



of SANTA CLARA and  
SAN MATEO COUNTIES

FALL 2014

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

This summer, Second Harvest's website asked us to "help feed our neighbors in need." On my daily commute, stuck in the slog of Bay Area traffic, I've had many chances to contemplate this message. Now, I want to share what we're always keenly focused on at Second Harvest: *exactly who our neighbors in need are.*

Thanks to our participation in a nationwide survey of hungry Americans, we've developed an even clearer picture of who is seeking Second Harvest's help. Feeding America, our national partner in ending hunger, just announced the results of Hunger in America 2014. The study affirms what we hear from volunteers and staff on the front lines in the fight against hunger, and yet its findings may surprise you.

What stood out most about *Hunger in America 2014* was not just who our clients are, but the agonizing choices they face. To keep hunger at bay, they water down milk, eat food well past its expiration date, and pawn their most valuable possessions. Moms like Irene (see her story on pg. 2) who delay purchasing new school clothes for their kids, and skip their own dinner to keep their children fed, are not alone.

Nearly half of our clients must choose between educational expenses and food. How can we expect the next generation to get ahead when they have to choose between college and eating?

Many Second Harvest supporters believe that our typical client is a homeless adult. Yet while such individuals may be the most visible face of hunger in our community, in fact, 89% of our clients live in permanent housing and 40% of our clients are kids.

*Hunger in America 2014* tells us the vast majority of our clients make an average of \$20,000 or less annually. Did you catch the Silicon Valley Business Journal report that the average monthly apartment rent is \$2,321 in Santa Clara County, and \$2,470 in San Mateo County? Given the astronomical cost of living here, it's not surprising that our neighbors seek food assistance more frequently than their low-income counterparts in other parts of the country. **Second Harvest clients rely on food assistance an average of thirteen times per year; nationwide, food bank clients seek food assistance only eight times per year.**



Even amidst the bustle of the upcoming holiday season, I hope you'll join me to reflect on what our "neighbors in need" sacrifice for their families. Thank you for sharing the joy of a healthy meal with seniors, kids, and families who have nowhere else to turn.

With gratitude,

*Kathy Jackson*

**Kathy Jackson**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Second Harvest Food Bank



● Nationally, clients receive assistance from food banks an average of **eight times per year.**

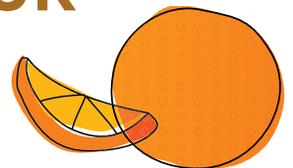


● Locally, clients receive assistance from Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties an average of **thirteen times per year.**

-Hunger in America 2014 study, Feeding America



## NOTHING ELSE MATTERS WHEN YOUR FAMILY IS HUNGRY: MEET IRENE, CHEYENNE, AND DAKOTA



Irene's days often start at 4 a.m., and she doesn't slow down until her volunteer work is done. At a monthly Second Harvest Produce Mobile distribution, she offers potatoes and carrots to community members patiently waiting their turn. "I think that we all have a duty to look after one another. That's why we're here." Irene carves out time to help with the Produce Mobile when she's not booked with the Girl Scouts, 4-H, local churches, and veteran centers.

During the summer, Irene's teenage daughters, Cheyenne and Dakota, volunteer alongside her. Giving back is especially meaningful to the family, because they've weathered tough times themselves. Dakota shares, "The struggles we've gone through with our family make me realize that other families have gone through the same thing."

Irene is unable to work due to a disability. Though her husband has a steady job, in our region, one full-time job is not always enough to put food on the table.

"The high cost of living makes it just about impossible for anyone to feed a family," Irene says. "There were times when I felt completely hopeless about our situation. I didn't know how I was going to feed my family." Though Irene downplays the sacrifices she's made, her children know what she's given up. They can remember their mom skipping meals so that they would have enough to eat.

"I wanted to give up," Irene says, "but my kids needed me, so I had to do something. That's when I heard about the Food Bank."

The family's rough patch is mostly behind them, but for a while, hunger disrupted their daily lives. Irene reflects: "Hunger affects not only their moods, their health, the whole house—it just upsets the family dynamic."

Today, Irene and her family depend on a monthly bag of fresh produce from the same distribution site where she volunteers. With her steadfast volunteering, Irene is part of the solution to local hunger, and she shares her thanks with her fellow Second Harvest supporters: "Everything they donate is benefiting someone's heart, health or financial situation. Because they chose to support Second Harvest, we have the resources each month to provide healthy food to our families. It gives us hope."

**“Hunger affects not only their moods, their health, the whole house—it just upsets the family dynamic.”**

# SEAN SHARES HIS BIRTHDAY WITH HUNGRY KIDS IN OUR COMMUNITY



For Sean's birthday, he planned to bring his friends to Second Harvest's warehouse to sort food for families in need. However, Second Harvest can only accept volunteers over the age of fourteen—and Sean was just a year shy of the cutoff. Undeterred, Sean came up with a creative way to fight local hunger. He asked his friends and family to donate to Second Harvest. Here are his reflections on giving back to the community:

Each year on my birthday, I've asked my friends and family to support a good cause instead of buying a gift. My family's been helping me do that for the past ten years. Usually, I donate to marine causes, because I think it's important to stop pollution in the oceans. But this year, I wanted to do something about local hunger.

I learned that a lot of kids depend on their schools for breakfast and lunch. In the summer, kids need something to rely on. If I was in their position, I would be afraid of summertime. Most of us have what we need, and we can look forward to the summer.

