

COMMUNICATOR

COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF ORANGE COUNTY



CELEBRATING 49 YEARS OF CARING

Spring/Summer 2014

Motel Families in OC

There are an increasing number of families in Orange County being forced from their homes due to insufficient working wages, high housing costs, rising food prices, and other economic problems that are making it difficult for our families to support themselves. Many of these families are turning to inexpensive motels to live week-to-week as Orange County's unknown homeless.

With a grant from the PIMCO Foundation, Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC) is now able to partner with FOCUS, a local non-profit dedicated to helping motel families, providing each homeless family living at Valencia Inn in Anaheim with 20 lbs. of fresh fruits and vegetables every week.



While visiting this site for distributions, CAPOC was surprised by the poor living conditions of these families. A young girl came up to us and asked if her family would still be able to receive the produce even though they were homeless, a problem no child should have to be worried about. We had mothers thank us

for providing them with the first fruit they were able to provide their children with in over a month. We noticed how truly appreciative these families were that we were taking the time to care about their needs.

Our new fresh produce distribution program is allowing these families to become less food insecure while educating them on the importance of eating balanced meals. We are pairing the produce distribution with classes such as "Building a Healthy Plate" and "Shopping on a Budget" to make sure that these motel families have the necessary resources to make healthy choices in the future.

CAPOC is dedicated to finding creative solutions to our county's most difficult issues. With your support, we are able to work every day to provide our at-risk neighbors the tools to move themselves out of poverty and live a fulfilling life.

CURRENTLY @ CAPOC

EVENTS

Join us on Tuesday, June 17th for our Coast-to-Coast Hunger Summit at the OC Food Bank. Check out page 2 for more information!

DONATE

This is not work that we can do alone. Visit www.capoc.org/getinvolved to find out how you can help today!

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faces of poverty

Community Action Partnership of Orange County strives to assist families affected by hunger and poverty. These are our neighbors and friends who champion to provide a better life for their families and their community. They are struggling, working families who just can't make ends meet sometimes.

We went in search of families affected by poverty to tell their own stories, and to put faces and names to this plight of many. We asked mothers at our El Modena



Resource Center to share their story on how they view poverty in their community. What we got back illustrated the poor conditions these communities face. The mothers documented neighbors waiting in long lines to receive food, home and car repairs that they could not afford to fix, and dumpster diving for furniture. They also documented the rise in the cost of food, rent, and gas, while noting that they did not have any additional resources or liveable wages to pay for these items.



Their stories showed us the continuing need in Orange County. They noticed homeless seniors living outside of their shopping mall, recognizing the reality that while most

people in Orange County have the luxury of spending money freely, many people living in their community have serious financial burdens. They told us stories about waiting hours in line to receive much needed food only to then walk a mile back home due to lack of transportation. They talked about how surprising it is that in this day and age there is still so much disparity that people refuse to recognize.

The mothers then discussed that they try to teach their children to share the little they do have with the homeless and those less fortunate, and to become role models to other students in their school. Their stories and their strength continue to inspire CAPOC to help people, help themselves and each other.



COAST to COAST Hunger Summit

In celebrating Community Action in Orange County and the 35th anniversary of the OC Food Bank, we are hosting a hunger summit. We are bringing together national and local community leaders to discuss the ways in which we can help fight hunger and poverty in Orange County and across the nation. Community Action Partnership of Orange County is dedicated to meeting the basic needs of low-income residents and the first way we do this is by utilizing our OC Food Bank to fight childhood and senior hunger.

Please join us on Tuesday, June 17th from 10 am – 12 pm at the OC Food Bank (11870 Monarch Street • Garden Grove, CA 92841). We will be featuring our OC Food Bank Director, Mark Lowry; New York City Coalition Against Hunger's Joel Berg; and a panel of local leaders in the fight against food insecurity. RSVP to clee@capoc.org.

50th Anniversary Celebration Campaign

Fifty years ago this past January, President Lyndon B. Johnson's Economic Opportunity Act led to the formation of Community Action Partnership of Orange County. We continue to respond to this call to action by working everyday to help individuals overcome hunger and poverty by providing them with the tools to gain self-sufficiency. There is a new face to poverty, it is individuals and families who are only one to two paychecks from crisis.

