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**CHILDHOOD HUNGER IN SILICON VALLEY IS OFTEN HIDDEN  
SECOND HARVEST LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO FOCUS ATTENTION  
ON THE 1 IN 3 KIDS AT RISK OF HUNGER**

***John and Eileen Donahoe, Bill and Amy Gurley and Sheryl Sandberg lead effort***

**SAN JOSE, Calif., April 24, 2019** – Kids need nutritious food to grow up strong and healthy, but in Silicon Valley, more and more families are sacrificing nutritious food for housing. A recent [report by CityLab](#) shows how low and even middle-income residents can't afford to buy food in areas like Silicon Valley where housing costs take up so much of their budget. Second Harvest Food Bank is feeding a record number of kids and families – an average of 260,000 people every month, including more than 87,000 kids. But hunger in wealthy areas like Silicon Valley is often hidden, so people don't realize that many of the kids they see aren't getting the nutritious food they need to thrive.

That's why Second Harvest's campaign For the Kids is so critical. The Food Bank recently launched the campaign to focus attention on childhood hunger and raise \$10 million to ensure that any child who needs a healthy meal can get one.

"People I talk to are often shocked to learn that 1 in 3 kids in Silicon Valley is at risk of hunger," said Leslie Bacho, CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. "We really need to shine a light on this issue. Nutritious food is a game-changer for kids because it provides the fuel they need to succeed in school, at the playground and for long-term health."

A major focus of Second Harvest's effort to reach more kids and families with healthy food is its school pantry program. Four years ago Second Harvest launched an intensive effort to open a network of school pantries – where families can pick up groceries and fresh produce right in their own neighborhood, learn more about nutrition, and get connected to other resources like CalFresh (food stamps). In that time, Second Harvest has increased the number of K-12 schools served by its pantry program from 14 to 133 – a whopping 850 percent jump in just four years.

Second Harvest also has food pantries at every community college in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, as well as at San at Jose State University and two private colleges. College students are an often-overlooked group of young people who struggle to get enough healthy food in one of the most expensive housing markets in the U.S. [A recent assessment](#) of college hunger released by the California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA) found that 41.6 percent of CSU students and 44 percent of UC undergraduate students experience food insecurity. That number jumps to 50 percent for community college students in California.

Studies show that kids who don't get enough to eat often suffer emotional and physical effects that can hurt their ability to do well in school and succeed later in life. Hunger and food insecurity among college students has been associated with poorer health, poorer academic performance, and more feelings of depression and anxiety. But studies also show that kids who have access to food-assistance programs score higher on tests, and have better math and reading skills, than kids who don't.

"It's unacceptable that kids in our community have to go to bed on an empty stomach or sit in class while their stomachs growl," Bacho said. "We have to do what it takes to ensure that every kid, teen and college student has access to nutritious food. Part of that effort is making sure people know how big the problem is. Every day, at school, at the playground, even at the grocery store, you likely see kids who don't have consistent access to healthy food. But it doesn't have to be that way. Hunger is a solvable issue if we all work together."

### **Feed Kids, Nourish Lives**

Making sure the next generation of innovators has access to nutritious food is such a critical issue that local business leaders are committed to the campaign. This year's co-chairs include John Donahoe, CEO of ServiceNow; Eileen Donahoe, executive director of global digital policy incubator at Stanford's Center for Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law; Bill Gurley, founding partner at Benchmark Capital, and Amy Gurley; and Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook and founder of Leanin.org.

"We all need to be committed to ending childhood hunger in our community," Sandberg said. "It's heartbreaking – and unacceptable – that 1 out of 3 children in our area are at risk for food insecurity."

Dollars raised during the campaign will be used to open more pantries and explore new and innovative ways to connect more kids and families to food when, where and how they need it. Second Harvest plans to open six to 12 more school pantries this year. The Food Bank is also reaching more kids by distributing food at 57 affordable housing complexes so families can get fresh produce and healthy groceries right where they live. Second Harvest plans to add six more this year.

In addition to opening new school pantries and distributing more food to local families, Second Harvest is intensifying its effort to leverage public food resources like school meals and other federally funded programs aimed at keeping kids and families fed. Second Harvest is collaborating with schools, libraries, community organizations, government entities and others so kids can get healthy meals during the school year and all summer long.

Based in Silicon Valley, Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties is one of the largest food banks in the nation. Currently providing food to an average of 260,000 people every month, Second Harvest is a trusted community-based organization that was founded in 1974. Despite the immense wealth in Silicon Valley, and partly due to the high cost of living, hunger and malnutrition are pervasive. The Food Bank distributes nutritious food, including more fresh produce than almost any other food bank in the country, through a network of 309 nonprofit partners at 985 sites. Second Harvest is pursuing innovative efforts to increase access to food resources as it seeks to feed more hungry people each month. To reach more people, it advocates for anti-hunger policies and connects those in need to federal nutrition programs and other food resources. To learn more about how Second Harvest is building a hunger-free community, visit [SHFB.org](http://SHFB.org).

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