

Community Harvest

FALL 2019

A historic
expansion to
save *lives*

Esther,
Food Bank client

At 81 years young, Esther loves reading, taking walks, and cooking healthy meals. After undergoing open-heart surgery, she follows a strict low-sodium diet filled with fish, chicken, and produce.

"The cost of healthy food is really high," she said. "The majority of my savings went to medical bills—insurance, x-rays, doctor visits."

Living on a fixed income, Esther often struggled to find affordable, healthy food after paying rent and other bills. But when she learned about CalFresh, Esther attended one of 100 events we hosted to help neighbors like her apply.

"The majority of my savings went to medical bills—insurance, x-rays, doctor visits."

"It's a great benefit to have a program to assist with food and provide some stability," said Esther.

Starting June 1, that benefit was expanded to include California residents who live on Supplemental Security

Income (SSI)—low-income seniors and disabled or blind individuals. An estimated 1.2 million additional Californians—about 48,000 in Alameda County—are now eligible for CalFresh benefits.

This expansion is historic and a huge policy win for our neighbors and our Food Bank. We've been fighting alongside SSI recipients for more than a decade to make this a reality.

Through SSI, a person can receive a maximum of \$931 per month. With CalFresh, they can receive an additional \$192 to purchase food. Considering **the cost of a meal here is 25 percent higher than the national average**, CalFresh is the difference between skipping a meal vs. having the means to purchase one.

"Food banks are in the business of changing people's lives, but this expansion is literally going to save lives," said Liz Gomez, Director of Client Services.

So far, more than 8,300 SSI recipients in Alameda County have taken advantage of the expansion, allowing thousands of our neighbors to shop for healthy food, save money for other basic needs, and have the nourishment they need to thrive.

FROM THE DESK OF SUZAN BATESON

Time for reflection and hope



Suzan Bateson,
Executive Director

Recently my colleague Shanti—our Food Bank’s Senior Policy Advocate—sent me an article sharing self-care strategies for challenging times (like now).

In 2019 we should be well beyond policies and rhetoric that marginalizes people of color, immigrants, and countless other historically underrepresented communities. And yet, here we are. Some days feel like a step backwards from all we've fought for. (Just as we were sending this newsletter to print, the White House announced new "Public Charge" rules aimed at immigrants who benefit from CalFresh.) It's nearly impossible to not feel some combination of anger, frustration, discouragement, or sadness.

But here, we don't wallow: we rise.

I really needed that article (thank you, Shanti!). It reminded me that this is a marathon, not a sprint. Equally important, it reminded me that we, at ACCFB, play many important roles.

Hunger disproportionately affects people of color. In Alameda County, 7 in 10 community members who are living in poverty are people of color.

The evidence that hunger and racism are linked is irrefutable. We can't end hunger without addressing this issue head-on for the well-being of our entire community.

Earlier this year I sent a note to our staff and community about ACCFB's work to fight racism, which stands at the very center of the problem we're trying to solve. As outrageous as it is that so many influential people and institutions seem intent on making the problem worse, I take comfort—and I hope you do too—that we are making progress.

This summer was huge. We had two of our biggest policy wins ever, which expanded CalFresh eligibility to SSI recipients and increased the California Earned Income Tax Credit. Both will mean millions of meals

generated through programs which support mostly communities of color. We also concluded our Diabetes Prevention Project pilot, which showed promise in preventing a disease that disproportionately affects low-income communities of color as well.

Our agency partners also stand up and step up for our community. They're tailoring their distributions to better meet health needs and cultural preferences, and engaging in research and advocacy actions that are leading to long-term solutions.

And there's you: partners, volunteers, supporters, food program participants, and advocates who encourage, engage, and foster change as our needs, and our community's needs, evolve.

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ANOTHER WAY TO JOIN US

This summer, I joined our Food Bank's leadership team at a discussion with Robin DiAngelo, author of "White Fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism." Of the countless lessons my team and I took away, it is that there is no finish line. We can—and must—continuously grow and learn.

