

FALL 2014

# BREAD CONNECTION

A Not Quite Quarterly publication of Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

# TURN ORANGE FOR HUNGER RELIEF

Every September, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano joins Feeding America to **Turn Orange™** for Hunger Action Month. We ask supporters to become part of the nationwide movement to solve hunger, all month long.

## 3 EASY WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

**TURN ORANGE** Orange is the official color of hunger awareness. By wearing orange every Thursday in September you make a bold statement to start the conversation about hunger.

**DONATE** at [www.foodbankccs.org/hungeractionmonth](http://www.foodbankccs.org/hungeractionmonth) and share your action! Or hold a food drive with your neighbors, at work or at your place of worship. Each dollar provides two nutritious meals.

**SHARE** Turn your Facebook and Twitter profiles orange for the month and let everyone know you're taking action! Share Turn Orange pics and actions you've taken with @FoodBankCCS and @FeedingAmerica via social media and use the hashtag #HungerAction. Invite the Food Bank to share about hunger at your school, business or place of worship.



Today Show anchor, Savannah Guthrie Turned Orange for Hunger Relief in 2013

Visit [www.foodbankccs.org/HungerActionMonth](http://www.foodbankccs.org/HungerActionMonth) for more easy ways to take action.



Find out how you can get a limited edition Turn Orange T-Shirt designed by Yuko Lau at

[www.foodbankccs.org/hungeractionmonth](http://www.foodbankccs.org/hungeractionmonth)

## Taking the Hunger Challenge to Gain Empathy



As part of Hunger Action Month staff and supporters of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano try to experience what it's like to live on a dramatically reduced food budget like that of a CalFresh recipient (formerly known as Food Stamps). Many

of us witness hunger firsthand, but it's hard to truly understand how it feels.

After taking the challenge last year, I have a new understanding of how it feels to make hard choices in the grocery store and sometimes go to bed hungry. Living on a food budget of just \$4.50 a day doesn't leave room for a lot of variety or fresh fruits and vegetables. Focus and concentration are also major concerns.

While it is impossible to fully comprehend the difficult decisions low-income families face, taking the Hunger Challenge this September will help raise awareness about the issue of hunger in America.

I invite you to sign up to take the Hunger Challenge with us the week of September 15 to the 19. You can sign up at [www.foodbankccs.org/hungerchallenge](http://www.foodbankccs.org/hungerchallenge).

Larry Sly  
Executive Director



Get periodic updates about how you are helping us end hunger at [www.foodbankccs.org/enews](http://www.foodbankccs.org/enews)

## 7 Tips for Your Best Holiday Food and Fund Drive

Hosting a food or fund drive is easier than you think! With these tips you will be on your way to helping provide food to your neighbors in need all year long.

**Set a goal** - Decide how many pounds of food or dollars you will raise by a specific date. Setting a goal is motivating by giving your team and supporters something to aim for. Be sure to let the Food Bank know your plans, so we are prepared to provide support.

**Gather your team** - Food and fund drives are more fun with friends! Who do you know that is passionate about helping others and will help you spread the word? Team members are a great source for encouragement and maybe even friendly competition!

**Let us help with the details** - The Food Bank has resources to help with your drive from collection barrel or box drop-off/ pick-up to sample emails, hunger facts, flyers and posters. Barrels are only recommended for drives that collect over 100 pounds (one can of food weighs about one pound).

**Funds help too** - With special deals and bulk purchasing, the Food Bank can provide \$4 worth of nutritious food for every \$1 donated. Let us set up your custom virtual food drive or add a fundraising component to your food drive for people who prefer to donate funds.

**Promote** - Send a personal email to your family and friends with your goal to start off strong. Share the momentum with your social media contacts, coworkers, and neighbors to help reach your goal. Remind them about your drive and progress often to get more support.

**Give us a call** - During this busy time of year, make sure to set a pick-up date in advance with our Food Drive Coordinator. You can also bring your donations to either Food Bank location during warehouse hours. We'll let you know how many pounds were collected so you can share the success with your team and supporters.

