

For Immediate Release

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**Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan
Announces: Leadership Change and Two New Child-Focused Initiatives**

(November 8, 2013 – Detroit, MI) ... Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan (Gleaners) announced today that W. DeWayne Wells will step down as Gleaners' President and take on the new role of National Policy and Advocacy Officer for the agency. Wells became President of Gleaners in 2008.

In response to the continued high need for emergency food, Gleaners will launch a new initiative – Hunger-free Holidays for Kids – beginning in mid November. Working with schools in metro Detroit where the need is greatest, Gleaners will more than double its Weekend Backpacks outreach and provide additional food for children through its school-based Mobile Pantry programs during the holiday season.

According to the Michigan League for Public Policy in Lansing, 43 percent of the 1.8 million Michiganders affected by the recent SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs) cuts are children.

As Gleaners' National Policy and Advocacy Officer, Wells will focus on advocating for policies and programs that provide relief from hunger; giving everyone access to healthy nutritious food and ensuring they have a voice in the debates and decisions that affect their well being. He will help Gleaners and its partner network understand and respond to legislation and policies that affect their work. Wells will conduct his work from Gleaners' Detroit headquarters.

“Our Board is excited about Gleaners' strengthened focus on policy and advocacy, and look forward to DeWayne's leadership in this area,” said Walt Young, Gleaners Board Chair. “We remain committed to our core mission of feeding hungry people in the communities we serve, especially the children.”

Wells has a long history of advocacy work and shaping policy surrounding hunger issues. Wells is a member of Detroit Food Policy Council [founding], Michigan No Kid Hungry steering committee, Michigan Good Food steering committee and is the current Co-chair of the Michigan Nonprofit Association SE Michigan Policy Council. At the national level Wells is a member of Good Food for All, a national policy workgroup; participated in multiple visits to Capitol Hill as part of FRAC (Food Research and Action Center) and Feeding America's National Anti-Hunger Policy Conferences; a participant of Congressional roundtables and listening sessions for the Farm Bill work in 2012. Wells also testified at DHS (Department of Human Services/Michigan) Appropriations Hearings regarding the Michigan Agricultural Surplus System program.

Walt Young, current Gleaners Board Chairman, has engaged a Transition Committee to find Wells' replacement. Young will act as interim President until a new president is named.

About Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan

For more than 36 years, Gleaners Community Food Bank has been "feeding hungry people and nourishing our communities." Last year, Gleaners distributed more than 46 million pounds of emergency food to over 550 partner schools, soup kitchens, shelters and pantries in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Livingston and Monroe counties. Of every dollar donated, Gleaners uses 93 cents for food and food programs. **One dollar provides three meals for a hungry neighbor.** Learn more at www.gcfb.org.