



# FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Filled with unexpected twists and turns, the last two years have created unprecedented hardships for many individuals and families right here in south Orange County. But as businesses shuttered and hardworking people found themselves out of a job for the first time, it instilled a new sense of compassion and understanding in all of us. Our community has learned that no matter how stable life may seem, people from all walks of life could one day be in need of a nourishing meal or roof over their head.

As we enter the holiday season this year, hold onto that feeling. Keep those who are experiencing food or housing insecurity in your hearts and remember that any one of your loved ones could experience a crisis at any time.

Those in need of support this season could be much closer to home than we realize. They are our neighbors, like South County Outreach client Mary, who has owned the same condo in Aliso Viejo for over 30 years. With a now-retired husband suffering from dementia and a loan modification to pay off, Mary's minimum-wage income and his social security were barely enough to afford the cost of living. Visiting our food market gave them access to all the staples for healthy living, from eggs, milk and butter to fresh produce and meats.

Thanks to SCO's resource program, Mary and her husband not only had food on their table — the support meant they could hang onto the condo where they raised their children and start to get back on their feet. What seemed like a simple food market service helped preserve decades of memories and holiday traditions celebrated in the only home their family has ever known.

During this season of giving, we are reminded that even the smallest act can make a life-changing difference. By reaching a hand out to those in our community, we can help others discover new ways to thrive in the face of adversity. Last year, you helped us host an incredible 362 food drives and distribute 737,146 pounds of food to families in south Orange County just like Mary's. Yet, one in five children in Orange County still do not have enough food to eat and 12 percent of households in our community live below the poverty line, struggling to make ends meet.

Families like Mary's deserve the comfort and joy of a Thanksgiving meal. Our team at SCO is here to ensure everyone in need receives a little bit of holiday magic this season. With your continued generosity, we can transform donations into essential pantry items that give all our clients a chance to create their own delicious meals to share with loved ones.

If you are interested in helping a family enjoy Thanksgiving dinner this year, please donate by visiting [www.sco-oc.org/donate](http://www.sco-oc.org/donate).

Best Regards,



LaVal Brewer

President & Chief Executive Officer



## GET INVOLVED

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# SCO'S NEW HOLIDAY PROGRAM

After years of delivering cheer and goodwill with stocking stuffers and gifts, we're excited to introduce a brand-new holiday giving program to the South County Outreach family in 2021. This year's program brings to the forefront our vision of creating an Orange County where no one should go to bed hungry.

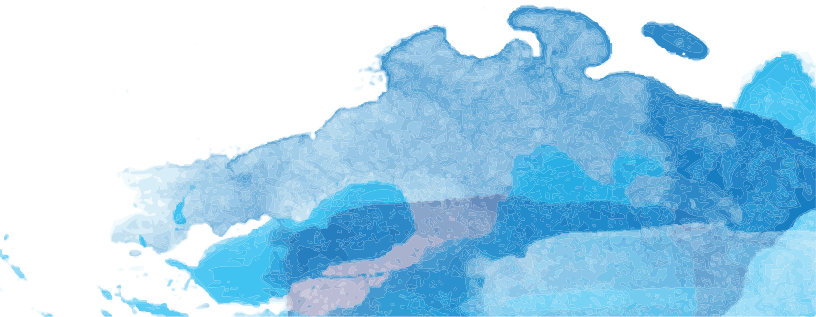
**We invite you this season to join us in feeding our community with dignity.**

Each of our clients at SCO brings their own backgrounds and life experiences — including unique cooking styles! Food is often a way for people to honor family traditions or celebrate their culture. It can evoke powerful memories and emotions, providing more than just sustenance. It nourishes our entire well-being.

With the important role food plays in day-to-day life, our focus at SCO is to ensure we do more than just provide pantry essentials to our clients. We are reshaping what it looks like for people experiencing food insecurity to receive the help they need. They are in control of the cart at our food market, choosing each nutritious item based on their own dietary restrictions, flavor palate preferences and cooking abilities.

By offering a personalized shopping experience through a market model, we can deliver service that treats each client with our core values of dignity and respect. And we've found that the way you treat people truly changes an experience for the better.

Our goal with the 2021 holiday program is to feed our community beyond just a season. Help us stock the market with a variety of food items that reflect our clients' diverse backgrounds and different ways of cooking. You can visit [www.sco-oc.org/get-involved/feed-our-community](https://www.sco-oc.org/get-involved/feed-our-community) to learn more about donating food or hosting a drive that will make a difference for OC families all year long.







