

Communicator

Community Action Partnership of Orange County
Celebrating 44 Years of Caring

October 2009

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Hope for the Holidays

Dear Friends,

During this holiday season, consider joining our 2009 *Hope for the Holidays* Campaign. In Orange County, the number of persons who are poor and at-risk of hunger continues to grow as families are struggling to make it through these troubled economic times. While many low-income families work, they do not have sufficient resources to meet basic needs due to low wages, high housing costs and rising food prices that are **making it harder for our families to make ends meet. This places children at-risk of hunger.** We are asking you to help break the cycle of despair and bring hope into the lives of thousands of children and their families. **Please help to fulfill America's promise to our families.**



A wonderful way to celebrate the season and to make a difference is to organize holiday food and gift drives with your own family, classmates or co-workers to help the less fortunate this holiday season.

How you can get involved:

Food Drives

Hold a Food Drive to provide holiday meals for needy families. Consider donating a gift certificate for a turkey or other holiday meat.

Toy and Clothing Drive

Collect toys for children ages newborn to 18. Our greatest need is gifts for children ages 11-16. Many of our families are also requesting clothing (i.e. undergarments, jackets, shoes). Gifts must be new and unwrapped.

Gift Certificate Drive

It is difficult to find gifts for 17-18 yr olds. We are suggesting that donors give \$20-\$25 gift certificates and allow parents to buy the gifts.

Monetary Donations

Make your dollar go farther! Through Community Action Partnership of Orange County's (CAPOC) network of suppliers, we are able to increase the value of your donation. For example, with your \$1 donation CAPOC can buy approximately \$5 worth of food.



If you would like to make a donation and make a family's holiday a bit brighter, please **call our Hope for the Holidays Coordinator, Marleen Morrill at 714-897-6670 ext. 3404 or donate online at www.capoc.org.** If you would like to send in a monetary donation, please mail the donation to:



Community Action Partnership of Orange County

Attn: Planning Department

12640 Knott Street

Garden Grove, CA 92841

Bringing Hope and Changing Lives



Giving a Family Hope



Cira Perez and her two children have been attending the Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center for over a year. She has two daughters, Teresa, 3, Nayeli, 6 and is expecting a baby boy who is due January 28th.

Cira brings her daughters to the center almost everyday where they receive help with school work and engage in an after school reading program. While the children are learning, Cira is also learning in the center's ESL Program (English-as-a-Second Language).

The Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center is one of the programs at Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC). Families like Cira use the center's resources to help their children succeed academically. There are several other families at the center in similar situations like Cira. A couple of the mothers from the center said they are in need of clothes for their children and Cira will need essentials for her baby.

"Hope for the Holidays" will ensure that children and families like Cira have clothing and basic necessities to make it through the holidays. Our families look to the community for help during times of need and this is an opportunity for CAPOC to partner with local businesses and groups to help Orange County's neediest families.

For more information on how you can give hope to a family during the holidays please contact Marleen Morrill at 714-897-6670 ext. 3404.

Lights on Afterschool

The Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center helps strengthen families and communities keeping them safe and stable through a variety of activities and programs.

On October 22nd, the center celebrated its *Lights on Afterschool* event. Several parents and their children attended to celebrate their success. Most of the kids attend Walker Elementary School which made the afternoon extra special when Principal Roxanna Owings showed up to speak. Owings expressed how proud she was that the students were coming to the center, explaining kids are sharing their experiences and how they enjoy the activities and learning important skills. Owings went on to express that she was happy that they are in a safe environment and have the opportunity to interact with other kids in the Anaheim Independencia Community.

Perhaps the most heart warming speech came from student Teresa Martinez. In a shy quite manner she stood up and explained why she loves coming to the center. She does her homework at the center and has the opportunity to interact with other kids. Her grades have also improved at school because of the help she receives in the afterschool program. Teresa's 3 siblings also attend the after school program.

Deputy Sierra from the Orange County Sheriffs Department also attended the event to encourage students to go to school. "What do you want to be when you grow up?" he asked. The children's eyes lit up as they excitedly said, "Doctor! Firefighter! Lawyer! Cop!" to name a few. Deputy Sierra, who used to work at the center four years ago, supported the parents and showed his appreciation to the center for giving kids the resources to achieve their dreams and obtain a higher education.

At the end of the event, the kids were entered into a raffle based on how many books they read. Prizes included gift certificates to Mimi's Café, Target gift cards and the grand prize was a laptop which Ivonne Areos, a student in the afterschool program, took home! Congratulations to all the students in their success at the Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center.



A Little Help Goes a Long Way

During the holidays, Hope for the Holidays tries to fulfill wishes and some of the basic needs to families in Orange County. Without the Partnerships assistance, some families will have no Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner, others will be challenged to provide basic needs for their children.

