

News from the Food Closet

SOUTH SACRAMENTO INTERFAITH PARTNERSHIP QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ♥ MAY 2022

FULL PLATES, FULL HEARTS INDEED! Successful Event Increases Dollars & Awareness

By Chong Choe-Smith

Our second annual Full Plates, Full Hearts event was truly a labor of love by our volunteers, donors, business sponsors, and sister community organizations.

This year's Full Plates, Full Hearts virtual gala and online auction raised \$41,000, with a full accounting not yet complete. Jan Neeley and her team, including Mary Lou Hanzlik and Niki Serna, worked tirelessly to curate high quality auction items and produce a wonderful event with special guests and an original piece of music.

Although we can't say that the virtual gala aired without a hitch on March 9, we can certainly say that the care and attention poured into the event was clearly evident from the recording of the program which was quickly made available on the SSIP website.

The virtual gala was emceed by Pastor Jesse Larson of Bethany Presbyterian Church, who remained unflappable as the team pivoted to a different platform and then recorded the program. The event included in-depth information about the work of the SSIP Food Closet and its staff, volunteers, and diverse clients.



Featured in this year's gala were interviews with sister community organizations including Elizabeth Nava, Family Resource Center Coordinator at La Familia Counseling Center, and Al Rowlett, CEO

of Turning Point Community Programs, both of whom described how important the food provided by the Food Closet has been for their clients. Also featured this year was an original piece of music composed by Mark Tootle, Director of Music Ministry at Faith Presbyterian Church and performed by the worship band at the church. Special thanks to Mark Hanzlik for volunteering countless hours

of photography, video recording and production of the slide show and video segments.

This year's silent auction included a very popular wine raffle and dozens of high-quality items donated by many volunteers. The auction items included creative wine baskets, restaurant gift certificates, original works of art, and housewares donated by Macy's. The auction also included beautiful hand-made quilts and greeting cards donated by the Japanese United Methodist Church. Many items generated spirited bidding, and, in the end, we were able to raise \$14,000 from the auction alone.

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FOLSOM MASK MAKERS SPREAD KINDNESS WITH MASKS

By Mary Lou Hanzlik

The SSIP Food Closet received 125 colorful cloth masks for our clients from the Folsom Mask Makers group. SSIP was just one of approximately 380 local organizations that have benefited from this generous group. Karla Burgess, R.N. a representative for the mask makers shared more about their mission.

The Folsom Mask Makers are a group of approximately 200-300 volunteers who actively sew to help anyone in need. The group was formed by a local seamstress on Facebook and grew quickly to a membership of thousands. The mask makers came together at the start of the pandemic as a response to the PPE shortages in the medical community. Initially they made and distributed masks, scrub caps for the local medical facilities, skilled nursing facilities, dental offices and all the other first responders. (Continued on page 2)



MIRACLES HAPPEN HERE

Looking at the numbers and the people behind the scenes

There is no doubt that SSIP is a strategic community member for Sacramento residents experiencing food insecurity. Our impact is remarkable, as told by our numbers and our people.

Let's look at the numbers. In 2021, SSIP served over 27,000 households, feeding over 96,000 individuals. This is comparable to our numbers for 2020, where we served over 27,000 households, feeding over 105,000 individuals. In the first quarter of 2022, the numbers continued to climb. (See the table below.) March was a full month, with 23 days of distribution; we served, on average, 157 clients a day. It was a record month for client visits. I feel that inflation has been a key contributor to the elevated levels.

Month	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022
HOUSEHOLDS	2,623	2,908	3,597
INDIVIDUALS	8,046	8,665	10,797

Let's take a look at the people behind the numbers. During the two weeks from March 21st through April 1st, we conducted the "Miracles Happen Here" survey. Both clients and volunteers were asked a question with five possible answers.

The question to our clients: "How does SSIP help you and your family?" Surprisingly, the top answer was 'My family and I can eat a variety of foods, and healthy foods.' A close second was 'Other ways' - where clients could write down specifics.

One client wrote "I feed the homeless with this." 'Keeping me & my family from going hungry' came in third.

The question for our volunteers was "Why do you volunteer at SSIP?" In order, the results are:

- 1) Giving back to the community.
- 2) Serving God. Finding purpose.
- 3) Humbling. Feeling blessed for all my good fortunes.
- 4) Staying active. Keeping healthy.
- 5) Fellowship. Building friendships.

Volunteer, Meg Burnett, put it nicely, "Giving back to our community to help folks less fortunate than I, is very important to me, even if my gifts are very small. I am inspired and energized by the SSIP program and its terrific volunteers and staff, who collectively form a lifeline to many families in south Sacramento."

Finance Committee Chair, Deb Kanner, also shared: "I volunteer for all the reasons listed. God has blessed me and my family, but for the grace of God, it could be me looking to find a meal! I'm blessed that God allows me to help others."

Miracles happen here every day at SSIP. We are so blessed to be in the good company of generous donors, dedicated volunteers, and grateful clients. The community needs us, and we are here for them until that day when we close our doors because no one is hungry anymore.

Simon Yeh, Food Closet Manager

FOLSOM MASK MAKERS

(Continued from page 1)

Since the start of the pandemic the group has made and distributed an outstanding number of goods including 98,000 cloth masks, 2,000 visual masks, 8,500 3D printed ear savers, 1,000 post-op aprons, 1,000 beanies and hats, plus face shields, heart pillows, Christmas stockings and more.

Karla shares, "It's incredible what a bit of fabric and thread can accomplish. We have seen the very best of humanity during these



last two years, neighbors helping neighbors." Thank you Folsom Mask Makers for your kindness to the community of SSIP.

FULL HEARTS INDEED!

(Continued from page 1)

An event like Full Plates, Full Hearts couldn't happen without the help of dedicated volunteers and supporters. As featured in this newsletter, we had many generous business sponsors who donated more than \$19,500, and additional auction merchandise valued at \$10,000. The gala was another wonderful opportunity for our community to come together in support of food insecure families and individuals in the Sacramento area. A big "Thank You" to all those who contributed to this labor of love—Full Plates, Full Hearts indeed!

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SSIP Food Closet



@SSIPFoodPantry



instagram.com/
SSIPFoodCloset

SPOTLIGHT: FLORIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Florin UMC is located at 7560 Florin Road in the 95828 zip code. Reverend Bobby Jones currently serves as Pastor in a diverse and caring south Sacramento congregation.

Florin UMC is one of the original seven congregations who in 1969 participated in the organization of the South Sacramento Ecumenical Parish (SSEP), later renamed South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership (SSIP). At that time, Reverend Chuck Corsin and Layman Don Towne were active committee members in forming the SSIP and the Food Closet. Don and Jean Towne remained active leaders and volunteers throughout their lives. They encouraged others to also become active with SSIP.

Through the years, Florin UMC has supported the Food Closet in numerous ways, frequently with food drives and food collections in receptacles placed in the church narthex.

In the early 2000s, Florin UMC shared their facility with a Unitarian Universalist Congregation, who also were active partners with SSIP.



The Unitarians had an awareness raising "Hunger Dinner" fundraiser where SSIP volunteer, Chuck Snyder, spoke about the Food Closet and provided information about food distribution at that time. Florin UMC has provided space for an SSIP food storage container and sorted food received from the KCRA KidsCAN! Drive. The youth group has been active participants and supporters of the Bowl-A-Thon fundraiser.

In the early 2000s, Reverend Linda Snyder served as SSIP Board Chair providing significant leadership. Florin UMC hosted numerous Ash Wednesday and Good Friday services for SSIP partners over the years.

SSIP volunteers from Florin UMC, Chuck Snyder and Dolly Jang, are to be acknowledged for their long and faithful volunteer service with SSIP.

Thank you to Florin UMC for your role in making the SSIP Food Closet the significant community service it has become.

WORKING AFTER HOURS

Donors provide the financial means to carry out our mission. Volunteers and staff provide the human power to keep operations going. Our sincere thanks.

Even though the Food Closet is closed on weekends and holidays, there is still a lot of activity taking place behind the scenes. A small dedicated crew of drivers, volunteers and staff work after hours to pick up food donations from our grocery partners and sort them to make sure perishables are properly stored until our next distribution. I'd like to acknowledge the following volunteers that commit their mornings on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays to keep the food supply flowing.

Saturday crew: Jean and James Chew, Gary and Carol Aycock, Dan Wong and Henry Sepulveda.

Sunday crew: Brian Moese, John Sugar and Chuck Snyder.

Holidays and backup crew: Jim and Wally Hoffsis, Tom Busch, Rick Breitenbach and ad-hoc drivers.

Our grocery partners really appreciate that we pick up their food donations every day. The after-hours crews help make this possible. Thanks to you, one and all.



