

Communicator

Community Action Partnership of Orange County

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CAPOC Starts "Million Solar Roofs Plan" in San Juan Capistrano

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC) installed the first phase of a model solar housing project that combined affordable housing with the latest solar energy systems in San Juan Capistrano. Low-income first time homeowners became the first in the state to receive state-of-the-art solar panels under Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's California Solar Initiative. The initiative implements the Governor's "Million Solar Roofs Plan" to provide clean energy, reduce the output of greenhouse gases and reduce energy costs for one million low-income families in California.



Funding for the solar panel installation was made possible through a partnership between the California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) and MS Solar Solutions Corp., a subsidiary of Morgan Stanley's Commodities group, drawing upon private capital and resources from local partners to supplement the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). "This visionary project," said CSD Director Lloyd Throne, "represents the commitment by CSD and Morgan Stanley to make the economic and health benefits of solar PV systems available to all Californians, regardless of ability to pay."



CAPOC installed the solar PV systems in four homes being built by Habitat for Humanity of Orange County. The project offers affordable housing for qualified low-income families and disabled veterans or the surviving families of military personnel who gave their lives in combat. The homes are part of a new housing development in San Juan Capistrano. Akeena Solar of Los Gatos, California, supplied its solar PV systems, the AC Andalay, and trained CAPOC's weatherization crew as well as local conservation corps members in solar installation. Lennar Homes was also a partner.

"This solar installation partnership officially launches the green economic recovery in Orange County," stated Clarence Ray, Executive Director at CAPOC. "The training that our crew is getting in solar technology will make them competitive for the emerging green industrial sector, and the reduced energy costs for the veterans and their families is priceless to help them weather this economy."

NALC FOOD DRIVE -- A GREAT SUCCESS

One in six of neighbors in Orange County will likely miss a meal sometime this month – because they simply couldn't afford it. Half of those at risk of hunger are children, 40 percent are seniors. As the economy continues to struggle, these alarming numbers will likely increase through the rest of this year. Hunger touches every community in the county.

On Saturday May 9th, letter carriers picked up food left in mailboxes by local residents in the **Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive**– the nation's largest single-day food collection. Stamp Out Hunger is a national food drive held annually by the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC). Volunteers also helped collect and sort out expired food items.

Orange County residents filled a bag with nonperishable food items (cans of soup, cans of vegetables, Spaghetti-O's) and place it next to their mailbox. This year, the Orange County Food Bank collected 287,024 pounds of food and \$1,044 in monetary donations. The food collected represented at 56% increase over 2008.



Mark Lowry, Director of the Orange County Food Bank, said organizers were “unsure whether donors would be more or less generous given the economic crisis.” It turned out that residents of Orange County gave more than usual, which Lowry hopes will help sustain the bank through the summer.

“This food drive is coming at an absolutely critical moment and our shelves were bare,” Lowry said. “This summer will be even more difficult for families with children who depend on food donations when children are not

receiving free or reduced lunch programs while not in school.”

This year's drive will help some of the neediest residents in Orange County. For Example, John lives in North Orange County. He is in his 70s and depends on Social Security. John has frequently been forced to choose between paying for medicine and buying groceries as money tightens toward the end of each month. Sometimes his two daughters would help cover basic expenses to get him through the month. Even John's daughters can't always help, because they are also struggling to make ends meet.

The food John receives from a local food pantry helps to supplement his Social Security check. This allows him to get his medicine but not at the expense of other basic needs. John often gives back by helping to unload food or stock shelves at the pantry.

Bill Fogarty from United Labor Agency of Orange County explains that “The food received from this food drive will help fill the shelves of local Food Pantries and assist us in providing food for many individuals and families.”

To donate money to end hunger, call Alexandra Tran at 714-897-6670 ext 3405. To hold a food drive please contact Kristen Kvesic at 714-897-6670 ext 3604 or visit CAPOC at www.capoc.org.



