



Because of you, hunger isn't on the syllabus

When Nathan, a bioscience major at Contra Costa College, heads home after a busy day of studying, he knows he will be able to unwind by cooking a nutritious meal — thanks to you!

With your support, we're partnering with our local community colleges and adult education centers to ensure students can access nourishing food to fuel their studies. At Contra Costa College, students can access food you help provide through the college's food pantry and refrigerated food lockers (accessible whenever campus is open). The Food Bank also holds distributions on campus open to students and the public.

"It was like a miracle when I heard about this place," shares Nathan, who recently lost access to benefits that were helping to stretch his budget. He prefers to visit the college's food pantry, where he

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You're building a food-secure community

**SPEAKING UP FOR
CALIFORNIA FAMILIES**

**FIGHTING THE ROOT
CAUSES OF HUNGER**

**CHAMPIONING FOOD
EQUITY FOR EVERY
COLLEGE STUDENT**



CEO message

Over the past few years, you've supported the Food Bank through challenges we would never have expected in our lifetime. But, because caring community members like you stood with us, we've been able to support our community through funding cuts, benefit disruptions, and more.

Your support not only ensures that over 79,000 households can put food on their tables each month – it is building a food-secure community in Contra Costa and Solano Counties.

In this edition, you'll see how you are helping us to invest in partnerships with schools and smaller hunger-fighting nonprofits, who can help

our neighbors access post-secondary education, affordable housing, and other resources to help them thrive.

As **changes to CalFresh/SNAP eligibility push more than 33,000 of your neighbors off food benefits**, these local partnerships are critical to ensure we can continue to support our community. Filling the gap for our neighbors will take all of us working together.

The Food Bank was created to be a temporary support to help families find stability in moments of crisis. Today, we still provide that support, and so much more, because of you. Thank you for helping us continue to build a food-secure community for all.



Caitlin Sly
Caitlin Sly
President and CEO

With your help, we can continue to provide food to fill the immediate need, as we work toward long term solutions.



GIVE MONTHLY

foodbankccs.org/365



A voice for change

Lauren Keltz knows what it's like to lose her safety net overnight. Through the Food Bank's Voices for Change program, she's sharing her story so other California families don't have to.

Lauren's family had been stretching their budget with CalFresh/SNAP and other programs when a clerical error abruptly cut them off from all support programs – just as her youngest daughter was hospitalized for a major medical issue.

"It threw our family for a loop," Lauren remembers. "You don't want to rely on benefits, but when you do in the way that we did, it's your plan B and C. And when it's taken away, you don't have a plan D and E."

With one daughter still hospitalized, Lauren and her husband would skip meals for days at a time to ensure their children at home could eat. Eventually, the family fell behind on rent and became homeless for a period of time.

Today, Lauren sees her experience reflected across our community as changes to CalFresh/ SNAP eligibility push over 33,000 seniors, parents,

humanitarian immigrants, and others off the program. That's why she's advocating with the Food Bank for state programs that can help fill the gap.

"We need something in place where we're not just trying to survive, or in survival mode — where we're thriving," Lauren says. "I think we all want that for each other."



Lauren and our Advocacy Team successfully advanced many hunger-fighting policies in this year's state budget. Learn more about how you support our advocacy.



ADVOCATE

foodbankccs.org/advocate

You feed more than hunger

Fighting hunger starts with food — but it doesn't end there. Thanks to you, we're able to provide support to more than 245 agency partners who help connect our neighbors to other services and resources they need to build stability. Together, we're fighting the root causes of hunger, to help our community thrive!



Our partner, Gracefully Broken, in Antioch started out offering free clothing giveaways and community events. With your help, today they're offering more and more resources to their community.

In addition to weekly grocery giveaways, they provide diapers from the Food Bank to more than 80 families each month. "It is a lifesaver," says Founder Randi Garcia. "We had one lady who recently took in all three of her grandchildren, and two of them are still in diapers. She didn't realize how expensive they were. She comes to us for food, but now she also comes for the diapers."

