YOUNG VOLUNTEER STRIVES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By Madeleine Hennessy, Marketing & Communications Manager

Lana has been volunteering with Feeding San Diego for the last five years, recently becoming a Team Leader. She leads two volunteer shifts a month in the FSD warehouse, teaching and helping volunteers through produce gleaning, sorting and packing food.

She’s 13 years old.

Lana lives with her family and their two dogs in Rancho Santa Fe. She spends her time going to school, studying and cheerleading competitively. Even with her busy schedule, she makes it a priority to volunteer.

“I would volunteer more if I could,” said Lana.

Lana was first introduced to Feeding San Diego through Kids Korp and as she volunteered with other organizations, she said Feeding San Diego really stood out.

“Feeding San Diego is top notch – it’s fun, clean and everyone is really nice. I’ve had nothing but great experiences here.”

Lana found how easy it was to sign up for shifts and continued to register for the two-hour volunteer shifts available online.

As she spent more time at Feeding San Diego, she wanted to help fight food insecurity even more.

“I met a volunteer team leader who inspired me to apply to be a team leader myself and I love it.”
Dear Friends,

My name is Alicia and I am the Director of Operations at Feeding San Diego. My team works to capture food from our local and national food donors, move it safely and efficiently through our distribution center and deliver it to our 225 partners, who then provide it to the 63,000 individuals we serve each week.

I believe that every person deserves the opportunity to live a successful life. Without easy access to healthy food, this journey becomes incredibly difficult. I am proud to work alongside our staff, volunteers, partners and thousands of donors to continuously develop our supply chain that provides healthy food to families in need.

The sheer magnitude of the work Feeding San Diego does still impresses me. The millions of pounds of food we provide each month through our strong local network helps children, families and seniors thrive in our community. Knowing this, inspires the work I do every day.

Thank you for helping to make it all possible. 

Alicia
GIVING BACK IN HARD TIMES
By Feriha Ahmed, Outreach Support Intern

It’s hard to believe that such a joyful and enthusiastic woman like Lynda was homeless for three years.

During that time, she sometimes found housing at a local hotel and as a person with diabetes without steady access to healthy food, she was unable to regulate her own blood sugar.

She recalls her darkest moment when she was stuck on the floor unable to move or call for help because her blood sugar was so low.

A friend told her about a local food distribution and after she received food, she decided to volunteer at the distribution site. As a volunteer, she made sure all those in need not only received food but also found intellectual nourishment. Lynda helped kids with their homework, offered them books and films about a variety of topics, from astronomy to the deep ocean.

While homeless, Lynda saw the need at her hotel. She began volunteering at Heaven’s Windows, a partner of Feeding San Diego and decided to help her neighbors.

“Being homeless never stopped me from seeing that people were hungry and needed help,” said Lynda.

With help from Angie Kretschmar, the head of Heaven’s Windows, Lynda began distributing food at the hotel. Families in the neighborhood nicknamed her “snack lady” and after school, children would line up outside her room to receive food.

When she ran out of food to provide, Lynda would hand out food from her own pantry.

In return for the food, Lynda would ask the children to do a good deed.

“The children would tell me their good deed was being quiet in class and staying out of trouble,” chuckled Lynda.

Lynda’s passion for helping her community is still going strong and today, she is running the food pantry at Heaven’s Windows. She educates clients about nutrition and where to find resources in their community.

Even in the hardest time of her life, Lynda made giving back a priority and is an inspiration to all who know her.

“The best way to get up is to help others,” said Lynda with a smile.
**THANK YOU**

**Price Philanthropies Foundation** for awarding $54,852 to replicate a successful pilot in Mid-City that improved City Heights charitable food distribution system. The pilot was a joint effort between Feeding San Diego and the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank in the City Heights community. The accomplishments, learnings and best practices that emerged from the pilot project are now being implemented in the Mid-City community over an 18-month period to improve distribution efficiency, food quality and enhance client experiences while increasing access to healthy food and community-wide wrap-around services to improve clients’ self-sufficiency.

**Walmart** for generously donating $50,000 to increase Feeding San Diego’s agency distribution network capacity to participate in its Food Rescue program. These funds were used to provide refrigeration, shelving, carts, bins and other assets to increase perishable food storage and improve overall network capacity. One of FSD’s partner agencies, Special Delivery San Diego, increased their capacity by 100% with their new commercial refrigerator and freezer provided through this grant. Two other partners, Santee Food Bank and Catholic Charities Vista Food Resource Center, both received new freezers, enabling them to accept and distribute more perishable food.

**Walt Disney Company** and **General Mills, Inc.** for kindly donating a total of $100,000 to help Feeding San Diego resolve its transportation challenges and achieve its strategic produce plan objectives. Feeding San Diego will use the funds to purchase a new refrigerated truck, with a 20-foot box and 9,500-pound capacity that includes refrigeration and a lift gate. The added vehicle will vastly improve Feeding San Diego’s capacity to procure and distribute large volumes of produce that will provide more clients with more fresh, nutritious food through its partner agency and direct service distribution network.

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Want to get your company involved in hunger-relief?

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VOLUNTEERS BRING FOOD & HOPE TO COMMUNITY

By Nicky Riordan, Programs Manager

The food pantry at First Congregational Church of Ramona couldn’t operate without its dedicated volunteers like Arthur, Patty, Kathy, Dolores and Nancy.