2009 TASTE OF THE NATION



In Orange County, more than 300,000 children face hunger and about 10% of families live below the poverty line. With a passion to fight childhood hunger, Orange County's hottest chefs and restaurants gathered at the Island Hotel at Fashion Island for the Share Our Strength's (SOS) **Taste of the Nation**. Taste of the Nation works to end childhood hunger by ensuring that children and their families have reliable access to nutritious food and by addressing the deeper causes of these conditions.

More than 20 of the city's finest chefs and restaurants participated in the event that includes: A Restaurant, Charlie Palmers at Bloomingdales, Mr. Stox, Jay's Catering, Bluefin and Sage on the Coast and many others. Guests enjoyed the city's finest foods paired with wines provided by Brown Forman as well as specialty cocktails from Tommy Bahama Rum. In addition to fabulous food and drinks, the event featured an exquisite auction and live entertainment by local band—Off White.

"We're honored to be part of this nationwide movement to end childhood hunger in America," said Bill Groux, Taste of the Nation Orange County, Event Chair. "Taste of the Nation brings together the finest of Orange County's culinary world, and helps the children in our community who suffer from hunger every day." Funds raised through the Taste of the Nation events provide a grant \$19,000 to our Orange County Food Bank.

THE ARTS COME TO THE AID OF THE HUNGRY



Mark Lowry of the Orange County Food Bank and Rick Stein, executive director of Arts Orange County

Back in December 2008, arts group leaders were discussing their financial woes in the economic crisis when someone mentioned that others have it even worse. Arts Orange County Executive Director Rick Stein started thinking about the need.

24 Orange County arts organizations and local artists decided to collaborate to fight hunger during a three-week food drive and launched a campaign called "Arts Can." The campaign was organized by Arts Orange County and the Community Action Partnership of Orange County, which operates the O.C. Food Bank.

Rick Stein said "We in the arts have a particular sensitivity to human suffering, often expressed through the music, theater, dance and visual arts we create and present. In these times, the needs of

those less fortunate are even more acute: It's hard to believe it, but thousands of Orange County residents are going hungry and our community's social service agencies are straining to meet this unprecedented demand for food."

Participating local arts organizations accepted canned food and encouraged patrons to contribute through the online "Arts Can" food drive. The collaboration resulted in collecting on one ton of food. Participating agencies included: South Coast Repertory, Costa Mesa; MUZEO, Anaheim; and Festival of Arts and Pageant of the Masters, Laguna Beach.

Thank you for all your efforts Arts Can!



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TO MAKE DONATIONS:

**CALL (714) 897-6670 ext.
3405 or visit www.capoc.org**

OUR PROMISE

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

**2009
MAY EVENTS**

May 1: Taste of the Nation! Friday at The Island Hotel in Fashion Island, 690 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660 from 5:30-8:30pm. Tickets are \$75 and can be purchased at www.taste.strength.org.

May 9: National Association of Letter Carriers Food Drive.

May 25: CAPOC Closed in Observance of Memorial Day.

May 27: Public Hearing at CAPOC 12640 Knott St., Garden Grove, CA 92841 from 6:30pm-8:30pm.

May 30: John Force Car Show and Food Drive from 4pm-7pm at the John Force RaceStation - 22722 Old Canal Road - Yorba Linda, CA 92887. More Info please visit www.JohnForceRacing.com or call (714) 921-1651.

SPEAKING OUT ON HUNGER



Sueng walked into Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC) and handed \$70 dollars to one of the agency's staff and explained that the money is to be used to feed hungry families and individuals. Sueng explained that the donation was a part of a class assignment in public speaking.

Sueng delivered a speech on hunger. All Sueng expected was to get a good grade for the speech he made in class. Sueng didn't expect his professor to take out a \$5 dollar bill and put it into the center of the classroom. The teacher challenged the other students to give to the needy. Soon a wave of students reached into their pockets and added more money. The speech turned into a gift that kept giving.

"I was amazed that my speech could raise money to help the poor." Sueng exclaimed. Sueng once volunteered at CAPOC and that the experience is impacted him profoundly and this influenced him to give a speech on hunger in Orange County.

Sueng is just one of the many great individuals who volunteers at Community Action Partnership of Orange County.