



The 2012 “Freshy” Nominees

Best Performance by a State Legislator

Assembly Member Felipe Fuentes, Representing the 39th Assembly District (Los Angeles)

- “Developed 2011 legislative priorities that focused on increasing access to healthy, nutritious foods, including more fruits and vegetables, among low-income Californians”
- “Provided a consistent and essential voice in not only communicating the importance preserving the nutrition safety-net, but also working to make benefits more accessible and efficiently administered.”
- “Authored AB 6, the CalFresh Act of 2011, that removes the fingerprint requirement for all CalFresh households, moves CalFresh and CalWORKs to a semi-annual reporting system, and implements a “Heat and Eat” program; resulting in monumental changes and improvements that will increase access to and participation in CalFresh ”

Best Performance by State Legislative Staff

Julie Salley-Gray, Assembly Appropriations Committee, Consultant

- “Staffed AB 6, the very difficult and time consuming bill which called for semi-annual reporting, elimination of SFIS for all CalFresh households, and initiated a Heat and Eat benefit.”
- “A strategic thinker who is hard working and completely committed to providing food for low-income communities.”
- “Though immersed in her work at the State Capitol, she manages to stay connected to the “ground-level” struggles and issues facing low-income communities across the state of California”

Best Performance by a State Employee to Improve CalFresh

Christina Acosta, California Department of Public Health, Contract & Program Manager CalFresh Outreach

- “Cristina worked, almost behind the scenes, to secure a vibrant partnership with the California Department of Aging, CDPH, CDSS and others interested in outreach to the underserved population of seniors in California. She was patient and provided the persistent commitment necessary to get materials through the many edits and approvals. As a result of her sustained efforts and the support from her supervisor and partners we now have Cal Fresh materials in English and in Spanish that will help bring seniors to their CalFresh entitlements.”
- “Cristina has persisted through field testing and endless reviews to bring senior-focused English and Spanish CalFresh brochures to target California adults/seniors aged 60. Through her leadership she strengthened the CDPH, CDSS, and CDA partnership through the Senior Materials Brochure project. The senior brochure will be used in overall social marketing strategy by giving CalFresh a unique piece to outreach to older adults.”

Andrea Bricker, California Department of Aging, Public Health Nutritionist

- “Collaborated with CDPH – Network for Healthy California, and CDSS to develop the CalFresh Older Adult brochure. The brochure developed by this collaborative group will provide information to older adults about applying for CalFresh benefits and will increase the number of older adults who apply for and participate in CalFresh in California.”

- "Brought attention to the underserved senior population in California and worked with DSS to develop a brochure specifically targeted to the senior population. She also promoted training for front-line staff on how to work more effectively with the senior/elderly population."

Dianne Padilla Bates, California Department of Social Services, AGPA, EBT & Farmers' Markets Branch

- "Dianne has been instrumental in increasing the number of farmers' markets that participate in the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Farmers' Market Program, which allows CalFresh and cash aid recipients to access their benefits at farmers' markets, produce stands and flea markets."
- "Diane's work has created greater food access at farmers' markets through EBT access, and thus improved community and individual health. Her efforts have increased investments in local economies and brought in more take-home revenue for California's small family farmers."

Best Performance by a Frontline County Employee to Improve CalFresh

Ann Marie Masino, San Diego Health & Human Services Agency - Escondido Family Resource Center, Bilingual CalWORKs, Food Stamps, & Medi-Cal/PCN HSS

- "Worked tirelessly with community based organizations to quickly correct CalFresh case mistakes in order to get the client benefits as soon as possible. She also has gone out on Feeding America San Diego's mobile pantry to speak to clients in food deserts about CalFresh and bring her county expertise to the field."
- "Ann Marie is extremely passionate and it shows with every person she works with. By working so diligently with CBOs, Ann Marie has facilitated the process for dozens of CalFresh clients needing special assistance with her case. By going out into food deserts, she brings a face to the county to clients that never have been able to go to the office, increasing access and the reputation of programs such as CalFresh. She is helping eliminate barriers right now and for many years to come by these generous and passionate actions."

