

OUR MISSION:

To deliver food and quality services to food banks and foster relationships in support of our commitment to eliminate hunger.

Established in 1984, AAFB is a support organization serving its five member regional food banks and a network of nearly 1,700 food pantries and agencies in Arizona. Major activities include: developing more food resources, promoting nutrition, advocating for public policy changes to help hungry people, fostering cooperation among food banks and networking with government, local, state and national leaders dedicated to ending hunger and engaging all sectors of society in hunger awareness and sensitivity.

The Association of Arizona Food Banks is not a food bank - we help make food banking better.

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Matthew Mellon
Emerson Hunger Fellow 2010-11

AAFB MEMBER FOOD BANKS COLLECTIVELY SERVE ALL 15 ARIZONA COUNTIES:

Community Food Bank, Tucson
www.communityfoodbank.org | 520.622.0525

Desert Mission Food Bank, Phoenix
www.jcl.com/foodbank | 602.870.6060

St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, Phoenix
www.firstfoodbank.org | 602.242.3663

United Food Bank, Mesa
www.unitedfoodbank.org | 480.926.4897

Yuma Community Food Bank, Yuma
www.yumafoodbank.org | 928.343.1243

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Arizona Self Help - resource pre-screening tool
www.arizonaselfhelp.org

Health-e-Arizona - online SNAP (Food Stamp) application
www.healthearizona.org

Community Information & Referral
www.cir.org

Valley of the Sun United Way
www.vsuw.org

Arizona Department of Economic Security
www.azdes.gov



STAY CONNECTED WITH AAFB:

Stay current on state and federal activities by sending an email with "Subscribe to the AAFB Advocacy Team" in the subject line to Ginny Hildebrand at ghildebrand@azfoodbanks.org.

Subscribe to the bi-weekly AAFB Email Newsletter by emailing Brian Simpson at brian@azfoodbanks.org.

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Change.org: www.change.org/azfoodbanks

HELP US SAVE COSTS:

Consider receiving FOOD LINES in your inbox. While a print version will be available, saving on printing and postage costs will allow us to direct more resources toward our mission! Email brian@azfoodbanks.org to receive future issues in your inbox.

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ASSOCIATION OF ARIZONA FOOD BANKS

- The latest on Child Nutrition Reauthorization, new Census poverty data, Hunger Fellows, and more.
- Highlights from Ginny Hildebrand's 25th anniversary. Updates from the AZ Statewide Gleaning Project.

IN THIS ISSUE OF FOOD LINES:

ABOVE: Speaking at her 25th anniversary celebration, Ginny Hildebrand encourages and inspires us all: "It is a moral outrage that we have hungry people in Arizona."



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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK Ginny Hildebrand, AAFB President & CEO



Dear Friends,

As Fall finally approaches, AAFB is gearing up for the peak growing season in Arizona, California and Northwestern Mexico, which brings us the opportunity to deliver more donated and purchased fresh produce to our member food banks, and ultimately to the families they reach at 1,700 sites across the state. AAFB and our member food banks strive to facilitate the timely delivery of quality product. To that end AAFB is excited about our Arizona Food Banks Produce Training Program for the produce handlers who work in all our member food banks (see article in this issue of FOOD LINES). The Produce Training Program will help all involved gain the same knowledge, tools and approach to assess the condition of produce, thereby assuring that we accept and distribute the same quality produce throughout the network. The end result: reduced waste and increased access to produce for families in need. In the last year, our Arizona Statewide Gleaning Project handled 45.2 million pounds of product, and with this additional expertise we anticipate it will be even greater this year.

On another topic: as I write this letter, I'm wondering if you have read that the recession is over? Technically over, that is. But the fine print which is writ large for too many Arizona families tells a far different story. Jobs will not come back for another two years according to most economic projections. Arizona had a 9.7% unemployment rate in August. In the same month there were over 4,000 foreclosure filings in Arizona and 1,044,940 eligible Arizonans, the highest number ever, received SNAP (Food Stamp) benefits. Today over a million Arizonans live in poverty - an annual income of \$22,050 or less for a family of four.

Behind the numbers are real families, many of our neighbors, struggling to get by during this crisis - many unemployed or underemployed, many losing their homes. Behind these numbers are 350,000 children of families trying to put food on the table, clothes on their backs and reaching for a better life. Our member food banks are serving as many of these families as resources permit. They distributed 19% more food in the year ending in June than in the prior year. In support of their efforts, AAFB is continuously seeking new sources of food and funds while advocating at the state and federal level for more effective nutrition programs to help these same families.

