



## St. Mary's donates 2.5 tons of frozen turkeys to those in need

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Just before the holiday season began, St. Mary's Health Care System and its colleagues and volunteers donated 281 frozen turkeys – weighing more than 2.5 tons – to the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia to help families in need this holiday season.



*St. Mary's Chief Human Resources Officer Beth Patrick presents a frozen turkey to David Williams, Food Bank of Northeast Georgia Associate Director of Operations.*

Each year, St. Mary's gives a free turkey to each colleague and volunteer as a token of appreciation for their dedication and service. During the weeks before Thanksgiving, St. Mary's leaders personally hand out frozen turkeys at St. Mary's Hospital in Athens, St. Mary's Sacred Heart Hospital in Lavonia, and St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital in Greensboro, as well as at ancillary facilities in Athens, Bogart and Watkinsville.

St. Mary's makes it easy for colleagues to donate their turkey to those in need, if they wish to do so: they simply don't pick it up.

The Food Bank collects the donated turkeys

on the Monday before Thanksgiving in time to distribute them to families in need before the holidays.

"Every year I'm amazed and moved by the number of colleagues who choose to donate their turkey," said Beth Patrick, St. Mary's Chief Human Resources Officer. "It's a sad reality that the number of people who have food insecurities in our community is growing. We're thrilled that so many colleagues and volunteers love getting these turkeys, and we're just as thrilled that so many donate them to help others who are in need. It's a true testament to our commitment to our core values."

Kelly Klein, Chief Philanthropy Officer at the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia said, "For many years, St. Mary's has gone above and beyond guiding and serving our region through

unprecedented challenges to public health, which is an incredible feat alone. They have gone the extra mile to provide turkeys for hundreds of families this Thanksgiving, and we are grateful for this partnership."

Klein noted that the Food Bank continues to see elevated need across its entire service area. "The continued high cost of living forces our neighbors to make difficult choices between food and other necessities – like health care. We are truly thankful to be part of this community where we see so many coming together to support our mission, to connect neighbors with nourishing food," she added.

In 2024, the Food Bank provided more than 15.5 million pounds of food – or 12.9 million meals - to families through over 230 Member organizations – including food pantries, senior centers, churches and other non-profit hunger relief organizations – in 15 counties: Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Franklin, Habersham, Hart, Jackson, Madison, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Rabun, Stephens, Towns and White.

For more information about the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia and the agencies with which it partners, visit [www.foodbanknega.org](http://www.foodbanknega.org). For more information about St. Mary's, please visit [www.stmarys-health.org](http://www.stmarys-health.org).

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