Lorena Moran, Santa Cruz County Human Services Department, CalFresh Call Center Supervisor

- "Without a doubt having the right person/contact in the county office makes the difference between families get the food they need for that month. This is exactly what Lorena Moran has managed to do for many years."
- "Over the years Lorena, has been the person has taken the time to answer any questions that the food bank CalFresh outreach team has about any particular CalFresh client. If there any doubt about the denial of the case, she will double check to make sure that the correct decision was made."

Clara Rayos, County of Ventura Human Services Agency, CalFresh Program Analyst

- "Ms. Rayos was the county liaison, primary contact, and educator who worked diligently with our FOOD Share team to expand the CalFresh Outreach Program. She was always available, assisted with problem solving, developing a smooth working relationship between FOOD Share, our subcontractors, and the county to manage the expanded CalFresh outreach program to serve more eligible clients."
- "Increased client access to CalFresh benefits by expanding trained CalFresh outreach staff to educate and conduct application assistance throughout Ventura County. The program is the first of its kind in Ventura County in which the food bank partnered with the county to conduct outreach in areas that are underserved, reach people who have experienced a variety of barriers to access, and go to where the need is and people are in the field."

Petros Alemeselassie, San Diego County Health & Human Services, North Inland Office, Health and Human Services Admin II

- "Petros is the manager of San Diego HHSA's North Inland Family Resource Center. The region his office serves is one of the most diverse in the county, if not the state."
- "Worked with his staff to make sure the complex rules for immigrant and refugee populations are understood and correctly applied by his staff. He has met with refugee resettlement and community organizations to understand their concerns and implement changes."
- "Petros' commitment to improving CalFresh reflects his dedication to reduce hunger in our communities. He is an asset to his organization and the anti-hunger community."

Kris Call, San Diego County Health & Human Services, Oceanside Office

- “Kris is the main contact for San Diego Outreach Partners in her office. She is always very responsive and gets issues addressed right away.”
- “There is still work to be done, but she is a great partner for the community and is appreciated by all.”
- “Her responsiveness and assistance have ensured that eligible families get their CalFresh benefits quickly.”
- “She has also helped to create a positive and dynamic partnership between the community and her office.”

Best Performance by a County Director to Improve CalFresh

Claudine Wildman, Santa Cruz County Human Services Department- Benefits Division, Division Director

- “Claudine is a great partner with Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County and a champion for access to CalFresh. She initiated an outreach contract with Second Harvest, which has enabled the food bank to bring on two additional outreach workers to provide outreach, application assistance, and follow-up. Claudine has also supported outreach efforts by providing funding for local media campaigns and a county-wide outreach partnership, chaired by Second Harvest staff.”
- “The addition of two Second Harvest outreach workers has dramatically increased the number of applications for CalFresh. In addition, she granted view-only access to the CalWIN database for food bank staff, to facilitate follow-up and tracking efforts. The county-wide outreach partnership is effectively promoting sharing of best practices, mentoring of outreach workers, and coordination of non-profit CalFresh outreach activities.”

Dr. Michael Riley, Orange County Social Services Agency, Director

- “Dr. Riley meets with the three outreach organizations on a yearly basis. In 2011 he instituted changes that streamlined our CalFresh Workshop process. Workshops transformed from “Food Stamps in 4 Hours” to “CalFresh in 2 Hours”. Half way through the year, finger imaging, which was previously done at the workshops, was discontinued and “Rights and Responsibilities” was changed to be done in front of the entire group, thus shortening the wait time for applicants.”
- “Dr. Riley’s efforts have allowed our three organizations to directly submit over 1500 completed CalFresh applications in 2011. The application process for 25 workshop participants was shortened from 4 hours to 2 hours.”

Curtis Updike, Ventura County Human Services Agency, Deputy Director

- “Mr. Updike led his county team in a successful contract with FOOD Share, the Ventura County food bank, to greatly expand the CalFresh Outreach Program.”
- “Increased participation and outreach for education and application assistance in underserved areas and with underserved populations in the County of Ventura.”

Best Performance by a Local Advocate to Improve CalFresh *(Due to the large number of nominations, two Freshy Awards will be given in this category)*

Christine LaBadie, Fremont Family Resource Center, Program Coordinator

- “Christine has been instrumental in organizing that CalFresh runs smoothly and efficiently. She has created schedules that benefit clients as well as all the caseworkers who are responsible in delivering services. She has made it so that everyone feels comfortable using a calendar system and scheduling appointments- if it weren't for her, the office would be very chaotic. She reminds approximately 10 people when there are changes, when there is low number of clients and she encourages everyone to fill the slots.”

