



ALAMEDA COUNTY
**COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK**

Until everyone's fed

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

Community Harvest

SPRING 2022

Building the Food Bank of the Future



Lajon Taylor and Rich Pittman, from our warehouse team, with Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation's Co-founder Stephen Curry at the Food Bank

Spring is here, and days are getting longer. As each day brings more hours of sunshine, we look with hope to the year ahead. This will be our third year of being in emergency response mode for COVID-19 and we have dramatically changed the way we work since pre-pandemic times.

Alameda County Community Food Bank is an organization that is known nationally for being groundbreaking. From being the first food bank in the nation to stop distributing soda by replacing it with fruits and vegetables, to taking a stand against the Senate filibuster, we innovate to uproot hunger. We're working together with supporters, volunteers, advocates, and partners to eradicate hunger, racism, and poverty in our community and beyond.

Food banks across the nation are facing the immense challenge of increased food insecurity. We can't rely solely on distributing food to uplift communities. While we work to transform the efficiencies of our operations, we also work to give people the ability to determine their own destiny.

Addressing root causes of hunger — the conditions that lead to food insecurity within our communities — is vital to our vision. This means acknowledging and challenging the racial disparities embedded within many of our systems — in food, and others like housing and healthcare.

We all play a role in this work — and it's community which binds us all together. Together we're building a stronger, safer, more nourished community that we can all live and thrive in. One where no one has to worry about where their next meal is coming from. It's going to take all of us — and the resources, relationships, skills, and expertise that each of us has — to achieve the scale of change that we all need. We see that our struggles are interlinked and taking action in solidarity is essential.

We're listening, we're shifting, we're evolving.

Together, we are building the food bank of the future.

Building Our BOLDEST Policy Agenda Yet

By Henry Easton Koehler and Nick Musni,
Community Organizers

As a recently expanded, seven-person cohort, our Policy & Partnerships team works to advance policies that will move us closer to eradicating hunger. Our roles as the Food Bank's Community Organizers involve building, strengthening, and mobilizing community members to uproot hunger through collective action.

At the core of our work is an annual **Policy Agenda** that guides our legislative priorities and grassroots advocacy throughout the year.



Henry Easton
Koehler,
Community
Organizer

Our team's goal for 2022 is to have the boldest and most inclusive policy agenda in more than 20 years of anti-hunger advocacy.

We started by centering the voices of leaders in the community — uplifting the perspectives of people working on the front line against hunger. With the guidance of our Research Department, we met with partner organizations in the four zip codes with the highest rates of food insecurity and asked: "What are the most pressing needs in your community, and what changes might have the most impact on addressing those needs?"

The answers were consistent: **Housing, healthcare, and immigration** rose to the top, **followed by living-wage employment, community safety, and childcare**. Also consistent? *Hunger is the byproduct of these issues — creating and lengthening food distribution lines ... which we're working to shorten and eliminate.*

Hunger doesn't operate in a vacuum so we can't address it in isolation.

2022 Legislative Priorities

1.  HOUSING
2.  IMMIGRANT RIGHTS
3.  DEMOCRACY
4.  TAX POLICY

**...YES, THEY ALL RELATE
TO HUNGER**

The roots of hunger run deep and entangle a range of inseparable issues which are further entrenched by systems of white supremacy and widening class divisions. If we work together to eliminate barriers to housing, healthcare, and other basic needs, people won't have to choose between a visit to the doctor, rent, or groceries. *This is the foundation to our 2022 Policy Agenda.*



Nick Musni,
Community
Organizer

Uprooting hunger won't be easy. But we know this: we are not alone in this fight. Different struggles intersect. But our work is so deeply connected — across sectors, identities, and lived experience — and that gives us hope that, together, we can make a difference.

Join us and stay up-to-date with our policy work at accfb.org/advocacy.

“We created bonds that extended past the warehouse walls.”



Jeff San Gabriel,
Lead Volunteer

By Jeff San Gabriel, Lead Volunteer

Three years ago, my company sponsored a group volunteer day at ACCFB. I enjoyed the experience so much, I started volunteering monthly on my own.

When California went into lockdown in March 2020, not only was I furloughed from my job but I was also shut out of my volunteer opportunities. I jumped at the chance to get out of my house and back into the community when volunteering started up again in June 2020.

At first, I expected that I would go into the Community Engagement Center and sort food for eight hours a day. What I didn't realize was that over the next 18 months, I would meet an extraordinary group of volunteers who share the same sense of duty to our region. I ended up growing into a lead volunteer role, three days a week, at ACCFB's Drive-Through Pantry distribution in Oakland. Together, we distributed 11 MILLION pounds of food from March 2020 to December 2021.

In March 2021, I contracted COVID-19 and had to quarantine. When I was able to resume my post, I was greeted with words of relief and encouragement from my friends, grateful that I was able to overcome my bout with COVID.

