

A Little Girl's Gift

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by **Angela Ebron**

The minute you meet 7-year-old Makenna, you know that she's a little girl on a mission. At an age when other children are focused on play, she's focused on service.

We learned that firsthand earlier this month when Makenna and her mother stopped by Food Bank to make a very special delivery: an \$18 donation. Makenna had saved up the money herself--\$36 in all--to give to two charities: an aquarium that had been damaged in Hurricane Sandy and Food Bank. Because of Makenna we'll be able to provide 90 meals to New Yorkers in need.

Makenna is no stranger to Food Bank. She's enrolled in our CookShop program at PS 139 in Brooklyn, and takes the nutritional lessons she learns there very seriously. She's so into healthy eating that she was even named captain of her school's salad bar. Makenna created a training program for all of her helpers and proudly told us that "no one gets by me until they've been trained."

Sometimes the biggest gifts come in the smallest packages, and Makenna has given Food Bank so much more than money--as our President and CEO, Margarett Purvis, made clear in her thank you letter:

Dear Makenna: Thank you so much for visiting us at Food Bank! All of us truly appreciate that you chose our organization to be one of the two charities you're supporting. I know that it wasn't easy saving \$18 and we will make sure that it goes a long way to help other little girls who need it. Because of you we can provide 90 meals!! Thank you so much Makenna. I know that the Aquarium feels the same way about you as we do. I didn't know about the damage Sandy caused to the home of those beautiful fish. Thank you for educating me. You are kind and thoughtful...two of the best traits in great people! I'm glad you liked the special Food Bank pin and bags that Mr. Dan gave you. Those items are for our very special partners, and now that you've made both Mr. Daryl and Mrs. Sharon cry (I told you he would, but she caught me by surprise) you have a very important role that only you can do for us. I really need for you to do for others what you did for all of us! You reminded us of the simple joy found in serving others. The pride in your eyes reminded me that instead of worrying about all that I HAVE to do, I will celebrate all that I GET to do for this mission that we both love! I will let my team know about your suggestion of adding more color on the walls of our community kitchen to make the many children we serve feel more comfortable and less sad! That was a GREAT idea. Thank you for thinking of us as a part of your plan to help others. We are thrilled to help you be the leader you were CLEARLY made to be! Have a great school year! Margarett Purvis-----Angela Ebron is Food Bank For New York City's writer and editor.