Addressing these issues can be challenging and often very uncomfortable. Yet, necessary.

Our staff started a reading list of books and articles that have been helpful in expanding our policy fight, improving how we communicate, and working on becoming a more inclusive and belonging Alameda County Community Food Bank.

We'd love for you to learn with us. Please visit accfb.org/booklist.

HUNGER HEROES

Hunger Heroes are members of our community who go above and beyond for hunger-relief. Please share your story with us at media@accfb.org.

Fueling our efforts

Tyson Foods is passionate about ending hunger in the Bay Area by providing healthy, nourishing food to our neighbors.

Loaded with healthy staples and fresh produce, our Mobile Pantry stops in Hayward once a month. We set it up like a farmers market, offering a wide variety of nourishing food. Children typically run around a nearby playground while their parents pick up healthy groceries.

Tyson made a commitment to help build a stronger, healthier community. Thanks to their support, we're able to serve nearly 700 people each month through the Hayward Mobile Pantry and **provide the equivalent of 95,200 meals.**

Distributing groceries to our neighbors at a time and place that is convenient for them means that we're



able to provide more meals to more people, thanks to Tyson.

We're honored to have partners like Tyson Foods that inspire generosity and invest in the wellness of our community.

Raising her voice against hunger



It takes a lot of work to make real change. That's something Janny Castillo knows well. For the past five years, she's been the Hope and Justice Coordinator at St. Mary's Center, one of our partner agencies.

Through the "Seniors for Hope and Justice" group, Janny leads other seniors in our community to learn how to advocate and take action in meaningful ways. Our policy and advocacy team has had a longtime partnership with Janny and the seniors she helps empower. A phone call to Janny before a budget hearing or a lobby day results in dozens of senior

advocates prepared and ready to share their stories with lawmakers.

"They make such a positive impact in the community. This meaningful work improves the quality of their lives by leveraging their life experiences and wisdom and helping them feel their great value to our community," said Shanti Prasad, Senior Policy Advocate at ACCFB.

Their involvement in our work is invaluable. **Seniors for Hope and Justice's advocacy played a key role in expanding CalFresh to SSI recipients, many of whom are seniors.**

When they experience a big win, Janny says it fuels them to keep fighting for more just policies.

"We're impassioned to continue to fight," she said. "It's all about our influence and building that power."

Join us in thanking Janny for all she does for our community and our neighbors.

Agency Spotlight

STREET LEVEL HEALTH PROJECT

Every Thursday morning, neighbors in the Fruitvale district of Oakland line up outside an unassuming brick building. The windows are lined with fliers saying, “Refugees are welcome here” and “Stop deportations.” Inside, it’s a safe haven for low-wage workers, immigrants, and underserved communities.

Street Level Health Project (SLHP) provides groceries, health screenings, and support with other social services. For neighbors like Geraldo, SLHP is a resource he’d be lost without.

“Thanks to Street Level, I can get a lot of help in different ways,” he said.

After undergoing eye surgery, the 63-year-old had to leave his job. SLHP provides healthy groceries that help keep Geraldo’s diabetes in check, he’s able to see a doctor, and employees helped him file for disability.

SLHP has been helping neighbors like Geraldo for nearly 20 years. And, **they work every day to ensure their clients feel cared for and part of the community.**

“A lot of it has to do with that intention,” said Francisco Pablo Matias, SLHP Outreach Specialist. “I imagine people are happy because we’re able to provide all of these services.”

As a former day worker himself, Francisco understands the needs of the people SLHP serves.



That’s why, every Thursday morning he personally comes to the Food Bank’s warehouse in Oakland to pick the foods SLHP will distribute that day. Francisco loads up on fruits and veggies like zucchini, onions, and apples — skipping items like sweet potatoes because he knows what his clients prefer.

