“When you see someone so grateful for something as basic as a meal and cold water, that’s a powerful moment,” says Megan Black, Community Programs Manager at Caridad Community Kitchen.

Caridad is open daily for free meals, cold water and Gatorade, bags of ice, frozen hydration pops, and basic needs like soap, hand sanitizer, socks, and underwear.

In the Tucson heat, a good meal and cold water go a long way. “All day, guests are saying ‘God bless you’ and telling us we’re saving lives,” says Megan. “We’re still seeing such high demand here.”

The team at Caridad prepares over 10,000 community meals each month—everything from cold sandwiches and pasta salads to warm chicken pesto wraps and a Thanksgiving casserole topped with stuffing.

“We’re here for anyone who needs us,” says Megan. “No questions asked. Just come by and we’ll get you what you need.”

On hot summer days during a time of increased need, your support is keeping Caridad open for our community. Thank you! 🌿
Dear Friends & Neighbors,

It’s already one of the hottest summers on record, and it comes during a time of high need as local families continue to be impacted by and recover from the pandemic.

Thankfully, we have you.

People like you continue to come together in extraordinary ways to serve our community: the volunteers who work outdoors in the heat to distribute food, the community partners who have stepped up to serve summer meals to kids who are out of school, the donors like you whose generosity makes it all possible. Thank you!

As you read the stories in this issue—about Grace finding community at Las Milpitas Community Farm, or about our team at Caridad Community Kitchen cooking up meals for anyone who needs them—I hope you’ll remember: you did that.

You make so many wonderful things possible.

I hope you’ll also join us for HungerWalk on September 11. This year, we’ll have opportunities to join us in person or virtually. Wherever you walk or however you give back, please remember: our community is fortunate to have you.

You make our community a better place.

With gratitude,

Michael McDonald
CEO & President
“The goal is for all of us to grow together.”

Grace found her community at Las Milpitas Community Farm

“I’ve always worked in environments with traditional hierarchical structures,” says Grace, a grower and garden leader at Las Milpitas Community Farm. “So I was really surprised by this concept of gardeners being self-directed at Milpitas. It feels like everyone has a voice in the decision-making and planning of future projects.”

Grace learned about Las Milpitas through her job and checked it out on a whim.

“It felt like a special place,” she says. “The way everyone was working together, forming genuine bonds, really building this magic little community space. Right away, I wanted to be part of it.”

Las Milpitas, our 7-acre community farm space along the banks of the Santa Cruz, provides garden plots for local growers, free garden materials and educational workshops, and a green community space for neighbors to come together.

For Grace, it’s much more than a place to grow food.

“The community and space at Las Milpitas is about food sovereignty and giving ancestral knowledge the value it deserves. It’s about meeting other folks who also want to do what they can to make Tucson a better city in every sense. It’s about feeling empowered to do meaningful work and then passing the torch and empowering others who will then do the same. That’s how we make real change for our communities.”

“It’s about meeting other folks who also want to do what they can to make Tucson a better city in every sense.”
Get Active & Give Back: HungerWalk 2021 is Here!

Join us on Saturday, September 11th to fight hunger

It’s a Community Food Bank tradition: our annual HungerWalk brings thousands of people together every year to walk in solidarity as we raise funds to fight hunger in our community.

This year, HungerWalk is a hybrid event with multiple ways to participate! Join us virtually, join a small meet-up group, or donate to support a walker or team.

There are 3 ways to make a difference:

1. **Register as a virtual walker.** On Saturday, September 11th, take a walk! Walk alone or with your team; on a trail or on a treadmill. It’s up to you! Make sure you take pictures and tell us why you walk by sharing with the hashtag #HungerWalk2021.

2. **Register to walk in person with a small group.** Join us at one of four meet-up locations to walk with other community members! It’s a safe, socially-distanced way to get some steps in and support the fight to end hunger.

3. **Donate to fight hunger.** Support an individual walker or team by donating to their fundraising goals. Your gifts go directly to providing emergency groceries, hot meals, and so much more to local families.

Start your team today! communityfoodbank.org/HungerWalk

Your generosity today builds a healthy, hunger-free tomorrow.

Planned giving is a way for you to integrate your personal, financial, and estate planning by making lifetime or testamentary charitable gifts.

LEARN MORE Visit plannedgiving.communityfoodbank.org or call Sio Castillo at (520) 882-3308
University of Arizona public health student Nyibol Agot has plans to attend medical school, and she’s already thinking about her future patients.

“I believe in holistic care,” she says. “When you’re taking care of a patient, you need to know things like whether they have enough food at home. Whether they have access to healthy food. What barriers are there.”

Nyibol is one of five students from the UA’s Public Health Undergraduate Network (PHUN) who joined us recently to volunteer at Tucson food distributions.

“It was actually a relief to see that it’s healthy food going out,” says Nyibol. “We were handing out bags of apples. That’s the kind of community resource I want my patients to have if they need it.”

PHUN is a student-led group dedicated to public health education and professional development. And they like to have fun.

“It’s in our name!” says Nyibol. “We’re PHUN. And it’s fun to meet the other volunteers, meet the community members you’re serving, and know you’re doing something that impacts communities.”
Healthy Communities
Hunger is a public health issue! We’re happy to partner with El Rio Community Health Center to hold fresh produce giveaways in underserved communities. Our latest distribution served over 650 community members—all possible with your support!

Growing Together
Our Farm & Garden team trains staff from local libraries to host their own educational garden workshops. This “train the trainer” model means more resources reach more people, and empowers community leaders along the way. Thank you for helping our communities grow!

Food is Love
A guest picking up emergency groceries in Nogales shared this note: “I have always thought of food as love. It is how we show other people we care. I never thought I would need it, but I am so grateful to get food here and for the people who care.”

Partner Spotlight:
Pearce Elementary School

Your gifts provide healthy food & garden education for kids in Cochise County

Kyle Hart, Principal of Pearce Elementary School, is excited about kids learning to garden.

“School gardens are creating a healthy future for these kids,” he says. “We can send students home with food for today from our school pantry, but we also want to start teaching kids where food comes from, what’s healthy, why it matters.”

Pearce Elementary serves a rural area of Cochise County where food access can be difficult. The school’s food pantry, located on school grounds for any families who need it, has been serving the community for the last two years.

With a recent grant from the Community Food Bank, the school is now getting a new garden ready for the new school year. New garden beds, fencing, and ground cover rocks are installed. Next up: canopies to provide shady areas where kids can learn and do homework outdoors.

“The garden is about more than growing food,” says Mr. Hart. “It adds to the complete education our students receive. It will help build skills and confidence for our students as they learn.”

Thank you for helping us grow healthy futures!