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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT CELEBRATES MULTI-YEAR PARTNERSHIP
WITH ST. JOE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Food For Thought Outreach and St. Joe Community Foundation are excited to announce their multi-year partnership with Food For Thought receiving a \$105,000 grant over the next three years to support their efforts in fighting food insecurity and childhood hunger.

Food For Thought's mission is to remove the negative impacts of hunger, and to empower children to get the most out of their education and development by providing them weekly access to healthy, easy to prepare meals through their many programs. The contribution will provide \$35,000 per year for Back-to-School and Holiday food programs at Food For Thought.

During 2019-2020 school year before the COVID-19 "Stay at Home" Order, Food For Thought was providing weekly backpacks of food to over 3,300 students across Okaloosa and Walton counties. When the global pandemic hit and schools closed their doors, Food For Thought shifted immediately into curbside services and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

"We are expecting at least a 25% increase in enrollment this school year which will be over 4,000 students. Food insecurity and unemployment continues to affect our community and our services will help bridge that gap for families," says Tiffanie Nelson, Founder & CEO of Food For Thought Outreach. "We are so grateful to have generous partners like the St. Joe Community Foundation. Their multi-year commitment helps to ensure our services can continue and the food insecure children who need us the most, will be able to count on us for support."

Since March, families have been receiving curbside food distributions, each vehicle receiving 30 to 50 full size food items, often including twenty-five pound boxes of fresh produce generously provided by City Produce, in order to prepare full meals for the entire family. Food For Thought is currently serving 500-600 families a month while staff and volunteers are strictly adhering to safety guidelines including wearing face masks, social distancing, increased sanitizing and cleaning procedures in the pantries, and less than 10 volunteers working together at any one time.

"The St. Joe Community Foundation is very proud to support Food For Thought's mission; in times like this, we are grateful to see them step up to meet the overwhelming needs in the community," adds April Wilkes, Executive Director of St. Joe Community Foundation.

This shift in programming means 60,000 food items are needed per month in addition to replacing \$120,000 in donation losses from postponed or cancelled events and fundraisers from March into September.

The community can join in the giving by supporting Food For Thought's Stock the Pantry: Virtual Team Fundraiser. The annual Stock the Pantry Food Drive has been revamped to be a virtual

team-based fundraiser this year. Instead of collecting food items, FFT will have a virtual fundraiser, where each team will contribute to raise money towards the goal of \$150,000 which is equivalent to 300,000 food items.

This fundraiser runs virtually from July 14 through August 22, and will enable Food For Thought to be able to continue to provide food to families and students, as the need is ongoing and growing. Please reach out to: support@fftl.org for more information or to register your team.

If you or someone you know is in need of support from Food For Thought, you can get information about food distribution the following ways: follow on Facebook @FoodForThoughtOutreach, email support@fftl.org or call 850-714-1960.

About Food For Thought Outreach

Food For Thought is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization based in Santa Rosa Beach, FL that provides backpacks filled with healthy, easy to prepare food for students who are dependent on free or reduced school meals. Our goal is to support a child's development and educational experience by bridging the gap between school meals during weekends and holiday breaks. Food For Thought has been working to fight child hunger since 2010, and currently serves 35 schools in Walton and Okaloosa Counties, providing backpacks for over 3,300 students each week. For more information, such as donation locations, pantry items needed, and opportunities to volunteer, please email support@fftl.org.

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With Gratitude
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FFT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization