



San Diego Food Bank – Press Release

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For immediate release

San Diego Food Bank celebrates first anniversary

San Diego, Calif. – June 27, 2008 – The San Diego Food Bank (SDFB) celebrated its first year as an independent organization at a special ceremony at its warehouse in Miramar today.

Those speaking at the event included the SDFB's Chairman, Eugene "Mitch" Mitchell; President, Stephen P. Cushman; and new Executive Director, J. Scofield "Scody" Hage.

Attendees included representatives from the SDFB's 290 member agencies, donors, volunteers, the SDFB Board of Directors, sponsors and corporate partners.

Chairman Eugene "Mitch" Mitchell spoke about the SDFB's "enormous successes over the past year" and focused on the deepening economic crisis which is seeing thousands of families turn to the San Diego Food Bank for support.

Mitchell said that the "face of hunger" is changing with an increasing number of the SDFB's clients coming from middle class families struggling to cope with the "summer squeeze of high fuel and food prices, rising rents and mortgages, and higher utility bills."

Mitchell released the latest SDFB distribution statistics which saw a 7% increase in overall pounds distributed from April to May which he said represented a "dramatic rise" compared to increases in previous years of 1-3%.

In this same period, the San Diego Food Bank's member agencies reported an increase of 14% in the number of recipient individuals and families with the largest increases in East County, North County, Inland and South Bay.

SDFB President, Stephen P. Cushman, followed Mitchell's speech with a round-up of the San Diego Food Bank's "achievements" for its first year of independence and its end-of-year finances.

Cushman highlighted the year's successful campaigns which included the Macy's "Bag Hunger Food Drive" and the San Diego Chargers' "Sack Hunger Food Drive."

Cushman thanked the supermarket chain Vons for its "outstanding" annual commitment to provide the SDFB with approximately one million pounds of food per year for which the Food Bank "was deeply grateful," and he recognized the contribution made by the Hilton Family of Hotels.

Cushman concluded his speech announcing that the SDFB “was in a stable financial position and would finish the fiscal year in the black.” He then welcomed the appointment of new Executive Director J. Scofield “Scody” Hage as “strong leader who would take the organization into the future.”

Executive Director J. Scofield “Scody” Hage set out his vision for the future of the San Diego Food Bank and announced grant funding from the San Diego Foundation for consultants to review the operations and strategic direction of the organization in order to enable the San Diego Food Bank “serve future generations of San Diegans.”

Hage ended the event by awarding plaques to the San Diego Foundation and the Futures Foundation for their generous contributions to the SDFB’s work.

Hage also awarded certificates and presented ten “Food Treasure Boxes” to each of the SDFB’s twenty leading member agencies. Weighing nearly thirty pounds each, the “Treasure Boxes” were given to the agencies to distribute to families in need.

The twenty agencies receiving certificates and “Treasure Boxes” included:

1. La Maestra Family Care
2. Southport Christian Center
3. Activated Ministries
4. Family Care Foundation
5. El Cajon Four Square
6. House of Prayer Christian
7. Oak Hill Residential Care
8. House of Metamorphosis
9. Islamic Foundation of SD
10. Santa Sofia Conference
11. Freedom in Christ Fellowship
12. St John Church
13. Salvation Army – Chula Vista
14. New Seasons Church
15. Labor Participation
16. Halcyon Center
17. Training Center
18. Gemini House
19. Center Star Act – MHS
20. Shabach House Ministries

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About the Food Bank:

Established in 1977, the San Diego Food Bank is a critical component to the welfare of San Diego County, providing food to people in need, advocating for the hungry and educating the public about hunger-related issues. Through a combination of government programs and partnerships with more than 290 San Diego County non-profit charities, SDFB acts as a central repository and distribution point for government and donated food. Funded by foundations, grants, USDA, corporations, sponsors and individual donors, SDFB distributes more than 10 million pounds of food annually to individuals, families and a network of non-profit organizations that work to alleviate hunger throughout the county. For more information, please visit www.sandiegofoodbank.org

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