

NOVEMBER 2020

Episcopal Community Services

The Spotlight

ECS Addresses Food Insecurity In San Francisco

ECS residents and clients are exceptionally vulnerable to the biological, social, psychological, and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals and families in San Francisco experiencing homelessness or extreme poverty are facing alarming rates of food insecurity, and Episcopal Community Services (ECS) has mobilized extensive meal programs to feed people suffering from hunger in our neighborhoods.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, food security has diminished at concerning rates throughout our community. Feeding America, a national organization dedicated to addressing food insecurity, estimated that 6.2 million Californians, 2.2 million of them children, do not know where their next meal is coming from. Loss of employment or steady income, the closure of congregate meal providers and inexpensive restaurants, and the health risks of leaving home for people at the highest levels of vulnerability of contracting the coronavirus have greatly complicated many families' and individuals' ability to secure sufficient and nutritious meals for themselves.

In July, a survey conducted by ECS staff documented a near doubling in the number of residents of permanent supportive housing utilizing our onsite food pantries, relative to the same period in 2019. The SF-Marin Food Bank, one of ECS's partner agencies, reports that before the pandemic one in five people was at risk of hunger in San Francisco and Marin, but as the pandemic has continued, food distribution needs have increased by 54% per month. While federal nutrition programs (such as SNAP—the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) continue to be an important defense against hunger and food insecurity, the urgent need surpasses the capacity of these programs. Subsequently, ECS has focused efforts to provide groceries and as many meals as we can to those we serve:

- With funding from **Albertson's** (national.albertsoncompaniesfoundation.org) and **CatalystKitchens**, (catalystkitchens.org) our team of chefs led by Chef Al (pictured), including CHEFS program instructors and alums, prepare 760 meals weekly for distribution in supportive housing sites.
- Up to 100 seniors and adults with disabilities pick up a prepared lunch every weekday from the **CanonKipSeniorCenter**.



- **SanctuaryShelter** provides its approximately 80 guests with three meals per day.
- This month, **CHEFS Catering** took on the responsibility to provide three meals per day—every day— to the approximately 900 guests living in the eight ECS **Project RoomKey** (ecs-sf.org/project-roomkey) Hotels.



Since June, ECS has partnered with **Food Runners** (foodrunners.org), another San Francisco organization dedicated to circumventing food insecurity in our city. Food Runners provides 800 meals each week for residents of supportive housing, which are then distributed by volunteers like Tram (pictured).

MEANS Database (meansdatabase.org) provides 100 meals per week at two supportive housing sites. This initiative pays

restaurants to prepare the meals, thereby keeping many of them open and keeping their staff employed.

As the pandemic persists, ECS remains diligent in our efforts to keep our clients safe, fed, and healthy. We gratefully appreciate all our partners in this endeavor. **Your financial support is essential during this challenging time**. Please **DONATE** (ecs-sf.org/donatenow) to ensure that our families, seniors, veterans, and other vulnerable neighbors do not go hungry.

Make a Neighbor's Life Brighter This Holiday Season



Our Annual Holiday Gift drive ensures that everyone we serve has a gift to open during the holiday season. This year, with our partners, we are providing 2,700 warm jackets, towel sets, and gift cards to our participants. Help brighten this holiday season by joining our **Holiday Gift Drive** (ecs-sf.org/2020-holiday-gift-drive) by:

- purchasing a gift from our **WISHLIST** (amzn.to/3n04ENQ)
- **donating** (ecs-sf.org/donatenow)
- engaging your company or faith group to “adopt” one of our sites
- inviting your family members and friends to join the drive.

Please consider participating in the Holiday Gift Drive and brightening someone's holiday season!

The ECS Friendsgiving Table Was Full!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our first **Friendsgiving** (ecs-sf.org/friendsgiving) virtual event on November 7, featuring the delicious food and cooking of Top Chef Masters winner Chef Chris Cosentino. Special thanks to our partner Bash Creative, our event sponsors, Chef Chris Cosentino, emcee Ellen Toscano, and mixologist Scott Oller for sharing their expertise and making this a spectacular event.



Become a part of the solution to homelessness.

[Donate Today](#)

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