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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Purdue students' innovation helps food bank fight hunger

ANDERSON, IN – Students at Purdue Polytechnic Anderson have developed a way for Second Harvest Food Bank to provide fresh produce year-round with their Seedstock senior project. Second Harvest, which serves east central Indiana, is a non-profit devoted to feeding the hungry, advocating for those with food insecurity and providing nutrition education.

In the spring of 2016, students began producing spinach and lettuce hydroponically for the food bank. They also developed plans for composting and to expand into other produce, such as microgreens and pumpkins that could be sold to local chefs, creating a revenue stream for Second Harvest. This innovation was a senior project for several students led by Lorri Barnett, continuing lecturer of technology leadership and innovation at Purdue Polytechnic Anderson. The student team received funding through a Purdue Statewide Commercialization and Research Grant to help develop the technology. The project is featured on the [Statewide Innovation website](#).

The project is one of several Barnett and her students have undertaken over the last few years to provide assistance and innovation to Second Harvest. “It is important for our students to understand how their skills can impact their communities,” Barnett said. “With this and other projects, they are preparing for exciting careers while offering assistance to those who need it most.”

Barnett and her students have been working with Tim Kean, president and CEO of Second Harvest, to ensure the success of their projects. “We love working with the creative team of people at Purdue Polytechnic. They are solution-focused with real life applications. They have helped us look at new approaches to solving the challenges of food insecurity,” he said.

About Purdue Polytechnic Statewide

Across Indiana, there's a transformation taking place, a new approach to higher education. Where students learn by doing, tackling real-world problems, with business-seasoned faculty mentors, preparing for meaningful careers in industry as entrepreneurs, leaders and makers. The Purdue Polytechnic Institute at Purdue University offers its programs in nine communities across the state in response to workforce demands. Locations exist in Anderson, Columbus, Indianapolis, Kokomo, Lafayette, New Albany, Richmond, South Bend, and Vincennes.

A photo of a student at the warehousing project can be found online in the [Polytechnic Media Room](#).

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