



“The impact the Food Bank makes on this community will always be important to me.”

Wrapping up the career of a lifetime

As a valued supporter of our work, I wanted to let you know I am preparing to retire from the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. When I accepted the job as a truck driver - fresh out of college - for the newly-formed Food Bank in 1976, I had no idea I would end up providing leadership for the organization for over 43 years.

I feel like the luckiest person in the world to have had a professional life dedicated to helping provide healthy food to people in our community. Now it is time for me to shift gears and start using my hiking boots and kayak on a regular basis. There's a good chance I will end up volunteering somewhere because I am built that way.

The impact the Food Bank makes on this community will always be important to me and I am committed to making the transition to new leadership a smooth one. In preparation for my departure, our Board of Directors established a Transition Committee to find the right person to lead the organization and ensure its future success. I have absolute confidence that our leadership team is ready to skillfully move us into this new chapter for the Food Bank. And I have no doubt the Food Bank will remain steadfast in partnering with our community to end hunger, so your support remains vital.

We value your commitment to the Food Bank and hope that you will reach out if you have any questions or concerns. Please feel free to contact me at 925-771-1300. You can also contact Kim Castaneda, our Development Director, at 925-849-8365.



"The culture, values, and mission of the organization will serve as the foundation of the search process."

A NOTE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

We are so happy for Larry as he starts this new chapter of his life. We are also grateful to have a team of professionals dedicated to finding the right person to carry on the mission.

As you read on the cover, Larry Sly has announced his plans to retire. Larry has provided outstanding leadership to the Food Bank and its mission to end hunger.

We deeply appreciate his dedication and the significant legacy of achievement and service he has created over the past four decades. We wish him all the best as he starts his next chapter.

Larry is continuing his role as Executive Director through the search and selection process for his successor and is using his remaining time with the organization to help ensure a smooth transition for his successor. Behind the scenes, the Food Bank's leadership team has been working closely with our dedicated Board of Directors to also ensure a successful transition process.

We are excited to find a new Executive Director who will embrace the culture, values, and mission of this organization and lead the Food Bank into the future.

Tracy M. Tomkovicz
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
Board of Directors, Chair

To continue Larry's mission to end hunger, donate at
foodbankccs.org/newsletter

RETROSPECTIVE

Leading the fight to end hunger

Larry Sly has seen a lot of growth in the Food Bank since his career began in 1976. Under his leadership, the Food Bank has become a vital resource that focuses on people first.

"The Community Food Coalition is constantly looking for ways to combat the twin problems of hunger and food waste in the county."

- Martinez News Gazette, 1979

"50 persons were signed up immediately. The need is even greater than anticipated."
-Josephine Bohakel:
Senior Food program
Volunteer at the first
site in Antioch, 1979




"Do kids like eating fruits and veggies? You bet they do. At a basketball game held afterschool, a box of apples was put on a table next to the snack stand. The garbage can was full of apple cores after the game, and the coach from the visiting team asked if he could have apples for his team to eat on the bus ride home."

-Newsletter article four months after the Farm 2 Kids program began

"Providing healthy food to the people we serve is the right thing to do."
-Larry Sly



- 1975 ● Community Food Coalition founded
- 1976 ● Larry Sly becomes Executive Director
- 1979 ● Senior Food program begins
- 1982 ● Food Coalition joins Second Harvest Network (now Feeding America)
- 1991 ● Name changes to Contra Costa Food Bank
- 1992 ● Food for Children program begins
- 1995 ● Food Bank of Contra Costa merges with Solano Food Bank
- 2001 ● Food Stamp outreach begins 
- 2007 ● Farm 2 Kids program begins
- 2012 ● Community Produce program begins
- 2015 ● 40th Anniversary
- 2017 ● College Pantry program begins
- 2018 ● Mobile Food Pharmacy begins
- 2019 ● Food Distribution exceeds 25 million pounds per year



Students shop the Los Medanos pantry for staples and ready-to-eat foods.

THEIR STORY

Hunger sidelines higher education

Since 2017, the Food Bank has been partnering with local colleges to make sure students can worry more about exams than when they will eat again.

Although many people look back at their days of being a "poor college student" living on ramen noodles as some sort of rite of passage, hunger on college campuses today is a real problem affecting students from all walks of life.

Almost half of local college students struggle to afford food due to the increasing costs of housing, tuition, and books.

Though their ages span decades, all college students have the common desire to get a proper education and hunger should not get in their way. Some of these students are single parents, some are the first ones in their families to pursue higher education, and some are struggling to balance going to school with working a full-time job.

We hear their stories daily. David, who is now in his late 20's, explained what it felt like to experience true hunger while he attended college, "To know that you can't get that basic need of food met, which is a must-have for survival, was frightening."

