



COMMUNITY BRIDGES
PUENTES DE LA COMUNIDAD

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

May 15, 2020



THE POWER OF COMMUNITY AT WORK

Thanks to committed partners like the Community Foundation Santa Cruz County, Driscoll's and Sunlight Giving our Family Resource Centers have been able to help over **1,500** individuals whose households have lost income or jobs due to COVID-19! With the over **\$96,000** provided by our partners, we have been able to provide **324** households with Safeway gift cards and rental assistance to **169** families. Many of these families are ineligible for public benefits due to their immigration status and we are one of the few resources available to them during this crisis. It is only through ongoing support from partners like you that we will be able to continue to meet these urgent and essential needs. [Check out our Client Stories below to see how this support has changed two households.](#)

New Benefit Helps Families Feed Their Children

The California Department of Social Services is providing a new benefit, Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT), similar to CalFresh (SNAP) benefits. P-EBT will help families in California buy food when schools are closed due of the coronavirus emergency. Families will receive up to \$365 per eligible child on a P-EBT card to use on food and groceries. Most families receiving CalFresh, CalWorks, Medi-Cal, or foster care will **automatically** receive a P-EBT card in the mail beginning May 12. Families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals can also receive P-EBT benefits, however they will need to apply online after May 22, 2020 and before June 30, 2020. The online application will be available beginning May 22, 2020 at ca.p-ebt.org.

Client Stories

My husband's work hours have been reduced and I am unable to work because I have three children that I need to care for. When I was told there was help for me it was like a light in the dark, as we don't have an income that will cover everything since we live in a place where the rent is very expensive. If we hadn't had that help I wouldn't have been able to feed my children.... With the help, I was able to buy some food and use the money I had to pay the water bill. - Leticia Martinez



I needed help from Live Oak Community Resources because it has been a very difficult time to work now that my children are staying home and learning online. There is no childcare. I am a single mother and this helped me obtain some necessities for my family. This was a blessing for my children and me. Thanks to this help, my children and I were able to eat and pump gas into our little car. My children and I would like to thank the donors for being so kind and helping so many families, ...they are like angels. - Anonymous

Ray's Corner



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NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO STAY SILENT

We have the power to create a more just and equitable Santa Cruz County, even after COVID-19. There is absolutely no doubt that this pandemic has decimated planning, tax revenue and fiscal realities for local and state government. It has also put great strain and pressure on social service agencies, like Community Bridges, to respond to the needs of our community.

In that spirit of working together to address the societal needs of our community, we must live by the very mantra that this crisis has brought us - **We are all in this together!** Now more than ever, we must not just say these words, but live by them in every action - including how we manage future budget decisions. We must see a fair and equitable response by our local leaders to prioritize the needs of the community as the devastating financial reality that this crisis has created locally burgeons in their own jurisdictions.

I urge you to begin discussing these important topics with local elected officials with openness and candor. The next several months agenda items will be littered with cuts, expenditures and decisions that will shape the health of our community and influence resources available to respond to this crisis and the next. It's so critically important for our

elected leaders to hear from supporters like you, their constituents, about your priority to ensure that funding for essential work is sustained. These decisions impact essential work such as our Lift Line drivers who take seniors to pick up their medication, our Meals on Wheels staff who distribute and coordinate hundreds of daily meals, and our Family Resource Center advocates who provide financial support and unemployment assistance to meet the demand of our community. Without this community discussion, we are poised to experience the same fate as the 2008 recession, when social services were the first budget line item to go and the very last to recover. So let's work together to ensure our shared values and community priorities are reflected in the forthcoming local and state government budget proposals.



Community Bridges Family of Programs

Child & Adult Care Food Program | Child Development Division | WIC | La Manzana Community Resources | Live Oak Community Resources | Mountain Community Resources | Nueva Vista Community Resources | Elderday | Lift Line | Meals on Wheels

Community Bridges is an exempt organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; EIN #94-2460211. Donations are tax deductible in excess of the value of any goods or services provided in exchange for your contribution.