# A SEASON OF GIVING

The holidays are a magical time, filled with bright lights and the cheerful sounds of laughter as loved ones linger over a family feast.

While it is certainly a season of celebration, it's also one of gratitude and reflection. At South County Outreach, we are thankful each and every day for our donors and volunteers, whose unwavering generosity has helped keep the families of Orange County housed and fed. Because of you, we have served **1,500** clients each month through our food market.

But in yet another challenging year, families continue to struggle with hunger and homelessness. For many experiencing financial insecurity in the wake of the pandemic, the pressure during this time of year can be overwhelming. Parents who skip meals to make sure their children have enough food on their plates often make additional sacrifices to provide even the simplest holiday dinner for their families.

So many treasured holiday traditions are centered around the joy and warmth of a home-cooked meal. Think of your favorite holiday dishes: creamy mashed potatoes, flaky pumpkin pie crust, fresh-baked gingerbread cookies. They all require expensive perishable ingredients like eggs, milk and butter. While we are able to provide SCO clients with access to plenty of shelf-stable foods to cook at home, it's difficult to keep these fresh items stocked in the pantry due to short expiration dates.

For **\$25**, you could provide 8 gallons of milk to families in need so they can prepare all of their favorite dishes. Your support this season will ensure our SCO food market stays stocked with perishable pantry staples so our clients have a chance to celebrate their own traditions with loved ones.

## How else can your contribution impact children, seniors, and families in south Orange County?

**\$10** will help a child bake two dozen cookies

**\$50** will provide a family of four with enough fresh food to make a delicious Thanksgiving feast

**\$100** will provide 25 seniors with enough milk, eggs, and butter for the holiday season

**\$500** will enable 60 individuals to have a delicious and complete holiday meal

**\$1,000** will provide 111 households with essential dairy items and eggs

Your contribution at any amount directly impacts the thousands of children, seniors, and families SCO serves each year. We appreciate your support and have provided a donation envelope in this mailer for your convenience.

For any questions about donations, please contact Dennis Williams at [dwilliams@sco-oc.org](mailto:dwilliams@sco-oc.org) or 949-380-8144 ext. 218. To make an online donation, visit [www.sco-oc.org/donate](http://www.sco-oc.org/donate).

As 2021 draws to a close, we ask our SCO family to join us in opening your heart — because this holiday season, no one should go to bed hungry.



## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

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Robin is a star swimmer. He's co-captain of the team at Westcliff University, where he's a sophomore earning his Bachelor of Business Administration with a focus on marketing.

He's also among the **45 percent** of college students nationwide experiencing food insecurity.

Saying goodbye to his native Sweden, Robin moved to Irvine for a chance to experience something new while pursuing his studies and athletic career. For the longtime competitive swimmer, Orange County's sunny skies and proximity to beaches seemed idyllic. But like so many other college students, days went by where he struggled to have enough food to eat.

Concerned for the health and well-being of his athlete, the school's swim coach took notice and suggested that Robin sign up for the **South County Outreach** food program.

**"For me, it has ... been a very good asset that I am grateful for, as it is very easy to visit them and it reduces food costs,"** Robin says. "As an international student, you are also not allowed to work, and it is generally difficult to have time leftover in addition to school and training."

Once a month for the last year, he and his roommate — also a swimmer — have visited our market to stock up on grocery essentials. As athletes, Robin explains it's not only important to eat healthy and nutritious food, but also have enough to sustain energy through a rigorous training schedule. He's incredibly grateful to SCO for the wide range of pasta, rice, chicken, vegetables and fruit that he's always able to add to his cart.

With the holiday season approaching, and his loved ones over **4,500 miles away**, Robin feels a new wave of gratitude for SCO's services. **"[SCO] has been very valuable," he says. "Not everyone can afford food in general. From a student's perspective, many ... do not go home over Christmas and Thanksgiving, and it can be nice to be able to create nice dinners with friends instead."**

You can help make a difference in the lives of SCO clients like Robin this holiday season.

Visit [www.sco-oc.org/donate](http://www.sco-oc.org/donate) to learn more.







# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

**“Helping others is an indelible Catholic ideal, and it can be found in three of our five mission statements — Love God, Love Others and Serve,”** says Alyssa Eugenio, Corpus Christi’s parish life director. “We are constantly striving to find ways in which our parishioners can live out our ideals, and supporting an organization like South County Outreach is a great way for them to do that outside of the parish.”

