



## For Immediate Release

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# The Food Bank Celebrates Fund Raisers and Community Hunger Fighters

*Second Harvest Food Bank celebrates local individuals and organizations*

*for impactful community efforts.*

**SANTA CRUZ, CA March 8, 2024** - Despite March's unpredictable weather, Second Harvest Food Bank powered through to unveil the remarkable results of their largest annual fundraising event. The much-anticipated Holiday Food & Fund Drive Awards Dinner, chaired by Susan True, Community Foundation Santa Cruz County CEO and Dr. Faris Sabbah Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools, was a sold-out affair, buzzing with excitement as the community's team spirit and generosity was celebrated.

From November 3, 2023, to January 15, 2024, the community rallied together and raised the equivalent of an astonishing 4,695,069 healthy meals. Every dollar raised during this event went directly toward feeding food-insecure residents of Santa Cruz County, making a tangible impact on the lives of many.

At this highly anticipated annual event, the spotlight shone on Richard Crowe of St. Francis Catholic Kitchen and Ray Mosier of LiUNA Local 270, who were honored as Second Harvest Food Bank's Hunger Fighters of the Year. Richard Crowe, with his unwavering dedication as Program Director for over two decades, ensures that 26,000 meals are served annually, providing

heartwarming spirit. Their commitment and compassion were recognized with awards and proclamations from numerous esteemed government municipalities, representatives, and officials.

Not to be overshadowed, local businesses and organizations were also praised for their pivotal roles in this successful fundraiser. Central Coast Alliance for Health, Twin Lakes Church, UC Santa Cruz, Freedom Rotary, and Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, Santa Cruz Warriors, Driscoll's, Dominican Hospital, and Park Avenue Fitness, among others, were commended for their significant contributions.

The Food Bank acknowledges that while these larger contributions make a substantial impact, the collective effort of numerous smaller organizations and individuals was equally vital to the fundraiser's success. This united effort truly exemplifies the spirit of community and compassion that defines Santa Cruz County.

The co-chairs of the 2024-25 Holiday Food & Fund Drive will be returning chair, Dr. Faris Sabbah, Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools, and Chris Murphy, President of the Santa Cruz Warriors & Senior Vice President of the Golden State Warriors.

### **About Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County**

Founded in 1972, Second Harvest Food Bank was the first food bank in California and the second in the nation. Its mission is to inspire and support Santa Cruz County to provide nourishment for all community members. Its network of nearly 130 local agencies and programs feeds on average 65,000 people in Santa Cruz County every month. In our community's efforts to ease food-insecurity, we recognize our donors, we celebrate our volunteers, we're thankful for our partners and staff, and we truly see all our neighbors. We are the Food Bank. [TheFoodBank.org](http://TheFoodBank.org)

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Co-Hunger Fighter of the Year Richard Crowe of St. Francis Catholic Kitchen accepting award.





Co-Hunger Fighter of the Year Ray Mosier of LiUNA Local 270 announced by Holiday Food & Fund Drive Chairs Susan True and Dr. Faris Sabbah..

Two local City Managers, Matt Huffaker City of Santa Cruz, and Rene Mendez, City of Watsonville, accepted a healthy challenge on behalf of their staff as to which city's team could raise more funds for meals for SHFB. Winning city, Santa Cruz raised the equivalent of 137,298 meals. City of Watsonville raised the equivalent of 36,744 meals for SHFB.



Final 'Meal Reveal' 4,695,069 meals - the funding raised during the entire 2023-2024 Holiday Food & Fund Drive in the equivalence of meals to be distributed in Santa Cruz County over the coming year. One dollar equals 3 healthy meals.

