

The Harvest

News and notes on solving hunger in El Dorado, Nevada and Placer counties

Spring 2017

A relief when you've lost everything

I'm Jeanine, and I'm here because during the recession my husband and I lost everything. We owned our own business and saw some real ups and downs. And with a wave of bills these last six months—including medical bills—well, it can really wipe you out.

We have two disabled sons who are 12 and 14. They're eating us out of house and home! I feel badly coming in here to get help, but I'm willing to do it for my children. We have to eat gluten-free for health reasons, and that makes it even harder on our limited budget.

I've also had health issues since I was as a kid. Many family members had undiagnosed celiac disease, and we just thought being sick was normal. Now with my own kids, I'm trying to make sure they have a healthier life.

"I'd like to thank the donors to Placer Food Bank, but I can't do it without breaking down crying."

—JEANINE

One less worry

My husband and I are working as hard as we can to get back on our feet. It's been an incredibly stressful time, so being able to get this food from the Placer Food Bank means one less thing to worry about in the midst of all the bills. It has been a real helping hand. Last time I came to the pantry, I got eggs and lamb chops. That was really great!

I used to look at people who needed help and think, "Why don't you get a job?" Now I know from my own experience that people often have jobs—but they just can't make ends meet. I've learned it really can be your neighbor who is going hungry.



Jeanine appreciates the food that helps her provide healthy meals for her children.

I'd like to thank the donors to the Placer Food Bank, but I can't do it without breaking down crying. It's just such a relief to get help when you've lost everything. I believe this situation is temporary for us; we're working hard to get back on our feet again. But knowing you're here to help me feed my kids is a huge gift to us. So, thank you.

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Encouraging words

from our Executive Director



This is our first newsletter of 2017, and I just want to say how thankful we are to be in partnership with friends like you who are so committed to helping us provide fresh, nourishing food to the 71,000 people we serve each month.

One of our goals this year is to provide 10-20 percent more fresh produce. With spring approaching, the planting season will be here soon. We're so thankful for our partnerships with local farmers, community gardens and volunteers who work hard to help us grow those fresh fruits and vegetables for those in need. The other piece in that puzzle is your support, which provides vital financial assistance for distributing that fresh produce in a timely and efficient way across El Dorado, Nevada and Placer Counties.

We hear many stories of families like Jeanine who have lost so much in the ups and downs of the economy here in our area. Whether they've been affected by the recession, are coming out of addiction like Scott, struggling to earn enough like Antonio or learning to cook more independently like the folks at Placer ARC, the people we serve hope for and work toward a better life for themselves and their families. The food your support provides keeps families nourished and lets them know they're not alone in that struggle.

When families tell us how meaningful it is to know that someone cares, we know they're talking about you, our friends who so faithfully and generously support this mission. This year, as we continue to provide more fresh fruits and vegetables, and long-lasting staples to families who live with food insecurity in our community, we're thankful to be able to count on you.

Gratefully,

Dave Martinez, Executive Director

Partner Spotlight
Placer ARC: Learning to cook independently



Jen, pictured with Sean, one of the students in the food preparation class.

The mood in the kitchen at Placer ARC is fun and empowering for the intellectually disabled adults who attend the day program. The cooking program is designed to teach students life and work skills, including how to cut and cook, while maintaining cleanliness and safety standards.

"I love cooking!"
—RANNI

Ranni, both a resident and student in the cooking class says she learned to make chicken and spaghetti here. "I love cooking," says Ranni. "My roommate usually does the cooking, and sometimes I help her." To the people who support the Placer Food Bank, which provides food for their class, Ranni says, "I would tell them thank you."

"The food from the Placer Food Bank helps other students like Ranni become more comfortable in the kitchen. We have a number of people living on their own, and as a result of being here, they actually fix their meals at home more independently," says Jen Marchant, director of the program.

Giving Back

The Placer Food Bank supports Placer ARC in a variety of ways. Every Tuesday afternoon, a group of participants goes out to the Placer Food Bank to pick up the food they need to use for their cooking classes. ARC participants also give back. Once a month, a volunteer group goes to the Placer Food Bank to bag produce to send out on the mobile pantry. "They love it," says Jen. "They report to me when they come back. 'I was just at the food bank and we filled so many bags!'"

Your support helps nourish our community. While most of our partner agencies are pantries or meal programs, others, like Placer ARC, meet the unique needs of a vulnerable population. Thank you for the many ways you care!

Thank you for providing food while I get on my feet again

Scott is a volunteer working with his father at one of our partner agency food pantries. Scott's parents divorced when he was young, but recently his father's influence has been important to Scott's sobriety and turning his life around. Not only does Scott volunteer, he also receives help while he works to get back to self-sufficiency.



My name is Scott

I really appreciate the food I get at the food pantry. Life would be much harder if I couldn't come here to get groceries. I live in a sober living house, so I use the food to cook for myself and my other roommates.

