VINCE HALL JOINS FEEDING SAN DIEGO AS CEO

In April, Vince Hall was appointed CEO of Feeding San Diego and quickly dove into his role. As he traveled throughout the county visiting our partners and community distributions, he was struck by the people he met and the stories they shared...

In my first month at Feeding San Diego, I have seen nothing but extraordinary feats of compassion and generosity from our partners, clients and volunteers as I traveled to every corner of our service area to see our programs in action.

Within the first week on the job, we distributed 429,997 nutritious meals to children, families, seniors, veterans, immigrants and military families facing hunger.

In that time, I had the opportunity to visit one of our school partners in San Ysidro, where they host a School Pantry twice a month. The parents couldn’t have been more appreciative. It was apparent they deeply admired and respected the school principal for taking time out of his day to help distribute food to his students and their families, making sure no one would go without over the weekend.

MAP THE MEAL GAP 2017

New study finds that 423,290 people, including 153,970 children, in the Feeding San Diego service area experience food insecurity. Map the Meal Gap 2017 results reveal that San Diego County ranks sixth out of the 14 U.S. counties with more than 100,000 children struggling with food insecurity.

Map the Meal Gap, the latest report by Feeding America® on food insecurity and the cost of food at both the county and congressional district level, indicates that food insecurity exists in both San Diego and Imperial County, Feeding San Diego’s service area.

Both counties have severe child food insecurity with 1 in 3 children in Imperial County facing hunger and 18.9 percent of San Diego County children struggling with hunger as well. Overall food insecurity ranges from a low of 12.3 percent of the population in San Diego County up to 14.5 percent in Imperial County. The national average food insecurity rate across all counties is 14 percent.

The annual meal gap in San Diego also remains high, with more than 71 million meals required to meet the need and an additional 4.6 million needed in Imperial County.

Map the Meal Gap is a study that uses data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and food price data and analysis provided by Nielsen (NYSE: NLSN), a global provider of information and insights.
Dear Friends,

My name is Dana and I am one of the Programs Managers at Feeding San Diego. You can find me in community meetings, at resource centers, schools, or libraries, building relationships with local leaders to get food directly to families, children and seniors in need.

I am tasked with overseeing our direct service programs to provide our clients a dignified experience through a client-choice model, whereby dry goods and fresh produce are offered in a farmer’s market style distribution. Through our Federal Nutrition Programs, we offer kids free nutritious meals in their after-school programs and throughout the summer and through our CalFresh outreach, families and individuals are empowered to choose their own groceries with the use of their EBT cards.

My proudest moments are when I am able to strategize with community stakeholders about how food resources can support their vision for a better community and how our partnership can make this a reality.

I feel fortunate to come to work every day and collaborate with inspiring people from a cross section of the community, working to end hunger in San Diego.

Thank you, Dana

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**Family Builds Stability With School Pantry**

On a chilly, wet day in the South Bay, Gabriela Ruiz arrives at the Berry Elementary School Pantry, knowing the sweet potatoes, onions, oats and beans being distributed will make a difference for her family.

The School Pantry began at Berry Elementary in 2013, first serving 160 families but recently has seen a jump to 200 families. Three years ago, half of the elementary school’s children were eligible for free and reduced-price meals but now nearly 75 percent of the school population is eligible.

On a knee scooter from a car accident in November, Gabriela has her daughter, Nirvana and mother, Alma with her. They reside in apartments across from the school.

“This neighborhood is really calm and it’s convenient to be so close to my daughters and nieces’ school,” said Gabriela. “If anything happens, I know I can just run across the street to get to them.”

Gabriela works at a preschool but with a slow recovery from the car accident, she hasn’t been able to work. Her husband, Hugo is truck driver but with only his salary, they are finding it hard to make ends meet.

She heard about the School Pantry from her sister who is one of the 20 volunteers at the site and since her car accident, Gabriela has been attending the twice-monthly distribution with her mother, Alma.

“The food helps a lot,” said Alma. “Nothing will go to waste.”

Alma knows her community is low-income and invites all her neighbors and friends to go to the distribution.

“We have but we don’t have enough,” said Alma.

The food they receive helps to relieve stress as well, explains Gabriela.

“It’s hard to depend on help but I’m so grateful for the School Pantry, it helps a lot,” said Gabriela.

Their entire family is grateful for the healthy food available to them and express their gratitude to the donors, volunteers and supporters who make these programs possible.

“Not just anyone does this for someone they don’t know,” notes Gabriela.
FOOD BRINGS RELIEF TO EL CAJON SCHOOL

By Feriha Ahmed, Outreach Support Intern

Located in El Cajon, Lexington Elementary has about 1,000 students – many are from low-income families and quite a few are refugees from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Congo. More than 90 percent of the school’s students qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

"Some students tell me their parents don’t have money to go grocery shopping. How can we expect children to learn if they are hungry?" said Maria Dodd, parent liaison at Lexington Elementary School Pantry.

To combat this food insecurity, Assistant Principal Joshua Van Norman and Dodd run a School Pantry on site with Feeding San Diego.

“What Feeding San Diego provides is amazing because a lot of our families don’t have access to food all the time,” said Van Norman. “When we first began distributing, families would panic and worry that we would run out of food. Many of them came from places around the world where they didn’t have reliable access to food.”

