

food thought

FOR

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Heather's Story



"There are bonds between those of us who don't have, and I don't think people realize that."

Nearly 45 percent of the seniors who live in Orange County don't have enough money for their basic necessities. That is a truly alarming statistic on many levels. From a health standpoint, not having enough money to buy nutritious food can worsen many problems including diabetes and hypertension.

Heather is one of the seniors featured in our *30 Faces of Hunger & Hope*.

"I was part of the layoffs in 2001," she told us. "Physically, I went under unexpectedly. That was the beginning of the multitude of disasters that occurred to me. I finally came to the Friendly Center with a great deal of shame."

The Friendly Center, with five locations in Orange County, is one of Second Harvest's partners. They offer more than 20 programs including a Supplemental Food Program. They helped Heather get back on her feet and she also receives groceries including fresh produce. Twice a month, Second Harvest brings the Mobile Pantry to the Friendly Center, distributing more than 10,000 pounds of nutritious produce and other food items to Heather and others in need.

"I work, but I can barely scrape together rent money. Now I volunteer here too, and I found out a lot of other people were in the same position as I was. You can find highly educated people here from all walks of life.

"The Friendly Center is a tremendous place, a safe place. We have a secondary system and we help each other. Those who have a little extra food share that. We get each other to doctor's appointments. There are bonds between those of us who don't have, and I don't think people realize that. It's a really upbeat place to be."

Seniors Skip Meals to Buy Their Medications

Sadly, a lot of seniors we talk to tell us the same thing — they either have to skip meals or buy the cheapest food they can find; items such as fresh vegetables are unaffordable.

The rising costs of rent, utilities, transportation, and medications, plus losses in retirement savings, make it impossible for many seniors to make ends meet. Here in Orange County, 51% of our client households have had to choose between medical care or medicine and food.

Together, we can help. Our **Brown Bag Program** provides bags of groceries to more than 7,000 seniors each month at 37 sites. The food they receive is easy to prepare, nutritious, and selected for the dietary needs of seniors.

Other seniors struggling with hunger come to our food pantries, soup kitchens, or our Mobile Pantries. Every donation that you send helps seniors and all hungry people here in Orange County.



"If I buy the prescriptions I need to keep from getting sick, I can't afford food."



Resolutions You Can Keep!

A Note from Nicole

At the start of every year, I make New Year's resolutions. Like many of us, I make personal resolutions like 'I want to exercise more'. Some years, I'm more successful than others. However, a number of years ago, I also resolved to help my neighbors have a better year and to make my community a better place to live. At Second Harvest, we do that every day.

Each of you can play an important role in making our community stronger and healthier. Surprisingly, it's really easy to do.

So, here are some resolutions you can keep!

- Take a **Nourishing Hope Tour**. It lasts about an hour and you'll learn a lot about hunger in Orange County and the programs we've developed. You can share this knowledge with friends so they too can understand the enormity of the problem. Then you can take the next step;
- **Volunteer at Second Harvest Food Bank**. Even if you have only a few hours a month, you can help at a School Pantry, sort food in our distribution center, harvest crops in our Incredible Edible Farm — there are lots of opportunities.
- **Teach your children more about hunger when they volunteer at Izzy's Corner**. Children ages 7–13 can help kids in their community who are hungry while they have fun with other children packing nutritious food.
- **Join our Harvest Club**, a monthly giving program. Each month, the amount you designate will be automatically charged to your credit card. You can stop or change the amount at any time, and ***you'll be helping hungry neighbors all year long***. If you can't do that right now, please continue your generous donations.

Thank you for partnering with us to end hunger in Orange County.

**Nicole Suydam
CEO | Your Partner**

Harvesters Luncheon and Fashion Show Raises More Than \$470,000



Nicole Suydam, Second Harvest Food Bank CEO, with Melinda Serra and Irene Martino, Event Co-Chairs at the Harvesters Luncheon

Raising money for a worthy cause can be great fun — especially when it's the Harvesters 22nd Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show.

Nearly 400 patrons attended the gala event on October 8 that included a fashion show featuring styles by Dior, Fendi, Gucci, Valentino, and others; a silent auction; a luncheon catered by Patina; and an after-party at the Center Club.

The outstanding event raised more than \$470,000, the equivalent of 1,410,000 meals.

Mark your calendars — the 2015 event will be held on Wednesday, October 7, 2015.

Senior Community Garden Program Launches in January

To help low-income and hungry seniors, Second Harvest has developed the Senior Community Garden program. It provides a community garden setting and comprehensive training to seniors so they can plant, grow, and maintain small vegetable and fruit gardens.

Seniors will enjoy the opportunity to connect with other seniors in a social and educational environment where they can grow healthy produce for themselves. It's a great way to stay active and improve well-being.

UPCOMING EVENTS



JILL WILSON Volunteer, Donor, and Legacy Society Member

Jill Wilson wanted to give back to her community by volunteering, so she researched a few different organizations and chose Second Harvest Food Bank.

