

News Flash!

Valley View Community Food Bank is building a warehouse! Storage has been a long-term problem and I have been unable to find anything to rent. We have contracted to build a 50'x100' building on donated land in El Mirage. If permitting goes well, we should have a completed building by September. We have part of the money in a dedicated building fund, but would love to have you help us with construction costs. Write "Warehouse" on your check memo or PayPal donation notes.

What a year! Valley View Community Food Bank felt the effects of the pandemic in both good and bad ways. Our numbers were up about 50% each month over 2019 numbers. Long term volunteers decided they couldn't work in the close quarters of the pantry, particularly after new freezer units were installed making social distancing harder. Groups which have done regular drives for us, like churches and clubs, were meeting by Zoom. Thrift shop sales, which have been used to cover the pantry's overhead, were down.

But **YOU** stepped up to fill the void! New people volunteered, made donations, or found other ways to help. Thank you, thank you, thank you!



VVCFB is now the largest distributor of food in the West Valley. One hundred and sixty-two thousand food boxes were given to more than 650,000 clients during 2020. Each box contained approximately \$300 worth of food, enough to feed clients and their families for about 5 days. VVCFB had enough food to encourage clients to come more than once a month if they needed to. With our new partnership with St. Mary's Food Bank, we became a distributor of state and federal food programs for the first time. And yet, we continued to pack our food boxes individually so that each family received what they needed based on family size and health considerations.

Last Easter, more than 8,000 individuals received an extra food box and 2,500 children got Easter baskets. Although we had to forego our annual hair

cut day, more than 1,000 children received new back packs and school supplies. Over 15,000 people received Thanksgiving and/or Christmas food boxes, and 2,000 children got gifts from VVCFB's Santa. Also at Christmas, we were able to provide gift bags to 300 homeless people and gifts to 300 grandparents raising grandchildren.



Through our Feeding Arizona program, we were able to share food with foster group homes and shelters for the homeless and victims of domestic violence. We partnered with 18 smaller pantries across the state who needed more food. Our Farmer's Market and our supplemental food program located in El Mirage allows families to purchase food at very low prices if they are able to pay a little. (We make sure that nobody ever leaves hungry.)

But VVCFB is about more than numbers. It's about the people we help, like the EMT who gave us his badge in gratitude for feeding his family; the excitement of the kids who met our volunteer Santa; the hundreds who waited patiently in line for



continued...

(continued from front)

Thanksgiving turkeys, the laid off worker who needed help with his mortgage or the homeless woman and her daughter who needed gas cards so they could run the air conditioning in the car they were calling home.

It's about the people who help us, like our hard-working A-Team of volunteers who staff food and toy drives and are planning this year's Gala. It's volunteers in the pantry and thrift shops. It's the student who calls and says she wants to organize a food drive, the woman who called her neighbors when she was collecting food to bring more, the senior who donates to our thrift shop when downsizing, the small businesses that organize their own food drives for us, and the business owner who has been meeting me at Safeway to buy thousands of dollars of groceries at a time. I am touched by the number who have sent some or all of their stimulus checks to Valley View Community Food Bank.

It's also the foundations and business who support us. We've received money from the Bellevue Baptist Church Foundation, Season for Sharing, Arizona Community Foundation Covid Relief Fund, the Kroger Foundation, and the Ethel and Kemper Marley Foundation. Z's Fine Jewelry in Peoria and JMR music are great supporters too.

As always, I am deeply grateful for your support and encouragement.

Jesse Ramirez
President and Founder



Ways to Help

Make a cash donation. Donate online at:

www.feedingAZ.org.

or mail a check to:

Valley View Community Food Bank
10771 W. Peoria Ave.
Sun City 85351

You are eligible for a tax credit whether you itemize your Arizona income tax or not.

Shop at Amazon. Go to Smile.Amazon instead of Amazon. Choose Valley View Community Food Assistance from the drop-down menu.

Support Valley View Community Thrift Shops at 13576 W. Camino del Sol #6, Sun City West 85375, 10737 W. Peoria Ave., Sun City or 12321 NW Grand Ave., El Mirage 85363. Call 623-455-2911 for hours or to arrange a pick-up.

Volunteer. Volunteers are needed in the pantry and the thrift shops on a regular basis. Organize a food drive or collect items for our Gala auction, Easter, Back to School, Thanksgiving or Christmas. For information on how to get started, call Jesse at 623-297-9102.

Fill the Pantry. Pick up extra items while shopping. Always needed items include: peanut butter and jelly, pasta, canned soups and stews, canned fruits and vegetables. Also baby food and diapers and adult sanitary items.

Save the Date

April 24th - Board member Jon Caveletto through his foundation, Seeds of Hope International Ministries, has 6,000 pounds of beans that need bagging. To sign-up for a 2-hour shift, call 623-222-1522 or email larry.garcia@surpriseaz.gov. Masks are required.

July - Donations of new backpacks and school supplies are needed.

November 6th - The fun-filled annual Gala returns to Briarwood Country Club. The A-Team is working hard collecting auction items and we will be thanking our angel donors. For information, call Mary Maclin at 928-252-3876 or email at Mdarris47@sbcglobal.net.

Our Arizona state number for the tax credit is QCO 20405. Our federal non-profit number is FEIN 77-0696933.

SCAN TO DONATE

