

FOOD MATTERS

A publication of Alameda County Community Food Bank to celebrate the CalFresh Program and your good work



SPRING 2019

Responding to community needs during the government shutdown



Volunteers box groceries for federal employees affected by the government shutdown

This year started off as an uncertain time for our community. The 34-day government shutdown left thousands of local federal employees unsure of when they would receive their next paycheck.

Our Food Bank responded immediately, re-affirming our commitment to being there for anyone who needs support in our community. ACCFB provided the equivalent of 17,900 meals for impacted workers, many of whom had never needed Food Bank help before. But, we know the shutdown impacted our community in other ways.

The shutdown created a "SNAP gap" for the 120,000 Alameda County residents who rely on the food assistance program. February SNAP (CalFresh) benefits were distributed early in mid-January in order to provide households with food benefits during the shutdown. But, March benefits

were not distributed until the first of the month, meaning many people faced a 40 day gap between receiving benefits.

"Alameda County Community Food Bank is preparing to expand food distribution if people lose their CalFresh benefits," said Allison Pratt, ACCFB Chief Partnership and Strategy Officer. "We're treating this like an emergency."

In an effort to close that gap for CalFresh recipients, the Food Bank worked with Alameda County Social Services to provide food assistance to anyone impacted by the shutdown. Vital information on how to access food was mailed to everyone in Alameda County who receives CalFresh benefits.

The shutdown has since ended, but our commitment to our community remains just as strong. Our Food Bank will continue providing support for as long as we're needed.

We're here to help!

The Food Bank Outreach Team is contracted by Alameda County Social Services to offer CalFresh outreach and out-of-office applications. Call (510) 635-3663 or email outreach@accfb.org.



Liz Gomez
ext. 325



Veronica
Cervantes
ext. 386



Roy
Chim
ext. 362



Tina
Davila
ext. 305



Crystina
Esparza
ext. 359



Patty
Figueroa
ext. 360



Cindy
Gonzalez
ext. 387



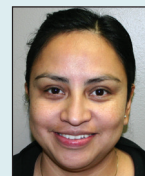
Eyra
Gonzalez
ext. 740



Ying Guo
ext. 388



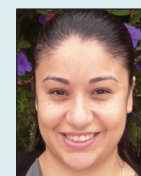
Lisa
Houston
ext. 355



Miriam
Juarez
ext. 322



La Wonda
Ponder
ext. 356



Vanessa
Ramirez
ext. 344



Miguel
Rosales
ext. 374

Expanding our efforts at UC Berkeley



CalFresh enrollment clinics are held weekly at UC Berkeley

Hunger is a big problem at UC Berkeley. According to the university, there are an estimated 10,000 students eligible for CalFresh. That is why UC Berkeley opened the Basic Needs Center in February, which supports students with food, housing, and financial resources.

Looking for innovative ways to expand our efforts at UC Berkeley, we helped establish a CalFresh ambassador program, led by a group of six students who are trained in CalFresh application assistance. The program emerged from the realization that college students understand food insecurity among their peers and could effectively convey the benefits of the program.

"As a college student myself, I've witnessed the differences in nutrition between the foods college students typically eat compared to healthy home-cooked meals," Vanessa Tran, CalFresh Ambassador, said. "CalFresh aims to change that. By offering fresh produce and healthy foods, I believe that we are making a difference in community nutrition and setting an example for a healthier lifestyle."

The ambassadors actively work to support students like them who could benefit from CalFresh. They conduct outreach events, provide case support, and online assistance. They're also knowledgeable in eligibility guidelines.

"I've learned not only the logistics of applications, but I also had the opportunity to work with a passionate team, and take part in solving more relevant and pressing issues such as inaccessibility to healthy foods especially among college students," Tran said.

We're proud to partner with UC Berkeley to ensure all students' basic needs are met.

Our Helpline is often able to connect callers with food the same day they call.

Emergency Food Helpline

Alameda County Community Food Bank's Emergency Food Helpline



helps county residents find a healthy food pantry near where they live or work.

Our helpline number is (510) 635-3363 and is open Monday-Friday. We are often able to connect callers with food the same day they call!

Many pantries are open in the afternoon and on the weekends. Visit FoodNow.net for more information.

VOICES OF CalFresh

"In a way, it's kind of a blessing to see how much of our community is supporting us. I get to teach my kids about community support. That's the upside in this hard situation."

"I don't know how I would have gotten groceries without the Food Bank,"

"I've never had to go the Food Bank before but I probably would have to go there."

Did you miss a previous Food Matters edition? Visit the Food Bank's website: accfb.org/media/media_publications

Comments or suggestions? Please e-mail Rashon Seldon at rseldon@acgov.org