Although Lexington Elementary recently moved, the school prides itself on a sense of community. The school has an active PTA and many of the School Pantry volunteers continue to volunteer even after their children no longer attend the elementary school. The school also opens their fields to the community when school isn’t in session.

The fields may offer locals a chance to enjoy the summer sun but this time of year is especially difficult for the families of Lexington Elementary.

“The summers are especially hard. If the children are in summer school, we can serve them breakfast and lunch but our other families struggle to meet the gap. They look for food distributions at local churches and centers,” said Van Norman.

Lexington Elementary transitioned to the School Pantry program in 2011 from the former Farm 2 Kids program, a previous FSD program providing produce to children to meet the need. The current School Pantry program serves 150 households.

“Feeding San Diego does an amazing job,” said Van Norman. “I’d welcome anyone to come to our distribution or any distribution sponsored by Feeding San Diego to talk to the clients and see how they are thrilled to have this lifeline.”

CLIENTS BEING SERVED BY SCHOOL PANTRY VOLUNTEERS

"HOW CAN WE EXPECT CHILDREN TO LEARN IF THEY ARE HUNGRY?"

Donate.
Every dollar you donate provides vital support for special food distributions throughout the summer to ensure kids and families receive the nutrition they need to thrive.

Volunteer.
Join the 13,000 individuals who dedicate their time to glean, sort and package food to be distributed throughout the county.

Advocate.
Show your support online by liking our Facebook page and following us on Twitter and Instagram to stay up to date on hunger-relief in San Diego.

FUEL FOR SUMMER

Hunger doesn’t take a vacation when school does.
1 in 5 San Diego children are food insecure. During the summer, thousands of children lose access to school food programs, a critical source of nutrition.

Donate.
Every dollar you donate provides vital support for special food distributions throughout the summer to ensure kids and families receive the nutrition they need to thrive.

Volunteer.
Join the 13,000 individuals who dedicate their time to glean, sort and package food to be distributed throughout the county.

Advocate.
Show your support online by liking our Facebook page and following us on Twitter and Instagram to stay up to date on hunger-relief in San Diego.

FEEDINGSANDIEGO.ORG/FUEL-SUMMER
Hello Friends,

In April, we attended the UC San Diego American Medical Student Association 8th Annual Health Fair to provide nutrition education. First, we taught kids about sugar and how to find out how much sugar is in a food or drink from a nutrition label. Most of the children were very surprised by how much sugar is in soda. We shared other beverage options rather than sugary drinks. Next, we played the "mystery" fruit game where kids are asked to place their hands in paper bags and guess what fruit is inside without looking. Once they guessed correctly, they got a sticker! During the game, we also handed out fliers to families with local food distribution information. It was a beautiful Saturday in Monterey Park, we were happy to be there!

Catch you later!

Wheelz and the NUcrew

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**BRO-AM**

**JUNE 24**

This iconic San Diego event hosted by the band Switchfoot draws over 17,000 people for a charity surf contest and free beach concert. Throughout the event, Feeding San Diego and other local organizations are highlighted. The week preceding BRO-AM, a benefit party is hosted to raise funds for the featured charities.

[FEEDINGSANDIEGO.ORG/BROAM](http://FEEDINGSANDIEGO.ORG/BROAM)

**HUNGER ACTION MONTH**

**SEPTEMBER**

September is Hunger Action Month, when Feeding San Diego and the Feeding America national network unite to urge our communities to take action to help end hunger.

As individuals, organizations and government, we all have a role to play in getting food to those in need.

Spread the word to family and friends by wearing orange, volunteering and donating. For every $1 donated, FSD can provide four meals to those in need right here in San Diego.

[FEEDINGSANDIEGO.ORG/HAM](http://FEEDINGSANDIEGO.ORG/HAM)

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**KID VOLUNTEER BECOMES LEADER**

If he’s not busy playing with LEGOS or listening to music, nine-year-old Aiden Gruby likes to volunteer. The Gruby family started volunteering at the beginning of 2014. They attend many of FSD’s events including Volunteer Open Houses and Starbucks Global Month of Service.

Their son, Aiden, began volunteering as soon as he was able at six years old. Not a shy kid, Aiden has established himself as a motivated and genuine volunteer.

“Reclamation is my favorite project,” said Aiden. “I like when you sort food and check that it’s mostly good.”

Aiden is a natural born leader and prides himself on the work he does and the processes he follows.

“I like leading people,” said Aiden. “I remember one time I suggested a new way to weigh food bins and showed by example.”

Aiden sees the value in volunteering and helping fight hunger simultaneously.

“Families should know where the food is coming from, and that even if it’s funny shaped, it’s safe to eat.”

Aiden doesn’t plan to stop giving back any time soon. He is attending Feeding San Diego’s Team Leader Orientation this spring, which will make him the youngest Volunteer Team Leader ever.

He is also starting to volunteer with his Cub Scout group. His motivation is simple.

“It’s like what my shirt says, I believe in helping others,” said Aiden as he pointed to his FSD shirt.

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Take a quick survey and tell us what you think about our newsletters: [bit.ly/2q3Hnk](http://bit.ly/2q3Hnk)

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**HUNGER-RELIEF INITIATIVES**

- [FEEDING KIDS](#)
- [FEEDING SENIORS](#)
- [FEEDING EXCELLENCE](#)
- [LEARN MORE AT FEEDINGSANDIEGO.ORG/PROGRAMS](#)
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.

VOLUNTEER

DONATE

ADVOCATE