When Executive Director of Girls Incorporated, Lucy Santana, was browsing through Facebook she came across some interesting news. Santana had previously heard that the Orange County Food Bank was experiencing a shortage of food, and she saw it displayed on City of Costa Mesa Councilmember, Katrina Foley's Facebook page and took action.

Lucy immediately thought of what she and Girls Incorporated could do to help. Girls Incorporated of Orange County are a national non-profit organization that builds a strong network of girls in the community and challenges them to take an active roll in the community.

When the girls were told that the OC Food Bank was low on food, they decided to host a two-week canned food drive to collect 500 cans. In a matter of two weeks the girls were able to gather 485 cans of non-perishable food items. Santana expressed that the canned food drive has given the girls the opportunity to be the "givers" by giving back to the community in which they live.

It is amazing to think that through social networking what one person learned in a call to action turned into a group of girls donating hundreds of canned goods to the OC Food Bank and helping the 23,000 people that the Food Bank serves each month.

This is a great way to kick off Hope for the Holidays. The donations and help are always needed. Join our Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/capoc>.



Second Annual Great Park Pumpkin Harvest



The Second Annual Great Park Pumpkin Harvest Food Drive held an early Halloween celebration. The event highlighted a greater cause. The event gave attendees an opportunity to donate non-perishable food items to be distributed to needy families through the Orange County Food Bank and Second Harvest Food Bank.

A giant flying Jack-O-Lantern marked the scene. The event was comprised of fun filled activities; including kid's crafts, a costume parade, train ride and free pumpkin carving for kids aged 12 and under. Along with pumpkin picking and decorating as well as master pumpkin carving demonstrations, the Pumpkin Harvest includes a petting zoo and Halloween-themed activities in the Spooky Hangar. The event was free to all and some kids donned their Halloween costumes to celebrate the season.

The event was a great way to bring awareness to the community about the need to fight hunger. As the holidays approach, the demand for assistance increases.

"The food collected during the Pumpkin Harvest Food Drive will provide immediate relief for families who are struggling from the current economic crisis," said Mark Lowry, Director of the Orange County Food Bank.

The Orange County Food Bank collected an estimated 750 pounds of food which will feed 75 families this holiday season.



Community Action Partnership of Orange County

12640 Knott Street
Garden Grove, CA 92841

TO MAKE DONATIONS:

CALL Alex (714) 897-6670 ext. 3405

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.

Visit
www.capoc.org

**2009
UPCOMING
EVENTS**

Oct. 31: CSU, Fullerton's Trick-or-Treat for Food 5:30-8:30 pm
Info contact:
(657) 278-7623 or e-mail
volunteer@fullerton.edu

Nov. 20: Yamaha 's Feed the Children Event

Nov. 21: National Family Volunteer Day. OC Food Bank, Knott Office.

Nov. 22: "Gift from the Heart" Vietnamese Appreciation Day-Food, Clothing & Toy Drive. Info contact: Alex Tran (714) 897-6670 Ext. 3405

Nov. 28/29-Dec. 19/20: OC Market Place Holiday Toy & Clothing drive Free admission each weekend with donation of new unwrapped toy or clothing item

Local Corporations Get Involved

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC) officially kicked off our 2nd Annual "Hope for the Holidays" campaign with a \$5,000 donation from **Sempra Energy Foundation**. **Sam's Club** also got involved donating \$2,000.

This year, the need is even greater, according to Alan Woo, Director of Planning at CAPOC. "We need to help our neighbors now to ensure that all children and families will have food and basic necessities to make it through the holidays."

Disneyland Resort employees got involved by shedding pounds to help feed the hungry in Orange County. The Resort partnered with the Orange County Food Bank to administer a weight loss challenge for employees. For every pound a Cast Member lost, a pound of food was donated to the OC Food Bank. More than 1,400 Cast Members across the Resort participated as part of Disney's Healthy Pursuits program. Employees lost a total of 2,658 pounds! "The weight loss challenge for charity is a unique event.



Buddy Ray (second from left) celebrates with Disneyland executives and Goofy.



From left to right: Alan Woo, Reyna Reynoso, Kathy Kifaya and Buddy Ray.

The event produced thousands of meals for families struggling through the current economic crisis," said Orange County Food Bank Director Mark Lowry. In addition to the food donation, Buddy Ray, Executive Director at CAPOC was presented with a \$10,000 check by the Disneyland Resort to help feed the hungry this holiday season.

PIMCO and its employees are conducting a Share The Harvest Adopt-a-Box Program. Their goal is to fill 1,000 boxes with a holiday meal for Orange County's neediest families. A \$25 donation will buy a box for a family or four.

To get involved with Hope for the Holidays, please call Marleen Morrill at 714-897-6670 ext. 3404 or visit www.capoc.org.