



# FOOD *for thought*

FALL 2016

## You've helped our family in many ways—thank you!

Hello, my name is Rafaela. Twice a month I come to this family center in our community to get vegetables for my family. The food and the vegetables help us to eat healthier meals! The center has also taught me a lot about raising my children. I have a 5-year-old and an infant. They helped me get speech therapy for my son when he needed it as well.

Having enough income is difficult for us. My husband works in the fields, so there are a couple of months during the winter when he has no work. Right now, I am home caring for my children; when they're older I will look for work. I like to crochet, and I've sold a couple of items to help out.

We live in a small community where it can be hard to get reasonably priced groceries. When my husband is off, he can take us into Woodland to go to a larger market. Here in town, the grocery stores are more expensive and the vegetables aren't very good.



**"I made a big meal for our family so we could enjoy Thanksgiving together." —RAFAELA**

The Food Bank has helped us in so many ways. I remember one season when there just wasn't a lot of work. It was hard for a lot of people in the community. People would ask for help, but we didn't have anything to give. I was embarrassed and worried for my family. I found out about a food distribution in Woodland, and I was able to get food for our family when we had nothing. Now I know where to go when we need help with food.

### Grateful for a Thanksgiving meal

We've also been very fortunate to get a Thanksgiving meal box. It came with everything we needed like a turkey, potatoes and pumpkin. I made a big meal for our family so we could enjoy Thanksgiving together. That was really a big help for us.

I'm very grateful for all the ways you help our family. God bless you for what you're doing. You're helping a lot of people in this community. Thank you.

### Yolo Food Bank's 8th annual Running of the Turkeys

Share the spirit of Thanksgiving with 1,500+ community members at the 8th annual Running of the Turkeys. **Help us raise \$50,000** to support Yolo Food Bank and our more than 60 local partner agencies that serve 50,000 Yolo County residents every month.

The 5k run/walk takes place on Thanksgiving Day, November 24, at 8 a.m., Heritage Plaza, Woodland. Awards for largest team, best dressed kid and adult, first dog to finish and more! Race prizes will go to the top three men and women overall, and the top 3 men and women winners in 14 age categories. For registration, sponsorships, and event information go to [www.runningoftheturkeys.org](http://www.runningoftheturkeys.org) or call Becky Beaman, 530-668-0690.



Presenting Sponsor



# Food for Thought

from the Executive Director



It is a busy time of year as the harvest season ends and the flow of summer fruits and vegetables begins to diminish. During this time, we are ever mindful of the urgency of moving forward with the expansion of our new building. Without adequate cold storage to hold these crops for a timely distribution, we have to leave some remaining crops offered to us unharvested. By this time next year, we are hopeful that our new building will be completed so we can store a larger variety of nutritious produce for distribution and also take full advantage of opportunities to preserve it.

Speaking of preserving, we are currently piloting a project with UC Davis to create a healthy and delicious preserved food that would utilize the bounty of fresh produce from our area. It's a way of using older preservation techniques in a more modern way that will benefit the families we serve.

With school back in session, our Kids Farmer's Market is underway in seven schools. Not only is this a wonderful way to get fresh produce into the hands of those who need it, but we're also using the opportunity to teach kids about healthy eating. The support of our partners and friends like you is helping us continue to operate this invaluable program for another school year.

The upcoming holidays are an especially busy time for us. We are sourcing turkeys, and our volunteers are getting ready to pack more than 2,000 holiday 'meal kits' with staples and fresh produce. In the week before Thanksgiving, Board members and supporters will come down to the Food Bank to help distribute these 'meal kits' at our site. And, many more volunteers will be working through our partner agencies to ensure that our Thanksgiving meal kits are distributed to struggling families like Rafaela's and Esther's, in all corners of our county.

As we work together to use the bounty of resources in our community to meet the hunger needs of our neighbors, I am so grateful for your continued support. This work depends on your investment in our mission and vision as we move into this new phase of growth. Thank you for your commitment to helping us End Hunger in Yolo County.

With gratitude,

*Kevin*

Kevin Sanchez, Executive Director

## Thank you for providing healthy food for our family



My name is Esther and I'm very thankful for the help we've received from the Food Bank. My husband and I both work in the fields. During the winter months there isn't much work, and that's when things get hard. Sometimes, there just isn't enough food in the house for all of us. When that happens, we have to make do with what we have.

Three of my children are grown, but I still have one son and a wonderful grandbaby living with me. My older children live in the nearby area, so we are blessed to be able to see our other grandchildren.

We come to the Family Resource Center to get vegetables as often as twice a week. The produce has been a big help because I like to cook healthy meals. And I love vegetables. Our town has no big grocery stores, so we have to drive 20 minutes to get to one that has all the things we need.

### A Thanksgiving meal with leftovers

Getting the Thanksgiving meal box has been wonderful. That helped us a lot! I made a big meal for the whole family.

We've tried to save for the hard times, but there really isn't much income to do that. When there's nothing, there's nothing. Our biggest challenge is having enough work. Thankfully, we've had family who help us out when things get really bad.

Whether it's the vegetables they distribute, the food from a pantry or the Thanksgiving meal, the Food Bank has been a big help to our family. Thank you!

**"The produce has been a big help because I like to cook healthy meals." —ESTHER**

## Agency Spotlight

# Getting a healthy meal at Fourth and Hope

Those who are homeless or hungry in this community know they can come in to Fourth and Hope for a hot meal and a warm room. The agency, which has been providing food, clothes and shelter to those in need since 1985, partners with Yolo Food Bank to get the fresh food and staples they need to provide snacks and three healthy meals a day. All meals are open to the public, regardless of whether they are staying at the shelter. The site serves about 40 lunches and 100 dinners every day.

