

# Six Nations Community Food Bank launches holiday fundraising drive

By Laura Hill

**OHSWEKEN** – Charley Hill motions towards a monthly list of donations needed at the Six Nations Community Food Bank.

“December is coming up. Baby food, formula — we are always looking for diapers as well. We don’t have enough to give out a whole package [of diapers]. It’s something, but it’s not enough.”

Hill is the Coordinator of the Six Nations Community Food Bank. As the sole employee of the organization, she does well in creating an atmosphere that is friendly, welcoming and clean. She and the Board of Directors that oversee the organization provide roughly 400 or more boxes of food donations to community members each month, keep track of donations, and manage the volunteers that come through the door each week. And yet, despite their hard work, there are still key items running low in their stock room.

When the organization noticed that they were low in the personal care items not covered by their budget — such as diapers, wipes, formula, baby food, feminine products, toiletries and household cleaning items — they decided to launch a holiday fundraising campaign which they hope will provide families with these basic necessities.

“The Helping Hands for the Holidays campaign is trying to raise \$10 000 in monetary donations, and that’s just to offset costs of the staples we get, like groceries. It will hopefully go towards buying baby products, personal care and household cleaning prod-



Charley Hill, Coordinator of the Six Nations Community Food Bank, is pictured here with a few examples of items that they are in need of this holiday season. The Helping Hands for the Holidays fundraising drive is seeking to raise \$10 000 to add these basic items to the food bank’s inventory. PHOTO BY LAURA HILL

ucts that we don’t normally get.” Hill explained.

She added that not many people realize the food bank accepts personal care and baby items, so the holiday campaign seeks to fill this gap.

“People don’t think to donate toothbrushes and toothpaste and stuff like that, but it comes in handy. We also need a lot of women’s products — feminine products, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner.”

Along with dispersing personal items, the Food Bank runs a food service program every Thursday from 9:30 am until 5 pm.

There, community members can receive pantry staples such as pasta, beans, soup, canned vegetables, fruits, school snacks, and bread. To supplement the staples, the food bank also provides fresh items on a rotational basis each week including eggs, dairy, fresh vegetables and meat.

Those seeking to use the food service need only provide the status cards of everyone in their family, as well as a small weekly administrative fee of \$5.00 per household. If status cards are lost or being sent in the mail, a letter from Six Nations Lands and Mem-



Local community member Joshua Hill donated \$1,000 to help the Six Nations Food Bank earlier this year in July. Monetary donations help offset costs to buy personal care and household items that the Food Bank doesn’t normally receive. SUBMITTED PHOTO

bership will also be accepted.

Hill says that those who find they may need the help of the food bank can expect an environment that’s warm, hospitable and judgement free.

“Sometimes there’s a stigma of having to access a food bank. My goal here is to make this place welcoming. You come in — and don’t feel bad. This is why we are here. We are here to help the community.”

The Helping Hands for

the Holidays drive runs until the end of January. Those interested in helping can bring donations to 1741 4th Line Road, or online at [www.sixnationsfoodbank.com](http://www.sixnationsfoodbank.com). For more information about the food bank, please call 519-771-0025, email Hill at [erin@sixnations-foodbank.com](mailto:erin@sixnations-foodbank.com), or search for Six Nations Community Food Bank on Facebook or Twitter.