

HOW DID YOU SPEND YOUR SUMMER BREAK? FELLOWS FROM FAITH PRESBYTERIAN AND THE TABLE CONTRIBUTE

By Chong Choe-Smith, SSIP Volunteer

The summer season is winding down and students are heading back to their respective campuses. We want to highlight the contributions of students who volunteered at the Food Closet during their summer break.

Two summer fellows from Faith Presbyterian Church, both home from college for the summer, volunteered regularly distributing food to neighbors in need.

Also, ten high school students from the Table Farm volunteered through a fellowship funded by the Table Foundation and a SMUD Shine Grant. The fellows not only grew food at the Farm, but also delivered the produce to

SSIP Food Closet and worked weekly shifts distributing to Food Closet clients.

Table Farm's mission of "learning the tactile craft of growing food" in ways that are community-building and sustainable was realized by the fellows. Momina Niazi found the experience at the Food Closet to be "eye opening" and enjoyable. She especially cherished interacting personally with clients. "A little boy in one of the families gave me the ticket and when I brought out the food, he gave me a hug. This was something small but made volunteering at SSIP so amazing", she said. Another fellow shared it was rewarding to give back to a food closet after recalling her family depending on food assistance when she was younger.

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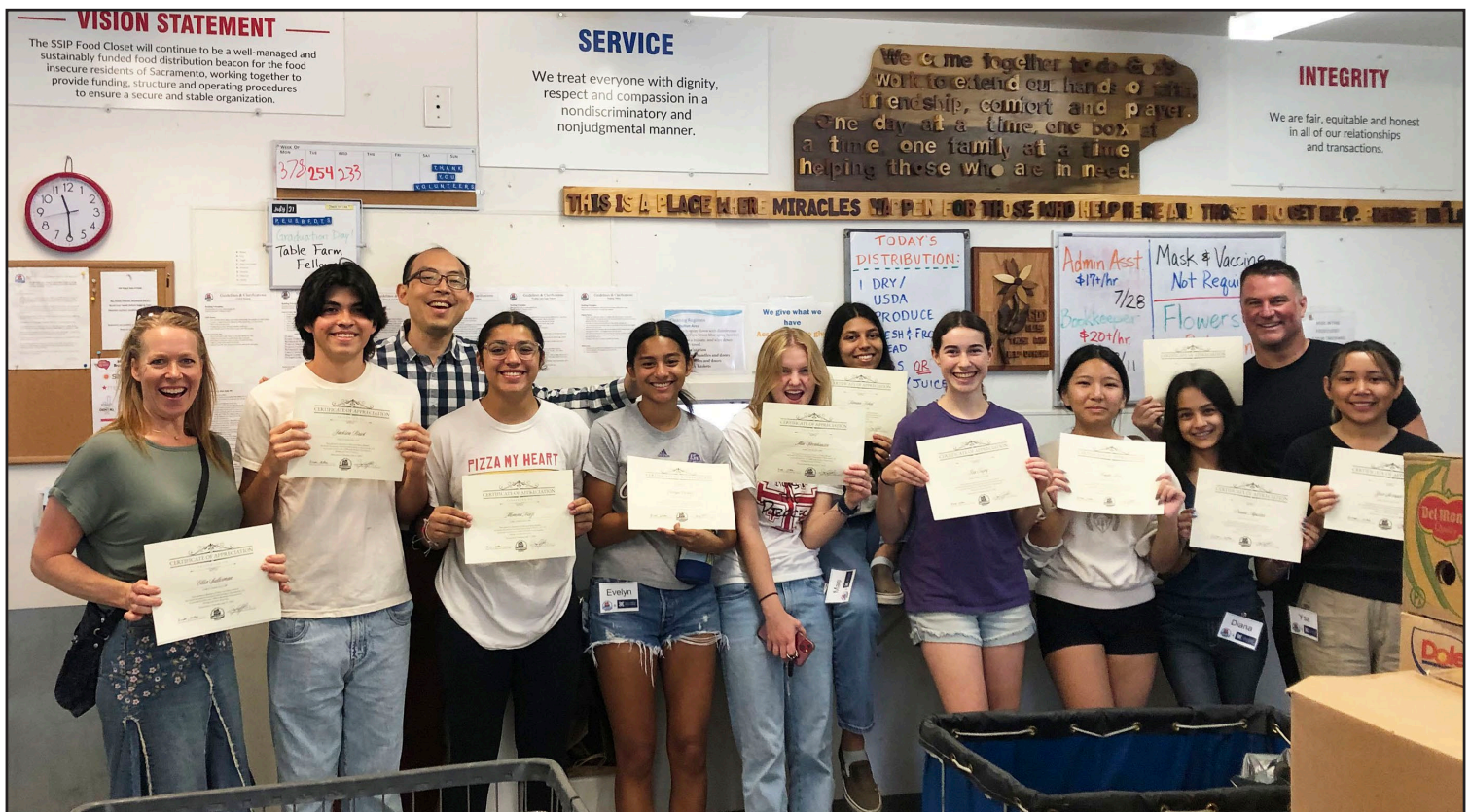


