

Buckeye Food Alliance

HONORS & SCHOLARS
International Affairs Scholars

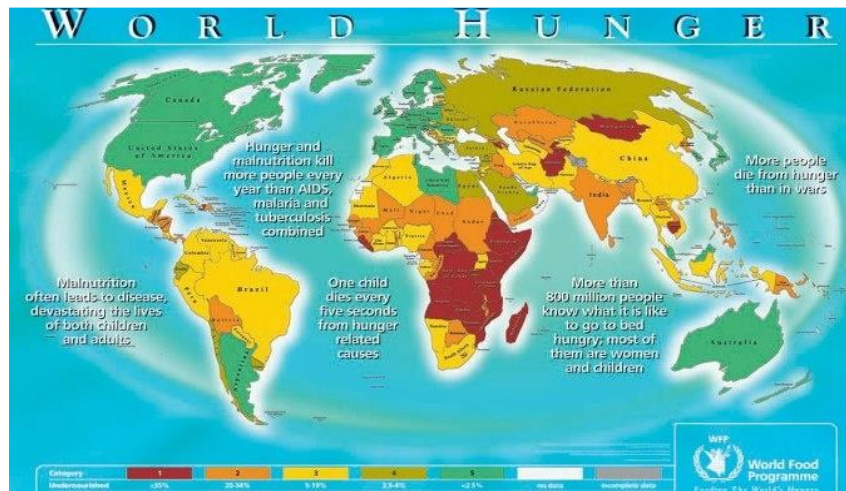
Food security is one of the most pressing issues of our time. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization globally estimated that, from 2014-2016, 1 in 9 persons were chronically undernourished. Nearly all of the 794.6 million food insecure people during this span, 780 million specifically, lived in developing nations. The United Nations FAO also concluded that 14.7 million people were food insecure in developed countries. I chose to volunteer with Buckeye Food Alliance in order to combat local food insecurity, specifically amongst Ohio State undergraduates.

(<http://www.fao.org/hunger/en/>)



Being an International Affairs Scholar has allowed me to gain a greater worldview outside of my previous western mindset, keeping me well informed on world happenings, trends, and events. Without IA, I would not have dedicated my time towards an issue so daunting and globally intricate; one which supersedes borders and race, religion and culture. Service only seemed natural after learning about the shortcomings of the world, for it has been instilled in me to help those who cannot help themselves.

In a study conducted by Ohio State's Center for the Study of Student Life, 15% of OSU students identified as food insecure. Buckeye Food Alliance aims to raise awareness about college campus food insecurity, and help eliminate food insecurity among college-aged students. Buckeye Food Alliance operates on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday evenings from 6:00-8:00 PM. During food distribution, for which I volunteered, food insecure Ohio State undergraduates would walk in and use the pantry. I walked students through the pantry, helped assemble industrial refrigerators to preserve a wider range of food, and organized/stocked food items on the shelves.



Having been volunteering with food security organizations for the past 3 semesters, much of my undergraduate time has been spent interacting with food insecure individuals and counteracting food insecurity in the greater Columbus area. Food insecure individuals often need the most help, and budgeting for medical expenses is near impossible, considering that budgeting for food is often also overlooked. My career goals have shifted towards trying to engineer medical devices for those who may not be able to afford the current market model, or may need the device the most.

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The best part of volunteering at Buckeye Food Alliance was getting to interact with those in need. Being able to make a difference in someone's life is the main reason anyone gets involved in service, including me. Being involved in the fight against food security was also a focal point of my volunteerism.

Food Insecurity: lacking reliable access to a livable quantity of affordable, nutritious food.