Many childcare providers require families to bring their own diapers – without enough diapers, parents may have to miss work or school! Thanks to you, we're able to provide diapers to more partners like Gracefully Broken, to help families stretch their budgets and maintain stability.



Our partner Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) in Richmond offers hot meals and shelter to unhoused families and individuals, but their care for their community doesn't stop there.

"When you have food, when you have a roof, you can breathe," says Executive Director Ralph Payton. "You can say, 'okay I don't have to worry about today and tomorrow.' Now I can start thinking about how I can look after myself and my children in the long term."

In addition to serving over 200 nutritious meals a day, provided with help from you, GRIP offers services to help neighbors build for the future. That includes career counseling, childhood literacy help, and even tenancy support for neighbors who have made the move back into stable housing.



Our partner at Monument Crisis Center in Concord found families were coming to them with more needs than food. Today, the center also runs programs to fight senior isolation, provide educational activities for kids after school and during summer break, and help families apply for additional resources.

"Food, in our experience, is often a symptom of a larger issue," says Executive Director Daniel Scherer. "Their rent is too high. They lost their housing. They lost a loved one, and they now have a hardship. And we're able to try to fill that gap."

With support from the Food Bank, and you, the center also distributes food to over 15,000 neighbors a year – supporting the families already using the center's resources, and introducing new ones to the programs on offer.



Supporter spotlight: Safeway

This year, our partners at Safeway are celebrating 100 years of services to Northern California communities. To mark this milestone, the Safeway Foundation made special donations to four of Northern California's oldest hunger relief organizations – including the Food Bank!

Throughout the year, Safeway stores provide community members with multiple opportunities to support their local food banks at the checkout. These fundraisers can provide over \$100,000 in grant funding each year.

"As Safeway celebrates its 100th year serving communities in Northern California, it is timely and an honor to applaud and recognize our valued, longtime partners in hunger relief, such as the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano,"

says Kent Streeb, director of public affairs and communications for Safeway California.

"While we are proud to have supported your efforts for decades through financial and food donations, it truly is you, your staff and your many selfless volunteers, who are on the frontlines delivering assistance every day to those in need. Safeway appreciates your service and the difference you make."

Thank you to Safeway for working with us to inspire our community to fight hunger, and congratulations on 100 years!



VOLUNTEER

foodbankccs.org/volunteer

STUDENTS' STORIES

(continued from front cover)

can pick up items like milk, canned goods, eggs, and meat. Now, he's able to worry less about food and focus on his future.

"I'm able to study more and have more time," he says. "And it's made me able to enjoy cooking ... After a long day of schoolwork, I just enjoy and de-stress by using all the food I'm able to obtain here."

Kollin, a student worker in the college's basic needs office who is finishing his final year of school, says the food you helped provide allowed him to make more space in his budget for school books and supplies. He's now passing on your generosity by helping other students access food and resources on campus – and he's seen the difference your support makes firsthand.

In one afternoon, the pantry will often serve 40 or more students.

"My job is to make sure everyone's taken care of on campus, and I take that seriously, because I understand as a student how it feels to be left out," he shares. "If you're a student here, you're welcome to come by, and we will help you out."



Kollin, Contra Costa College Basic Needs Office

Last year,
you helped us ❤️



13

Partner with 13 colleges and adult schools to nourish students



2,462

Connect 2,462 students a month to nutritious food through college pantries



341

Provide groceries to 341 students through refrigerated food lockers at Contra Costa College, Los Medanos College, and Diablo Valley College – San Ramon





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Join our community of hunger fighter champions



JOIN US TODAY

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This Hunger Action Month, you can be a Hunger Fighter Champion for your community. Every action you take becomes part of a powerful collective movement to create solutions to end hunger! Choose your actions, and join in:

Start a monthly gift to put meals on tables year-round, and help us continue our strategic work to tackle the underlying causes of hunger.

Volunteer to ensure nourishing food reaches our community now.

Advocate to save and strengthen CalFresh/SNAP, and other social safety net programs.

Activate your friends and neighbors, to create more hunger fighters for our community.

