

A love letter from Harvest to all Manitobans

35th anniversary address

After six months of COVID-19 delays, Harvest held a much curtailed, virtual 35th anniversary celebration on Nov. 24.

But, Keren still had a present for all of us. It came in the form of a speech that turned out to be more of a love letter to the province, you, me, everyone.

This is a draft of that message:

We are Harvest Manitoba.

We collected and distributed 11,000,000 pounds of food this year. And every bite of it was needed. We are now serving more than 80,000 clients a month; 43 per cent of those we feed are children.

We have thousands of volunteers who donate 200,000 hours of service. They are essential to operations, now and in every colour of COVID code.

All this 'we,' Manitoba — is 'us.' Every tin for the bin, every hour and dollar donated, all the people 'we' feed, this is our community, and you are our Harvest Stars.

Your support for Harvest over these past 35 years — feeding hungry people you don't know and have never met — can be seen as our greatest act of character.



You may not have heard at the time, but earlier this year, as part of its landmark 35th anniversary, Winnipeg Harvest merged the Manitoba Association of Food Banks into the Harvest family and changed its name to Harvest Manitoba.

Now, the Harvest Manitoba network of food banks and agencies distributes food directly to hungry individuals and families through 350 locations across the province.

Keren Taylor-Hughes, Harvest Manitoba chief executive officer, explained:

"Both organizations had the same objective — to feed hungry Manitobans. Our superpower is collecting, sorting, packing, and distributing food. Their strength is operating food banks in rural and remote locations — and together, we're able to feed more Manitobans. It's a true win-win-win for everyone."

We've changed our name, but not our passion.



Nobody sees you do it. You just give because it's in your heart. You know. You feel it. Feeding your hungry neighbours and looking after your community is the right thing to do.

When that happens, children go to bed full of hope and promise. Youth are fueled for learning. Parents are nourished, better able to face the day.

Thanks to you and your gift of a Harvest Hamper, they can honestly tell the kids, 'We're OK,' because on this day, this family didn't have to choose between food and rent.

Because yesterday, you gave to Harvest Manitoba.

These are your greatest gifts. They can, and they do, change lives.

And that my friends, is character in action. You've redefined us. You've taken us beyond 'Friendly Manitoba.' By your actions — you have made us a community of Harvest Stars.

Those who give support are 'Harvest Stars' because with your quiet capacity to be kind, caring and supportive — you shine.

Those who come to Harvest in your hour of hunger who work so hard just to get by, who sacrifice for loved ones, who despite the challenges persevere — we see it in you every day, and we embrace you. You too, are Harvest Stars.

I am proud to live in a community of such people. And for that, I don't have to thank my lucky stars. I get to thank all of you, who make all of us, a community of Harvest Stars.

I am Keren Taylor-Hughes, and on behalf of everyone at Harvest Manitoba, I thank you.

For more information on Harvest and its programs, visit winnipeg Harvest.org

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