



SAN FRANCISCO FOOD BANK

San Francisco Food Bank Calls for Volunteers to Participate in National Day of Service to Honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Year round, Food Bank volunteers sort, package and ready food for distribution to thousands living at or near the poverty line

San Francisco, CA (January 13, 2010) – With 1 in 4 children and 1 in 5 adults at risk of hunger, the San Francisco Food Bank, a non-profit organization dedicated to ending hunger in San Francisco is calling on volunteers to mark Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day by volunteering in their communities. Though enacted in 1994, the MLK Day of Service reached a record level of participation in 2009 when President Barack Obama called for widespread volunteerism.

The San Francisco Food Bank serves 22,000 households weekly throughout San Francisco and Marin counties, and will distribute 36.5 million pounds of food to the community this year – enough for 78,000 meals each day. Over 350 tons of food is moved through the Food Bank warehouse every week. Volunteers help sort and pack fresh produce, attach labels to unlabeled cans (known as "shiners"), assemble food boxes for seniors, and perform many other tasks that help the food bank provide \$9 of food for every \$1 donated. Last year more than 21,000 people volunteered at the San Francisco Food Bank, logging more than 102,000 hours of service and doing the work of what would be more than 50 full-time employees.

With food requests up 20% over this time last year and six consecutive months of more than 3 million pounds of food distributed, the number of those turning to the San Francisco Food Bank continues to increase. The San Francisco Food Bank is responding to needs of those in the community and volunteers are needed throughout the year to help meet this demand. With volunteer shifts every day of the week, including some evenings, the San Francisco Food Bank makes it easy to fit service into a busy life. Families are welcome to volunteer together on weekends, and children as young as four years of age can volunteer on Sundays.

“As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, ‘Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: what are you doing for others?’,” said Paul Ash, Executive Director of the San Francisco Food Bank. “The National Day of Service is a great opportunity for people to get involved in their community but it is important to recognize that the need for volunteers exists year round. We encourage people to get involved with the San Francisco Food Bank throughout the year.”

On the National Day of Service, people of all ages and backgrounds will come together to improve lives, bridge social barriers, and move our nation closer to the “Beloved Community” that Dr. King had envisioned. Dr. Martin Luther King devoted his life’s work to causes of equality and social justice. He taught that through nonviolence and service to one another, problems such as hunger and homelessness, prejudice and discrimination can be overcome. Dr. King’s teachings can continue to guide us in addressing our nation’s most pressing needs.

Members of the media are encouraged to visit the San Francisco Food Bank warehouse at 900 Pennsylvania Avenue in San Francisco on Monday, January 18 to meet with volunteers who will be working in shifts from 9:00 a.m. to noon and 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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 serves 22,000 households weekly throughout San Francisco and Marin counties, and will distribute 36.5 million pounds of food to the community this year – enough for 78,000 meals every day. Over half of what is distributed is fresh produce. For more information, visit www.SFFoodBank.org.

Contact: Stacy Newman
Phone: 415-282-1900, ext. 270
Cell: 949-702-6444
snewman@sffb.org