

More Hunger-Fighting Help on the Way



In September 2017, the Association of Arizona Food Banks was awarded a grant by the Corporation for National and Community Service to fund three **AMERICORPS "VISTA" (VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA)** positions working with food banks to solve food insecurity in rural and tribal communities. VISTAs are highly skilled and trained service volunteers who are deployed for one-year service terms in communities to build and expand capacity. These positions are supporting work at **ST. MARY'S FOOD BANK ALLIANCE** and **COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA**.

In Flagstaff, the outreach team's goal is to expand the **USDA SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM** in rural and tribal areas. Meanwhile in Phoenix, the VISTA is working with the food bank's partnership team to develop a client feedback system between St. Mary's and its rural agency partners.

Yet another VISTA volunteer works out of the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona. Their job will be to encourage local food sovereignty practices on **THE TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION**, where they'll implement a gardening curriculum developed by the food bank's garden team.

All of these positions have now been filled, and the new staffers began their assignments in March 2018. AAFB is thrilled to be managing this project that helps provide extra hands to support the critical work food banks do statewide to end hunger.



AAFB's three VISTA volunteers: Alfonzo Chavez, Tiffany Harvey, David Robinson

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SNAP Works: What's at Stake in the 2018 Farm Bill?

The **SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)** is a federal program that provides support for children, seniors, people with disabilities, and working families to purchase food. You may know it by its old name, food stamps. Our country's most comprehensive and effective anti-hunger program, SNAP helps people out of poverty, and supports families of underemployed, temporarily unemployed, and low-wage workers.

People like Michelle.

Michelle, a member of the San Carlos Apache Tribe, is a single mother of three children ages 6, 5, and 3. She works part time at a grocery store during the school year but quits during the summer to be with her kids. "I get \$190 a month in SNAP," she says, "and my parents help."

In Arizona, **SNAP HELPS NEARLY 850,000 PEOPLE FACING HUNGER EACH MONTH**. About 53% are children, 11% are seniors, and 10% are people with a disability. "Work eligible" adults also receive SNAP, and more than half of them work at least 20 hours each week.

SNAP Is at Risk

The Farm Bill governs many agricultural and food programs, including SNAP, and has to be renewed by September 30, 2018. Eligibility changes in the U.S. House of Representatives' version of the 2018 Farm Bill would impact SNAP's existing work and work-reporting requirements. It would also drastically increase penalties for noncompliance. These new eligibility criteria would require that parents of children ages six and over, including Michelle, work at least 80 hours each month to participate in SNAP.

The Senate's version of the 2018 Farm Bill maintains SNAP's current work requirements, reduces fraud through more reliable methods, and strengthens the program overall.

Both bills have passed and are being reconciled by what's called a conference committee. Arizona Congressman Tom O'Halleran (District 1), a member of the House Agriculture Committee strong on anti-hunger issues, was recently appointed to the committee. Once those lawmakers propose a compromise bill, it must then pass both the House and the Senate again before heading to the president's desk.

What can you do?

Contact your representatives and tell them to support SNAP and a compromise that will help, not hurt, Arizonans at-risk of hunger. Email INFO@AZFOODBANKS.ORG to be added to our Advocacy Alerts, find your representatives, and learn more about SNAP and other issues that impact hunger in Arizona.



Everyone Needs More Fruits and Vegetables

Thanks to UnitedHealthcare, people at risk of hunger will get even more healthy produce!

Your parents told you to do it. Your doctor tells you to do it. Eat your veggies!

Even for those of us who don't lack the resources to purchase healthful, fresh food, eating enough leafy greens, veggies and fruit can be challenging. Now imagine that you can't afford the price tag of a bag of salad greens, or a fresh honeydew melon. Or think about walking to your local store and they don't have the healthy produce you need. It gets exponentially more difficult to get the recommended daily amount of fresh food.

But thanks to quick action by AAFB and member food banks, **THIS YEAR WE WORKED TOGETHER TO DISTRIBUTE MORE THAN 45 MILLION POUNDS OF PRODUCE.** A 61% increase from the previous year!

THE VAST MAJORITY OF THIS NUTRITIOUS FOOD IS DONATED, AND MIGHT OTHERWISE BE WASTED. But because of your support and our member food banks, it got channeled to people in need.

And now thanks to a grant to AAFB from **UNITEDHEALTHCARE**, two new semi-trailers and another driver will be available for the necessary transportation and logistics needed to move fresh food to all parts of the state.

So chomp on that carrot and snack on that salad, knowing that thanks to donors and friends like you, people at risk of hunger have more fruits and veggies, too.

WHAT'S A QCO?

AAFB is a Qualifying Charitable Organization (QCO) in Arizona, which means that when you give to AAFB, you could receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit on your Arizona state taxes — up to \$400 for individuals or \$800 for those filing jointly. Donate today to help hungry people in Arizona while you help yourself, too! (Please consult a tax advisor for full details, as this information shouldn't be taken as tax advice.)



hunger relief license plate

Have you seen this license plate when driving around Arizona, or do you even have one yourself? The Hunger Relief license plate costs \$25 (plus postage and handling) and benefits AAFB. **Get yours when you renew your Arizona license plate** and help end hunger one "plate" at a time. A big thanks to everyone who has this special plate. See you on the road!

AAFB: Making Connections at the Capitol

Once again this year AAFB worked with the Governor and Arizona's legislators to make sure that people at risk of hunger have a strong voice. When 1 in 4 children is at risk of hunger in Arizona, AAFB knows that having adequate resources to help is more important than ever. This year AAFB worked on a primary priority: **INCREASED ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS**. Governor Ducey's budget included a \$1 million appropriation for Arizona's emergency food network to improve healthy eating options for people in need. This one-time investment will be used for refrigeration, transportation, and storage statewide, with a particular focus on rural areas.

The Arizona Department of Economic Security is signing contracts for large projects with three of our member food banks. AAFB has created an application process where soup kitchens, food pantries and other agencies that provide hunger-relief help can apply for funds.

The goal is to have more refrigeration in place statewide before the holiday season.

Do you have advocacy ideas for next year? Email AAFB at INFO@AZFOODBANKS.ORG to share your ideas and to be added to our advocacy updates.

OUR MEMBERS



COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK
OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA



ABOUT AAFB Established in 1984, AAFB is a private, nonprofit organization serving five member food banks and a network of nearly 1,000 food pantries and agencies. AAFB partners with Feeding America and other hunger relief organizations nationwide to end food insecurity in our state and country. For more than 30 years, AAFB's programs, including transportation, the hunger hotline and getting children meals in school, have helped alleviate hunger in Arizona. Our advocacy efforts target reducing the need for emergency food from the charitable system. For more information about our organization and work, visit our website at www.azfoodbanks.org.

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