

President's Report January 2021

Happy New Year! We launched right into 2021 with pretty much the same speed that we exited 2020. So, as we close out January 2021, we acknowledge that we are truly in a marathon, and it is important that as a team we slow down a bit and begin to think about the next stages.

Our focus this month has been completing all our calendar year end tasks such as grant reporting requirements, completing data entry for all donors and preparing charitable gift letters, realigning warehouse space and moving into new space, and getting caught up where necessary.

We have a few projects yet to launch but as we move forward in the months ahead, we are taking measured steps so as not to overcommit the team to new ideas or projects. As you will see below in the list of 2020 accomplishments, we expanded in a number of areas and we need follow-through to make these expansions successful.

In addition to completing work plan goals, some of the special activities we have on the horizon for the remainder of the fiscal year and somewhat into the first half of next fiscal year are the CERES upgrade; programmatic design and implementation of two restricted grants addressing child nutrition; the marketing and outreach grant with Three Square for senior pantries, i.e. Golden Groceries; launching as CA TEFAP provider in Lassen/Modoc counties (Feb); preparing for active advocacy opportunities; FY21 budget and work plan development; launching in the field the year-long Feeding our Community Survey (March); Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) CARES grant; re-vamping our Safety and Food Safety Committees; continuing a refresh on the Volunteer space (some photos at the end); hosting a virtual Partner Agency Conference (postponed from September) to name just a few. Events are still on hold but we are optimistic that CAN-struction might be a go in late May rather than March.

Mike Escobar a member of our Program's team has been selected through a competitive grant process offered by Feeding America as one of two FY21 Humana Rural Mobile Capacity Advisors to assist with innovatively and equitably in the work of expanding mobile pantries in rural communities.

FBNN has been selected to participate in United Way's Equity Learning Community. Kerry Kelly will be our representative in this group.

While MLK looked different, it still made an impact. Coverage in [Nevada Independent](#).

Listen to MLK Day of Service Tributes <https://www.tribute.co/mlk-national-day-of-service/>.

So as I sit here trying to compile everything that is on the horizon, it doesn't really appear that we are slowing down, but we do plan to be more intentional as opportunities present.

To close out, here are a few excerpts from my New Year's message to the team followed by a compilation of achievements in a pandemic calendar year.

In our lifetimes, each of us will reflect upon 2020 in our own way. We will remember how we felt, its impact on our lives and those of friends and family, but I hope each of you will remember how your work here at the Food Bank of Northern Nevada made an impact on so many lives in the communities we serve.

Our team touched people and families in a meaningful way. It seems hard to celebrate our achievements in this moment as the pandemic still rages on, but it is important to acknowledge that we did persevere and have much for which we can be proud.

January—March 2020

- Started a partnership with Olympian David Wise and his family. He volunteered with a camera man to support the Food Bank. His wife also was a judge for CANstruction.
- Held first of its kind MLK Day of Service with over 800 people volunteering at the Convention Center to pack food.
- 13 teams (nearly half were youth teams) participated in CANstruction, 5 corporate sponsors and 26,012 lbs.

Little did we know, as CANstruction was de-CANstructing, that overnight our world was about to change significantly. On Sunday, March 16, schools and businesses closed, instantly creating hardship for some many.

So how did the Food Bank team react? With skill, compassion, dedication, ingenuity, AGILITY and without the blink of an eye.

Within hours, this team literally transposed so many of our methods of delivering food for what we thought would be a few weeks or maybe a few months' time. Well, as we closed out the year, we still are operating in a fluid manner.

There is no doubt that COVID has certainly provided some unexpected monetary resources , but this has enabled the Food Bank to make some investments in infrastructure ahead of schedule, think ahead to the future and to be able to actually expand services as outlined in work plans.

It has provided us with unprecedented support and with that came some significant deadlines; most of which were not within our discretion. So as food bankers do, we got it done....

What follows is a compilation of the year as of March 17, 2020....

- Transitioned MH to a drive- through model and secured 23 new sites / new community

partners with an April high of 28,272; normally 8,500 served per month).

- Transitioned SFSP into a drive through model and provided “grab and go” options in the summer as well as the school year (operating 36 sites and serving over 534,000 meals for children from March 17 – June 12; a 55% increase in meals served compared to a normal school year when we serve just over 292,000 meals).
- Transitioned SNAP outreach work to be phone based.
- Transitioned Nutrition Education to a virtual format.
- Provided 2 additional distance learning pick up sites for children who do not have access to school meals.
- Expanded rural MH into 6 new communities, including 2 Tribal Nations.
- Provided Capacity Building grants to partners, totaling over \$220,000 using TEFAP TM funds/NDA CARES funds
- Established new partnership with RTC to expand home delivery to homebound individuals and those with disabilities.
- Expanded CSFP home delivery, doubling current capacity.
- Expanded the Holiday home delivery meal program to serve 87 seniors with a Thanksgiving and Christmas meal (increased people by 47 and added the second meal).
- Held 6 successful Holiday Meal distributions to families in need in Washoe County assisting 1600 households in November and 1600 households in December.
- Secured CPI - Demonstration Project for SNAP outreach and added 1 additional SNAP team members.
- Rolled out Produce on Wheels to eligible seniors in Washoe, Churchill, Lyon counties and Carson City.
- Expanded Nutrition Education opportunities and programming supported by State funds to include NOW and HPI. Established new partnership with Urban Roots, to provide locally grown, fresh produce to school pantry families, combined with nutrition education.
- Opened 5 additional school pantries.
- Collaborating with the Boys & Girls Club in Winnemucca to establish a rural school based food pantry.
- Assisted by 2 interns who focused on program needs (1 for Rx pantry and 1 for Senior Hunger).
- Two food pantry partners opened Senior Only food pantry hours, to support the needs of food insecure seniors.
- Established new partnerships with 4 Tribal Nations, supporting their development of onsite food pantries for their communities.
- Working with the State of California to take on the role of TEFAP provider to Lassen and Modoc counties – this new partnership will begin in February, 2021.
- Transitioned to a new client tracking software system for internal programs (MH, CSFP, POW, SNAP, Nut. Ed, Rx pantry).
- Continued to organize and participate in drive-through Family Health Festivals.
- Held special Mobile Harvest distributions in partnership with Liberty Dental and Anthem (COVID testing)
- Secured new grant opportunities to support Seniors, Tribal Nations, Military Families and Veteran’s, Children and Food Insecure Families throughout our service area.
- Actively advocated for policy and funding needs with local, state, federal officials.

- Assisted state with Pandemic EBT roll-out.
- Work to secure waivers for SNAP interview, Child Nutrition Programs, CSFP and TEFAP signature requirements.
- Organized and held weekly meeting with NV Dept of Agriculture Administrator and Three Square Food Bank.
- Seven months of support from the men and women of the Nevada National Guard.
- Executed new cluster agreement with Three Square and Fresno Food Banks.
- Launched planning and survey design for Feeding our Community Survey.
- Participated in USDA CFAP program.
- Purchased approximately \$1.3million in food specifically designated for COVID impact.
- Strong stewardship of donors.
- Formed another great partnership with PBS Reno in June, cross marketing each of our services to each other's supporters.
- Pivoted to new way of doing business and interacting with supporters including donor town hall meetings, drive through events and videos to communicate what our response to COVID had been.
- Revised volunteer opportunities to keep community engaged while maintain adherence to health and safety guidelines.

Featured in many prominent national news stories about the impact of the pandemic on the communities served.

- Participated in an international BBC story about Hunger in our area in February 2020: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-51578045>
- Contributed to a national hunger story with Marketwatch in July 2020: <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/food-banks-are-anticipating-a-second-wave-of-demand-when-the-extra-600-in-unemployment-benefits-expires-next-month-2020-06-29?mod=elisabeth-buchwald>
- Worked with Vice TV about a story highlighting our area and showing how COVID has affected Food Insecurity that was published in early November. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISzUg0jo8zM&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0sIZnxyAYxLW-Ot08e77NgeWuCAZB2t7wCTHl24L4jpizFVdrHwd0AGII>
- Contributed to a national story in December 2020 about Hunger: <https://www.wdbj7.com/2020/12/25/food-insecurity-hits-millions-of-americans-for-the-holidays/>
- Maximized our local media exposure as well. In the first 4 months of the pandemic we had more than double the amount of television and radio stories than we did the prior year for a total of 568 stories in 4 months.
- Replaced regular events with monthly Drive through Food Drives including one that doubled as a trick or treating event and capped off by a different but no less impactful KTVN Share Your Christmas Food Drive.
- Key advocate for 2020 Census (did you know that Nevada is #1 in the country in self-response growth) and FBNN was cited by Census Bureau state team as being tremendous in getting the word out.
- Passed AIB inspection.
- Awarded the 2020 Golden Pinecone Award for addressing food security.

- Board Chair John Lipinski selected as Board Member of the Year by Human Services Network.
- Continued partnership with Catholic Charities for Fund for Healthy Nevada grant.

Infrastructure Improvements

- Additional staff to handle necessary functions (POW Coordinator, Data specialist, Tribal Specialist, Bilingual SNAP Outreach, Nutrition Educator (focus on NOW and HPI), Grant Writer/Assistant, Warehouse Tech and Driver (note: filled vacancies and created new roles from vacancies to meet organizational need)
- Completion of 8,200 sq feet of warehouse space with 2 additional dock doors and new racking
- 2 new program vehicles (Jeep and Subaru)
- Upgraded refrigeration in 3 child nutrition vans
- 2 new semi-trucks
- 2 new semi-trailers
- 1 new refrigerated trailer (pulls behind pick-up)
- 1 new semi-trailer refrigeration unit (S-600 Evergreen)
- 3 new electric walkie jacks
- 1 narrow aisle reach truck
- New pallet scale
- Installed new lift gates on 3 trailers
- New barrel cart
- 3 new Surface Pros for Programs
- Rollerball conveyors for volunteer area
- Capacity investments for partners include (Freezers, Refrigerators, pallet jacks, hand trucks, storage racking, IT equipment and other miscellaneous items to assist them.
- Electronic racking bin location and barcoding - access points and scan guns.

Here are some photos.....

Volunteer area – new conveyor system

Chalkboard wall



Volunteer entrance featuring Volunteers in Action



New warehouse racking

Raley's FFF funded CA Compliant reefer

