



COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK
OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

NOURISHING NEWS

FEBRUARY
2023



Parent-Student Advocate Maricela Sanchez sorts food donations, finds some food on sale, and looks for recipes to offer families. When bananas are abundant, she puts out a banana bread recipe. Lots of veggies? She breaks out a recipe to use them in caldo [soup].

Building Community: Pantry Opens at Apollo Middle School

What used to be a storage closet right near the Apollo Middle School cafeteria is now a school pantry, freshly painted, with shelves stacked with cans of corn and other veggies, peanut butter, cereal, pasta, and fresh produce. Parents are welcome to come once a month and “shop” for free. For a parent like Marta, who has four children, this is a huge help. “This is my first year going to the pantries. Everything is so pricey right now with inflation. This means we don’t have to worry about food for the week.”

The pantry has been a goal of principal Thad Dugan since he arrived at Apollo Middle School four years ago. It’s an idea that was interrupted by COVID, but not abandoned. “Because of safety issues, a lot of schools have been closed off. To me, it’s important to be a hub for the community. We have lots of fast food in this area but not grocery stores. It’s our responsibility to help in any way we can.”

Parents who use the pantry are offered an important option: the chance to choose foods their families will eat. The school hopes to add a mobile food distribution soon, and to invite families from other schools to shop the pantry.



We have families who are struggling.
To me, it’s important we’re here for the community.

Thad Dugan, *Principal, Apollo Middle School*

¡Ahora disponible en español! communityfoodbank.org/newsletters

After the Food Drive: Where Does My Donation Go?

All food drive donations are carefully sorted and inspected by volunteers who check for expiration dates and damaged products. After that, donations head to a part of our warehouse called Agency Market.

Adam Parker, our Allocations Supervisor, tells us more.

Who are these agencies?

We partner with 250 non-profit agencies that serve food on site or create a take home package for people in need. These are schools, libraries, faith communities, shelters, food pantries, Family Resource Centers, smaller food banks and community centers. The food we distribute comes from food drives, food manufacturing and shared excess food from food banks across the nation, as well as local sources such as grocery stores and buying clubs.

What makes donating to a food drive so important?

Donations put food on the table for families in need. Food banks are feeling the effects of supply chain disruptions, inflation, and decreased resources in the wake of the pandemic.

Are there items that are especially popular?

Cans! From tuna fish and soups, to corn and beans, canned food is by far what people are looking for the most. Shelf stable proteins like peanut butter, as well as dry staples like pasta, rice, and flour are also extremely helpful.



You see
the struggle.

The need
is great.

Liberkis is the Family Advocate at Southside Community School, a partner with the Community Food Bank.

She connects families in need of food and says she has seen more people asking for help, including seniors who live in the neighborhood.



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It's an exciting time at the Community Food Bank!

My first 90 days on the job brought so many great opportunities to talk with staff members one on one, hit the road to see our vast service area in Southern Arizona, and listen to volunteers, donors, and many community members who partner with us.

I am impressed by the wide range of services and programs we provide and the hard work we do. Your support allows us to continue with this impactful work. 2023 brings the opportunity to focus even more on getting food into people's hands and making sure we are meeting the essential needs of the entire five-county region we serve.

I am thrilled to be back in Southern Arizona where I grew up. Seeing our food distributions in places from Ajo to Marana, and the broad scope of work from Caridad Community Kitchen to Las Milpitas Farm energizes me, and leaves me even more grateful for your generosity.

Thank you for joining us in our mission to end hunger in our area with dignity, respect and empowerment.

Malea Chavez, CEO
Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona



Garden Beauty

Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and cabbage are packed with Vitamin C and K, and so many other nutrients. These are great winter veggies in Southern Arizona. See what you can grow this spring in our upcoming series of garden workshops!

Go to communityfoodbank.org/events or email garden@communityfoodbank.org.

The Spirit of Giving

It's magic!

We love the lights of Winterhaven, the generous neighborhood who shares their festive space, and the way this tradition calls people to enjoy and to donate!

