



COMMUNITY  
FOOD BANK  
OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF IMPACT

# NOURISHING NEWS

IN THIS ISSUE: HANDS, HISTORY, AND A HEAPING HELPING OF GENEROSITY **MAY 2026**

## Many Hearts, One Mission

April was National Volunteer Month, and we're thrilled to celebrate all of the incredible individuals who power our work each and every day.

As you may know, last year volunteers gave more than 101,000 hours of their time, the equivalent of over 50 full-time employees. That's not just impressive, it's transformative. Their generosity, compassion, and commitment fuel our mission and strengthen our community in ways that can't be measured.

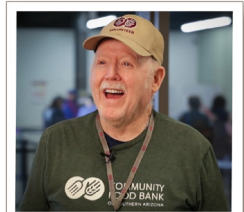
Today, we're proud to spotlight just a few of these remarkable individuals. And to every volunteer, whether featured here or not, please know how deeply grateful we are. You are the heart of this work, and we celebrate you today and every day.



**DENISE**

3 years at Caridad

"We're deeply passionate about supporting those experiencing food insecurity, especially the unsheltered."



**LARRY**

5 years at GGRC

"Coming here gives me a purpose. I feel better when I'm here working."



**ESTELA**

1 year at Nogales

Proud and active member of Grupo Semillas, and participates in several of our educational programs.



**DAN**

10+ yrs at the Garden

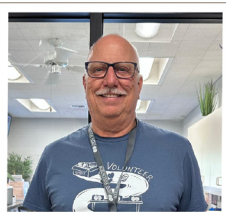
"I volunteer because of the friends I've made and because I like that people get to grow their own food."



**ROBERTA**

8 years at Caridad

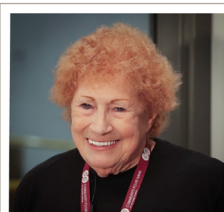
"I value the strong sense of family here at Caridad, and addressing food insecurity is deeply important to me."



**SCOTT**

1 year at GVIAMADO

"I feel fortunate to have found a worthy cause in my retirement."



**LINDA**

4 years at GGRC

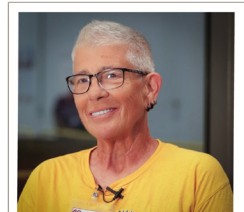
"The more people who volunteer, the more people get fed, and that's what we want."



**ROSEMARY & GERI**

7 & 3 years at Caridad

"I volunteer at the kitchen because I love the community and [these] guys."



**SUSAN**

4 years at GGRC

"If I can do one thing to make anybody's life better & make them have a little food in their stomach, then I'll do it."

# NATALIE'S NOTES



## Hello Friends and Neighbors,

As we celebrate 50 years of the Community Food Bank and look ahead to the future, I keep coming back to a central question: what does it really take to end hunger and build resilient communities?

To me, this means working towards a future where fewer people need our services or those of our partner agencies. And if we get there, that's something to truly celebrate. It also opens the door to something bigger: reimagining how we serve our community in new and meaningful ways.

Can we strengthen our local food system and connect more of that food to our schools and institutions? Can we expand opportunities for people to grow their own food or make healthier choices through nutrition education?

This work is rooted in partnership. The stronger our connections, the more we can build a continuum of care that removes barriers and helps families thrive. When people have access to education, housing, and healthcare, and we're part of that through school pantries, food boxes, and food-as-medicine programs, the impact is lasting.

**Because the truth is, food is more than nourishment. It can be sustenance for the soul, and the solid foundation for strong, thriving communities.**

Natalie Jayroe, Chief Executive Officer  
Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona

## 50 Years of Impact

Fifty years ago, a small warehouse on 4th Avenue opened its doors with one employee, one volunteer, and one donated delivery truck. Its mission was simple: **to fight hunger in Southern Arizona.**

In its first year, the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona distributed 10,000 emergency food boxes. It was a modest start, but it planted the seeds of something extraordinary. As Southern Arizona grew, so did the need. And we grew right alongside it, strengthened by a generous community committed to helping fellow neighbors thrive.

In 1996, we relocated our Tucson location to Country Club Road, a move which reflected both the community's growth and our expanding vision for the future. Also once known as the Punch Woods Multi-Service Center, this facility marked a turning point from a traditional hunger-relief organization into a broader force for hunger and poverty prevention. **In 2011, we renamed the distribution center here the Gabrielle Giffords Resource Center**, honoring the former Congresswoman and longtime supporter of food banks.