These volunteers are all well-known members of the community, having lived in the area for decades.

They help distribute fresh produce and healthy staple food items once a month, serving between 100-150 households. The church and their volunteers also serve food to the families of Ramona Elementary and set aside food for home-bound seniors.

Transportation and fixed income is a challenge for many seniors in this area and for low-income families getting healthy food is also difficult, especially if they have children and are new to the area.

When service gaps were identified in Ramona, the Ramona Food Security group got together to distribute food at mobile homes and the school across from the church. From there, the distribution has only grown to overcome barriers in this very tight-knit, caring community.

Healthy produce is now available to seniors through delivery and families feel more comfortable receiving food in a welcoming, farmers market-style distribution which also offers them the opportunity to socialize.

“Seniors like the fruit and families really enjoy the onions and potatoes that they can’t afford at the grocery store,” said the volunteers.

Since the distribution began, they’ve seen clients eat out less and stick to more healthier choices.

One of the regular clients, Angela, used the food from a distribution to cook a holiday dinner for home-bound seniors, but was only able to afford to do that with a turkey voucher from the church and cranberry sauce, stuffing ingredients and produce from Feeding San Diego.

“We saved the frozen turkey until Christmas. We were able to present a very nice Christmas dinner to several park residents and two ‘shut-ins’. None of them would have had a Christmas dinner, otherwise.”

We all had a lot of fun, eating and conversing! We could not do all this on our own,” said Angela.

The volunteers collaborate to continue to serve the community, knowing the difference it makes.

“The quality of the food from Feeding San Diego keeps people coming back, it feeds their soul.”
UPCOMING EVENTS

NUTRITION MONTH VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE
Every March, Feeding San Diego celebrates National Nutrition Month®, sponsored by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, focusing on building awareness of the link between hunger and health. FSD integrates healthy foods and nutrition education into hunger-relief programs to reduce the risk of diet-related chronic illness.

Join us for a Volunteer Open House on Saturday, March 18 from 9AM to 12PM at our distribution center. Learn more about volunteering, tour the facility and try volunteer projects.

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PAIRINGS WITH A PURPOSE
APRIL 15, 12 - 4 PM
BOBBY RIGGS TENNIS CLUB & MUSEUM
ENCINITAS, CA

In beautiful Encinitas, taste and sip exclusive pairings from San Diego’s finest chefs, breweries and wineries while participating in the silent auction and raffle with one-of-a-kind items.

100% of the proceeds from this second annual event supports hunger-relief programs through Feeding San Diego.

For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, visit our website.

FEEDINGSANDIEGO.ORG/PAIRINGS

FOOD FROM THE BAR
MAY 2 - JUNE 2

The Feeding San Diego Food from the Bar campaign challenges San Diego law firms to unite against hunger in a fun and competitive way. The legal community will compete head-to-head during the month of May to find out who can make the biggest impact and overrule hunger in San Diego County.

This competition provides much needed funds and awareness to ensure that our children and families can get the nutrition they need to live healthy and productive lives during this crucial time.

To register and learn more, visit our website.

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In her new role, she helps lead organizations, families and corporate groups in their volunteer experience at Feeding San Diego.

“A few months ago, I was leading a group of young kids and their parents in a project and they were so enthusiastic and helpful. They seemed to realize that helping people is a good thing and it made me happy to be a part of that.”

She also encourages her family to volunteer and be as involved as possible in hunger-relief.

“Hunger is so sad, so it makes me happy to help – especially kids. The BackPack program is my favorite.”

Lana understands the difference volunteers make in lives of the nearly half a million San Diegans who face hunger.

“The healthy food helps out in so many ways. Good nutrition is so important for kids and adults so I know it helps those who don’t have access.”

Preparing for high school in the fall, Lana plans to continue volunteering even as she’s excited to participate in extracurricular activities at her new school.

“My involvement is only going to grow, I know it’s good for me and keeps me humble.”

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ON THE GO

Hello Friends,

The first in a series of six Healthy Cook classes at Naranca Elementary in El Cajon began January 19. The class was led by Feeding San Diego AmeriCorps VISTA Nutrition Capacity Coordinator and two FSD interns. They taught two 5th grade classes about USDA MyPlate and reading food labels. The kids tried three different “mystery” apples, taking notes before the apple variety was revealed. The coordinator and interns also demonstrated how to make an apple, banana and Sunbutter sandwich and offered samples. The kids made notes in their own recipe book about how they could make the sandwich at home, what they liked and what they would do differently. At the next class, the majority of the students said that they had tried the recipe at home! The next series of classes at Naranca Elementary begin soon.

Catch you later!

Wheelz and the NUcrew

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Feeding San Diego is looking for team leaders! 

ask staff know you can learn more about this opportunity!
Join Feeding San Diego and the 13,000 individuals who dedicate their time to help feed more than 490,000 children, families and seniors every year.

Feeding more than 63,000 children, families and seniors every week, FSD relies on the support of individuals, corporations and community groups. Through our highly organized distribution model, every $1 donated turns into four meals.

In order to achieve a hunger-free and healthy community, FSD advocates on behalf of the food insecure on a federal, state and local level. Lend your voice to the fight against hunger and show your support for hunger-relief efforts on social media.