



**Second Harvest Food Bank
of Northwest North Carolina**

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For Immediate Release

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Eric Aft Appointed Chief Executive Officer of Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC

Winston-Salem, N.C. – July 10, 2018 — Eric A. Aft has been appointed as the next Chief Executive Officer of Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC, the region’s lead agency and advocate addressing hunger and its causes. Aft assumes the reins after the long-planned retirement of Clyde W. Fitzgerald, Jr., who passionately served the organization in numerous roles throughout its entire 36-year history, including the last 10 years at the helm.

“I am humbled and honored to follow the legacy of exceptional leadership provided by Clyde Fitzgerald and Second Harvest’s founding Executive Director Nan Holbrook Griswold,” said Aft. “I look forward to continuing to work with our talented staff team, our committed board, our strong network of partner agencies, and our compassionate and engaged community of supporters, as we build on the accomplishments of the organization into the future.”

Aft joined Second Harvest in September 2017, as Chief Operating Officer, bringing with him more than 27 years in nonprofit management and a proven track record of strategic, results-oriented leadership and success in building collaborative approaches to addressing pressing community issues.

“My successor as CEO, Eric Aft, is the right person to lead our organization into its exciting and challenging future,” said Clyde Fitzgerald. “After a comprehensive national search, our board and executive team chose a very talented, knowledgeable and experienced local leader to join our organization.”

“Eric has roots here and cares deeply about the people and communities we serve,” said Michelle Butt, general manager of WXII 12 News, who is also in a new role with Second Harvest as the chair of the Board of Directors. She also served on the search committee that hired Aft. “Eric has proven abilities engaging and partnering with diverse stakeholders to achieve deep and sustainable impact on community issues. He’s committed to innovation and success in building philanthropic support. These are among the reasons he was selected to the COO role and appointed, on the approval of the full board, to lead the organization effective July 1, 2018.”

Aft is excited and focused as he takes the reins to lead the agency forward.

“Making sure that people can access healthy food when they need it is central to our work and vital to the well-being of our communities,” said Aft. “It is also true that families want and deserve more. We will continue to build awareness and engage more people around the issues of hunger and poverty.

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Our goal is to strengthen and expand our programs and initiatives that support transformational change, including Providence, our nationally recognized culinary job training program. We will seek new ways to use technology and data to enhance the way we do business and focus our energies to make the biggest difference possible. **At the heart of our approach is working collaboratively with the many communities we are honored to serve, because everyone has something to bring to the table.** I will be out in the communities regularly, and look forward to connecting with our old friends and new ones.”

Prior to joining Second Harvest Food Bank, Aft served as Director of Development, Mid-Atlantic Region, for Wake Forest University. He is well known to many through his service as Chief Operating Officer of the United Way of Forsyth County for nearly 12 years, from 2004-2016, and was a staunch supporter and partner of Second Harvest in that role.

Before he and his family moved to Winston-Salem, Aft served seven years as President and CEO of the United Way of Central Virginia, covering 4 counties. He also previously served 4 years as CEO of the United Way of Wooster, Ohio, another multi-county operation.

Aft holds a Masters of Health Administration from the University of South Carolina. He has also served as adjunct faculty at Salem College since 2012, teaching courses on Organizational Planning and Evaluation, Fundraising, and Non-Profit Management and Governance. He’s long been involved with a number of community activities in Winston-Salem and is a past board member of the Piedmont Triad Regional Council’s Workforce Development Board; past member of United Way Worldwide High Performing Community Partnerships Committee; past board member and treasurer of Leadership Winston-Salem; and past member, Equity Profile Team, of Piedmont Together, among others.

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About Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC

Second Harvest Food Bank is a leading agency and advocate for a healthy, hunger-free Northwest NC, serving as a central resource for healthy food, nutrition education, SNAP/FNS outreach services, advocacy and more for a network of more than 290 local agencies overseeing more than 460 food assistance programs (pantries, community kitchens, shelters, and meals programs for children and seniors). Second Harvest’s strategic focus on addressing hunger among children includes partnerships with local schools and agencies to provide nutritious food for kids through BackPack, Kids Cafe, School Pantry and Summer Meal sites. Second Harvest’s work to address root causes of food insecurity includes a nationally recognized culinary training and job skills program; leadership and partnership in systems change work across our service region; and advocacy for community action and policies that support our communities.