Community Business Sponsors

We could not meet the growing need for emergency food without the support and generosity of our business sponsors in the community. A special thanks to all those who stepped up this year. (See our enclosed 2022 Business Sponsor list)

SCOUTS FOOD DRIVE

The SSIP Food Closet was the beneficiary of a one-day food drive (March 12) conducted by Cub Scout Pack 259 and Scout Troop 259, both chartered out of St. Anthony Parish. Julia Hawkinson, Cubmaster, and Jonathon Miller, Den Leader, made the arrangements for delivery of the donated food items, which required four SUVs and a trailer. Thank you, Scouts, for the great effort. It's much appreciated!

HOW CAN I HELP?

By using Amazon at <https://smile.amazon.com> .05% of your purchases can be donated to SSIP. At the top left of the page, click: Supporting, and type South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership.

Please **help us to recruit volunteers** for a variety of tasks needed to keep the Food Closet doors open. Contact Simon Yeh at (916) 428-5290 or volunteers@ssipfoodcloset.org.

SSIP needs your **monetary donations** to keep our doors open and overhead expenses paid. Your dollars are leveraged to purchase food at a very low cost. Donate at our website www.ssip-foodcloset.org/give or send checks using the enclosed envelope.

We accept recently purchased **canned goods** and **staples**, and **fresh fruit** and **vegetables** from home or community gardens.



SSIPfoodcloset.org

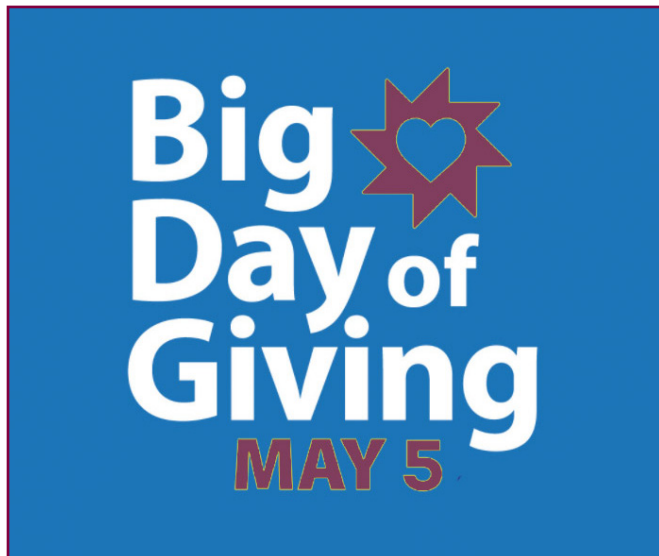
5625 24th St
Sacramento, CA 95822

PAPER OR DIGITAL?

If you prefer to receive only an electronic version, please email your request to info@SSIPfoodcloset.org

THE SSIP MISSION

The primary mission of the SSIP Food Closet is to maintain and operate an emergency food distribution to help alleviate food insecurity for Sacramento residents. Partner faith-based organizations, with assistance from local businesses and other community members, provide the support and resources for the SSIP mission. In carrying out its mission the Food Closet adheres to the values of service, integrity, stewardship and accountability.



Save the date!

Big Day of Giving is May 5, 2022

Join us this year for another amazing day of community fundraising.

Visit www.bigdayofgiving.org/SSIPfoodcloset

GROCERY PARTNERS

A big thank you to our partner grocers:

- Grocery Outlet (Florin Rd./Riverside Blvd.)
- Nugget Market (Florin Rd./Greehaven Dr.)
- Raley's (Freeport Blvd.)
- Trader Joe's (Folsom Blvd.)

FAITH-BASED PARTNERS

Faith-based partner organizations, with assistance from local businesses and other community members, provide the support and resources for the Food Closet's mission.

Members:

- Bethany Presbyterian Church
- Centennial United Methodist Church
- Faith Presbyterian Church
- Florin United Methodist Church
- Hope United Methodist Church
- Parkside Community Church, United Church of Christ
- Sacramento Japanese United Methodist Church
- Saint Anthony Catholic Parish

Associate members:

- Fruitridge Christian Church
- Lutheran Church of the Master
- Prince of Peace Baptist
- Wesley United Methodist Church



SOUTH SACRAMENTO INTERFAITH PARTNERSHIP THANKS TO OUR 2022 COMMUNITY BUSINESS SPONSORS



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