When we moved the Drive-Through Pantry distribution into the heart of Oakland at the beginning of 2022, we started seeing more people from the neighborhood walking up and requesting food. Whether or not our site is seen from the freeway, folks are finding out about us. Either by car or on foot, many in our community are still food insecure.

I'm glad that ACCFB is here to help and I'm happy to do my part alongside.

Sign up to help at accfb.org/volunteer.



Lead Volunteer Jeff has made a huge impact at our Drive-Through Pantry distribution.

A Huge Assist from Dub Nation

By Kerith Burke, Golden State Warriors reporter at NBC Sports Bay Area

March 11, 2020 was the day that the NBA postponed its season and upended my routine of sideline reporting for the Golden State Warriors.

My job at NBC Sports Bay Area paused. My paycheck was slashed. A whole season reporting on Zoom followed once basketball was back.

When work resumed in person, I still felt uneasy. I was going through my normal motions, but "normal" didn't feel right under the slow squeeze of stress.

Before a Warriors game last November, I saw an article about food banks struggling with the surge in demand and higher costs. "Supply chain disruptions, lower inventory, and labor shortages have all contributed to increased costs for charities on which tens of millions of people in the U.S. rely for nutrition," the article stated.

I fired off a tweet: "This is tough to read. Our neighbors need us. However many points the Warriors score tonight, I'll double it for a donation to @ACCFB. Would anyone like to join?"

Would anyone like to join turned into a spontaneous wave of generosity. Over two games, Warriors fans used stats to dictate their contributions. Some fans multiplied the score, or donated ten times the Warriors' steals, or gave \$20 for each of Steph Curry's three-pointers.

Several fans went big with their donations. But what caught my eye were the fans who said, "I don't have much" but gave \$5 to match the team's blocked shots. What feels like a drop in the bucket still contributes to a win! Together we raised more than \$22,000.

Dub Nation knows the importance of teamwork, and they came through with a huge assist for ACCFB. The groundswell of generosity was impressive. It's rewarding to see how impactful we can be when we take care of each other.



Kerith, spreading the word to Warriors fans on Instagram.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service



After a "pandemic pause" in 2021, our annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service returned on January 17. Seventy volunteers worked to sort and bag more than 22,000 pounds of fresh produce (onions, oranges, potatoes, and sweet potatoes) which is the equivalent of nearly 19,000 meals. Volunteer groups joined us from Alameda Health System, Delta Sigma Theta, KPCLA#336, Phi Beta Sigma, Ratcliff Architects, and Wendel Rosen LLP.

Our first MLK Day of Service was held in 2010 with 80 volunteers. The event steadily grew each year to the point of engaging nearly 200 volunteers in 2020. Shortly thereafter COVID-19 hit us all, but our community has remained strong and united in helping each other during the past two years.

It is that sense of strength and unity that made the recent MLK Day of Service so special. Though volunteer numbers were limited for safety reasons, it was an opportunity for all of us to get back in touch with the spirit called for by Dr. King: "...Let us rise up tonight with a greater readiness. Let us stand with a greater determination. And let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge, to make America what it ought to be. We have an opportunity to make a better nation."

This is the reason our Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service is so important. We are very happy that we were able to host this special day again at ACCFB this year.

“I promised...I too would give back”



By Jason McKinney, Truffle Shuffle founder

I am the founder of Truffle Shuffle, an Oakland-based business that connects people across the country through food. But long before I founded Truffle Shuffle, I was, simply put, a kid who knew all too well the feeling of hunger pains that lasted for days.

If you met my family in 2007, you would have thought we had it all together. My dad ran a massive company; my mom stayed home to make sure us kids had what we needed. The biggest problem we had was, well, me. I was always in trouble at school, at times with the law. Most of my family's concerns were whether or not I would ever figure it out.

When the economy came crashing down in 2008, my dad had to let go of 287 employees and began to spiral. He had always battled addiction, and the more he tried to hold everything together the more things fell apart. He eventually left us with a foreclosure notice on the door.

When my mom got a job washing dogs at a pet hotel and boarding facility, I knew I had to do something. I got a job cooking breakfast in the

mornings and started going to alternative school at night.

While working one day, my mom called and told me she had received a donation of food. It was the day before my 17th birthday. **That donation included cupcake mix, which my mom used to make me a birthday cake. It was then that I promised myself one day, I too would give back to people in need.**

After the pandemic lockdowns went into effect in 2020, Truffle Shuffle pivoted to virtual cooking classes. As the business took off, I wanted to make sure we were giving back. That's when I found the Food Bank.

Truffle Shuffle donates a meal to ACCFB for every single ingredient kit we sell, and has proudly contributed over 100,000 nutritious meals to-date. This has been a cause that our whole company has rallied around. Our monthly volunteer days have also been a powerful way to come together.