*[continued next page]*



The Amado Resource Center began in 1988, when three residents distributed food from a modest 19th-century horse stall. Since moving to Old Nogales Highway in 2002, it has grown into a trusted hub serving up to 1,500 individuals in rural communities every month along the I-19 corridor and as far west as Arivaca.

Food distribution in Green Valley began with the support of a local church and grew into a dedicated center by 1983. As demand increased, the Green Valley Resource Center moved to Continental Road in 1998 to better serve the expanding area.

Incorporated into the Community Food Bank in 2010, the Nogales Resource Center is a true community center. It is our second largest food distribution site serving over 10,000 neighbors across Santa Cruz County every month.

Our Willcox Distribution Center opened in 2015 to help us expand our reach into rural communities, specifically in Southeastern Arizona. The 8,000 square foot warehouse serves as a critical staging point, storing essential food supplies and supporting the logistics that keep mobile distributions in our rural areas running smoothly.

Today, the Community Food Bank is a regional lifeline in our state. Across five counties stretching over 23,000 square miles, our Food Bank now operates four resource centers and a distribution center, up to 18 monthly mobile distribution sites in rural areas, and partners with over 300 local agencies. Last year alone, we distributed more than half a million emergency food boxes and 38 million pounds of food to neighbors facing hunger.

This work cannot be done alone. It's made possible by the dedication of our volunteers and the generosity of our donors. Together, they've helped create lasting impact in our community; one that has grown and strengthened over the past 50 years.

As we look ahead, we're guided by new leadership and a shared vision for the future. We continue to build on our strong foundation, and have tremendous hope for the next 50 years.



## UPCOMING EVENTS



### CAN-TASTIC CREATIONS!

Canstruction Tucson: Build for Hunger is a fun and unique building competition between local architects, engineers, builders, contractors, and designers. Using canned foods and other non-perishable items, these Cansculptures will be built and on display at the Park Place Mall from **June 27th to July 10th** as a larger-than-life art exhibition. This year's theme is Fun and Games! Learn more at [communityfoodbank.org/canstruction](https://communityfoodbank.org/canstruction).



### CAN YOU THINK OF ANYTHING THAT SOUNDS GROOVIER THAN HELPING KIDS?

Did you know one in five children in Arizona faces hunger? On **Tuesday, July 14th**, help kids across Southern Arizona by supporting our Summer Stock Up Day! We're trying to raise \$50,000 in just 24 hours to fund our Summer Nutrition Kits and fill school pantries for the year ahead. Learn more at [communityfoodbank.org/summerstockup](https://communityfoodbank.org/summerstockup)

# Stirring Up Opportunities

At Caridad Community Kitchen, our Culinary Training Program is opening doors for individuals facing barriers to employment, by building skills, confidence, and a pathway to lasting stability. Along the way, students give back by preparing nutritious meals for neighbors, connecting opportunity with service.

With a recent grant of more than \$200,000 from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the program is expanding its impact through student stipends, upgraded kitchen equipment, and additional staffing support during and after training.

For many participants, financial pressure can stand in the way of completing training. These stipends provide critical support, making it possible for students to stay in the program instead of being forced to prioritize immediate income over their potential culinary future.

The updated kitchen equipment is truly enhancing the training experience. By working with tools that reflect typical kitchen environments, students gain practical skills that translate more easily into the workforce and feel prepared from day one.

The grant has also expanded support beyond the classroom. Denielle, our dedicated Student Resource Coordinator, works with participants and alumni, offering guidance as they transition into employment and build stability.

During a recent graduation, the impact of this support came into focus when one graduate shared that her family belongs to the same faith that helped fund the program. Chef Ismael, Culinary Training Program Manager, reflected, **“It was a powerful experience to see her complete the program knowing it was supported, in part, by her own community. It created a full-circle moment that shows how impactful this kind of support can be.”**



COMMUNITY FOOD BANK  
OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF IMPACT

3003 S. Country Club Rd. | Tucson, AZ 85713  
(520) 622-0525 | (800) 950-8681 | [communityfoodbank.org](http://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.

DONATE  
TODAY:



Este boletín está disponible en español: [communityfoodbank.org/newsletters](http://communityfoodbank.org/newsletters)