

Feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless since 1968



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38th Annual Walk for the Hungry A Success!



There are few things as satisfying as seeing the product of a major effort. Even more so when that product is the loud-and-clear fact that people support the things that you believe in and work for. That's how we feel every year when the Walk for the Hungry rolls around. Obviously, bringing in funds to fill our food pantries is a major goal and concern, along with awareness raised in the community by seeing a myriad of people out walking for a purpose. However, at the same time, in a very real way, the walkers support us. They show us that the work we believe in is valuable and appreciated. They show us that people out there care about the cause we champion—that eliminating

hunger is a valuable and worthwhile goal. And they show us that the solidarity of a community can lift up its members in need.

This 38th Annual Walk was no exception. Volunteers poured in throughout the morning providing invaluable assistance and organization. Walkers came soon afterward and their excitement was contagious. People were milling around enjoying In-N-Out, face-painting, popcorn, and balloons as well as the exuberant company of all the other walkers. We met walkers who have been attending consistently for years, even if a little slower, and walkers out for their first time—a few in strollers.

We also had an impressive showing from community youth—the top two youth fundraisers bringing in more than \$500 each. And speaking of fundraisers, preliminary esti-

mates show walkers bringing in over \$41,000! That's not including corporate sponsorships or other donations that have historically continued to come in through the next few months. That equals 246,000 lbs. of food for our pantries just in time for the holidays. We thank everybody who participated and contributed (and continue to contribute). Your efforts and enthusiasm keep us going—in more ways than one.



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Volunteer Coordinator

courtesy AmeriCorps

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Who We Are ...

Celebrating 43 years of commitment, Inland Valley Hope Partners serves over 75,000 men, women and children each year through "Our House" family residential shelter; BETA, SOVA, Claremont and San Dimas food pantries; and the Pomona Farmers Market throughout 13 communities including Chino, Chino Hills, Claremont, Diamond Bar, La Verne, Montclair, Mt. Baldy, Ontario, Pomona, Rancho Cucamonga, San Dimas, Upland, and Walnut. The shelter can house eight families for up to 90 days. The food pantries distribute five days worth of food per person to no and low income families. Clients may come once every 30 days. The Farmers Market operates every Saturday morning and accepts WIC and EBT cards. Begun in 1968 as the Pomona Council of Churches, today the non-profit is a collaboration of faith communities, businesses, community groups, and individuals who care about their neighbors.

Blessings

After months of planning, it's hard to believe that the Inland Valley Hope Partners' 38th Walk for the Hungry is over. But that's the way it has gone for years: plan, promote, and advertise for months, then pour it all into an afternoon of walking. Pour is definitely the key word there because the efforts and generosity of community members toward their neighbors can only be described as an outpouring. This would have been a very different (and much less effective) event without the generosity of donors, the willingness of volunteers, and the excitement of all the walkers. I want to make it abundantly clear that we are constantly impressed by your efforts and very grateful for your support.

On the other hand, one can't pour into a cause like this and not get a bit philosophical about what we're doing. Over the years I have seen our walker numbers rise and fall even as the necessity to fight hunger has grown, and I wonder why. People haven't stopped supporting causes—any number of charities or research causes walks consistently draw droves. Everybody supports a friend or family member who demonstrates something worth walking for. Maybe people just don't know someone who's hungry.....

I guarantee that is not the case: you know somebody who is hungry; you know them personally. With data telling us that 1 in 6 Americans deals with food insecurity right now, it would be next to impossible not to know someone. Unfortunately, there's still a stigma to hunger; even with a faltering economy we somehow believe that everybody should be able to feed their families, and so people hide their need from those around them. So, it is up to us to support our communities—our friends and neighbors and their children should never have to wonder if and from where they'll get their next meal.

So, again we thank you for coming out in support of this hidden problem. Thank you for refusing to let our neighbors be hungry. And.... we look forward to seeing you again next year....and bring a friend!

God Bless,
Wytske Visser, executive director



Many Thanks to the Van Noy Allstate Team



We'd like to thank Jason & Shelley Van Noy and the rest of their Allstate Team for their recent Mac & Cheese Drive. Starting with an original goal of 1,000 boxes, they impressed everybody with a final count of more than 1,500. Food drives like this are vital to our efforts against hunger and we thank them for taking up the cause.

