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**San Francisco Food Bank Receives \$50,000 Grant to Boost Food Stamp Participation among Those in Need**

*Grant is part of a \$1.1 million Bank of America Charitable Foundation partnership with Feeding America to connect low-income Americans with federal nutrition programs*

San Francisco, CA (September 15 2010)– The San Francisco Food Bank today announced they are one of 36 food banks in 18 states to receive a grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation. In addition to the grant, approximately 25 local Bank of America associates and executives volunteered at the San Francisco Food Bank, sorting food in the warehouse to be distributed by 400 nonprofit agencies which will serve more than 24,000 households this week throughout San Francisco and Marin counties.

Locally, the \$50,000 grant will support increased participation in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps). The funds will enable the San Francisco Food Bank to offer its pantry clients access to SNAP education, prescreening and application assistance. While the number of San Franciscans on food stamps has grown by some 52 percent since 2008, currently, only 39.5 percent of the 77,863 eligible San Franciscans participate in the food stamp program. With less than half of eligible San Franciscans receiving the benefits they are entitled to, the city loses out on \$114 million in economic activity that could be generated by food stamp usage.

The state of California has the lowest food stamp participation rate in the country, ranking 51<sup>st</sup> in the nation. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), only 66 percent of people who were eligible for SNAP in 2007 received benefits – a trend which can inadvertently cause a strain on local food banks and pantries when benefit-eligible people rely solely on their resources instead of taking advantage of federal nutrition programs.

“On behalf of the over 24,000 households that the San Francisco Food Bank serves each week with our 400 plus partners, we are deeply grateful to Bank of America for their tremendous generosity and recognition that food assistance and hunger relief remain a top priority nationally and locally,” said Paul Ash, executive director for the San Francisco Food Bank. “This funding will enable food banks to connect SNAP-eligible people who visit our food distribution pantries

with the right information and resources to get the benefits they need and overcome any barriers to receiving them.”

“Understanding the enormous need for food assistance in this country and in the San Francisco community, SNAP awareness and outreach is one of the most important things we can do to ensure that no American goes to bed hungry,” said Martin Richards, San Francisco Market President, Bank of America. “As part of our work to help strengthen communities, Bank of America is opening up and shepherding opportunities for individuals and families in need by helping them receive food benefits and other essential human services.”

Bank of America is a longtime supporter of the Feeding America network and in addition to this grant, has provided more than \$2.5 million to Feeding America and its member food banks last year. The \$1.1 million in SNAP outreach grants is the largest gift in Feeding America history to support such efforts. Over the past year, more than 1,200 Bank of America associates have donated nearly 3,700 hours to the Feeding America network. Local Bank of America employees will be volunteering at the San Francisco Food Bank this month.

### **About the San Francisco Food Bank**

Hunger is a serious problem in San Francisco – with 1 in 4 children and 1 in 5 adults at risk of hunger. Every day, the San Francisco Food Bank sources, collects, sorts, inspects and repackages thousands of pounds of food, then distributes it to soup kitchens, neighborhood grocery centers, school programs and seniors in need.

The San Francisco Food Bank partners with over 400 nonprofit agencies to serve more than 24,000 households weekly throughout San Francisco and Marin counties. This year, the Food Bank will distribute 41.5 million pounds of food to the community this year – enough for 88,000 meals every day. Over half of what is distributed is fresh produce. For more information, visit [www.SFFoodBank.org](http://www.SFFoodBank.org).

### **About Bank of America Corporate Philanthropy**

Building on a long-standing tradition of investing in the communities it serves, last year Bank of America embarked on a new, 10-year goal to donate \$2 billion to nonprofit organizations engaged in improving the health and vitality of their neighborhoods. Funded by Bank of America, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation gave more than \$200 million in 2009, making the bank one of the largest corporate cash donors in the United States. Bank of America approaches investing through a national strategy under which it works with local leaders to identify and meet the most pressing needs of individual communities. Reaffirming a commitment to develop and sustain a culture of service, the bank announced the “Million Hour Challenge,” a pledge by the company’s associates around the world to donate 1 million volunteer hours by the end of 2010. In 2009, bank associate volunteers contributed more than 800,000 hours to enhance the quality of life in their communities nationwide. For more information about Bank of America Corporate Philanthropy, please visit [www.bankofamerica.com/foundation](http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation)