

# FOOD For THOUGHT



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2026



## CalGuard Steps In to Support FIND During SNAP Disruptions

When SNAP benefits were suddenly disrupted during a recent government shutdown, many local families were left wondering how they would put food on the table.

In that moment of uncertainty, the California National Guard (CalGuard) stepped in to stand with FIND Regional Food Bank, helping ensure our neighbors continued to receive the food they needed to survive.

From November 10 through November 26, 2025, CalGuard members served alongside FIND staff, providing critical support at a pivotal time. Their team assembled emergency food boxes for households impacted by SNAP disruptions, ensuring continued access to nutritious food when it was needed most.

CalGuard members also filled essential warehouse and logistics roles, operating forklifts and pallet jacks, supporting large-scale distributions, and driving FIND box trucks to deliver food safely and efficiently throughout our service area.

**Their flexibility, professionalism, and commitment to community care helped FIND maintain uninterrupted food distribution during a time of crisis. We are deeply grateful for CalGuard's partnership and service when it mattered most.**

Thanks to this partnership — and the generosity of supporters like you — FIND Regional Food Bank and CalGuard were able to step in when SNAP benefits were disrupted, helping families bridge a sudden gap and continue putting food on the table during a time of uncertainty.





## Message from the President and CEO

As we reflect on the past season, I am filled with deep gratitude for the partners, volunteers, and supporters who continue to show up for our community in meaningful ways. From celebrating the season of giving to stepping forward during unexpected challenges and uncertainty, your commitment to our neighbors has never wavered.

During moments when systems falter and families face added strain, FIND Regional Food Bank is able to respond because of you. **Your generosity and partnership ensured that food continued to reach those who needed it most**, even as many in our region navigated disruption and uncertainty. That kind of steadiness makes a real difference for families counting on us.

Thank you for standing with FIND, for believing in our mission, and for the impact we are making together. Because of you, we are not only meeting today's needs — we are building a stronger, more resilient future for our community.

Debbie Espinosa  
President and CEO,  
FIND Regional Food Bank



## Tuscan Friendsgiving: A Celebration of Giving

This season of gratitude was made even sweeter by the generosity of our incredible supporters, who came together to organize the inaugural Tuscan Friendsgiving! Friends shared a meal, built community, and — most importantly — turned their gathering into action that matters.

Together, this amazing event raised **\$37,100** to directly support FIND's mission to end hunger today and prevent it tomorrow.

*We are so grateful to everyone who hosted, attended, and donated. Your commitment transforms lives, uplifts families, and brings us closer to a hunger-free future.*



Ready to Help Support Our Neighbors?  
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# FIND SUCCESS: CCAC Fellows Lead Volunteer Sessions

Through FIND Success, participants gain hands-on training, workforce development skills, and industry-recognized certifications — all while giving back to their communities by supporting on-campus food pantries and local projects.

As part of this program, **California Climate Action Corps (CCAC) Fellows** partnered with FIND Regional Food Bank to lead volunteer sessions, bringing energy, expertise, and leadership to our programs. Since starting in September, the five full-time CCAC Fellows have learned about our waste diversion systems and climate initiatives, and they guide volunteers on best practices for reducing waste and supporting climate action. Each fellow is required by the fellowship to lead at least one volunteer event, providing a hands-on opportunity to educate and mobilize community members.

The leadership of the CCAC Fellows not only strengthens our mission to end hunger but



also inspires meaningful action on climate and sustainability within our community.

We are proud to offer programs like FIND Success and partnerships like the CCAC Fellowship, which equip emerging leaders with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities to make a tangible difference for people and the planet.

## College Corner

### A New Space for Learning and Leadership

FIND's new **Richard Brooke Foundation WFD Classroom** is already making a meaningful impact for students and partners across our region. Designed as a space for learning, collaboration, and innovation, this facility has expanded our ability to host workforce development trainings, informational summits, and best-practice seminars that strengthen both hunger relief efforts and career pathways.



In December, we welcomed a cohort of **College of the Desert** students who completed their FIND Regional Food Bank orientation and training. Through this experience, students engaged directly with hunger relief efforts while building practical skills that prepare them for future careers in food systems, nonprofit leadership, and community service.

In addition to supporting student learning, the **Impact Through Golf Foundation / The American Express Workforce Development Training Center** is quickly emerging as a regional hub for food security and workforce development. Since opening, FIND Regional Food Bank has welcomed nearly 500 partners and supporters through grand opening and open house events, convened educational and best-practice summits, and launched four workforce training and professional development sessions in the **Richard Brooke Foundation WFD Classroom**.

Together, these efforts reflect our commitment to connecting education, food access, and collaboration — supporting students today while advancing long-term economic mobility and leadership across our region.



# Celebrating the Partners Helping End Hunger Across Our Region



On January 30, 2026, FIND Regional Food Bank gathered partners and supporters for our annual Guardians Breakfast, an event that marked an important moment to reflect on progress, recognize leadership, and reaffirm our shared commitment to ending hunger across the Desert Region.

During the program, FIND President and CEO Debbie Espinosa delivered FIND's annual State of Hunger address.

The morning also included a check presentation from Bank of America in support of FIND's new building, an investment that will expand our capacity and strengthen equitable food distribution for years to come.

We were honored to welcome Ami McReynolds, the Chief Advocacy and Community Partnerships Officer of Feeding America as the keynote speaker who shared a national perspective on hunger relief and underscored the critical role regional food banks like FIND play during times of disruption and growing need.

A central highlight of the event was the recognition of our Hunger Heroes — individuals and organizations whose dedication and generosity exemplify what it means to stand with neighbors facing food insecurity.

The Guardians Breakfast reflected the strength of collaboration across FIND's network of partners and supporters. The progress celebrated that morning is **made possible by people like you**, whose generosity and commitment fuel our mission to End Hunger for Today, Tomorrow, and for a Lifetime.



## Mark Your Calendars!

### FIND Telethon May 1, 2026

Our annual Telethon returns with a new date this year — and a big milestone! The FIND Telethon turns **Sweet 16**, continuing a proud tradition of community support for hunger relief. Tune in for the **live broadcast on KESQ News Channel 3 on Friday, May 1, 2026**, and be part of the impact.

### Palm Desert Food & Wine March 19–22, 2026

**Thank you for your attendance and support at Palm Desert Food and Wine.** A portion of the proceeds from every ticket supported FIND Regional Food Bank, helping provide nutritious food and wraparound services across our region.

Support FIND Regional Food Bank, and you too can help feed the 125,000 adults, children, and seniors across California's southeastern desert region every month.

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[FINDFoodBank.org](https://www.FINDFoodBank.org)

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