We are so proud to partner with ACCFB. **I know that together, we can continue to connect the world through food, making a difference in the lives of people in our community and beyond.**

Supporting Changemakers in Our Community

By Alexa Senter, Marketing and Communications Manager

On a chilly Saturday morning, I met Sister Aminah, an indomitable woman with an infectious laugh who oversees Muslim Community Center (MCC) food programs in Pleasanton. I was greeted with warm (masked) smiles from staff and volunteers preparing the food packages that volunteers like me would deliver to families.

When the pandemic hit, MCC's food pantry program was in a broom closet and couldn't meet the surging need for food. That's when they joined ACCFB's network and started a home delivery program and drive-through pantry.

Last summer another crisis hit: Kabul, Afghanistan was retaken by the Taliban and tens of thousands fled. Alameda County is home to the largest communities of Afghans and Afghan Americans in the country, so many refugees are now rebuilding their lives in the East Bay with the help of MCC.

My delivery route is simple: MCC provides beautiful food packages, including fresh produce, oil, bread,



Every other Sunday Alexa joins dozens of other volunteers as a home-delivery driver for MCC.

rice, and beans — along with diapers, when available — to many newly arrived families trying to make ends meet in one of the most expensive housing markets in the country. I call after I drop off packages, for a quick, safe exchange and then head to the next house.

The pandemic has been hard on our collective wellness. It's hard to find a sense of control or opportunities to make change. But having the opportunity to support the newly arrived families is empowering and impactful. By supporting community members like Sister Aminah and organizations like MCC, we empower and uplift the changemakers in our community who are doing the hard work of making sure everyone is healthy and safe.

Learn more about MCC's ongoing work to support refugees and how **you** can get involved! Visit: accfb.org/RefugeeResponse.



Bags of fresh produce are assembled and ready for home delivery.



Help us nourish our community year-round

Become a monthly donor by March 31st and have your recurring gift **matched for a year**, up to \$50,000!

As a sustaining donor, you make it possible for us to quickly respond when the unexpected happens — like a global pandemic.

You can also sign up online at accfb.org/Join-Monthly.

WAREHOUSE OF THE FUTURE

Oh the things that excite a Food Banker.

Taller bays at ground level to store taller pallets? You may not find them exciting, but don't tell that to 6-foot, 3-inch Inventory Specialist Richard "Big Rich" Pittman. "Even I fit under them," he says excitedly — noting that, importantly, it helps him pick orders for partner agencies much quicker.

From changes small to 4,500-square-foot-cooler large, our warehouse is undergoing dozens of Big Rich-sized changes to make sure we're able to meet the long-term need caused by this pandemic.

Or to put it another way: it's the largest renovation project we've ever done.

These are the demands that come along with increasing food distribution 50%+ overnight.

Steve Parker, ACCFB's Warehouse Manager, has seen a lot in his 12 years at the Food Bank. The new cooler though, he says, "will be a game changer." Parker, as he's affectionately called within our walls, notes **how all the extra eggs and farm-fresh produce we'll store help better meet community need.**

Needless to say, this food means little without dedicated partners on the ground providing it to the community, which is why ACCFB's Engagement & Compliance Manager, Annie Loe, is doubly excited. "I can't wait for the Community Market changes," said Annie. "We've talked for years about how we can improve the 'shopping' experience for our partners and now it's happening. Soon they'll have their own walk-in freezer!"

Our community has a long road to recovery — and ACCFB likely has an even longer road as we expect the residual effects of the pandemic to last for up to a decade. Together, with your support, we're building a warehouse — and, well, a *Food Bank* — of the future. One that meets the needs of our community today and gets us ready to eliminate hunger tomorrow.

QUESTION:

How many "Big Rich" Pittmans can you fit in our new pallet bays?



ANSWER:

Just one, but that's still a lot...

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GET AND GIVE SUPPORT!



GET FOOD

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

If you or someone you know needs food, please call us at **1-800-870-FOOD (3663)** or visit www.foodnow.net.



VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are urgently needed to help sort produce, distribute food, and support partner organizations across Alameda County.

Learn about our safety protocols and sign up at accfb.org/volunteer.



ADVOCATE

Our advocacy team works year-round with every level of government to end poverty and inequity.

Get involved as an advocate. The movement is stronger with you in it. Learn more at accfb.org/advocacy.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



VISIT: accfb.org/social



Yes, I want to help our community recover

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

I want to become a monthly donor, and have my gift matched for a year!

Your monthly gift — made by March 31 — will be matched for 12 months, up to \$50,000!

☐ **Make this my first gift:** \$ _____ (my first gift is enclosed). I authorize Alameda County Community Food Bank to charge the amount indicated above to my account on the ☐ 1st OR ☐ 15th of each month. You can also sign up at accfb.org/join-monthly.

I am signing and dating to confirm my monthly commitment to ACCFB. Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Please make check payable to:

Alameda County Community Food Bank (or "ACCFB")

P.O. Box 30757

Oakland, CA 94604-6857

Please charge my gift to my:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AmEx ☐ Discover

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Donate online at donate.accfb.org

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