Besma Coda, Chaldean Middle Eastern Social Services, Culture Advisor

- “As San Diego County’s east region becomes the new home for many Iraqi Refugees, Besma Coda and Chaldean Middle Eastern Social Services have faced increasing need for food and other services. Besma and her team have worked patiently and diligently to advocate for better language access at the County CalFresh office. In addition, her organization hosts Quarterly Reporting workshops at the start of each month where families can get assistance completing the forms and preparing their documents to submit in order to reduce processing errors and delays.”
- “Besma’s work makes a difference not only for the Iraqi refugees she serves, but also for the County office, as the need for follow up with clients is reduced. As clients are able to maintain their benefits, the economy of her community is improved as well.”

Elizabeth Gomez, Alameda County Community Food Bank, Outreach Programs Manager

- “Liz continued her tireless CalFresh outreach efforts through innovative partnerships, specific community focus, and resource allocation. She has furthered our relationship with Alameda County Social Services to assist in our outreach at Santa Rita Jail

inmates and Alameda county seniors. We are able to do outreach in the jails because of her commitment to collaborative efforts with other agencies."

- "Liz hosted a Senior CalFresh Symposium, which included our county social services and other groups that work with our senior population, to develop a stronger CalFresh outreach effort for this underserved community."
- "Put a lot of effort in our successful "People Say" print campaign dispelling the myths about CalFresh and is now working hard on our upcoming campaign promoting the facts about CalFresh. She is an incredible leader whose impact in our community will be felt for a very long time."

Fred Summers, Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, JFS-SOVA Community Food and Resource Program, Director of Operations

- "Fred Summers helped facilitate the annual Hunger Action Day in Sacramento, visiting legislators on both sides of the aisle. This year his focus was on gaining support for AB 6, AB 69, AB 828 and SB 43 – all intended to broaden access to CalFresh benefits. Fred oversees three JFS-SOVA food pantries located in the L.A. area. Multiple times each week, staffers from LA County work from the pantry sites to provide clients with on-site CalFresh & MediCal enrollment. JFS-SOVA's ongoing CalFresh enrollment opportunities (including the on-site DPSS staffing) enable thousands of low-income Californians to learn more about the federal program."
- "On-site applications have led to an estimated 2,500 applicant families receiving benefits since the launch of the collaboration."

Joel Campos, Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz County, Sr. Manager Outreach & Education

- "Keeping the community up to date on changes and updates in regards to CalFresh, keeping community organizations involved and motivated to improve access to CalFresh. "
- "More people are aware of CalFresh and more organizations are involved in CalFresh promotion."
- "A leader in facilitating the ongoing work of the Central Coast Hunger Coalition and an active member of the California Hunger Action Coalition (CHAC), Joel works to ensure that policy solutions are a viable opportunity to improve CalFresh"
- "A key player in coordinating CalFresh outreach across the central coast, Joel has been a leader in connecting with the community and increasing access to CalFresh"

Jennifer Tracy, San Diego Hunger Coalition, Food Security Outreach Program Director

- "Assisted the County in implementing recent legislative changes, via her participation in multiple community CalFresh collaboratives and workgroups and providing information, education, training and support to the community about the effects the upcoming changes will have."
- "Over the past 3 months, Jennifer has been instrumental in helping the County design a new "pub-assist" email address that will allow CBOs to email the County workers to receive case statuses on multiple cases at once. This seemingly simple procedure took many hours to discuss, build and implement, and Jennifer was at the fore-front of ensuring that it happened and that the CBOs are satisfied with the result. This is one of many examples of the work Jennifer truly puts into this program in our region."
- "Trained 45 organizations and helped them enroll nearly 8,000 individuals in CalFresh."

Margarita Ponce, Kids Campus Youth Center, Youth Program Director

- "Eliminated junk food, has a bike club, nutrition classes and promotes healthy lifestyle."
- "Lowered risk of diabetes, increase children's knowledge on healthy living."
- "Teaches healthy living in computer lab using online programs."
- "Participates in the Power Play Program through Network for Healthy Families."
- "Created a Campus Garden to grow fresh produce and teach children how to create a healthy snack using the vegetables grown."

