



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UCare funds 16,000 meals during end-of-year neighborhood distributions

\$80,000 donation to Second Harvest Heartland's Minnesota Central Kitchen ensures fewer Minnesotans go hungry during the holidays

MINNEAPOLIS, Dec. 15, 2021 — Food insecurity continues to be a significant social driver of health for UCare members and the community at large. In the second year of the pandemic, still 1 in 10 Minnesotans is facing hunger. The state's leading hunger relief organization, Second Harvest Heartland, notes that no one can grow, maintain good health or reach their full potential if they are hungry. They report over half a million Minnesotans now facing hunger including 200,000 kids.

To offset this hungry winter, UCare is stepping up to provide a \$80,000 donation supporting ongoing hunger relief in neighborhoods with disproportionately high rates of food insecurity. The funds will cover distributions of approximately 6 weeks of [Second Harvest Heartland Minnesota Central Kitchen](#) meals – packed in UCare bags – at [Corcoran Community Center in South Minneapolis and other sites served by The Sanneh Foundation](#). Minnesota Central Kitchen brings together restaurants, chefs, caterers and hunger-fighting organizations to prepare delicious ready-to-eat meals, with special effort placed on creating culturally connected meals made by and for communities of color. Last year, this [National Geographic article](#) highlighted their work.

“Our friends at Second Harvest Heartland, their partners and programs continue to report growing hunger in local communities. Many UCare members live in these areas, so we are pleased to continue to partner with Second Harvest to help out,” said Ghita Worcester, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Chief Marketing Officer. “We also included cloth UCare grocery bags with the food donations.”

“As much as we wish we could say we were out of the pandemic-fueled crisis and on the road to a healthy recovery, the hard truth is that it's harder than ever to face hunger today,” said Allison O’Toole, CEO of Second Harvest Heartland. “Fortunately, organizations like UCare are listening to their members and communities, and they’re

showing up when the support is needed most. The meals they're funding from Minnesota Central Kitchen will bring much needed nutrition and nourishment to our neighbors facing food insecurity."

About UCare

[UCare](#) is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health care and administrative services to more than 570,000 members throughout Minnesota and parts of western Wisconsin. UCare partners with health care providers, counties, and community organizations to create and deliver Medicare, Medicaid and Individual & Family health plans.

The health plan addresses health care disparities and care access issues through a broad array of community initiatives. UCare has received Top Workplaces honors from the Star Tribune for 12 consecutive years since the rankings began in 2010.

About Second Harvest Heartland

At [Second Harvest Heartland](#), we work to end hunger through partnerships. As one of the largest, most efficient, and most innovative hunger relief organizations in the nation, we leverage our unique position in the emergency food chain to make an impact. In close partnership with a network of 360 food shelves and nearly 1,000 partner programs, we support those in our region facing hunger today.

More than a food bank, we're a leading partner in the policies and programs that work to end hunger, like SNAP, school meals and senior nutrition programs, and we're an innovator in the areas where food can be the solution, like FOODRx and Minnesota Central Kitchen.

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