Table Farm Fellows and their chaperones pose with volunteer Certificates of Appreciation from SSIP Food Closet on July 27.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

OUR OWN MIRACLE WORKER

By Carla Hart, SSIP Volunteer

“SSIP is a place where miracles happen every day. We get to be the miracle workers, which means all that I do is in God’s name in the care of my community.”

These are the words of Chuck Snyder, volunteer since October of 2001. In this quote he is paraphrasing the words recited by staff and volunteers before beginning to distribute food to those who have lined up outside the Food Closet. Chuck is the author and artist of the beautifully created wooden plaque displaying a similar prayer above the food distribution window.



Chuck poses recently in front of one of his wooden masterpieces.

Chuck’s first role was driving a van to pick up food one day each week. He soon found himself working many days a week and doing every job in the program and more. Wherever you take a turn inside or outside of the building, you see some of Chuck’s work. He has the gift of looking at a situation and being able to find a way to help, no matter the size of the job. In addition to artwork, he built the broom cart, staff condiment rack, and most recently, the colorful book cart.

He has roofed and rebuilt sheds (including one he donated), repaired gates and doors, hung signs, set up the shade curtain in reception, landscaped, and fixed just about everything that became broken at the Food Closet.

Chuck’s heart for giving and his energy for doing have allowed him to participate in the changes and growth of SSIP. He feels honored to have been able to contribute recommendations for the overall efficiency of the operation. He has worn many hats including Person-In-Charge, traffic director, sanitation engineer, and security guard for special events.

Chuck says, “ultimately, I believe wholeheartedly that SSIP is a place where miracles are seen in our everyday work. It is a testament to our faith that we fully trust that the food will be provided--even when we have no idea how. I have seen over and over again that people are fed. My smile comes with ease at SSIP because I know that our purpose and mission are fulfilled every day.”

Chuck continues to serve on the Food Closet Operations Committee, a role he has faithfully played since 2008 and was also Chair of the Committee for many years until 2020. He currently represents Florin United Methodist Church on the SSIP Board of Directors.

A NOTE FROM SSIP BOARD CHAIR

In June, the SSIP Board of Directors held a day-long retreat facilitated by Lang and Associates. Board members participated in various exercises designed to: identify how the Board can become a more effective decision-making body; determine whether the number of paid staff is adequate for current operations; and, recognize the challenges of fund-raising by a volunteer-run organization.

These topics have taken on greater urgency as SSIP continues to serve growing numbers of clients. In 2019, the year prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Food Closet served 61,165 individuals. By 2022, that number had increased to 136,382. Based upon data through July, we project more than 175,000 individuals will be served in 2023.

In response to the Board retreat, various task forces were charged with researching, examining and providing recommendations regarding issues discussed at the retreat. SSIP will continue to be dedicated to the mission of feeding the food insecure of our community. However, it must determine how the organization needs to evolve to effectively fulfill this mission. Having met many challenges over the more than 50 years of operation, we are confident that we will make the necessary adjustments.

-Tom Busch

FAITH PARTNER SPOTLIGHT **PARKSIDE CONTINUES TO FOCUS ON** **SSIP MISSION AFTER 50+ YEARS**

By Margaret Brown, Communications Co-Chair

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. We are a caring community pursuing justice, promoting diversity and supporting spiritual journeys.

Parkside Community Church UCC (United Church of Christ) is open, affirming and recognized by the UCC as a Just Peace Church. The Church is located at 5700 South Land Park Drive. The pastor is Rev. Rajeev Rambo.

Parkside was an early member of SSIP and has been an active partner for 50 years. Members have volunteered in the former Clothes closet, Counseling Center and Food Closet. Doris Welsh served as coordinator of the Counseling Center until it became independent in 2002. Albert Campbell served as volunteer coordinator of the Food Closet (1983-84) and more recently Lori Sugar served as the Food Closet manager from 2015-2019. Many other "Parksidiers" have been and continue to be faithful volunteers and donors who make food distribution possible.



Parkside members, Craig & Tina Chalmers, and Margaret Brown pose in front of their Harvest Table where fruits and vegetables are gathered for the SSIP Food Closet.

Parkside traditions that have supported the Food Closet include: the Easter "Egg and Tuna Hunt" where the found tuna tins are donated to the Food Closet; the "Harvest Table" for excess fruit and vegetables for others to take with a donation to the Food Closet; and an "Everybody's Birthday" offering where the organist plays a medley of songs representing each month. People are encouraged to give a special gift when their month's song is played in gratitude for years lived. As needed, youth group, women's groups and participants in fellowship have sorted donations from the Kids Can! Food Drive as well as bagged beans and rice.

Parkside keeps a focus on the Food Closet Mission as part of its own Core Values to provide for the food insecure of the larger community. Parkside's representatives on the SSIP Board of Directors are Margaret Brown and John Sugar.

DONATIONS IN MEMORY AND HONORING

Donations received May-June-July 2023

*In Memory of Pam Anderson
Robert Anderson*

*In Honor of Kathleen Anderson
Karen Walkup*

*In Memory of Elaine Deatherage's Brother
Victor & Shigeko Shibata*

*In Honor of Rev. Renae Extrum-Fernandez
Mark & Mary Lou Hanzlik*

*In Memory of George Hood
Patricia Aguiar & Alfonso Ramirez*

*In Memory of Cynthia Woo Louie
Sachiko & Dick Louie*

*In Memory of Elena Ramirez & Fred Nichols
Hermann & Alberta Lorenz*

*In Memory of Fred Nichols
Patricia Nichols*

*In Honor of Frances Lee
Susan Teranishi*

*On behalf of James Tokevich
Deborah Tokevich*

*In Memory of Michael Yui
Robert Yui*

SUMMER BREAK

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Sam Roth, fellow from Faith, was particularly impressed with the Food Closet Manager, Simon Yeh's, leadership and volunteers' positive energy. "I was pleasantly surprised how energetic everyone was when I first volunteered at SSIP. The positive energy was contagious and made serving more enjoyable."

There are many ways that students can decide to spend their summer break. Choosing to serve others in the community on a voluntary basis can be mutually rewarding as our summer fellows expressed. First-hand experience with our neighbors in need and working as a team to meet those needs are invaluable experiences for the future leaders of tomorrow. The SSIP Food Closet is thankful for their youthful enthusiasm and hard work. We hope to see you and others return next year.

FULL PLATES, FULL HEARTS LIVE EVENT IS SUCCESSFUL

By Mary Lou Hanzlik, Fund Development Co-Chair



After a long absence due to the pandemic, Full Plates, Full Hearts SSIP's annual fundraising event returned with an in-person Ice Cream Social in July.

While the annual event is a time to generate much needed funds to support the SSIP's mission, the Ice Cream Social was designed to provide a feeling of celebration. It was a very hot day in Sacramento, but it was cool to be together again.

Rich's Ice Cream Catering scooped a variety of flavors of delicious Gunther's ice cream into waffle bowls for parched eager attendees.



Volunteer Rod Lee provided a backdrop of piano music worthy of the event. Volunteers Agnes Buell and Madi Elsea created fun table centerpieces of grocery items that were later distributed to clients. *(centerpiece shown here)*

Over a hundred supporters gathered for the festive event including event sponsors like SMUD, partner churches and their pastors, and teenaged Table Fellows who had contributed so much to SSIP this summer. *Continued on page 5*



Representing SMUD at our Ice Cream Social (L to R) Patrick Guild, Rosanna Herber, Dave Tamayo, and Marcella Maui

Many thanks to our 2023 business sponsors!