Ecaterina "Cat" Burton, Alameda County Community Food Bank, Advocacy and Education Associate

- "Has successfully and tirelessly organized the community to both educate and provide access to much needed programs in regards to CalFresh and food justice. She has helped to de-stigmatize CalFresh and worked to help pass AB 6."
- "She's set up online advocacy systems and informed others of the way they can make a difference in CalFresh policy."
- "Has moved CalFresh forward as a nutritional program to better serve the community."
- "She's motivated people to go to Sacramento and be part of the 'fight.'"

Elizabeth Hall, San Diego Food Bank, CalFresh Outreach Coordinator

- "Elizabeth hasn't even completed a year at the San Diego Food Bank but her hard work, dedication and wanting to help those in need has proven to us that she is committed and values her work. She has gone above and beyond our expectations."
- "She is amazing with clients. She is compassionate to their needs, treats everyone with respect, is patient and truly cares about her clients. She will advocate to the very end."
- "Since joining our CalFresh Outreach department at the food bank, our efforts and partnerships have expanded. Our months are now busier with outreach events and presentations. She is always exploring ways to grow and make our program stronger. Much of what has been accomplished this year internally within the program at the food bank would have not been capable without Elizabeth's contributions."

Yane Flores, FOOD Share, CalFresh Outreach Coordinator

- "Has gone over and beyond her call of duty to really provide the best guidance and support to the families that are in need."
- "Always willing to help and always available. She is a great resource and always tries to help those in need!"
- "She helped to expand CalFresh Outreach Program in Ventura County."
- "Ms. Flores became the leader of an expanded CalFresh Outreach Program as a result of the first of its kind collaborative effort and contract for CalFresh outreach with the County of Ventura Human Services Agency. As a result of the contract, FOOD Share hired 6 additional FOOD Share outreach staff and subcontracted with 3 community based organizations that hired a total of 7 outreach staff. Ms. Flores trains, mentors, and supervises all outreach staff."

Rebecca Tamondong and CalFresh Outreach Staff, Catholic Charities of Orange County

- "Since January of 2011, Catholic Charities of Orange County (CCOC) has been hosting monthly "one-stop" CalFresh Application Assistance Workshops. At each 2 hour event, 25 previously pre-screened applicants that receive application assistance, submit an application directly to a county Eligibility Technician, and are interviewed. New CalFresh enrollees often receive their EBT cards within a week."
- "With these workshops, CCOC has created a model practice for facilitating effective collaboration between Outreach CBOs and county CalFresh offices to increase CalFresh participation. Over 175 Orange County households have been assisted through Workshops so far. Starting February 2012, CCOC will be expanding this model and conducting additional Application Assistance Workshops at a second site."

Pedro Toledo, Healthy Kids Sonoma County, Director

- "Pedro discovered that Sonoma and Napa Counties ranked at the bottom of 58 California counties for CalFresh utilization and was unwilling to accept such unacceptable numbers in his community. Pedro partnered with the Central Valley Health Network to help train 28 health insurance enrollment workers stationed at community clinics to screen for CalFresh eligibility."
- "Helped to ensure that the most vulnerable food-insecure populations had immediate access to emergency food or regular CalFresh benefits."
- "Pedro's collaborative effort resulted in CalFresh screening for over 12,000 people annually. The program has completed over 4,000 CalFresh applications for people into CalFresh, which is significantly increasing the CalFresh utilization rates in these rural communities."

Special Central Valley Category **Best Performance by a Local Advocate to Improve CalFresh**

Anne Schellman, University Of CA Cooperative Extension, Nutrition Education Program Manager III

- "As a partner with the Stanislaus County Nutrition Action Plan (CNAP), Anne developed several gardening brochures to encourage consumers to grow their own nutritious produce. Each brochure contained the following phrase in a highlighted box. "Did you know? EBT cardholders may use their Cal Fresh benefits to purchase seeds and plants to grow food for their personal consumption." She also helped the local CSA office create a container garden to remind people of this."
- "More consumers will choose to use their benefits to create a garden. This will increase their access to fresh wholesome foods and increase the amount food they can buy with their benefits, and make it more likely that they will be eating healthy foods and getting some exercise while tending their gardens."

Susana Mora, Selma Flea Market General Manager

- "Susana, in partnership with the Network for a Healthy California-Central Valley Region, made a walking trail of giant green, yellow and orange feet spanning 1 and ¾ mile that guides customers throughout the flea market. The trail includes nutrition tips in Spanish and English that promote the consumption of more fruits and vegetables and physical activity."

- “As the walking trail continues to be part of the Selma Flea Market, the message that eating more fruits and vegetables and being physically active will continue to impact the thousands of CalFresh recipients attending the market and it is expected that they will continue to purchase more produce with their EBT cards.”

Nora Baca, Family Health Care Network, Community Outreach Representative

- “Nora has diligently provided CalFresh information to families in rural communities in the Tulare County area. Nora takes CalFresh to the laborers in working in the grape vineyards, fruit groves and cotton fields. Nora is continually signing up participants through outreach activities i.e. health fairs, presentations in clinics and schools. Nora also collaborates with local radio stations to spread the word about CalFresh.
- “Shares the nutritional values of having fresh fruits and vegetables to every one she encounters. Families have expressed their gratitude for the new resource that helps their families eat well balanced meals. Nora is available to families for recertification assistance.”

Special Central Valley Category

Best Performance by a Central Valley County Employee to Improve CalFresh

Elaine Emery and Phoebe Leung, Stanislaus Health Services Agency, Nutrition Services Program Manager and Director of Health Promotion and Employee Wellness

- “Created a Food Resources Guide for consumers listing all the available resources with in Stanislaus County. This resource guide is available in both English and Spanish; it is laminated and has a magnet so consumer can keep it on their refrigerator.”
- “Brought attention to the underserved senior population in California and worked with DSS to develop a brochure specifically targeted to the senior population. She also promoted training for front-line staff on how to work more effectively with the senior/elderly population.”
- “Attended meetings and worked with focus groups, and promoted senior participation in the CalFresh program”

Dr. Ed Moreno, Fresno County Department of Public Health, Director

- “Dr. Ed Moreno recognized the high chronic disease and obesity rates related to diet, poverty and access to healthy food in Fresno County. He engaged the Fresno Public Health Department, the Fresno Co. Depart. of Employment and Temporary Assistance, and community based agencies to work together for the first time on expanding access to CalFresh as a health prevention program. Dr. Moreno, the E&TA, and community based agencies formed a working group funded by TCE to design waiver applications.”
- “Fresno County CalFresh enrollment will improve because of supported access waivers, and improve access to healthy food will include utilizing a sustainable top-up program at farmers markets in targeted low income areas. Ultimate result: better health for low income Fresno County residents and incentivized use of CalFresh at Farmers Markets, supporting local farmers.”

Kevin Stamper, San Joaquin County Human Services Agency, Program Manager

- “This year Mr. Stamper has been a great support to CBO’s doing CalFresh Outreach in the San Joaquin County. He works closely with CBO CalFresh outreach workers to assist eligible families and individuals complete the whole CalFresh process smoothly, if an issue arises for example; if client misses their CalFresh appointment and is not able to contact a worker, or if a client case is been pending for more than 30 days, Mr. Stamper will contact the supervisor and case worker to solve the issue.”
- “Collaborates with the San Joaquin Hunger Task Force group, to discuss hunger issues and find solutions to alleviate hunger in the county. Thanks to Mr. Stamper’s understanding and support of the CalFresh outreach program the communication between San Joaquin Human Services Agency and CalFresh outreach CBOs has improved. This improvement in communication allows the CalFresh outreach program in the San Joaquin County to help more eligible individuals and families receive benefits.”

Jill Erickson and Margie Palomino, Stanislaus County Area Agency on Aging & Veteran Services, Manager and Director of Aging and Veteran's Services

- "Both have worked very hard to increase access to Cal Fresh by the underserved aged population. By bringing together various agencies in Stanislaus County at local Senior Centers and other locations throughout the county they have helped to improve the quality of life for our senior population."
- "Stanislaus County Seniors received help applying for Cal Fresh and Medi-Cal at these events, they also had access to staff from Social Security, HICAP, and the Community Services Agency so they could get all of their questions answered regarding the services they already receive or want to receive from these agencies. This was done in setting that they are already familiar with and go to frequently."