**Share your results** - Be sure to personally thank your supporters because they care about the cause and care about you! Tag supporters in a Facebook post to let everyone know how much they helped!

**Find everything you need at**  
[www.foodbankccs.org/fooddrive](http://www.foodbankccs.org/fooddrive)

## Your support makes the holidays better for families like Marla's



Monopoly money, something I remember thinking as a young child standing impatiently by my mother's side, watching her tear paper coupons out of a book and hand them to the cashier. I was too young to understand anything different about the poverty my brothers and I grew up in. Not long ago, I found myself in a similar situation. A few years back, instead of waking up Christmas morning excited about opening presents like most children, my oldest daughter Lilia ran into my room and jumped on my bed exclaiming to the world that she knew it was Christmas because Santa had come and filled up the kitchen with food. That was my epiphany. I'm Marla Williams and this is the window into the life of a struggling family. A mother determined to break the cycle of poverty. A woman fueled by the love of my family, my community, my education, and leadership.

Our family has faced some challenges in the past few years. In July 2008, I held a job in the mortgage industry that paid fairly well. Two years later, I was laid off. Michael, my husband, is a veteran

who has served two tours in Iraq. He was enrolled at Los Medanos College working on his associate's degree at that time and employed full-time making minimum wage. Through the discouragement of the situation, the children had to adapt suddenly to several new changes at once. They went from a life that was comfortable to a life that left them struggling. They have slept in the backseat in the early hours of morning while I worked a second job throwing newspapers out of the car window to make ends meet. My daughters, Lilia and Toria, know what it is to be hungry and go without. It is their love that keeps my husband and I motivated.

I decided to seek out help within my community. I went to social services to see what programs I might qualify for to temporarily better our situation. After the frustration of being told we make too much money for some forms of assistance, I discovered that we could get help with groceries and fresh produce from the Food Bank.

After taking career training courses, I am helping my family change our circumstances, the holidays this year will look different for my girls. Michael is no longer working at a minimum wage job, however money is still tight. **The Food Bank is the glue that holds struggling families together when we have expenses like a \$900.00 car repair and there isn't enough money left over to buy groceries.** I went to the local pantry to pick up groceries just this morning so we can make it until his next payday this Friday.

I'm a dedicated individual when it comes to making our communities more resourceful for families in need. I believe in the power one individual can have to change not only their circumstances for the better but for the community around them as well. My family is on our way to no longer needing support from the Food Bank, but many like us are still in need of a helping hand. I will continue to fight to save community programs that are so vital to hundreds of families facing financial challenges in this economy.

# Inside the Food Bank



Most produce is donated from California growers with a service cost averaging 12 cents per pound. We also receive produce from community gardens and grocery stores. Because of your support we have been able to provide over 1 million pounds of fresh produce every month of 2014.

Through special deals and bulk purchasing, the Food Bank is able to purchase \$4 worth of nutritious food with every \$1 donated. Keeping nutrition top of mind we are able to provide brown rice, dried beans, lentils and low-sodium canned tomatoes and vegetables.



Over 50% of our funds come from individuals like you! We take that responsibility seriously and work to be good stewards of your gifts. In fact, 96 cents of every dollar goes directly to food programs. Thank you for working with us to end hunger in your community.

## Upcoming Events

Invite us to be part of your holiday celebrations or attend one of these events. Find more details on the web [www.foodbankccs.org/events](http://www.foodbankccs.org/events)

### SEPTEMBER 27

Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek Community Service Days

### NOVEMBER 1

Gourmet East Bay  
Broadway Plaza

### NOVEMBER 6

Moraga Golf Tournament  
Moraga Country Club

### NOVEMBER 15

Scouting for Food

### DECEMBER 13, 14

Fairfield Holiday Boutique Food Drive

## Ending hunger together

Visit [www.foodbankccs.org](http://www.foodbankccs.org)  
Call 855-309-FOOD

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AMERICA**<sup>TM</sup>