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FULL HEARTS

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During the event, lucky auction winners were able to pick up their winning bids from the virtual auction held a few weeks prior.

This year 142 auction items were donated by our caring community. Care packages donated through the auction were delivered to Opening Doors to welcome refugees to our community. Other auction items were also donated to My Sister's House Boutique store.

Much gratitude to everyone who contributed and participated in our virtual auction. Thanks to who that attended the Ice Cream Social, to our sponsors, and to our generous donors. You make the work of the SSIP Food Closet possible.



The piano stylings of SSIP volunteer Rod Lee were as cool as the ice cream served at the Ice Cream Social.

MULTILINGUAL SSIP

INCREDIBLE GROWTH BRINGS COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

By Simon Yeh, SSIP Food Closet Manager

SSIP has experienced tremendous growth in our client population over the past three years. Since we are among the few food closets open five days-a-week, SSIP gets lots of referrals from Sacramento 211 and several other community non-profits when they have inquiries about where one can receive emergency food. As the numbers of individuals served has grown, so has the diversity of the population.

We are thankful for the committed volunteers that return each week to serve with joyful hearts and positive attitudes. An important group is the volunteers who greet and check-in clients daily, using the Sacramento Food Bank's online client registration system. Often there are unique situations that require sensitive and creative responses to obtain the minimum client information to provide services. I am often called upon to assist non-English speaking clients in accessing our services. We believe two methods have contributed to more non-English speakers arriving at our door from all walks of life. One is the SSIP client card printed five languages, and the other is "word of mouth" exchanges between friends.

Last month, I greeted a new Hispanic immigrant recently processed through Texas. He found his way to Sacramento with his family of four, all living in a car with no cellphone service. Using my limited Spanish from college, I was able to help him fill out the Spanish version of the new client registration form. He walked away with a box and a bag of emergency food. He was glad to know that he may return again within the same week.

Just the other day, I tried everything to help a bewildered elderly Vietnamese woman get some emergency food. Regretfully, I turned her away with no food once I realized that she was illiterate in her own language, and I could not help her to complete the Vietnamese version of the new client registration form. While we were not able to help her that day, one of our carry-out volunteers reported the woman returned on another day with someone to help her, and she successfully received food.

These examples demonstrate how we will do whatever possible to assist our clients. It also emphasizes our need for multi-lingual volunteers to assist with translations, especially with clients who are not able to read or write in their language.

If you or someone you know is willing to volunteer and help meet this need, call (916)428-5290, or email volunteers@ssipfoodcloset.org.

SSIP CLIENTS SERVED

Month	Households	Individuals
MAY	6,061	17,249
JUNE	5,960	16,542
JULY	5,517	15,311



5625 24th Street
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 program to help alleviate food insecurity for Sacramento area residents. Partner faith-based organizations, with assistance from local businesses and other community members, provide the support and resources for the Food Closet's mission. In carrying out its mission the Food Closet adheres to the values of service, integrity, stewardship and accountability.

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**
Rev. Jesse Larson, Cathy Sapunor, Jackie Sneed
- **Centennial United Methodist Church**
Loretta Fransham, Kathy Anderson
- **Faith Presbyterian Church**
Tom Busch, Deb Kanner, Chong Choe-Smith
- **Florin United Methodist Church**
Chuck Snyder
- **Hope United Methodist Church**
Venéta Forrest Saulny
- **Parkside Community Church, United Church of Christ**
Margaret Brown, John Sugar
- **Parkview Presbyterian Church**
Carla Hart, Lois Van Beers
- **Sacramento Japanese United Methodist Church**
Shigeko Shibata, Elaine Maeda
- **Saint Anthony Catholic Parish**
Leonor Alvarez, Pat Aguiar Ramirez, Henry Sepulveda

GROCERY PARTNERS

Grocery partners serve an important role in providing a vital resource for our clients in the form of perishable foods, fresh produce, and packaged dry goods.

Grocery Partners:

- **Bel Air (Rush River Dr.)**
- **Grocery Outlet (Florin Rd./Riverside Blvd.)**
- **Nugget Market (Florin Rd./Greenhaven Dr.)**
- **Raley's (Freeport Blvd.)**
- **Trader Joe's (Folsom Blvd.)**

VOLUNTEERS HELP

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

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