



of SANTA CLARA and  
SAN MATEO COUNTIES

SUMMER 2013

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



## MILLIE GIVES (AND RECEIVES) FOOD THANKS TO YOU

My name is Millie. I'm not only a Food Bank volunteer but also a client. I first came to the East Palo Alto Senior Center when my husband passed away in 1986.

I started attending a women's therapy group and at one point, the others talked about the food they received from the Food Bank. Since I was on my own, I needed food assistance myself so I took their advice and signed up to receive weekly groceries through the Brown Bag program. I appreciated the help so much, I started to "give back" as a volunteer a few years later. When I started, there were only 4 regular volunteers. We've since tripled to 12 and the fellow seniors we're feeding are more diverse than ever - every background you can imagine all in the same place, needing the same thing: nutritious food.

Week after week, it's remarkable how much the seniors look forward to receiving the food. They come with their canes and walkers. Some of them can hardly walk yet they still want to come in and get the food themselves. We call the weekly food distribution our "Gossip & Family Day." This is the day when the seniors get to come and air out everything going on in their lives. The volunteers and I listen with love while we distribute the food. I am so glad to be part of it!

People come with their children as well as their grandchildren. There are so many families with different generations living under the same roof these days. And the food from Second Harvest really helps - items like eggs, vegetables, canned foods and cereals are just some of the items we hand out. It is such a gift to serve the people and for me to take a bag

home myself. All of us have a smile on our faces when we receive our food. When you look at the need balanced with the generosity of strangers, it really keeps you going.

If more people knew the magnitude of hunger in our area, everyone would donate to Second Harvest. Donations to the Food Bank help everyone: seniors, children and families. I am so proud to be a part of Second Harvest's mission. While the bags of food mean a whole lot to us, it's not just about that. It's in knowing that we haven't been forgotten.

**“ While the bags of food mean a whole lot to us, it's not just about that. It's in knowing that we haven't been forgotten. ”**



## FOOD STAMPS: A SOLUTION THAT WORKS FOR ENDING LOCAL HUNGER

Did you know that 1 in 10 of our neighbors depend on Second Harvest Food Bank for at least some of their food every single month? That staggering number includes children, who can fall behind physically, academically, emotionally and socially as a result of being hungry. It also includes seniors on fixed incomes who are forced to choose between buying food and paying for medication. It's not uncommon for parents in families that struggle with hunger to skip meals, cut portions significantly, or go without food altogether in order to meet their basic financial obligations.



Hunger is a big problem but the good news is - it's solvable. Nationally, 90 billion pounds of food is wasted every year, far more than is needed by nearly 50 million people who struggle with hunger. You don't have to be a "numbers person" to figure out that there is enough food available to feed our hungry neighbors. Hunger is a solvable problem.

One solution that works is CalFresh - our state's name for the federal food stamp program. In recent weeks, the U.S. Congress has been actively debating funding for the food stamp program as a part of the reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Food stamps serve as a necessary safety net and temporary solution for low-income individuals and families struggling during tough times. This safety net means that families have more money available for other purposes - rent, utilities, school supplies for their kids, and transportation costs, just to name a few. But that's not all. The money spent on food from these programs is spent in local grocery stores and at farmers' markets. More than \$11 million dollars was generated in local economic activity last year as a result of Second Harvest's CalFresh outreach efforts.

However, there are still too many people who qualify but are not enrolled in the program. Only about half of the people who are income-eligible for food stamps in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties are enrolled in CalFresh. That's why Second Harvest Food Bank has stepped up its efforts to connect more eligible people to the program through targeted outreach and education, on-the-ground application assistance and in collaboration with local community partners.

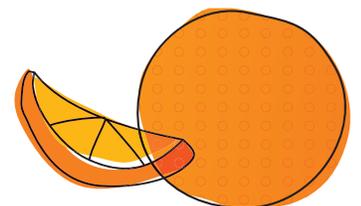
Thanks to your support, we were able to successfully enroll 6,000 individuals in the CalFresh program last year. In this newsletter you will read about one of our success stories. Her name is Amber (see opposite page) and through her story you can see the CalFresh safety net at work. Food assistance enabled this hardworking mom to stay in school and pursue a new career to provide a better, brighter future for herself and her daughter.

Through your gifts to Second Harvest, we are able to connect more families to solutions that work and keep the refrigerators and pantries well-stocked for mothers like Amber. Thank you for making this summer brighter and healthier for our neighbors in need.

In partnership,



**Kathy Jackson**  
CEO, Second Harvest Food Bank



## AMBER & HER DAUGHTER HAVE A BRIGHT FUTURE THANKS TO FOOD STAMPS

My name is Amber and I have a five-year-old daughter. I have always dreamed of pursuing a career in a food or culinary-related field, but was afraid that a work-related injury that limits my mobility would prevent me from realizing this dream. Fortunately, I found a distance learning nutrition program that is allowing me to pursue my passion for food while helping others lead healthier lifestyles.

