

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

FALL 2021

Food Bank Helps Single Mom in Need



On a sunny fall morning, Anastasia drives up to receive food assistance at the Food Bank's drive-thru food distribution at our North County Food Bank facility in Vista, which is open daily, Monday through Friday, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for families in need of help.

Anastasia works as an in-home caregiver. She helps homebound seniors and clients with chronic illnesses with bathing, cleaning, cooking, and household chores. "When COVID started, my client with cancer passed away, and then everything closed down. The office where I get work from closed, and I didn't get assigned new clients, so I lost most of my income," says Anastasia.

"I am a single mom. I have an eleven-year-old daughter. Her name is Natalia, and she just started the sixth grade. After COVID started, the schools closed. My daughter used to get free meals at school because we are low income, but the schools closed and I lost my income,

so I started coming to the Food Bank to get food to feed my family," she continues.

"We live in Carlsbad, and we share an apartment with my parents. My parents have one room, and my daughter and I share the other room. My dad is disabled, and my mom works with me as an in-home caregiver. Since our apartment building is for low-income families, we found out about the Food Bank when they put a flyer in the lobby saying if you need help with food, the Food Bank can help."

"So, we started coming to the Food Bank distribution here in Vista. It's about 10 minutes from our apartment, so we don't have to spend a lot of money for gas. We were so thankful because we could come to the Food Bank when we needed food, and everyone at the Food Bank is so kind and helpful."

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NorthCountyFoodBank.org

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Please Help Families Recovering from the Pandemic this Holiday Season

Despite recent improvements in the economy and the lifting of California’s pandemic restrictions over the summer, tens of thousands of families in communities throughout San Diego County continue to struggle with food insecurity and will rely on help from the Food Bank this holiday season.

For many families it will take a long time to fully recover from the financial impacts of the pandemic. Currently, families we serve are facing a number of challenges including: unpaid rent and an end to eviction moratorium, household debt acquired during pandemic to make ends meet, rising food costs due to inflation being at a 13-year high, and San Diego County’s high cost of living for low-wage workers which was a widespread problem even before the pandemic.

The Food Bank continues to feed record numbers of people. Currently, the Food Bank is feeding an average of 550,000 per month through our network of 500 nonprofit partners, our 200 direct food distributions, and through our 35 Super Pantries which are high-volume distribution hubs open throughout the week.

Thanks to our donors’ support, we have been able to maintain our enhanced food distribution programs across the county. Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020 to November 2021, we have distributed approximately 90 million pounds of food which is the equivalent of 75 million meals. That is an astonishing achievement and was only possible thanks to your donations which enabled us to purchase food to meet the exponential increase in need.

This holiday season, we are asking supporters to help us feed those facing food insecurity and families still recovering from the pandemic. Below are a few ways you can help:

- Visit your local Albertsons and Vons and donate to the Food Bank at checkout. Every dollar donated will provide holiday meals to families in need.
- Host a Virtual Food Drive with your business, school, or faith-based organization. We can customize it with your logo.
- Donate securely online as a holiday gift for a friend or loved one. Your honoree will receive a letter of thanks from the Food Bank. Visit SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Holiday.

If you are thinking of making a monetary donation to the Food Bank this holiday season, please remember to donate before Dec. 31. Not only will you help us feed those in need over the holidays, you may also be able to deduct your donation from your 2021 taxes. Remember, every \$1 that you donate provides 5 meals to those in need.

Thank you again for supporting our vital mission in the community.

Casey Castillo,
Interim CEO





A Food Bank volunteer places food in the back of Anastasia's car.

“Without the Food Bank, we wouldn’t have had enough money for food. With a rent increase, bills, car insurance, and utilities, it’s hard to cover all of the bills and pay for food. We would have had to buy cheap food like pasta and rice. Instead, the Food Bank gave us fresh produce, meats, cereal, milk, and lots of healthy food to eat,” says Anastasia.

“We are getting back on our feet. I finally have more work again. We need a bit more time and a bit more help from the Food Bank, but things are getting better.”

“I did make use of the time during COVID. I studied for a Medical Office Specialist certificate at Palomar College, and I’m looking for a new job in a medical

office. I am trained to do insurance claims, make medical appointments, and help new patients.”

“Thanks to the Food Bank, I was able to study during the pandemic so that I can eventually get a better job and take care of my family. I was able to do this because the Food Bank helped us with food, so I didn’t have to worry about feeding my family. My dream is to become a cardiovascular stenographer so I can get a better job and take care of my family,” continues Anastasia.

“With the holidays coming up soon, we are so thankful for the Food Bank because we know that we will be able to get help with food. Last year, we were very lucky to get a family holiday turkey meal box, and we were so grateful for that. It really made our holiday. We thought we would have to skip a holiday meal, but the Food Bank made it possible for us to have a holiday meal. We are so blessed.”

“Every time when we bring food home from the Food Bank, we sit at the table as a family and pray and thank God for the help and everyone who donates to the Food Bank. We are so thankful for the blessings they have given us.”

Super Pantry Program Serves 100,000 People Per Month

In order to meet the increased demand for food assistance and to serve Food Bank clients more quickly, safely, and efficiently, the Food Bank launched our new Super Pantry Program in July 2020.

Currently, 35 Super Pantries, strategically located throughout San Diego County, are operating as high-volume distribution hubs and are open a minimum of 3 days per week. These 35 Super Pantries are collectively serving more than 100,000 people facing food insecurity every month and have distributed more than 15 million pounds of food since July 2020.