This year we are blown away by the generosity of Robert Mayer, owner of Arizona Party Bike. Their Party Bikes are one of the few ways you can get around Winterhaven during the Festival of Lights. And this local event holds such an important place in Mayer's heart that he decided to donate ALL of his profits this year to the Community Food Bank.

That came to a donation of \$23,626!

Mayer calls the donation payback for the way Winterhaven Festival of Lights got his new business started back in 2014. "I was totally broke trying to get this business off the ground. Winterhaven ended up being half my revenue for my first year in business. That got me out of the hole and the business expanding."

Mayer's business now operates 30 bikes across several cities and states. He's encouraging other business owners to step forward for their community.

"Between COVID shutdowns and now rising prices, many small business owners have had a lot of fear the last two years. But don't let fear drive your decision making. There is no better act of optimism than giving it away, knowing that tomorrow is another day."

Winterhaven visitors donated 41,480 pounds of food in December, and Mayer's generosity contributed to \$55,189 in funds raised.

 **donated \$23,626!**



Making the Connection

We're reaching out to people in a new way—a cafecito—bringing coffee and conversation to a few of our resource centers.

We started last summer at Caridad Community Kitchen, listening and talking to people. We ask, "What's on your mind today?" and wait and listen. It's a great way for us to hear from our community.

Now once a month, we'll continue these cafecitos not only at Caridad but also in Nogales and Tucson. A guest at the first cafecito in Tucson said he appreciated the gathering because "sometimes older people like us are stuck at home for so long and you are the first people we get to talk to and see in the week".



UPCOMING EVENTS



MARCH 15-19

Haven't heard of the Hotdog Hundred Hike? Time to *ketchup!*

Dress up like a hotdog and join artist Joe Pagac in this FUNdraiser for the Community Food Bank, where you'll hike 100 miles along the Arizona Trail. You can also donate, join the fun, or choose a shorter hike. Learn more at hotdoghike.com

ARIZONA GIVES APRIL 4

Tuesday, April 4th is Arizona Gives Day, 24 hours of online giving that started in 2013. Support the causes you believe in and make our state a better place! You don't even have to wait until April 4th to donate—early giving opens March 15th at azgives.org/communityfoodbank

TAX APRIL 17

Don't forget you have until April 17, 2023 to claim the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit. This is a great way to donate to the Community Food Bank and keep your tax dollars working in our community.

Find more info at communityfoodbank.org/tax-credit

Time to Serve

Board members of the Community Food Bank gathered in December to volunteer in the Gabrielle Giffords Resource Center. They helped people to check in, portioned and sorted food, and loaded carts for distribution.





Too Much of a Good Thing?

If your grapefruit tree is giving you more than you can use, donate the extra at our Super Citrus Saturday collections! We accept any surplus citrus and we'll distribute it to families who can use it.

Learn more at communityfoodbank.org/citrus.

UPCOMING DROP OFF DATES:

February 25 from 11a – 2p at the Fry's Stores at 4036 N. First Avenue and 10661 N. Oracle Road

March 25 from 11a – 2p at the Fry's Stores at 2001 E. Irvington and 7050 E. 22nd Street

Fresh and Local

Our crop planning meeting in January brought together these local growers:

High Energy Agriculture
Merchant's Garden
Double Adobe Farm
Ochoa's Farm

SouthWinds Farm
Forever Yong Farm
Moonlighter Farm
Westover Farm



These farms are situated in areas from midtown Tucson to Cochise County to Marana, growing a variety of crops from garlic, to lettuce, to squash.

There's always plenty to talk about! We continue to work together getting fresh, nutritious, locally grown food into our community. We're planning for food going out through our school pantries and other community partners.



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communityfoodbank.org



The Community Food Bank receives most of its funding from people like you. Supportive public funding includes: City of Tucson, Pima County, USDA, Community Development Block Grants and Community Service Block Grants/Pima County and City of Tucson; Arizona Department of Economic Security/Social Services Block Grant and Arizona Department of Health Services. Community Food Bank programs provide services to eligible participants without regard to race, color, creed, religion, handicap, age, national origin, sexual orientation, political beliefs or gender.