As you read this FOOD LINES please consider making a contribution today. Every dollar can deliver 25 pounds of food. With your help, more of the need can be met. In the meantime, AAFB will keep on serving the food banks and advocating on behalf of hungry people. Thank you for being our partner in confronting the unacceptable condition of hunger.

In gratitude,

Ginny Hildebrand

Ginny Hildebrand
President and CEO

GINNY CELEBRATES 25 YEARS WITH AAFB

It was just last year that AAFB celebrated its 25th anniversary, and if you want an indication of the rock solid and stable leadership that has guided our work over that time, look no farther than one year later, when we celebrate president and CEO Ginny Hildebrand's 25th anniversary with AAFB.

On September 8, St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance graciously hosted a 25th anniversary celebration for Ginny in their brand new University of Phoenix Programs Center Community Room. St. Mary's Community Kitchen program provided a delicious lunch for all. Colleagues and friends from past and present, from Arizona and around the country, came to honor and appreciate Ginny and her tremendous dedication and work toward fighting hunger in Arizona and beyond. Ginny was presented with a brand new netbook as a gift from the AAFB Board, and a new fund was established in her name to continue the advocacy and coordination for which she has become known for.

The AAFB Board and Staff, as well as Ginny, thanks everyone who attended and sent well-wishes, and we invite you to check out more photos from the celebration on our Facebook: www.facebook.com/azfoodbanks.

If you are interested in making a contribution to the Ginny Hildebrand Fund, please contact Virginia Skinner at 602-528-3434 or vs Skinner@azfoodbanks.org for more information.



LEFT TO RIGHT: AAFB Board Chair Bill Carnegie presents Ginny with a certificate of appreciation from Governor Brewer; Ginny and Carol Garrity, Vice President of Capability Development for Feeding America; Ginny celebrates with the Hickman's Family Farms Funky Chicken.

THE FOOD LINES EXPRESS LANE

WELCOME JEROME GARRISON TO AAFB BOARD

AAFB is pleased to welcome Dr. Jerome K. Garrison to the Board of Directors as an at-large member. Dr. Garrison currently serves as division chair of the Communication, Fine Arts, and Social Sciences Division at South Mountain Community College (SMCC) in Phoenix. He has more than twenty-five years of experience teaching instrumental, strings, and vocal music from junior high school through college.

At SMCC, Dr. Garrison started the annual Messiah performance in 1987 and led the SMCC design team to build the Performing Arts Center in 2003. In 2008, Dr. Garrison was given the South Mountain/Laveen Chamber of Commerce Volunteer Service Award. He has also helped raise over \$300,000 for the SMCC STARS Foundation Scholarship. Outside of SMCC, Dr. Garrison serves as minister of music at Tanner AME Church in downtown Phoenix.



WELCOME MATTHEW MELLON, HUNGER FELLOW

AAFB and the Arizona Community Action Association (ACAA) were both fortunate to be awarded Bill Emerson Hunger Fellows this year, and thus we are pleased to introduce Matthew Mellon to you. Starting in September and lasting through February, Matthew (and his counterpart Marie Lawrence at ACAA) will conduct research and work to increase awareness and participation in SNAP (Food Stamps) and other nutrition programs, concentrating on underserved, potentially eligible Hispanic populations in Maricopa County.

Specifically, Matthew is conducting community-based research to identify barriers that Hispanic residents in Maricopa County face in accessing services at emergency food programs. He is also collecting poverty data on a sub-county level to encourage more effective outreach in high-need areas. The research findings will culminate in recommendations to AAFB on strategic partnership building in the Maricopa County's Hispanic communities.

Originally from Cincinnati, OH, Matthew graduated from Xavier University in May 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts in history and minors in economics, environmental studies and peace studies. He directed the University Summer Service Program, worked with Students for Economic Justice, and taught writing and mathematics at a job skills training program. Matthew has studied economic policy in Nicaragua and led a cultural immersion trip to Ukraine. Since graduating, he has worked as a Lutheran Volunteer Corps member at the D.C. Employment Justice Center, where he advocated for workers' rights and language access issues in the District.

You can reach Matthew at matthew@azfoodbanks.org. Read more about the Hunger Fellowship program at www.hungercenter.org.