"They made it very easy to sign up and starting in 2009, I came every Wednesday morning to help out. We work on the line, sorting groceries and getting them ready for the partner organizations.

"I quickly realized that hunger is a very serious problem in Orange County, however, many people are not aware of the widespread hunger here because Orange County is also an affluent community. I talked to my friends about hunger and brought in bags of food to the food bank for distribution, but I wanted to do more.

"I learned about Second Harvest's monthly giving program, the Harvest Club, and soon after I started volunteering, I joined. Again, they made it very easy. The amount I chose is charged to my credit card every month. It is also helpful for the food bank because when donors give a specific amount each month, they can plan more efficiently.

"I'm amazed at how much is going on here all the time — the School Pantries, Izzy's Corner, nutrition education, the "No Lunch" Lunch event — and it all benefits hungry people.

"The volunteer program is also really fun. The staff at the food bank and the other volunteers connect on a personal level and we look forward to working together. We're all striving for a common goal and it's really great how much we can get done working as a group."

A few years ago, Jill and her husband, Ian, wanted to leave a lasting legacy so they included Second Harvest in their trust plans. "I learned about Second Harvest's Legacy Society, and since we had already made the decision, we became members of the Legacy Society as well."

When asked what she would tell others who are thinking of volunteering or donating, Jill replied, "DO IT! Second Harvest has opportunities for anyone who wants to give in any capacity — volunteering, donating a few times a year, donating regularly, and donating in your will. I'm really glad I'm helping and you will be too!"

January – April Nourishing Hope Tours

Learn more about how we are feeding hungry people and how your understanding and involvement are an integral part of our success.

Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.:

January 13, February 10,
March 10, April 14

Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.:

January 29, February 26, March 26,
April 30, May 28

May 14 Summer Food & Wine Event

Location: Charlie Palmer at Bloomingdale's South Coast Plaza

Enjoy an evening with award-winning wines, gourmet cuisine, an exciting silent auction, and more!

All proceeds will directly benefit Second Harvest's programs to feed the hungry.

May 21 Serving Hope Breakfast

Location: Newport Beach Marriot
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Join us to meet our team, learn more about our programs, and find out how you can make a difference in the lives of Orange County families. The event is free of charge, however space is limited.

For more information, please go to our website, FeedOC.org, and click on events. To RSVP for any of these events, please email

Ericka Arambula,
Ericka@FeedOC.org or call
949.208.3150.

SPOTLIGHT

on our generous donors

We thank our generous donors for their dedication to our mission and for helping to feed hungry people in Orange County:

Walmart Foundation's generosity enabled us to purchase a new refrigerated truck for our Grocery Rescue Program. Their stores in Orange County are also part of this program.

Target's support helps us provide fresh produce through our School Pantry Program.

Feinstein Foundation's Annual \$1 Million Giveaway to Fight Hunger helps organizations throughout the country, including ours, combat hunger.

Cotton Family Foundation: Their enduring support helps us provide nutritious meals to hungry children.

Crean Foundation: For more than 25 years, they have played a key role in our ability to fight hunger in Orange County.

Allergan Foundation helps support our Child Hunger Strategy.

Abbott Foundation helps support our School Pantry Program.

Produce Marketing Association's 2014 Fresh Summit exhibitors donated more than 217,000 pounds of fresh produce.

Partner Development and Support Team Works Closely with Community Organizations



The Partner Development and Support Team (from l to r): Christina Wood, partner services administrator; Kelly King, partner development & support manager; Kim Wilcox, partner development & support coordinator; and Amber Mazmanian, partner program coordinator.

“We recently changed the name of our department from Agency Relations to Partner Development and Support to better reflect what we do,” explained Kelly King, manager. “We work with 320 members in 470 locations throughout Orange County.”

“We work closely with our partners so they can better serve their clients. They rely on us for food — visiting our warehouse on a regular basis to pick up what they need for their clients. Each organization is different, serving from three to 1,400 families every week.”

“We help our partners with capacity building: discussing best practices for food distribution, food storage, refrigeration, and food safety,” Kelly continued. “Over the past few years we have been distributing much more fresh produce, deli, and dairy products — we want to ensure that organizations can handle these items efficiently and safely.”

“We offer our partners the opportunity to schedule Mobile Pantry distributions at their sites and have resources available such as recipes and nutrition tips.”

“We are also talking to our partners about the advantages of *Client Choice* food pantries and helping them to switch from their traditional program if it is appropriate for them. The traditional method involves pre-bagging food. *Client Choice* food pantries set items out like a grocery store and clients choose food according to their dietary needs and preferences. It’s a huge benefit to people who are hungry or need food assistance, and it also benefits the food pantry.”

“Currently, we sponsor a Partner’s Conference once a year. Starting soon, we will also hold quarterly networking events with a theme that encourages partners to learn from us and each other. The closer we can work with our partners, the better it is for everyone.”



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