Where We're Going

With the holidays fast approaching, there is a lot of excitement just around the corner. And, as we see it, one of the most exciting things is the way people get into a charitable mode around this time of year. It's a beautiful thing when the holidays bring out a spirit of generosity and a concern for the well-being of the members of our community.

Hope Partners has a number of programs coming up to channel that generosity into aid and compassion for some of the people who need it most—at a time of the year where it matters most.

Alternative Gifts Program

Inland Valley Hope Partners attends Alternative Gifts events at faith communities and local businesses. This is another great opportunity to lend a helping hand to families in need during the holiday season. A member of the Hope Partners staff will be happy to join your event. Schedule your event with us today! Gifts can be purchased at events or directly through Hope Partners.



Gifts include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| \$1—Mac & Cheese | \$15—1 case of baby food |
| \$2—1 box of cereal | \$18—1 case of peanut butter |
| \$5—Target/Wal-Mart Gift Card | \$25—1 case of canned vegetables |
| \$12.50—one night of shelter | |

Food Stamp Challenge

Have you seen the price of groceries lately? It's almost bad enough to make you apply for food stamps, right? Actually, with the economy in its current state and unemployment in California around 12%, that's exactly what it comes down to for many people. Designed to provide a safety net for difficult times, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), better known as food stamps, sees the majority of its users leave the program within nine months. That makes it exactly the leg up that many people need when things cross from tight to impossible, including children who make up more than half of SNAP recipients.

That safety net, however, is in danger of collapsing. Proposed funding cuts would reduce the number of people served and the amount of assistance provided. Already groups are working to protect these programs during the federal budget process and the re-authorization of the Farm Bill in 2012.

Hope Partners is getting in on the effort as well, and inviting you to join the Food Stamp Challenge by experiencing one week on a food stamp diet from Thursday, October 27th through Thursday, November 3rd. The nationwide average monthly benefit in 2010 was \$133.79, which breaks down to about \$31.50 a week, \$4.50 a day, or \$1.50 a meal. We're challenging you to spend a week on that food budget, including any dining out and avoiding anything but condiments purchased before that budget—including handouts from friends or family.

For more detailed information on the program, go to www.fightingpovertywithfaith.com. Also, we'll be updating our Twitter and Facebook as we prepare and sharing our experiences as we take the challenge here in the office. We'd love to hear your experiences alongside us as we bring attention to this issue.

Inland Valley Hope Partners is proud to announce the **Adopt A Family Program and Toy Drive.**

The Adopt A Family Program started out by helping shelter residents by providing for needs and some wishes that families would not be able to obtain on their own because of circumstantial situations and financial limitations. Today, the program reaches out to other low-income families to help in critical economic times such as these. Thank you for your support. If you would like to donate to or Adopt A Family for the holidays, contact Rochelle Williams by email: rochellew@inlandvalleyhopepartners.org for more information.



Have you remembered to include Inland Valley Hope Partners in your will?



Consider leaving a legacy of support for our mission.

Where We've Been

Special thanks to Grainger for their stunning donation of \$15,000 at our Walk for the Hungry. Their consistent partnership and generous support go a long way toward feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless.



Emergency Housing Coordinator: David Hawkins

David has been a man of many places and many roles before coming to Hope Partners. Born in Michigan, he grew up in the San Gabriel valley and lived in Washington, Indiana, and Ohio at some point as well. His jobs featured heavily with youth, ranging from an After-school Program Director to youth-centered work with the Detroit Rescue Mission to work with delinquent and at-risk youth in the court system.



He comes to Hope Partners because of a passion for helping people and finds that to be the most rewarding part of his role here—along with the great staff he works with. David takes a necessarily hands-on approach to his job here, often disappearing from the office to change lightbulbs, do laundry, shop, or cook dinner for the clients in Our House.

When he's away from here altogether, he spends his time playing basketball and baseball and watching sports on TV. He's passionate about music, having been in a band called the Israelites and now doing some managing. He likes to spend his weekends doing something fun with family, which often means barbecuing for his stepson and nieces or heading out to the park.

Getting & Giving Back

One of the major benefits of a community food pantry is that it encourages a community to step up in support of its neighbors. When people with means donate, people with time volunteer, and people with needs are served, it defines a sort of human vibrancy within a community. Few people understand that as well as Jihawna Johnson. Jihawna's first experience with Hope Partners was through our rental assistance program. Now her connection is from the other side of our spectrum of interest—she's a regular volunteer at one of our food pantries. She enjoys the conversations with the people she meets volunteering there and notes how the time flies in the company of other volunteers, "wonderful people and lots of good laughs." We appreciate having her with us and thank her for the enthusiasm she brings to our mission.

A New Face on Food Insecurity

We've all heard the statistics. Half of all Americans that experience food insecurity are children. However, sometimes it takes a more concrete example to drive the statistic home. Last month a 10-year-old boy walked into Beta looking for emergency food. He knew about the food pantry because his mother had taken him there in the past. However, this time he came alone. In the interview process it was learned that his mom was in jail and he was staying with a cousin...who didn't have enough food. He wasn't willing to say much more, so his food was bagged up and he left with what we can only hope was enough provision to get by.

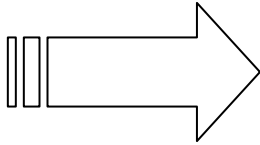
In the current economic situation, our pantries serve more people with less food than ever before. Thank you for continuing to support what is becoming an increasingly necessary work.

AWARENESS CORNER

Calling All Volunteers!!

We are hosting a volunteer orientation at our main office on October 29 @ 9 AM. If you would like to be a part of our fantastic crew of volunteers, come for snacks and coffee and information on how exactly you can be involved. The orientation will last about 90 minutes and we would love to see you there!

Direct any questions to Volunteer Coordinator Alicia Castro



Gleaning Hope

A common criticism of food pantries comes at the nutritional contents of common pantry items. For storage and distribution purposes, boxed, canned, and preserved foods make up much of the offerings and tend to miss out on the nutritional value of freshness.



That's what makes our Gleaning Hope program so exciting. Neighborhood and backyard fruits and vegetables get picked by volunteers and distributed by our pantries—fresh produce directly from the trees to people who need it, just like these pomegranates (400 lbs!) picked just last month.

And we'd love you to participate as well. Apples, dates, grapes, kiwi, lemons, cantaloupe, honeydew, Persian melons, Valencia oranges, pears, plums, pomegranates, strawberries, and watermelons are all ripe for harvest this month in Southern California. If you or anybody you know grows these fruits or any vegetables, we would love to put together a volunteer group to come out and pick them up—just give us a call.

Phone: (909) 622-3806 ext 223

Email: vcoordinator@inlandvalleyhopepartners.org

Blog website: Gleaninghope.wordpress.com

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Have an old rust bucket decorating the driveway? Put it to use! Donate it to us through Cars 4 Causes and turn that eyesore into emergency food or shelter for clients in our community.



If you're not doing it already, follow us on Facebook (Inland Valley Hope Partners) and Twitter (@HopePartners). Not only will we keep you informed about our latest efforts and current volunteer opportunities, we'll continue posting news and research into poverty, hunger, and homelessness. We figure the better we know the problems we work against, the more effective that work will be. Stay tuned for an upcoming fundraiser using these social networks.



Thank you to our September Partners in Hope

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& Jean Menton, Lynne Stella
Victor McCaleb
By Verla McCaleb

In Memoriam

We received word that Rosa Lopez passed away last month of complications following a fall where she broke her hip. Rosa worked at our organization for many years until 2009, both at the Sova and the Beta program centers. We wish her family God's strength and blessings during these days of mourning.

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Quick Note:

San Dimas Community UCC, 216 San
 Dimas Ave., San Dimas
 Will have the October Contradance on
 October 22, 6:30-8:30 pm. simple
 dances to traditional Irish music. Silent
 Auction. Admission: canned food to
 benefit the San Dimas food pantry,
 which serves several hundred people a
 month.



*In-Kind Donations for San Dimas to be in-
 cluded next month.