**"It is important that people support the Food Bank so that these services can be available."**

—ERIC



"I just really have a heart to work with the homeless population and see folks be successful," says Eric Banuelos, Fourth and Hope's Director of Emergency Shelter. "Everybody comes with a different story. Some folks are just down and out and need that little bit of guidance and hope to get to the next step."

The emergency shelter houses 24 men, 24 women and several families. Eric and his team provide guidance and case management for the individuals and families to find housing and help to move out of their current situation, which has made a real difference in the lives of young men like Michael (see story below).

### Working together to provide access to food

Eric says the relationship between Fourth and Hope and Yolo Food Bank has been an important link in providing quality meals for those they serve. "The coordination between the staff is really awesome, and it's key to making these services available," says Eric. "The Food Bank staff make it easy to access what's available so we can get it to folks that are in need."

Your support of Yolo Food Bank helps us feed those who are hungry in our community in a variety of ways, including through vital partnerships with shelters like Fourth and Hope. **"It is important that people support the Food Bank so that these services can be available," says Eric. "People willing to donate either funds or time really make all this possible."** Thank you for the important part you play!

## The good food makes a big difference—Thank you!

Hi. My name is Michael, and I came to this shelter to try and get my life back on track. I was homeless, living from friend's house to friend's house. Before I came here, I wasn't eating. Now I can eat all day long.

I heard about the shelter from my mom, who came here when she lost her apartment. They helped her with the transition back to her own place. She encouraged me to come here to get the same help. While I'm here, they're helping me with getting the resources and guidance to find work and a place to live.

I've been here for two months and I've gained weight with all the meals. The food here is like home cooking, and you can eat until you are full. You never have to go hungry here.

### Something better for my life

I've just gotten approved for getting my forklift license, so I'm going to school for that. They'll also help me get my GED. I kind of went off on my own in high school and never finished. It was really a downhill slide until about six months ago. I lost a family member and that experience really woke me up to the fact that I could be next. Now, I want to get up every day and try to do something better for my life.

To the people who support the Food Bank, I want to say that I appreciate everything they do. Even things they think are small can make a big difference in the life of a person who is here to get help. I hope you realize how much you're touching people's lives by what you do. It's a real blessing, and I thank you.



**"You never have to go hungry here."**

—MICHAEL

## Volunteer spotlight

# Brian Jennings: A very special team player

In the supportive community of volunteers at Yolo Food Bank, each person brings a unique set of skills and experience to support our mission.

One of these dedicated volunteers is Brian Jennings. A staple around the halls of the Food Bank, Brian is a remarkable individual who takes noticeable joy in everyday life and special pride in the volunteer work he does at the Food Bank.

Brian has a disability that makes speaking difficult. He came to the Food Bank through Community Employment Services, a nonprofit that helps individuals with developmental disabilities learn to run small businesses and find paying jobs. To augment his speech, Brian uses an assisted speech software on his iPad, which allows him to communicate quickly and effectively in any setting.

### A constant smile

Although Brian is the sole proprietor and CEO of Vitality



*Brian is a little camera shy but thought you would appreciate seeing his coffee stand at he Davis Senior Center.*

Vending, a coffee and vending machine business, he wanted to volunteer where he could help others. Brian typically works twice a week in Yolo Food Bank's packing room, where he labels, weighs and packs bags of rice and beans to be distributed to Food Bank clients.

"Brian takes his work very seriously...and once he gets into his groove, he's unstoppable," says Alyssa Allen, a support facilitator for Community Employment Services, who

accompanies Brian at the Food Bank.

Brian shows how happy he is to be working at the Food Bank with his ever-present smile. Similarly, the Yolo Food Bank staff knows how lucky we are to have such a dedicated volunteer like Brian on our team.

**For information about how you can join our team of volunteers, see the volunteer opportunities below on this page!**

## Virtual twist to food drives

Is your business, team, or community group interested in doing a good deed to boost their holiday cheer? Yolo Food Bank's Virtual Food Drive is a quick and easy online way for you to help wipe out hunger in Yolo County without having to leave your desk. It's also a convenient resource for year-end giving.



This holiday season consider our Virtual Food Drive with your group. You'll enjoy a happier holiday knowing you're helping provide wholesome food to fill the stomachs and warm the hearts of our hungry neighbors.

**For help motivating friendly competition among colleagues or teams, contact Food Drive Coordinator, Josh Ellis at 530-668-0690, or, [josh@yolofoodbank.org](mailto:josh@yolofoodbank.org). He'll create a customized webpage and link for your food drive—all you'll need to do is invite people to make food drive donations online.**

## Save the Date!

### Volunteer Opportunities:

**Thursday, November 17 –**  
Family food packing night for holiday meal kits.  
5:30-7:30 p.m.

**Saturday, November 19 –**  
Holiday meal distribution

To sign up contact Josh Ellis, Volunteer Coordinator,  
[josh@yolofoodbank.org](mailto:josh@yolofoodbank.org),  
or, 530-668-0690

**Thursday, November 24 –**  
8th annual Running of the Turkeys 5k run/walk.  
To register or volunteer go to [www.runningoftheturkeys.org](http://www.runningoftheturkeys.org)



## Contact Us

1244 Fortna Avenue  
Woodland, CA 95776  
530-668-0690

**Office Hours:**  
Monday through Friday  
8:30 am–5:00 pm

**Warehouse Hours:**  
Monday (receiving only)  
9:30 am–2:30 pm  
Tuesday–Friday  
8:30 am–2:30 pm

**STAY**  
connected



[www.yolofoodbank.org](http://www.yolofoodbank.org)