My family believes we should pay it forward. It's essential.

To other people who are thinking about donating, I'd say to think about it from a hungry kid's point of view. Put yourself in their shoes. It really comes down to wants and needs: I'm privileged enough to have the things that I want. But there are kids who don't even have the things they need.



*Sean's act of generosity will translate to 4,012 meals to families in our community! If you're interested in "donating" your birthday, anniversary, or other milestone, please contact Deborah McGaw at [dmcgaw@shfb.org](mailto:dmcgaw@shfb.org). You can also create an online fundraising page like Sean did.*

*If you know someone a little too young to volunteer on-site at Second Harvest, consider hosting your own food sort at home, to bag up food for families in need. Visit our website for [www.shfb.org/volunteer](http://www.shfb.org/volunteer) for inspiration.*

## "WHEN I HELP MY COMMUNITY, I HELP MYSELF": SANDRA'S STORY

In the food distribution line at Our Lady of Guadalupe church, Sandra is the first volunteer that hundreds of people meet. Sandra greets every person with a cheerful "good morning" or "buenos días." She works up a sweat doling out broccoli, carrots, onions, and strawberries to alleviate her neighbors' hunger. Here's her story:

I've lived in San Jose since I was a teenager. I have one child and I'm also taking care of two young adults who don't have parents in the states. I'm very involved with my church, Our Lady of Guadalupe. People tell me I'm really good at praying the rosary, so I make time to do that at funerals.

For 28 years, I worked at a dry-cleaning business. I worked my way up to manage 33 employees. But two years ago, I was laid off. I tried to make it on my own, but eventually, I knew I had to get food for my kids.

**“When I asked for food at my church for the first time, I was crying. I put on my hat to cover my head, I was so ashamed. But after that, I saw a lot of people who were going through the same thing. I felt comfortable.”**

Ever since, I've been volunteering with the food distribution. At my job, I learned a lot of good customer service skills, and that has helped me in my role as a volunteer.

At first, I couldn't believe how many people in my community depended on the groceries we give out. Every Wednesday and Thursday, hundreds of people come here to pick up food.



Everybody volunteers with a lot of heart. As a volunteer, I try to treat everyone with respect. When I help my community, I help myself.



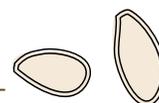
## MAKE A GIFT THAT MATTERS: DONATE FROM YOUR RETIREMENT PLAN AS PART OF YOUR ESTATE PLAN

A retirement plan can be a tax-efficient and simple way to leave a legacy! You can help future generations by naming Second Harvest as a beneficiary on your plan's beneficiary designation form.

With the exception of Roth IRAs, most retirement plans are subject to income taxes and possibly estate taxes if left to an individual beneficiary. However, if a charity is named as the beneficiary, the charity doesn't pay income or estate taxes on the distribution. This means that Second Harvest can use the full value of what is distributed as a gift from your estate.

To name Second Harvest as a beneficiary, you can obtain a beneficiary designation form from your IRA plan administrator. That form usually requires the name of the beneficiary (Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties), our address (750 Curtner Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125), and our tax identification number

(94-2614101). If you are comfortable, we will also recognize your commitment by including you on the Ashawna Hailey Legacy Society donor wall featured at our Cypress Center.



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 If you have any questions, or would like to receive invitations to Second Harvest Food Bank estate planning seminars, please contact Tracey Thurston, Associate Director of Individual Major Gifts, at 408-266-8866 ext. 436 or [tthurston@shfb.org](mailto:tthurston@shfb.org).

## WORKING HARD 30 YEARS AFTER RETIREMENT: MEET CHRIS



Second Harvest's Brown Bag program provides nutritious groceries, plus the healthy camaraderie of volunteering, to senior citizens. Chris, the Brown Bag Site Coordinator at Sacred Heart Church, is a native San Jose resident and a loyal volunteer.

Part of a large Italian-American family, Chris grew up picking plums in the Bay Area. After finishing school at fifteen, she immediately took a job in South San Francisco. Eventually, she worked her way up into a supervisory position at a cannery, a job she retired from at age 55.

Two years after Chris retired, her older sister volunteered at Sacred Heart's food distribution, announcing, "You're comin'! I need you!" Second Harvest has needed Chris ever since, as she's served as the Site Coordinator for the Brown Bag program for the past thirty years.

Volunteering is still a family affair for Chris, as she's recruited the next generation of her family into it. Her 73-year-old nephew and his sons volunteer under her watch. "I've got quite a good crew," she brags.

Over time, Chris has witnessed the face of hunger change. Recently, she's met people in their 30s and 40s, who were laid off and seeking



food at Brown Bag sites—which is specifically for seniors. Chris often has to refer younger people to different food distribution programs that cater to younger adults, but "I always tell them to come back at the end of the distribution, and I give them what's left over."

Chris's firsthand experiences echo in Hunger in America 2014: In 74% of households served by Second Harvest, the member who worked the most in the past 12 months was unemployed at the time of the survey.

Chris has been a steady part of Second Harvest's expanding services to meet the growing need. While she's seen San Jose change from bountiful walnut orchards to sprawling tech industry complexes, some things never change: "It gives me great pleasure to volunteer. Every single person is grateful. I've not heard anyone complain in thirty years, and I've only missed three shifts!"