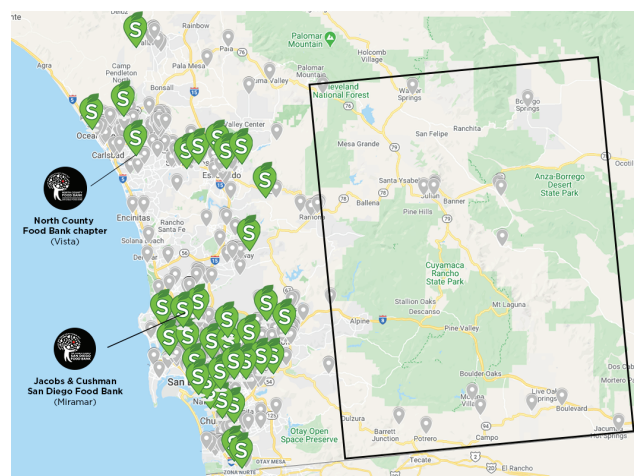
Super Pantries feature contactless food distributions with ‘drive-thru’ lanes and walk-up kiosks. With longer service hours on multiple days every week, the Food Bank is serving thousands of households more quickly, safely, and efficiently.

Despite recent improvements in the economy and the lifting of California’s pandemic restrictions, tens of thousands of families in San Diego County continue to struggle with food insecurity and will rely on help from the Food Bank. Currently, families we serve are facing household debt, back rent, rising food costs, and the region’s high cost of living.

For those in need of food assistance, our GPS food locator can be found at: SanDiegoFoodBank.org/GetHelp.



35 Accessible Locations Throughout San Diego County



MAP LEGEND

- Super Pantry Program Sites**
- Food Program Sites**
(Neighborhood Distribution Program, Senior Food Program, Emergency Food Assistance Program, and Food to Nonprofits Program)
- Mobile Pantry Service Area**



Please Support Our 2021 Holiday Food Drive



Please support this year's Holiday Food Drive campaign happening throughout November and December!

There are many ways you can help provide food to individuals and families in need this holiday season:

- Donate securely online at SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Give. Every \$1 donated provides 5 meals to those in need.
- Visit your local Albertsons or Vons in November and donate to the "Nurturing Neighbors" campaign, which provides full holiday meals to local families in need, including low-income military families.
- Visit your local Albertsons or Vons in December and donate a \$5 Hunger Bag at check out. Food donated through the campaign supports the Food Bank's hunger-relief programs.

Special thanks to our Holiday Food Drive supporters: Albertsons, Vons, Bank of America, First 5 San Diego, Toyota, Wawanesa Insurance, the San Diego Union Tribune, iHeart Radio San Diego, and FOX5.

Thank you for helping us feed the hungry this holiday season.

Thank You to Our Partners



Thank You to Our Supermarket Partners



Thank You to Our Media Partners



Host a "Virtual Food Drive" This Holiday Season

The Food Bank's Virtual Food Drive is an easy way to donate food to families in need and those who have been economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Simply visit the Food Bank's website to select and pay for food items with your credit card securely online using a smartphone, tablet, or computer.

The Virtual Food Drive is great for businesses, civic groups, schools, and faith-based groups to donate food over the holidays.

We can customize the webpage with your organization's logo and set up internal competitions between departments, classes, and groups while giving food drive leaders the ability to monitor your organization's progress.

Check out the Virtual Food Drive online. Visit SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Virtual.



**Save the Date for the Food Bank's 10th Annual
Chefs, Cork & Craft Gala: Hang 10!**
Saturday, April 23, 2022



Mark your calendars for the San Diego Food Bank's 10th annual Chefs, Cork & Craft Gala taking place on Saturday, April 23, 2022.

This year's gala will benefit the Food Bank's COVID-19 Hunger-Relief Response Programs, which are currently serving an estimated 550,000 people per month in communities throughout San Diego County.

The evening gala will celebrate the tenth anniversary of our gala fundraiser with this year's theme, Hang 10, featuring a whimsical surfing aesthetic coupled with elegant coastal-themed décor.

The dinner will take place outside, under the stars, on the grounds of the Food Bank's facility in Miramar to ensure the safety of our guests.

This year's gala will feature live musical entertainment, fabulous silent and live auction items, delicious drinks and hors d'oeuvres during the opening reception and a four-course dinner for gala guests.

For more information and tickets visit
SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Gala or contact Vivian McDonald at:
VMcDonald@SanDiegoFoodBank.org or 858-863-5198

What: The Food Bank's Annual Chefs, Cork & Craft Gala

Where: Outside on the grounds of the Food Bank's facility, 9850 Distribution Avenue, San Diego, 92121

When: Saturday, April 23, 2022, 6 p.m.

Chairs: Ellen Gruer & Cindy Hickman



**Volunteers
Needed at
North County
Food Bank
in Vista**

Our North County Food Bank chapter needs volunteers at our warehouse in Vista.

We need volunteers to help

inspect, sort and package food and to assist the on-site Drive-Thru Super Pantry, which serves about 500+ households per week.

Regular shifts are available Monday through Saturday. Individual volunteers 16 years of age or older and corporate groups are welcome! **To sign up for a shift, visit NorthCountyFoodBank.org/Volunteer.**

**Leave a Legacy in Your Will
or Trust**

Continue to touch lives long into the future by including the Food Bank in your will or estate plans.

Please join our Legacy Circle planned giving program. Your gift will help feed the families of tomorrow and inspire others to make a lasting impact on hunger in San Diego County today.

For more information, visit
SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Legacy or contact Chris Carter at: CCarter@SanDiegoFoodBank.org or 858-863-5131



Special Thanks

Our gratitude goes to the following corporations, foundations, and organizations for their generous support received between June and September 2021.

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