

FEEDING AMERICA RIVERSIDE | SAN BERNARDINO RECEIVES \$250,000 GRANT FROM THE ANTHEM BLUE CROSS FOUNDATION FOR LOCAL ‘FOOD AS MEDICINE’ INITIATIVE IN THE INLAND EMPIRE

August 1, 2023, (Riverside, CA) – Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino (FARSB) announced it has received a \$250,000 grant from the Anthem Blue Cross Foundation, a philanthropic arm of [Elevance Health Foundation](#), to launch a 3-year ‘Food as Medicine’ initiative in the Inland Empire. The grant will support FARSB as it collaborates with local healthcare providers to screen patients for food insecurity during healthcare visits. The healthcare partners will then connect patients who screen positive for food insecurity to food assistance resources onsite at healthcare facilities, community-based food pantries, and meal programs.

The ‘Food as Medicine,’ a Feeding America® initiative funded by the Anthem Blue Cross Foundation, will help connect approximately 9,000 people facing hunger in Riverside and San Bernardino counties to food distribution programs that provide access to healthy food options. The initiative aims to screen between 70,000 and 80,000 patients over the next 3 years with the goal of improving food security and health outcomes.

"At FARSB, our paramount goal is to forge meaningful partnerships, facilitating the equitable distribution of resources to families in need, particularly those who may be hesitant to approach conventional food pantries for assistance. Through the 'Food is Medicine' initiative, families are being introduced to food assistance programs during their health care visits when they need it most," said Carolyn Solar, CEO of Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino. "We wholeheartedly value our collaboration with Anthem, as together, we are bridging the gap between hunger and health."

"We are committed to improving the health of people across California, and we do that by establishing meaningful partnerships and collaborating with organizations like we are doing here in the Inland Empire," said Beth Andersen, president of Anthem Blue Cross in California. "This partnership will allow clinical staff to conduct universal food insecurity screenings and interventions, helping provide a deep understanding of the health-related needs of the populations we collectively serve."

The lack of access to nutritious foods can have serious, long-term effects on health and well-being, and it can make managing existing chronic conditions more difficult for people facing hunger.¹ The ‘Food as Medicine’ program includes data collection capabilities that will help identify learnings and best practices to enable positive health outcomes in participants. FARSB, a member of the Feeding America network, is one of 21 food banks to receive this funding from the Anthem Blue Cross Foundation.

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¹ "Causes and Consequences of Food Insecurity." Hunger and Health, 5 May 2022, <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/hunger-health-101/>.

About Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino

Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino (FARSB) is leading the fight against hunger in the Inland Empire by providing food access, emergency relief, education, and advocacy to families in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. FARSB opened in 1980 as Survive Food Bank in response to the increasing concern about the dual problems of hunger and food waste in the Inland Empire. Today, FARSB is the primary food source for over 250 local nonprofit organizations, distributing over two million pounds of food monthly to emergency food pantries, soup kitchens, high-need elementary schools, senior centers, after-school programs, and more. With the help of these community partners, they make up the largest hunger-relief organization serving Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, ultimately making food security a reality for over 1.2 million people every year. Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino proudly holds the 2022 Guide Star Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of transparency achievable through Guide Star. For more information, visit www.FeedingIE.org.

About the Anthem Blue Cross Foundation

The Anthem Blue Cross Foundation, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Association, is a philanthropic arm of the Elevance Health Foundation. The Foundation works to address health equity by focusing on improving the health of the socially vulnerable through strategic partnerships and programs in our communities with an emphasis on maternal and child health; mental health; and food as medicine. Additionally, the Foundation also responds to disasters when our communities need us the most. The Foundation coordinates the company's year-round Dollars for Dollars program which provides a 100 percent match of associates' donations, as well as its Volunteer Time Off and Dollars for Doers community service programs. ®ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross names and symbol are registered marks of the Blue Cross Association. To learn more about the Anthem Blue Cross Foundation and the Elevance Health Foundation, please visit www.elevancehealth.foundation and its blog at www.medium.com/elevancehealthfoundation.

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