SEPTEMBER WAS HUNGER ACTION MONTH

This September concluded another successful Hunger Action Month, where AAFB joins Feeding America, food banks, and anti-hunger advocates from around the country to take action to fight domestic hunger. Did you participate? Here is just a sampling of how people in Arizona and beyond made a difference for this year's Hunger Action Month:

- Millions were introduced to the 30 Ways in 30 Days challenge on the www.hungeractionmonth.org website that provided a different action or activity for each day of the month. These activities including everything from taking a pledge to be more active in fighting hunger in your community, to volunteering at a food bank, to calling your elected officials and making your voice heard on Child Nutrition Reauthorization.
- Our Feeding America member food banks held local events on their own and in conjunction with Feeding America. Some of the events included a golf tournament and benefit martini tasting for United Food Bank, far out Rock N'Box group volunteer food box building at St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, numerous farming and farmer's market events hosted by Community Food Bank, and Dine Out evenings benefitting Yuma Community Food Bank.
- In Phoenix, those who attending the annual Taste of the Nation event on Sunday, September 26 at Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain enjoyed a delicious 5-course dinner prepared by various local restaurants. Both AAFB and St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance benefitted from this always exciting and tasty good time.
- Those who made a financial donation to AAFB or our member food banks supported our continued collective work to fight hunger throughout Arizona.

Remember that hunger remains a year-round issue, so even though September has come and gone, your dedication is needed (and appreciated) year-round to help eliminate hunger!

ADVOCACY MATTERS

NEW CENSUS DATA SHOWS ARIZONA STRUGGLING WITH POVERTY

On September 16 and 28, the U.S. Census Bureau released new poverty data using 2009 data, the most recent available. Unsurprisingly, due to the economic recession, the nation's poverty rate grew to the highest it's been in several decades:

- 14.3% (1 in 7 Americans) lived in poverty in 2009, up from 13.2% in 2008.
- This equates to 43.6 million people living in poverty in 2009, up from 39.8 million in 2008, and the third consecutive annual increase.
- The Census defines the Federal Poverty Level as \$21,954 annually for a family of four.

In Arizona, the numbers were even more stark:

- 19.6% (1 in 5 Arizonans) lived in poverty in 2009, up from 14.3% from 2008.
- This was a 37% increase in poverty level, the largest increase of any state in the country, ultimately ranking Arizona 2nd behind only Mississippi for the highest poverty percentage in the U.S.
- 23.4% of those living in poverty in 2009 were children under 18, up 12.5% from 2008.

Broken down even further, we see:

- 15.2% of those in Maricopa County and 19.3% in Pima County, lived in poverty in 2009.
- Rural counties suffered the most, with 36.4% in Apache County and 27.3% in Navajo County living in poverty in 2009.
- Median household income in Arizona declined 3.5% from 2008 to 2009 (\$50,489 to \$48,745).

This data correlates with other recent numbers we've reported, including the Feeding America Hunger in America 2010 Study. That study, based on face-to-face interviews conducted with 1,390 individuals and 526 agencies in Arizona in 2009, showed that 888,100 individuals received emergency food from food banks in 2009, and that 74% of them lived below the Federal Poverty Level. In the time since the Hunger in America study concluded, we now know that more than 1 million Arizonans have received emergency food. Topping it off, more than 1 million are receiving SNAP (Food Stamps) benefits, an all-time Arizona record. Taken together, all these figures conspire to paint a grim picture of a state struggling to put food on its tables during these challenging economic times.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING! GIVE A THOUGHTFUL & LASTING GIFT

More Arizona families than ever are struggling to feed their children. One in five individuals in Arizona lives in poverty, and one in four children go to bed hungry. You can be a partner in alleviating the unacceptable condition of hunger.

Making a **contribution in honor** of a special person in your life tells them how much you appreciate them, and is perfect for the individual on your shopping list for whom finding a perfect holiday gift is a struggle. We will send your honoree an acknowledgement of your thoughtful gift--without the amount listed--and send you an acknowledgement as well.

During the holiday season, we often have special memories of those we love who have passed on, or we are reminded that a friend has lost a treasured person too. Many of AAFB's generous supporters send a **gift in memory** of those special people at the holidays. An acknowledgement will be sent to you and to others if they are the bereaved.

Others have chosen to **become monthly donors**. They have asked us to charge their credit card each month on the 5th or the 20th, a convenient way to keep supporting our work throughout the year.

Returning the enclosed envelope today or making a secure online donation at www.azfoodbanks.org ensures our continued outreach and education, in addition to providing much needed food.

RECEIVE A TAX CREDIT FOR YOUR 2010 DONATION

Under Arizona law (ARS43-1088.G.2), AAFB is recognized as serving the working poor. If you qualify, you could receive a **FULL TAX CREDIT**, up to \$200 (filing as a single unmarried head of household) or \$400 (married filing joint return) for donating to AAFB. Not only can you receive the Arizona tax credit, but you can also include the donation on your Federal Tax Return. Donations must be postmarked by December 31, 2010. See www.azfoodbanks.org and www.azdor.gov for more details, or call 602-255-3381 or 1-800-843-7196 from area codes 520 or 928. Always consult your tax preparer or financial advisor for specific advice.

