

MEMORANDUM

MENDING Poverty

JUNE 2012: MEND'S EMERGENCY FOOD BANK

MEND continues its commitment to ending hunger in our local communities by providing programs such as **Seed to Supper** and working with partners on food drives such **Stamp Out Hunger**. The numbers attest to the amazing effort and collaboration among volunteers, staff, and partner organizations.

- **250,000:** pounds of donated food MEND Foodbank receives each month
- **128,000:** additional pounds of donated food received for Stamp Out Hunger
- **25,000:** maximum number of people the Foodbank serves each month
- **425:** number of volunteers involved in Stamp Out Hunger this year
- **20:** number of years MEND has operated the Stamp Out Hunger Campaign



Stamp Out Hunger Campaign

For the past twenty years, the second Saturday in May has been dedicated to the largest annual food drive held nationwide. In partnership with the National Association of Letter Carriers, MEND organizes this one-day food drive where neighbors throughout Northern San Fernando Valley have an opportunity to easily donate food to needy families in our community. Our neighbors did not disappoint! With added support of Von's and Con-Way Freight and 425 volunteers who sorted food late into the night, MEND received six months worth of dried and canned goods.



Chris Forde has led groups of Stamp Out Hunger volunteers at the Sherman Oaks Post Office for the last two years as part of MEND's collaboration with the National Association of Letter Carriers. In addition, he helps the food pantry distribution program at Panorama Baptist Church each week

enabling hundreds of struggling families. He dedicates his time, "knowing that the food is going to the people who actually need it." He does so much yet he wants to do more. "There's always a need in this economy," and he wishes that Stamp Out Hunger could take place at the beginning of each season with participation from other organizations. His motivation is simple: he loves the positive feedback, smiles on people's faces, and appreciation from the people who are in need.



Thanks to our volunteers and staff, Young-Ji Lee, Dariel Miller, David Jimenez, Nathan Russo, Richard Weinroth, and Luke Ippoliti, for developing this update!

MEND - Meet Each Need with Dignity is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.
10641 North San Fernando Road, Pacoima, California 91331 | www.MENDpoverty.org | 818.897.2443

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Seed to Supper Program

Grow Food. Restore Connection. Empower Families.

The Seed to Supper Program seeks to help young people form a healthy connection to food. In nine Saturday sessions over a period of three months, youth from MEND's After School Program learn how to plant and tend a garden. And in addition to 'getting their hands dirty', they receive science-based classroom instruction in nutrition and sustainable gardening. These classes enhance their understanding and appreciation of what's happening in the garden, in food they eat, and how it affects them. The program culminates in a Harvest Celebration Supper where the students harvest what they've grown, prepare a nutritious meal and serve it to their family and friends.



Jonathan Quintana (age 12) and his sister, Brisa (age 9), joined the Seed to Supper Program after their mom learned of the new program being offered at MEND. A sample class includes a lecture on minerals and vitamins, nutritional snack time, and hands-on gardening. Jonathan and Brisa remember planting a few things with their dad, but it does not compare to the things they are learning now in the program. Jonathan gets excited when talking about the start of harvest and how butterflies affect the growth of certain plants.

MEND also collaborates with another non-profit, Farming's Future, to create sustainable home gardens for interested families of participant youth so that the learning and growing can continue with the entire family.

"The garden-as-classroom was the point when we set out to convert an unused corner of the MEND parking lot into a food producing space nearly two years ago," recalls Luke Ippoliti, MEND's Food Bank Assistant Manager. "Growing a garden allows kids to see food in its natural state, which evokes wonder and inspires them to try different things. Combine that with the fact that food from the garden tastes more flavorful, and you have an experience that transforms our relationship with what we eat. Furthermore, our families benefit when they are able to supplement their food by growing their own vegetables and herbs - both of which are costly at the market."



What Can You Do? Host a Food Drive!

Don't wait for the crops to grow or for the next Stamp Out Hunger Campaign to donate food stuff to MEND. We are always in need of canned and dried goods (i.e., dry beans, rice, pasta, canned vegetables, etc.). To host a food drive, please contact Richard Weinroth, Foodbank Director at (818) 686-7334.



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