As we launch our 50th anniversary campaign, "Planting Seeds of Opportunity", we will draw attention to the ways we better the lives of the poor and we will make Orange County a better place to live for the future.



Solar Water Heating

Our Energy and Environmental Services Department is participating in a Solar Water Heating Pilot Program for low-income residents. By partnering with the Department of Community Services and Development we can now deliver this new program to our clients. We



will be installing 30 units over the course of the pilot program. The hope is that solar water heating will become a permanent part of the Weatherization Program.

Staff attended a week of training, both in the class room and in the field learning about the program and the system. At this time we have installed two systems, and have identified another qualified household for installation.

In order for a home to qualify in our area it must receive weatherization services from Southern California Gas Company and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Anyone interested in receiving this service should contact our Energy and Environmental Services Department.

Congratulations



Congratulations to our board member, Nahala Kayali, on her Cesar E. Chavez Champion of Change Award! She is among 1 of 10 community leaders nationwide to be honored by the White House for committing themselves to improving the lives of others in their communities.

Affects of SNAP Cuts

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, also known as food stamps, were cut by an average of 7% in November of 2013. This affected roughly 4.2 million California recipients. For a family of four, that meant a cut of \$36 each month in their already limited income. In fact, SNAP benefits now average less than \$1.40 per person per meal. Here's a rundown of what the SNAP cuts will mean for our residents:

- 67% of California households affected by the cut include children.
- \$457 million federal dollars were lost in California due to benefit cuts.
- 21 meals are lost in the course of a month for a family of four.

Across the nation, food bank and food pantry workers say they have seen a new rush of clients. "The decision of our government to do less to help feed vulnerable families compels the OC Food Bank to do more. We are seeking new partners and resources to fill that gap," stated Mark Lowery, Director of the OC Food Bank.

SUMMER HUNGER

How is it possible that hunger and poverty could be affecting nearly 1 in 5 Orange County families? This will be felt most heavily on the more than 175,000 Orange County children living in poverty this summer. For most kids, summer is a time spent at the beach with their friends. For Orange County's poor, it means a time of hunger. Without access to the free and reduced lunch and breakfast programs, many children will be forced to skip meals this summer.

To aid struggling children and families, CAPOC works to help bridge the gap between poverty and self-sufficiency. This summer, we will help families from falling further into poverty by offering summer lunch programs at our two Resource Centers, produce distributions with partnering organizations, emergency food, utility assistance and other anti-poverty programs to low-income households.



THANK YOU



Thank you to everyone who took a day on instead of off and created positive change on their Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday by volunteering at the OC Food Bank. Your

efforts packed 8,955 boxes, providing more than 238,800 meals to low-income neighbors.



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OUR PROMISE

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

How can **YOU** transform lives?

Everyday, lives are being changed thanks to the support and generosity of people like you. Check out these great opportunities and see how you can make a difference in fighting hunger and poverty in Orange County.

MAKE A DONATION

With your financial support, CAPOC can help reinvest in our community by providing basic needs and resources to low-income households.

To make a donation contact Doug Vogel at Dvogel@capoc.org or call (714) 897-6670 ext. 3151

VOLUNTEER

We are looking for individual and group volunteers to help us pack food boxes.

For more information contact Andre Gaithe at agaithe@capoc.org or call (714) 897-6670 ext. 3493

CAPOC's

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

With your support, we raised **\$1.4 million** that produced the following results to make a difference in 2013:

-Our OC Food Bank distributed **18,22,621** pounds of food to nearly **400** partners that served **174,957** low-income children, families, seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities

-We reached **119,049** low-income children and their families through our nutrition and physical education programs

-**584** seniors were provided with services to help them maintain their independence and access to needed services

-We provided minor home repairs and weatherized **1,499** low-income homes that helped the poor reduce their utility bills

-**700** youth received backpacks filled with school supplies at the start of the school year

-**12** students received their GED through our ACCESS program at our El Modena Resource Center