Also, if you are at least 70½ years young, you may qualify to donate from your IRA without triggering tax consequences, when you transfer the funds directly. Please contact your tax preparer or financial advisor for specific advice.

DOES YOUR EMPLOYER MATCH GIFTS?

Did you know you may be able to double your gift to AAFB through Matching Gift Programs? Many employers offer to match your gift as a way to encourage their employees, and often their retirees, to support charitable organizations. While many of our donors access this opportunity, there are probably many more who may not realize this potential. Please ask your human resources office if your company offers this opportunity to give a "second helping" of generosity to people who are hungry throughout Arizona.



GLEANNING PROJECT UPDATE

by Jami Kakinuma, Gleaning Operations Administrative Manager

ARIZONA FOOD BANKS PRODUCE TRAINING PROGRAM

Over the past several months, the Association of Arizona Food Banks (AAFB) and the Arizona Statewide Gleaning Project (ASGP) have worked collaboratively with St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance and the Arizona Department of Economic Security to put together the Arizona Food Banks Produce Training Program, designed to educate, train and empower those who work with produce on a daily basis.

As our food bank members and partners receive a broad range of fresh produce in various conditions, from retail or number one grade to some having already gone past any salvageable state, it was decided that we all should have the same knowledge of the practices and procedures used to determine the usability of fresh produce.

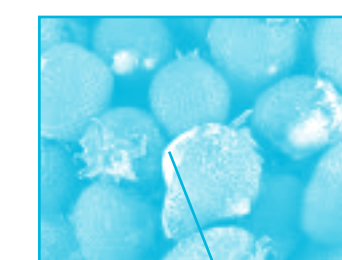
The Training Program is being conducted by Frank Bonner of St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, who has extensive knowledge and numerous years of experience working in the produce industry. Frank was kind enough to work with AAFB and ASGP to put together his personal knowledge and variously sourced materials to administer our Produce Training Program.

The Training Program covers numerous different components of produce, including the produce receiving process for a food bank, how to determine the condition of the produce, how to check the temperature of the produce, and how to diagnose various possible molds and fungi that could affect the produce's condition. All of these things may sound quite simple, however it's quite a large amount of information that needed to be covered. If any one of these steps is missed or diagnosed incorrectly, ASGP can end up transporting produce that cannot be used, or food banks can be stuck with produce that must be thrown away.

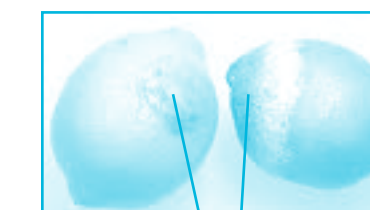
The first training session was held at St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance on August 19, 2010, and was an overwhelming success with attendees reporting on how much they learned. Representatives from all of our member and partner food banks attended, as well as representatives from AAFB and ASGP. Funding provided by the Arizona Department of Economic Security covers the cost of trainees' transportation to the training sessions.

This same funding will also pay for new materials and tools to be used when receiving and storing produce, such as thermometers, produce knives, pallet blankets, digital cameras to document product condition, and informational produce charts and literature. With these tools in hand and the lessons learned from the training, everyone who comes in contact with produce will be well-equipped to ensure only the most usable produce will make it to the food banks, ensuring efficiency and cost savings while also ensuring that clients of the food banks are receiving only the best produce to eat.

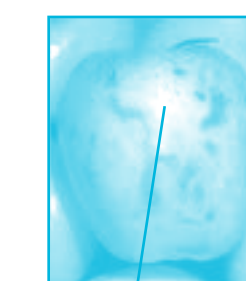
Finally, the Produce Training Program is serving as a national pilot program that will be taken up by Feeding America for implementation in other states. Having just been named one of Feeding America's inaugural Partner State Associations this past July, it is a tremendous honor to see projects utilizing the collaboration and leadership of all our member food banks become a blueprint for others.



MOLD



DECAY FROM ROT



SUN DAMAGE

The goal of the Produce Training Program is to equip food bankers with both the knowledge and tools necessary to quickly and correctly identify defects such as those above, to ensure the produce accepted is of the highest quality possible.

ASGP YEAR IN REVIEW

Read all about the previous ASGP year, which featured 45.2 million pounds of food transported, in the latest ASGP annual report on www.azfoodbanks.org. The 09-10 totals bring the total pounds transported since the program started in 1993 to over 800 million pounds! A big THANK YOU to all the donors, contributors and partners who support the Gleaning Project in 2009-10.

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