



## Press Release

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### The Food Bank's Denise Gibson among Top 20 Most Influential Women

**SPRINGFIELD (July 30, 2009)**—Ozarks Food Harvest's director of development and communications, Denise Gibson, was named one of the 20 Most Influential Women for 2009 by the *Springfield Business Journal* this month.

Gibson joined The Food Bank as development director in 2003, and has helped to successfully grow the revenue by more than 50 percent. She has been instrumental in increasing awareness of Ozarks Food Harvest and its mission to Transform Hunger into Hope™ in southwest Missouri communities by strengthening relationships with new and existing donors and business partners, according to executive director Bart Brown.

With more than two decades of experience in strategic planning, promotion and event management for national food manufacturers such as TABASCO® Brands and the Florida citrus growers and processors, Gibson has been successful in rebranding The Food Bank's image as well as increasing the annual operating budget from \$750,000 to more than \$2.2 million. Ozarks Food Harvest has earned the American Advertising Federation's (AAF) Jane Meyer Award for the Nonprofit of the Year, twice under the fundraising direction of Gibson. She's also received the AAF's Gold and Silver ADDY Awards for The Food Bank's Check Out Hunger™ program and Ozarks Food Harvest's Honor Roll of Donors. Last year, Ozarks Food Harvest was named the Philanthropic Organization of the Year by the Ozarks Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, and in 2009, OFH was named the Economic Impact Award winner in the charitable organization category by the Springfield Business Journal, for the second time.

More recently, Gibson served on Ozarks Food Harvest's *Compassion in Action* capital campaign leadership committee to build a larger and more efficient \$4.8 million warehouse. As The Food Bank's principal fundraiser, she was able to secure \$500,000 in Missouri Development Tax Credits which helped close out the campaign, bringing more than \$1.1 million of out-of-state funding to Springfield and the Ozarks. Ozarks Food Harvest was honored as only the fifth organization in the region over the last 40 years to receive a prestigious challenge grant from The Kresge Foundation of Troy, Michigan.

The tenth class of the 20 Most Influential Women will be honored at a gala luncheon at the University Plaza Convention Center on September 25. A silent auction to benefit Women In Need will be held during the luncheon. For more information, call Ozarks Food Harvest at (417) 865-3411 or visit [www.ozarksfoodharvest.org](http://www.ozarksfoodharvest.org).

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Transform Hunger into Hope™ at [ozarksfoodharvest.org](http://ozarksfoodharvest.org)

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