



FEEDING FAYETTEVILLE

The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." John 21:17

While the Wesley parking lot is usually packed as soon as students get back on campus, the only car in sight on the morning of Tuesday, August 16th, was a pickup truck pulling a trailer carrying tons (1.5 tons to be exact) of sweet potatoes. Though we have a lot of mouths to feed on any given day at the Wesley House, this day was a special opportunity to give back and feed the people in our community.

In collaboration with [Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance](#) and [Tri Cycle Farms](#), Wesley hosted a "Potato Drop" service event as a part of our Welcome Weeks events, where we welcome new students to meet current Wesley students and see what our ministry is all about.

Our task for the morning was simple: package sweet potatoes into 10 pound bags. But, our small project was part of a much larger mission to help end hunger and reduce food waste in our community. Luckily, with organizations like Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and Tri Cycle Farms, huge strides forward are being made for this cause.

Unbeknownst to many, Arkansas ranks as one of the top states in food insecurity and as much as 40% of food in the state goes to waste. This is where these organizations come into play. Tri Cycle Farms strives to share a third of their crops with volunteers, sell a third to sustain the farm and demonstrate the economy of food, and give a third to food pantries and community meals. Arkansas Hunger Relief

Alliance works to reduce hunger and improve access to nutritious food. One of the ways they do this is recovering unsold food from places like Whole Foods and Ozark Natural Foods and making use of fruits and vegetables that are too "ugly" to make it to the supermarkets in the first place by sorting through the supply and distributing them to be consumed. The partnership between the two organizations allows groups like our Wesley College Ministry to do our part to serve our community.

"It's integral to serve those around us, and that's the opportunity we were afforded during the Potato Drop," shared U of A sophomore and student leader Jordan Lenderman. "It was such a simple way to fight hunger in the area because the potatoes that we worked with were perfectly healthy, but are often wasted. This was a smart and simple way to provide for our community."

The parking lot was filled with music, laughter, and conversation as old Wesley students interacted with students new to our ministry. As they say, many hands make the work light! Our group of 26 sorted through the 3,000 pounds of sweet potatoes in just an hour! Following the sorting, students headed inside for pizza and ice cream sundaes, then it was back outside to load the sweet potato sacks back on the trailer to be taken to local food pantries or to be used for community meals in the area.

Here at the U of A Wesley College Ministry, we are passionate about "bearing fruit" in our community! We look forward to the coming school year with new opportunities to be the hands and feet of Christ on campus and in our local community.

If you would like to learn more about how you can get involved to end hunger in Arkansas, please visit arhungeralliance.org and tricyclefarms.org.