



FOOD4THOUGHT

JANUARY 2016



FIGHTING HUNGER
FEEDING HOPE

LOOKING FORWARD WITH A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

2015 was a special and sensational year at Valley Food Bank all thanks to our Heroes. We have been blessed and privileged to continue to serve our 10 food pantries throughout the Valley. We believe we are not only providing essential food resources, but also hope and strengthened relationships.

This year we are thankful we had 5,669 volunteers giving a combined total of 41,843 hours. Our big-hearted volunteers helped to serve and accomplish so much. Some of those volunteers were foreign exchange students from Spain, Norway, Italy, and Sweden. They were kind and generous to spend some of their United States time volunteering here in our warehouse.

We distributed 2,022,988 pounds of food coupled with 1,003,737 cans of food and 634,154 packages of non-perishable foods to 45,797 families affecting 184,682 individuals. We

are thankful for every volunteer and all the food and essentials donated! "Fighting Hunger – Feeding Hope."

This is our fifth consecutive year to receive a 4-Star rating from Charity Navigator. Charity Navigator differentiates us from our peers and demonstrates to the public we are worthy of your trust. We are quite proud of that!

We also presented our 2nd annual Penny Wayne Humanitarian award to the well-deserved Hal and Sophia Apple. We are forever grateful for their efforts and support!

We also partnered with Whole Foods Market Feed 4 More program. They chose us as their charity of choice, giving their customers an opportunity to support us. We also have a continued partnership with Ralph's grocery stores. 4% of your Ralph's purchases will be donated to us with your registered Ralph's rewards card.

2016 is filled with promise and our team is excited to help as many needy folks as our resources will allow. Thank you to all our partners, heroes, volunteers, donors and prayer partners for your steadfast support, encouragement, and love.



Yahoo! Summer of Service Program allowed employees to work in the warehouse to prepare food for distribution.

WILLING AND MORE THAN ABLE

Three days per week he walks in the door casually dressed, usually a T – Shirt and shorts with a joyful smile and positive disposition.

This year, Bob began to volunteer at the Valley Food Bank and in no time at all has become a valued and asset to our team. With comfortable fitting clothes, shoes,

racket ball tan, great smile and a very positive and joyful disposition... Several times per week Bob arrives ready to serve many families throughout the valley.

From the first time we met Bob, we just knew there was something special about him. No task is too great or too small. I caught up with Bob and asked what makes him

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WILLING AND MORE THAN ABLE (CONT.)

serve? Hoping to get a little insight into what makes him tick and what came next was so encouraging.

Bob explained that this was his first year of retirement he wanted to volunteer somewhere. He explained how he picked us: it was a combination of research and good intuition. He settled on trying out the Valley Food Bank and has been with us ever since.

Bob's great attitude towards life and others is truly and inspiration to many. In hearing him share a little about himself, we just couldn't help but feel his warm heartedness towards family and community. Though Bob graduated from UCLA and went on to earn a Law Degree, he eventually became a business owner. We went on to talk about the things that bring him the greatest joy: 42 years of marriage to the most wonderful woman in the world, grown children who have gone on to teach and contribute to the greater good, friends, and now his new friends and co-laborers, the Valley Food Bank.



Thank you Bob, you have helped us make 2015 a memorable and joyful experience, together, we are "Fighting Hunger – Feeding Hope!"

IT'S JUST A SET-BACK

I grew up in the Valley. There are three of us, two children (ages 22 and 14) and myself. About a year ago, I separated from my husband and ended up having to move in with my parents. We use a separate part of the house that we live in until we can find regular housing.

I've been coming to the Pantry for about six months, about once a month. I get food stamps which last about

two weeks. My oldest doesn't qualify for the food stamps, even though he is still at home and going to school.

We just recently had to go gluten-free, so that makes a major impact. The gluten-free products are so expensive, it's ridiculous.. I try to give my children a casserole or pasta and a vegetable as well as fruit.. Oh yeah, there have been times I didn't have enough food. Then we go to my parent's side of the house. A lot of times we'll go and eat with them to kind of compensate for the difference. Or the kids go to friends'...

The Food Pantry has added just that extra amount; it's helped. It's been great, it takes that little bit of burden off of what I don't have to buy.

I'm very grateful that the Pantry is accessible to me. I didn't realize that it was. I've really appreciated it. I have to be optimistic and hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel. I do believe that I will get myself turned around. It's just very humbling. It's kind of embarrassing, too. But it's just a set-back—that's all it is, it's just a set-back. Just a bump.