Another story we recently heard came from a young volunteer who was inspired to help at the Food Bank after what he saw his friend go through in college. His friend could no longer afford his apartment and he ended up living in his car for a while. "He wasn't eating healthy and since he didn't have access to a kitchen, he couldn't cook. He wasn't eating three meals a day, more like once a day and he ate as cheaply as possible. He became irritable and way more stressed."

To combat this growing problem, the Food Bank partners with six local colleges through our College Pantry Program. Each college pantry operates with the help of a staff member and many student volunteers. Most pantries are open 5-days a week and enrolled students can pick up free nutritious groceries and ready-to-eat snacks at these mini-markets.

One student attending CSU East Bay shared with us, "I'm able to study more and worry less about what I'm going to eat." This sentiment was the consensus when we recently surveyed junior college and 4-year university students participating in our college pantry programs. In fact, 97% reported being more focused in class since using their pantry.

When students have the necessary tools to succeed, such as proper nutrition, our entire community benefits. The College Pantry Program changes lives for those who are pursuing their education today, so they can better provide for themselves and their families tomorrow. We thank you for your support, because we simply couldn't make this impact on our community without you.

YOUR GIFT TO END COLLEGE HUNGER WILL BE MATCHED

Right now you have the power to help college students focus on studying instead of worrying about being hungry. **Give now to have your gift matched, dollar for dollar.**

foodbankccs.org/collegematch

"I am able to get healthy food for me and my daughter while on campus which has really helped." -College Pantry Participant



Students and pantry participants at Los Medanos College learn some budget cooking skills.



The Diablo Valley College Pantry celebrates opening. They have provided nearly 20,000 meals since 2018.



Featured Partner: John Muir Health

WHY WE GIVE

John Muir Health has long been a supporter of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. As a health system, we have contributed annual funding since 2008. We are proud of the diverse programming that we are able to support, which includes the Food Bank's first mobile pantry (the Community Produce Program), food pantries at local colleges and the Hunger Study research project.

John Muir Health is most proud of our role in the Community Produce Program. In 2012 the John Muir/Mt. Diablo Community Health Fund, supported by John Muir Health, provided funding to allow the Food Bank to buy its first customized truck that serves as a mobile produce market, plus hire a driver and a nutrition educator. The program delivers fresh food to more than 50 sites in Contra Costa and Solano counties, serving 3,200 families each month and fostering health in our local neighborhoods.

Food insecurity has become such a pressing

need in our community and with resources like the Food Bank, people are able to more confidently make healthy choices for themselves and their families.

John Muir Health also recognized that there was need to better understand the state of hunger in our community and how health was directly impacted by food accessibility. Our support of the 2018 Hunger Study helped shed light on many food-related issues that were previously overlooked – such as the tough no-win choices people need to make daily between providing food on the table or paying rent/mortgage.

John Muir Health values the collaborative nature of our partnership. Creating healthier communities is a core value of ours, and providing access to healthy foods aligns with our mission of improving the health of the communities we serve with quality and compassion.

EVENTS

Empty Bowls remains a favorite

From ladies' night to family time, Empty Bowls has something for everyone

Community comes together in one of our most-loved events of the year - Empty Bowls! Families, local business leaders, and long-time Food Bank supporters come together to share a meal and a cause.

Guests enjoy a simple meal served in a handcrafted bowl while learning how the Food Bank is working to get more nutritious food to people in need.

The bowl is yours to keep as a reminder of the empty bowls in our community.

Reserve your place today

When and Where

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

Fairfield Warehouse

October 12th, 2019
4:00-6:00pm

Concord Warehouse

October 13th, 2019
4:00-6:00pm

Reserve your place at:

foodbankccs.org/emptybowls

Sponsorships are available.



4010 Nelson Avenue
Concord, CA 94520

Return Service Requested



**BALSAMIC
ONION AND
THYME CARROTS**

cookinglight.com

Photo: Jennifer Causey

1 Tbsp. olive oil
2 cups sliced yellow
onion
Dash of baking soda
1/2 cup water
14 ounces carrots,
cut into 1-1/2 in.
pieces
2 Tbsp. balsamic
vinegar
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. chopped
fresh thyme
1/4 tsp. kosher salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper



Heat 1 Tbsp. olive oil in a skillet over medium-high. Add onion and baking soda; cook 10 minutes. Add water and carrots to pan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered for 6 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high; cook uncovered for 4 minutes or until liquid evaporates. Add vinegar, 1 Tbsp. olive oil, thyme, salt, and pepper.

AT-THE-TABLE

Right now you have the power to help college students focus on studying instead of worrying about being hungry. **Give now to have your gift matched, dollar for dollar.**

foodbankccs.org/collegematch

Learn more about the real problem of college hunger inside this edition of *At The Table*.