



The 2015 Freshy Award Nominees

You can cast your vote online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JLL5VJQ>

Voting is open until 5pm on Friday, September 4.

The “Freshy” Award winners will be announced at the 2015 CalFresh Forum on October 1, 2015 in Sacramento.

Administrator of the Year

Dave Badal, Unit Manager, CalFresh Policy Unit "B" California Department of Social Services

“Dave provided leadership and guidance in the effort to raise the CalFresh Gross Income Test to 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). He moved quickly to implement the changes put forth in AB 191 and in the 2014 Budget. Along the way the policy was greatly simplified and expanded to include not just Medi-Cal households but all households below 200% FPL. Dave helped take a good policy and make it significantly better. Along the way he reached out to partners for ideas and troubleshooting and navigated a challenging federal bureaucracy.”

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

“Kevin has played an important role creating access to and increasing participation in CalFresh throughout San Joaquin County. Kevin takes part in different work groups at the state level to find ways to increase access to CalFresh. Locally, he is very active in the San Joaquin County’s Hunger Task Force; Kevin always keeps the taskforce members up to date on new CalFresh rules and regulations. In addition, Kevin is open to working together with community-based organizations doing CalFresh outreach to address concerns and answer questions. As the head of the CalFresh corrective action committee, he has worked with policy and training staff to reduce error. As a result, he has gotten the entire intake backlog cleared, and currently the Human Services Agency of San Joaquin is able to schedule appointments within hours or the next day at the latest.”

Nancy Swanson, Director**San Bernardino County Human Services Transitional Assistance Department**

"As Director, Nancy has spearheaded several internal service efficiencies to meet CalFresh customer needs and reduce lobby wait times, such as Advance Eligibility Determinations (AED), use of "Greeters" called Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) in lobbies, and initiating combined Medi-Cal/CalFresh intake case workers, as well as implementing cross training of staff in multiple programs. Staff and customers have embraced the use of technology to streamline access to assistance as well as the ability to quickly process applications."

Richard Wanne, Director of Eligibility Operations**Health and Human Services Agency - San Diego County**

"Rick is a shining example of what a great leader is and what kind of impact one can make when your end goal is a positive one. As Director of Eligibility Operations for Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), he has taken his role very seriously and has positively transformed how to better access the CalFresh Program in San Diego County. He is innovative, strives to better the process for clients to access CalFresh and is supportive in working with community partners. He's accessible and his passion for bettering access to all eligibility programs is evident."

Grassroots Mobilizer of the Year**Marisol Jacobo, Family Resource Specialist****Catholic Charities Diocese of Monterey**

"Marisol's passion and commitment for CalFresh enrollment and food security is outstanding. Her professionalism and charismatic approach has definitely been effective in promoting CalFresh. She naturally connects with people and families and serves as an advocate, especially for monolingual Spanish migrant and farm working households across three counties (Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito). In addition to completing applications for clients, Marisol ensures families are receiving and maintaining approved benefits by conducting monthly follow up with applicants as well as local county offices. In the past year Marisol has educated and pre-screened more than 16,000 people across three counties during food distribution sites, incoming calls and community outreach events."

Parke Troutman, Formerly Public Policy & Advocacy Director, San Diego Hunger Coalition

"Parke was the hub for the newly emerged Californians for SSI (CA4SSI) coalition that helped call attention to the plight of more than 1.3 million Californians suffering under the poverty level due to grant cuts to the program - and ineligible for CalFresh due to the outdated "cashout" policy. Due to Parke's diligence and leadership, CA4SSI held a series of successful budget hearings, developed legislative champions for AB 474 (Brown, Thurmond), and ultimately a strong restoration passed by the Legislature's budget that was eventually rescinded in the final agreement with the Governor. The coalition also made strides in understanding the likely effects of ending cashout, educating legislative leaders on the origins and consequences of the policy, and building momentum toward an equitable end for this policy."

Innovative Outreach Leader of the Year

Note: due to the large number of nominees in this category there will be two winners.

Alica Bedore, CalFresh Outreach Lead, CNA IV CSU Chico Center for Healthy Communities (CHC)

"Alica has worked with the CHC CalFresh team for 3-1/2 years and knows every part of the in-team process. She maintains the reports, and works with the subcontractors as their go-to person. Alica trains the CHC CalFresh team which changes every semester and strives to keep the team on target by setting monthly goals for application assists. She mentors the team by role modeling enthusiasm and she motivates the team to be successful. Alica is quick to research and find answers when unique situations and questions arise. She has a great memory for recalling past numbers and past successful partnerships."

