

PRESS RELEASE AND REQUEST FOR COVERAGE

September 22, 2011

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



LOCAL FINANCIAL FIRM VOLUNTEERS AT FOOD BANK OF WESTERN MA DURING HUNGER ACTION MONTH

Hart & Patterson Team Takes Time to Help Fight Hunger

Amherst, MA - The women of Hart & Patterson Financial Services, LLP will be taking a few hours out of their busy schedules to volunteer at The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts in Hatfield, MA, on Tuesday, September 27, 2011. September is Hunger Action Month, during which food banks and food security advocates across the country are rallying their communities and encouraging neighbors and friends to find new ways to help reduce food insecurity in Western Massachusetts.

The Hart & Patterson team of ten will be working in the non-profit's 30,000-square-foot warehouse, sorting through food items to help prepare for the cold months ahead.

"We completely enjoyed giving our time and energy to The Food Bank last year and sadly, the need is even greater this year," says Cheryl A. Patterson, Partner, Hart & Patterson Financial Services LLP. "September is Hunger Action Month and we are proud to help the Food Bank with this critical initiative."

More families than ever before are seeking food assistance across western Massachusetts. The combination of stagnant wages, unemployment, rising food prices, and exponential increases in heating costs, results in many households that just can't make ends meet.

According to an August 2011 report from the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), nearly one in four U.S. households with children struggled to afford enough food for themselves and their families in 2010. The report also includes analysis, done separately, of food hardship rates — the inability to afford enough food — in households with and without children nationally and in every state, every Congressional District and 100 of the country's largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). Findings include:

- 20 percent of households with children in Massachusetts (1 in 5) said they were unable to afford enough food. The food hardship rate for households without children was 14.4 percent.
- For the Springfield MSA, the food hardship rate in 2009-2010 was 25.4 percent for households with children and 19.1 percent for households without children.
- Springfield ranks at number 37 out of the 100 largest MSAs in the country in terms of food hardship rates.
- Springfield has the highest childhood food hardship rate of all MSAs in Massachusetts that are included in the top 100 MSAs. Other large MSAs in Massachusetts include Boston, Worcester, and New Bedford-Fall River.

Volunteer opportunities can be found on The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts' website, www.foodbankwma.org.

Since Hart & Patterson's founding almost 20 years ago, they have financially supported numerous local and national causes and organizations. For more information about Hart & Patterson and the organizations they support, visit www.hartpatterson.com.

About Hart & Patterson Financial Services, LLP

Hart & Patterson Financial Services LLP is an independent financial services firm based in western Massachusetts. Established in 1992, Hart & Patterson handles multiple facets of financial planning, including investment management, retirement plans for businesses and individuals, estate planning, insurance services, charitable planned giving, and tax planning. The partners of Hart & Patterson are Lorraine A. Hart, Certified Financial Planner™ and Cheryl A. Patterson, Certified Financial Planner™. Ms. Hart has over thirty years of financial planning experience. She holds Series 7, 24 and 63 Securities Registrations and Insurance along with licenses in Life, Accident and Health Insurance. Ms. Patterson has served over 25 years in the financial planning and investment industry. She holds a Series 7 and 63 Securities Registrations and Insurance, along with licenses in Life, Accident and Health Insurance. In addition, the Hart & Patterson staff is supported by a team whose tenure averages ten years with the company. Hart & Patterson has offices in Amherst and Northampton, MA. For more information please visit www.hartpatterson.com or call 413.253.9454.

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