For about a year, I was living on and off the streets. I was hungry, eating out of trash cans. Sometimes I would go to a meal program to get a hot meal. That was nice because no one likes to be hungry, especially in the cold.

I lost everything I had through addiction. Then everything changed in my life when someone reached out to care for me, and I found God. This place, the help with food, and my father have really given me a big leap forward. My father has been a lifesaver.

“Everything changed in my life when someone reached out to care for me.”

—SCOTT

He gave me a chance, and I've been clean and sober for two years now.

Hunger leads to other problems

It means a lot that I can volunteer here at the food pantry. I know firsthand how much people need food and that hunger can lead to other problems. A lot of people who end up on the streets aren't bad people. They just need help—someone to guide them and something to believe in. Volunteering with the food pantry regularly, I see a lot of people who remind me of myself. So I put my heart into what I do and try to love people.

My biggest challenges right now are getting my own place, work and a car. I have a couple years of college, and I was working as a butcher at a grocery

store before things really went downhill. I've been putting out applications to try and get work again.

I would say thank you very much to the people who support the Placer Food Bank and make this help possible. I think you're awesome, and someday I would like to be able to help others in the same way. I hope you feel blessed by what you're doing.



Antonio relies on the hot lunch at a local meal program.

I would not have survived without these meals

Hi, my name is Antonio, and without this meal program I would not have enough to eat. Things would be very hard for me. I've survived because of these meals.

I work part time cleaning offices, so I earn a very minimum amount of money. I'd really like to work more. But I also have the additional challenge of relying on public transportation to get around when I am looking for other work. Right now, I'm living with friends, so that has been a help to me.

Fighting for a better life

I'm 57 years old. I know that I will continue to find rocks in the road looking for work, but I'm not going to

stop trying. You have to fight for things that are important, or you won't achieve anything. Years ago, I was doing much better in life, but I left my job to go and get married to my girlfriend. It was a decision I wanted to make, and I don't regret it. I also have two grown children.

I am very thankful to the people who support the Placer Food Bank. You don't always know the people you're helping, and I hope that God will bless you and reward you with more for what you are doing. Please keep on with your work, supporting people who can't always help themselves. One day I will have an opportunity to give back for the relief I was given. Thank you.

“One day I will have an opportunity to give back for the relief I was given.”—ANTONIO

Your support provides nutritious food to families struggling through tough times

When life knocks you down, it can take some time to get back on your feet. Every person who comes to us for help has a story. While each one is unique, we know that no one who finds themselves in a position to need food assistance ever planned on being there. When financial setbacks happen—whether through loss of employment, medical bills, an expensive car repair or even bad decisions that come with a steep price—families and individuals who are struggling need support to get back to self-sufficiency.



Families who are struggling need nutritious food that not only fills a hungry belly, but also nourishes them toward health.

That most basic need is food. Whether it's a hot meal or a basket of groceries, families who are struggling need nutritious food that not only fills a hungry belly, but also nourishes them toward health. The Placer Food Bank partners with over 80 charity agencies to provide meals and food to families in need. Along with our direct distribution programs, like our mobile pantries, we're serving an average of 71,000 individuals every month.

Your support is at the heart of our ability to accomplish that work. Will you take a moment today to bring food and hope to a family who is struggling? You can return the enclosed reply slip or give online at placerfoodbank.org. Remember every dollar you donate provides three meals. Thank you for sharing your blessings to help families in our community have the nutrition they need for a healthy life.

You can help fill the pantry

Our fourth annual Fill the Pantry dinner and auction is coming up on April 21, 2017, at the Blue Goose Event Center in Loomis. Join us for this special evening of delicious food, live entertainment, and both live and silent auctions. Our goal this year is to raise \$45,000 to purchase fresh produce and food staples to distribute to families in critical need in our service area, which includes El Dorado, Nevada and Placer counties.

Tickets for the event are \$60 and can be purchased through our website at placerfoodbank.org. To highlight your business or organization as an event or table sponsor, contact Dave Martinez at 916-783-0481, ext.106, or DonorRelations@placerfoodbank.org. Thank you for your commitment to fighting hunger and nourishing our communities by helping Fill the Pantry!

Stay connected!  

MY SPRING DONATION

Yes, Dave, I want to help provide nutritious food for families and individuals who are struggling to get back on their feet.

Here is my gift of: \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other \$_____

Please charge my gift on my credit card:

VISA MC AMEX DISC

NAME _____

CARD NUMBER _____ SECURITY # _____

ADDRESS _____

SIGNATURE _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER (_____) _____

MY EMAIL ADDRESS IS: _____ @ _____

It's easy! Give now at placerfoodbank.org

Thank you. Please make your check payable to:

Placer Food Bank | 8284 Industrial Avenue | Roseville, CA 95678

To charge your gift by phone, please call 916-783-0481 x100.

Your donation is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. We will send you a receipt for your records.