Judy Hamamoto, Program Assistant II Center for Healthy Communities

"Judy not only provides direct services by signing folks up for CalFresh benefits, but she also brings awareness to community members through impactful presentations and is always promoting the CalFresh brand. Judy is an advocate for food security both in her professional and personal lives and is dedicated to increasing awareness and participation in the CalFresh program. Through Judy's direct services, as well as her training and mentoring of other team members, she has increased CalFresh enrollment in our region and continues to bring awareness to food insecurity."

Hector Hernandez, Consultant California Association of Food Banks

"We needed help with CalFresh access, information and training for the Long Beach area. Hector made it happen. He helped us conduct trainings to get our staff on board and continues to be a reliable point of contact for all things CalFresh. We expect to launch new enrollment sites with our prepared staff, thanks to Hector."

Lisa Houston, CalFresh Partnerships Manager Alameda County Community Food Bank

"Lisa led a partnership team of 12 agencies to provide CalFresh enrollment assistance. Staff at each agency was trained and Lisa provided ongoing technical assistance. Through this partnership, application assistance was expanded in Alameda County. It can be very overwhelming to enroll at the county office, so through these agencies, families were served in a more comfortable and efficient way. Also with the increase in the income threshold, more persons qualified and more sites were needed to serve them."

Jennifer Maguire, Ph.D., Assistant Professor Humboldt State University/Oh SNAP! Campus Food Program

"Dr. Jennifer Maguire has been an innovative, determined and compassionate leader in addressing college student food insecurity. Much of this work has involved CalFresh outreach and support. Dr. Maguire worked closely with student leaders, faculty and administration at Humboldt State University, Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services (CalFresh division) and other critical community partners, to design, implement and establish the Oh SNAP! food security program at HSU via collaborative frameworks. Specifically with CalFresh, Dr. Maguire was able to establish regular, county-trained student staffing right at the campus food cupboard for walk-in CalFresh application assistance. This assistance is not only available during a student's initial application, but whenever they have questions, concerns, or

need support filling out or sending in documents. Tips are also provided on where CalFresh can be utilized in a variety of ways, including at Farmer's Markets. This is to help student clients increase CalFresh participation and maintain benefits. Collaborative research efforts also address college student food insecurity and the role of CalFresh."

**Lu Ann Miller, Executive Director Isla Vista Youth Projects
Thrive Isla Vista**

"Lu Ann spearheaded efforts to set up a phone queue specifically for Community Based Organizations in Santa Barbara County calling on the applicant/beneficiary's behalf for the CalFresh and MediCal programs. The phone tree includes a prompt for the CBO caller to select at which time the call will go to the top of the queue. Since this is a new queue, we do not know the estimated time to reach an Eligibility Worker, but we look forward to seeing more families more quickly enrolled in CalFresh."

**Karen Pautz, Executive Director
First 5 Siskiyou Children and Families Commissions**

"Karen has encouraged, supported and promoted CalFresh outreach and application assistance in a variety of activities such as parenting classes, toddler play groups, family fun nights, etc. in 10 resource centers throughout Siskiyou County. Almost all First 5 activities included CalFresh outreach. CalFresh outreach is integrated in nutrition education and promotional outreach activities, such as Harvest of the Month and other SNAP-Ed efforts at the resource centers. Karen understands the importance CalFresh has on local and state economies and promotes CalFresh to local businesses whenever possible. Her leadership and direction has helped create an environment that having enough resources for healthy food is of incredible importance for children, families and all individuals regardless of age, race or gender. Her partners understand that to have healthy communities, their residents need the tools, knowledge and resources to do so."

**Liliana Sandoval, CalFresh Outreach Program Manager
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank**

"Liliana has led the charge in San Francisco County to organize all of the groups doing CalFresh outreach and ensure they are trained, well-equipped, and have a seat at the table with county CalFresh administrators. Additionally, she has been active in helping to identify areas for statewide advocacy/action to ensure that CalFresh applicants and participants receive the benefits that they are entitled to. Furthermore, Liliana and her staff work with HSA staff to implement regular CalFresh-in-a-Day workshops wherein applicants are able to submit their applications and, if approved, receive their EBT cards the same day."