“The food is always fresh and it helps to save money for other expenses,” said Margarita, who picked up groceries with her family.

It’s the caring, compassionate people that make SLHP stand out. Because of Francisco and SLHP’s innovative and passionate commitment to their community, they’re able to improve their neighbors’ health—and lives.

“I want people to feel like they’re being seen and heard, that they’re a part of our community,” Francisco said.

JOIN US FOR A FESTIVE *celebration* OF CALIFORNIA-GROWN FOOD AND WINE

savor  the season

accfb.org/savor

Sunday, September 15, 2019

Noon - 3 p.m. (Silent auction preview 11 a.m. - Noon)

Wente Vineyards, 5050 Arroyo Road, Livermore

Get Involved

ADVOCATING FOR WHAT MATTERS MOST



Food Bank advocates at the Capitol in Sacramento on Hunger Action Day, May 22

We cannot end hunger without addressing poverty. We've ushered in important milestones in hunger relief thanks to our forceful community of anti-hunger advocates. And, our work is more important than ever in light of proposed policies that will increase hunger, hardship, and uncertainty. **September is Hunger Action Month**, a month when we all unite to raise awareness to end hunger. Here's how you can stay civically engaged and continue fighting for an equitable and just Alameda County:

REGISTER TO VOTE



Did you know that California's primary election is moving up to March next year? Ending hunger starts at the polls and your voice matters. Elections shape government, and each one offers choices that can deepen or alleviate poverty and hunger. Make sure you're ready for election day by registering—and voting!

GET INVOLVED IN ELECTIONS



If you're not yet 18 or eligible to vote, you can still get involved. Become a poll worker, sign up for our advocacy alerts, learn about important issues, and attend forums on issues that matter to you.

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES



One of the most effective ways of making your voice heard is by getting in touch with your own elected officials. Regardless of your voting eligibility, everyone can contact their elected officials. Make a call, send an email, or write a letter. It's quick, easy, and amplifies our efforts.

JOIN US ON HUNGER ACTION DAY



Every May, we bring a busload of anti-hunger advocates to Sacramento to meet with legislators, tell our stories, and urge action

on important legislation that affects us all. For the past three years, our longtime volunteer, Ward, has joined our Hunger Action Day efforts. "It makes me feel like I'm making a difference more directly. It seems like the highest level of engagement and the highest likelihood to make real change."

The movement is stronger with you in it. Ready to advocate for a hunger-free community? Learn more at accfb.org/advocacy.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

If you or someone you know needs food, please call us or share our Food Helpline cards.



FOOD HELPLINE

1-800-870-3663
1-510-635-3663

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9 AM – 4 PM

Monday – Friday

Lunes – viernes

星期一-星期五

Thứ hai-Thứ sáu

9 AM – 4 PM

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Lunes – viernes

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Thứ hai-Thứ sáu



Fall Harvest Medley

Our Nutrition Team provides nutrition education to our community, as well as healthy recipes that are tasty and cost-effective. Plus, the **ingredients used are ones commonly found in our warehouse**. Here's a hearty fall side dish, Nutrition Team approved!



Ingredients (8 servings)

- 1¼ pounds collard greens
- 3 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tsp salt (or to taste)
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/3 tsp ground nutmeg
- 3 tbsp mozzarella cheese and 3 tbsp parmesan cheese, grated and combined
- 2 sweet potatoes peeled and sliced into 1/4-inch rounds
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 cup nonfat milk

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Wash and dry greens. Chop stems into one-inch pieces. Chop leaves into two-inch pieces. Set aside.
3. Heat 1 teaspoon vegetable oil in skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until lightly brown, about 5 minutes.
4. Add the stems, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 5 to 7 minutes.
5. Add leaves and cook until they are wilted and combined. Remove from heat.
6. Heat 2 teaspoons vegetable oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Whisk in the flour and then slowly whisk in the milk. Stir until sauce is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
7. Spray a 9" x 11" glass baking dish with nonstick cooking spray and arrange half of the sweet potato slices in a single layer in the bottom of the baking dish. Sprinkle with oregano. Add half of the collard greens. Sprinkle with half of the cheese. Pour half of the sauce mixture over the top. Add a second layer of potato slices, then collard greens, then remaining sauce. Sprinkle the remaining cheese over the top.
8. Bake at 400°F for 40 to 45 minutes uncovered, until potatoes are cooked through.
9. Remove dish from oven and serve hot.

 **COOK TIME:** 1 hour 40 mins

Source: Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch (California Department of Public Health)

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NEED FOOD?

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¿Necesita comida?

需要食物嗎?

Nhu cần thực phẩm?

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Nhu cần thực phẩm?

FoodNow.net

FoodNow.net

End hunger, one plate at a time



The California DMV is pre-selling specialty license plates that help fund California Association of Food Banks members—including our Food Bank.

Get your plate at
californiainvolve.com

FOOD BANK HAPPENINGS



Success through Eat. Learn. Play.

ACCFB is proud to announce its most recent partnership. Stephen and Ayesha Curry recently launched their *Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation* in July with a community event centered on who they want to help: children. Like the Food Bank, they are passionate about improving the lives of families in the East Bay, with a shared focus of ensuring every child has the nutritious food they need to thrive.

Our food is the safest and freshest. And, we can prove it!

The American Institute of Baking (AIB) was recently at our Food Bank looking at our facility, operational methods, and food safety. **We scored 960 out of a possible 1,000.** To put that into perspective, a 920 is considered “Best in Class.” This is thanks to the incredible effort our Operations team makes to ensure we’re taking proper care of the food our community entrusts us with.



Promising Results for Diabetes Prevention

Can healthy food help prevent diabetes? That’s the question we set out to answer in 2017 as the only food bank in the country selected to participate in a pilot program aimed at improving the health of our neighbors.

Our Diabetes Prevention Pilot (DPP) recently wrapped—and we have some promising news to share.

Early results show that the 248 DPP participants ate more fruits and vegetables, increased their physical activity, and their general health and depression scores improved. They also reported increased food security.

Participants received diabetes-friendly food packages, health care referrals, and nutrition and fitness education.

Considering 20 percent of our client households have at least one member with diabetes or high blood pressure, we know the need for a program, like DPP, is not currently being met.

Final results will be presented this year and our Food Bank is continuing to research how we can further this work to improve the health and lives of our community.

The best deal *virtually* anywhere

What if we told you your dollar could help provide \$7 worth of groceries? It's true! Our newly redesigned **Virtual Food Drive** will help you "shop" for our most needed items such as milk, fresh eggs, and fruits and veggies—things that can't go into a food barrel.

Our Virtual Food Drive is also the perfect way for groups, such as families, businesses, religious organizations, schools, sports teams, fraternities, or weddings, to help out. And, signing up is easy!

\$100
at the grocery
store



\$100
at the
Food Bank
Virtual Food Drive



GRAB YOUR VIRTUAL SHOPPING CART TODAY!

Visit vfd-accfb.org



Employee Matching

Make your donation go **TWICE** as far!

Did you know your employer may match your donation or volunteer hours to the Food Bank?

Visit accfb.org/match to see if your employer participates in a matching gift program.

You may be able to **double the impact** of your gift!



I want to provide food—and hope—for families in Alameda County.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of: \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other: \$ _____

I commit to a monthly gift of \$ _____ (my first gift is enclosed)



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Please charge my gift to my:

Visa MasterCard AmEx Discover

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Name on Card _____ Sec. # _____

Signature _____

Please make check payable to:

Alameda County Community Food Bank (or "ACCFB")

P.O. Box 30757

Oakland, CA 94604-6857

Donate online at www.accfb.org

NLFAL19

Your donation is tax-deductible as permitted by law. The Food Bank will send you a receipt.