family?

Total Responses	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Once/Twice Year	Never	No Response
625	25	35	79	110	331	45
100%	4%	5.6%	12.6%	17.6%	53%	7.2%

### 2. Do you know whom to call to get information on finding food?

Total Responses	YES	NO	No Response
625	219	261	145
100%	35%	41.8%	23.2%

### 3. Do you ever have problems when you try to get help with food?

Total Responses	YES	NO	No Response
625	97	343	185
100%	15.5%	54.9%	29.6%

### 4. What information/training would help you have enough food for you and your family?

Total Responses	Budgeting	Cooking Tips	Stretch Food \$	Where to Get Emergency Food	Nutrition Education	No Response
452	133	29	85	117	31	57
100%	29.4%	6.4%	18.8%	25.9%	6.9%	12.6%

### 5. Do you ever have a problem with transportation to get food?

Total Responses	Sometimes	All the Time	No	No Response
597	56	87	388	66
100%	9.4%	14.6%	65%	11%

## **APPENDIX G: THE RADIMER / CORNELL HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY MEASUREMENT**

(from "Relationship of Hunger and Food Insecurity to Food Availability and Consumption," Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 1996, 96:1019-1024)

Response categories for items 1 through 10 are:  
"Not true," "Sometimes True," or "Often True."

### **HOUSEHOLD LEVEL**

#### **Food Anxiety Component**

1. I worry whether my food will run out before I get money to buy more.

#### **Quantitative Component**

2. The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more.
3. I ran out of the foods that I needed to put together a meal, and I didn't have money to get more food.

#### **Qualitative Component**

4. We eat the same thing for several days in a row because we only have a few different kinds of food on hand, and don't have money to buy more.

### **ADULT LEVEL**

#### **Qualitative Component**

5. I can't afford to eat properly.

#### **Quantitative Component**

6. I am often hungry, but I don't eat because I can't afford enough food.
7. I eat less than I think I should because I don't have enough money for food.

### **CHILD LEVEL**

#### **Qualitative Component**

8. I cannot give my child(ren) a balanced meal because I can't afford that.

#### **Quantitative Component**

9. My child(ren) is/are not eating enough because I just can't afford enough food.
10. I know my child(ren) is/are hungry sometimes, but I just can't afford more food.

### **To classify individuals by severity of food insecurity:**

**Food secure:** Negative answers to all hunger and food insecurity items.

**Household insecure:** Positive answers ("sometimes true" or "often true") to one or more household level items (1-4), but not to adult or child level items.

**Individual Insecure:** Positive answers to one or more adult level items (5-7), or the item about the quality of children's diets (8), but not to items about the quantity of children's intake (9-10).

**Child Hunger:** Positive answers to items about the quantity of children's intake (9-10).

## APPENDIX H: GOOD SAMARITAN TAX ACT (HR 2450)

**Purpose:** This bill will encourage restaurants and the food industry to donate unwanted food to the needy by removing barriers in the tax code that make no distinction between dumping the food and donating it to a charity.

**Background:** The Internal Revenue Service has determined that food not sold through normal distribution channels has no value beyond the value of its ingredients, which already are deducted as a business expense. Other charitable items are valued differently, giving businesses an incentive to incur the cost of collecting, packaging, and distributing donations of everything except food.

More than 96 billion pounds of edible food is dumped into landfills each year, at a cost to the nation's cities of more than \$1 billion. Saving just five percent of this food could feed more than 10 million of the 26 million people who regularly go hungry.

**Proposed Change:** This bill would treat food donations the same as the donation of other inventory for tax purposes. It will benefit food banks and hungry people, it will encourage farmers and businesses to take the extra step of donating their unused food, and it will reduce landfill costs.

**Text:** The bill amends the Internal Revenue Code by adding "(6) Special Rule for Contributions of Food Inventory.

(A) Contributions by Non-Corporate Taxpayers. In the case of a charitable contribution of food, paragraph (3) shall be applied without regard to whether or not the contribution is made by a corporation.

(B) Determination of Fair Market Value. For purposes of this section, in the case of a charitable contribution of food which is a qualified contribution (within the meaning of paragraph (33)) and which, solely by reason of internal standards of the taxpayer, lack of market, or similar circumstances, cannot or will not be sold, the fair market value of such contribution shall be determined

(i) without regard to such internal standards, such lack of market, or such circumstances, and

(ii) if applicable, by taking into account the price at which the same or similar food items are sold by the taxpayer at the time of the contribution (or, if not sold at such time, in the recent past).

**Sponsors:** Hall, Wolf, Campbell, Clement, Stark, Clayton, Filner, Pastor, Furse, Faleomavaega, Rivers, Torres, Emerson, Kaptur, Markey, Thurman, Luther, Engel.

**Action:** Request area members of congress in the House of Representatives to co-sponsor this bill. It would provide incentives to farmers to donate crops to non-profit organizations, especially the Gleaners, who are serving persons at risk of hunger.

## **APPENDIX I: FLORIDA LEGAL SERVICES, INC. ALTERNATE BASE PERIOD FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION CLAIMANTS (SUPPORT SB 220 AND HB 1617)**

- The Alternate Base Period supports the very purpose of unemployment compensation by providing temporary and partial wage loss replacement for workers who have become unemployed through no fault of their own.
- Florida currently uses an antiquated method of determining the base period that pre-dates modern technology and computer record keeping.
- Florida law excludes an unemployed worker's most recent work history in determining eligibility—at least 3 and as many as 6 months of their most recent work is not even considered.  
Example: the eligibility for a person who is laid off and files for UC in December 1997 is now determined by his or her employment from July 1996 to June 1997.
- Thousands of unemployed workers, whose recent work history is ignored, must wait months without UC before they can reapply, have their “ignored” work considered, and then become eligible.
- The Alternate Base Period would simply require the consideration of recent work history when that work will make them eligible.
- Most in need of the Alternate Base Period are claimants who had low wage jobs, who tend to have little or no savings to rely upon and are in need of UC to support their families until they can secure another job. They are often faced with eviction and forced to rely on welfare.
- The need for this change is underscored by the extensive overhaul of our welfare system which will move thousands of Floridians into entry-level and low-wage positions.
- Alternate Base Period is a key step to keep people off welfare by providing small UC benefits. It will make them less likely to fall back into the welfare system and thereby save millions of dollars in welfare benefits.
- This change goes a long way toward making Florida's UC system more “worker and family friendly,” and toward keeping people off our welfare rolls.

**Action:** request members of Hillsborough Legislative Delegation to support legislation to alter the base periods for Unemployment Compensation qualification. This would allow the minimum earnings requirement to be met on the basis of the four most recently completed quarters of work.

# CONCLUSION: IT'S IN OUR HANDS

I would like to tell you, in closing, a story of an old man. This old man was very wise. He could answer questions that were almost impossible for other people to answer. So one day two young people got together and said, "We're going to trick this guy today. We're going to catch a bird, and we're going to ask him, 'This that we hold in our hands, is it alive or is it dead?' If he says, 'alive,' we're going to crush it. If he says it's dead, we're going to let it fly away." So they walked back to the old man's house, and they said, "This that we hold in our hands today, is it alive, or is it dead?"

He looked at the young people and smiled. And he said, "It's in your hands."

The future of ending hunger in Hillsborough County is in our hands. We are able to do something together that would be impossible on our own.

—Based on an old African story



First Place for art done by a group:  
"Circle of Hands" by Lowery Elementary  
After Care students, Tampa, Florida

**Images of Hunger:** A circle of hands, a hungry baby and a truck full of food are some of the images of hunger and its solutions created by young artists in the Children's Art on Hunger project.