**Amanda Schultz, CalFresh Outreach Director
San Diego Hunger Coalition**

"Amanda increased access to CalFresh by working innovatively with San Diego County officials and facilitating a relationship between the two San Diego food banks. She has also expanded CalFresh participation by diligently assisting numerous organizations in advocating for cases that appeared to be inaccurately denied. Additionally, Amanda has helped document processes for casework flow, and has worked with the County to streamline case advocacy. More clients are aware and receiving CalFresh benefits because of the training and assistance that Amanda has provided organizations throughout the County. Amanda's exemplary customer service undoubtedly impacted each organization's ability to transfer that customer care to their clients, thereby promoting the CalFresh brand."

Elected Official or Capitol Staffer of the Year

Senator Mike McGuire, Senator, 2nd District California State Legislature

"This year Senator McGuire introduced SB 297, which would have made telephonic signatures for CalFresh applications over the phone a statewide option for all counties. While the bill did not pass the Senate, the conversation about this needed technology has been sparked."

Mareva Brown, Chief Consultant California State Senate Human Services Committee

"Mareva worked with advocates and legislators to advance the telephonic signature and verification hub policy development this year. These solutions to CalFresh application barriers would have a tremendous impact on expanding access and improving program performance across California."

Emerging Leader of the Year

Melissa Heffley, Program Manager for the Dept of Eligibility Services Tehama County Dept of Social Services

"Melissa Heffley is the program manager for eligibility services at the Tehama County Department of Social Services. Her program areas include Medi-cal, CalFresh, General Assistance, and CalWORKs. She manages the largest staff of any division at the agency in two office locations, Red Bluff and Corning. She is a firm believer in the "Great Place to Work" manifesto, and creates an innovative and positive work environment by encouraging staff to create fun at work and contribute creative ideas. She is an innovative, action-oriented person. Melissa advocates keeping her staff updated on CalFresh information. She sends staff to trainings and participated in the CalFresh Awareness Month. She partners with the CSU Chico CalFresh Outreach Prime Contractor to increase application and interview preparation."

Heather King, Social Work Graduate Student Humboldt State University

"Ms. King's master's project findings are aimed to increase access to CalFresh and SNAP for college students through statewide and federal policy reform. Her project illustrates barriers college students face when attempting to qualify for CalFresh. Findings will be used to educate the public and influence legislators on policy reform to address college student food insecurity."

Cinthia Onoa, CalFresh Outreach Coordinator Los Angeles Regional Food Bank

"Cinthia took over the department this year during staffing changes and kept the program running smoothly and went above and beyond her job duties to make this happen. Cinthia's work has an all-around positive impact. She assists the applicants and makes the application process as easy as possible. She also keeps the office under control and helps the outreach workers and our new supervisor as much as she can. Cinthia is often going out of her way to make sure the CalFresh Department is as productive possible."

Loreen Theveny, Social Advocate Disability Services and Legal Center

"Loreen helped improve access to, and participation in, CalFresh, including for Spanish speaking and disabled individuals. She helped to promote CalFresh use at Farmers Market and

influence statewide and local CalFresh policy at area health centers as well as outreach in neighboring communities. Loreen also advocated for community gardens and alternative assistance for low-income individuals needing healthy food. Her work led to better knowledge, support and resources for a greater number of individuals to access and obtain needed healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables. She also assisted those already diagnosed with health-related illnesses due to lack of access to healthy foods.”

**Maria Vasquez, Community Liaison and CalFresh Project Coordinator
Catholic Charities Diocese of Monterey**

“Maria is an exceptional leader with a solid knowledge of the CalFresh program and the community we serve (Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito and San Luis Obispo Counties). Her commitment to mentoring interns and providing trainings to staff, agency partners, and the public in general, regarding CalFresh, is outstanding. She has developed instrumental partnerships with agencies, schools, universities, and parishes. Maria organizes and develops outreach events in the community where many partners work hand-in-hand with our agency. Thanks to her passion for this area, we have been able to coordinate services with community partners in a more efficient way. Furthermore, she has helped develop instrumental changes in the Family Supportive Department and has mentored interns and staff in such changes.”

**Freshy Nominee bios were written by those individuals nominating them.*