After graduation, I was required to complete an internship in order to become a registered dietitian. Last summer, Second Harvest's Community Nutrition team welcomed me as a dietetic intern. Through this experience, I created nutrition-themed lessons and provided nutrition information to clients at food distribution sites. I also provided clients with samples of foods cooked with simple recipes, along with tip cards on how to prepare it themselves.

After completing all of the requirements for my nutrition degree, I plan to become a registered dietitian and continue working as a community educator. It's the work that I fell in love with at Second Harvest. The work that is done at the Food Bank is so helpful—the food that's provided, the education that's given—there's a lot of caring going on there. Second Harvest was one of the first food banks in the nation to hire a full-time nutritionist to promote the importance of eating right. I'm proud to be a part of this legacy and receiving the food myself to stay healthy and strong for my daughter. Thank you for helping Second Harvest reach "beyond" their warehouses to put food in the hands of your neighbors just like me.

**“ Without food stamps, I wouldn't be able to stay in school making a better future for myself and my daughter. ”**

What most people wouldn't guess from meeting me is that I rely on Food Stamps (CalFresh). It enables me to complete my internship while providing healthy food for my family. Thanks to CalFresh, I'm able to purchase nutritious staples at the grocery store that give me and my daughter the "fuel" we need to learn and thrive. It's a huge benefit to us! Through careful planning, we have enough food every month to stay healthy. Without food stamps, I wouldn't be able to stay in school making a better future for myself and my daughter.

Prima, (left) Second Harvest Community Nutrition Educator, and Amber, former Food Bank Intern



## TINA SEES THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS EVERY DAY

My name is Tina and I've been working in Second Harvest's Finance department for 7 years. I've seen so much change over the years as the Food Bank has grown to meet the increasing need for food in the community.

In Finance during the holiday season, our staffing resource needs increase dramatically. At one time we would budget to add additional temporary staff to make sure that all of the donations were processed as quickly as possible. We also needed help managing the wide array of grant support we apply for and the complexity each funding stream represents. We knew we needed more people to help process all of this, but didn't want to add to the staff to make that happen. Through the generous influx of skill set volunteers, we have been able to reduce that budgeted expense to zero. Thank you volunteers!

You might think that the Food Bank only needs volunteers to help sort food in the warehouse. The reality is we also need skill based volunteers "behind the scenes" in the office to reduce the amount of administrative tasks for staff like me. Prior to joining our Finance team, volunteers complete a formal interview and background check.

I'm so thankful for the team of nearly a dozen regular volunteers that now support me in everyday needs as well as special projects that would not have been possible without their support. Our volunteers have been so critical in ensuring



we remain an efficient organization. Just the combined hours of our Finance volunteers are equivalent to another full-time staff person, directly saving thousands of dollars each year to increase our ability to provide more food to the community.

My volunteer team is the best example of what a "win-win" situation looks like. Many of them are retired and looking for a meaningful way to contribute their time while others are between jobs, having been laid off but still talented, eager to work and grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in other people's lives. In turn, Second Harvest receives extraordinary support to make sure each dollar that is entrusted to us is handled as quickly and accurately as possible, while still under high levels of confidentiality and security. I also have the added bonus of getting to hear their stories of grandchildren graduating, recent vacations around the world, or the bittersweet news that they finally got a job. Thank you to everyone who generously gives of their time to help end local hunger.

**If you have high-level skills you can share with Second Harvest, email [volunteer@shfb.org](mailto:volunteer@shfb.org) today!**

## SHANNON IS HELPING TO STOP CHILDHOOD HUNGER

My name is Shannon. I recently attended a Giants game at AT&T Park with my husband Kevin. The billboard mentioned that it was a sold-out game with 41,000 attendees. I then realized that we could fill the stadium two and a half times, and that would represent the number of kids Second Harvest Food Bank feeds every month. It was a very moving moment for me because it confirmed that I'm on the right path in supporting their work.

As a mom of two young children, I know if I had to, I would miss a meal, or many meals for that matter, so that my kids could eat. When I heard that parents right here in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties have to make those decisions on a regular basis, my heart broke. My husband and I both grew up with very little and we know what it's like to struggle. Today we feel extremely fortunate and as such, feel compelled to help others. As parents, our top priority is to teach our children to be selfless and to give back to our community whenever, and wherever, they can. It is our job to be role models in this endeavor.

“When I became aware of the pervasiveness of childhood hunger in our community, I knew we had to do something.”



When I became aware of the pervasiveness of childhood hunger in our community, I knew we had to do something. I wanted to step up in a way that would help give these kids a chance - many of whom live just a mile and a half away from our home in San Jose. Hunger is so much closer than you think. That's why we decided to double our gift to Second Harvest Food Bank by making a \$100,000 matching challenge grant. I hope you can join me and my family this summer by making a meaningful gift and speaking out against childhood hunger. Whether you share the fact that 1 in 3 children in our region is at risk of going hungry in the summer or you make a comment on the Food Bank's Facebook page: every voice, every action matters. If each of us who has the means to make a gift contributes more than usual, collectively we can actually **Stop Childhood Hunger**. Thank you for partnering with other concerned parents like me to make a real difference in the future of our community.

Shannon with her daughter Chloe