A longtime supporter of SCO, **Corpus Christi Catholic Church** volunteers have provided time, talent and treasure in support of a cause near to their hearts. Together, parishioners have collected more than **80,000** pounds of food and contributed over **\$24,000** in financial donations since 2008.

The church’s **Hands Across the Community** ministry works tirelessly to host monthly food drives in support of SCO. Through their work with different church ministries, Alyssa explains that volunteers see firsthand how real the need for food and housing is even here in Orange County. It has inspired them to constantly seek creative ways to give back, whether it’s creating a COVID-safe drive through food collection or encouraging the next generation to get in the giving spirit.

On Easter a couple years ago, Corpus Christi requested donations of personal items in addition to the monthly food collection to create Easter baskets for children and their families. Children from the church helped with assembly, including filling each egg by hand with chocolates and wrapping the baskets before bringing them to SCO.

Another favorite event took place over Halloween, when parishioners were asked to fill brown paper grocery sacks with essential supplies that SCO needed most for the holidays. Not only did they fill all **500 sacks**, but a group of costumed children also brought their own brown bags of food and proudly placed them at the foot of the altar before going to the church’s Trunk or Treat.

**“I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in South County Outreach food drives,”** says parishioner Eileen Donahue, who coordinates volunteer participation in their drives. “This ministry means so much to me. My family is blessed to have a home and food on our table each day. I look at my grandchildren and am grateful they have homes and never go to sleep hungry. SCO’s mission to provide this for every child encourages me to participate.”

If you’re interested in volunteering this holiday season, SCO offers several opportunities for individuals and groups. You can roll up your sleeves in the food market, volunteer at our Upscale Resale thrift store or host your own food drive — we promise it will be a rewarding and fun experience that brings holiday cheer to both you and our clients.

For a list of all volunteer opportunities, please visit [www.sco-oc.org/get-involved/volunteer](http://www.sco-oc.org/get-involved/volunteer).





*empty*  
**bowls**

**SAVE THE DATE**

April 7, 2022

*The event begins at 6:00 p.m.*

Taste and sip to end hunger and house hope with South County Outreach's Empty Bowls hunger awareness fundraiser! South County Outreach will collaborate with locally renowned chefs to treat attendees to a night of tastings and fundraising with the goal to provide pantry essentials to those experiencing food insecurity.

*Presented by*  
**South County Outreach**

[www.sco-oc.org](http://www.sco-oc.org)

For more information, contact Dennis Williams at [dwilliams@sco-oc.org](mailto:dwilliams@sco-oc.org) or call 949-380-8144 ext. 218.



# NEW WEBSITE

## We have very exciting news to share...

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of our team as well as the web designers at Luminy and the Kitchen Table Marketing team, South County Outreach has a brand-new website! If you haven't already, please visit [www.sco-oc.org](http://www.sco-oc.org) to see all of the changes that make our new site even more informative, useful and easy to navigate. In addition, this new site is designed to grow with us, so stay tuned for more ongoing additions and updates!

## south county outreach

We envision an Orange County community where no one goes to bed hungry or without a place to call home.



### Housing

We provide homeless prevention and rapid re-housing services by offering rental and utility assistance as well as affordable housing to households who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

[Housing & Homeless Prevention](#)



### Food

Our food program provides 700,000 pounds of perishable, and 6,000 resident



### Food, Wine + Hope

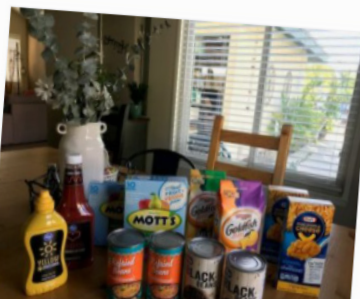
Taste and sip to end hunger and homelessness at South County Outreach's premiere fundraising event: **Empty Bowls**. Locally renowned chefs will treat attendees to an evening of delicious food, wine, and entertainment — all at the new Segerstrom Shelby Event Center.

Stay tuned for the date in Spring 2022!

[Learn More](#)

# EMPTY BOWLS

### News



### THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING A SPONSOR

#### The Benefits of Becoming a Sponsor

January 25, 2019

So you want to become a nonprofit sponsor... Here's some things you should know (and some benefits that come along with sponsoring): There are many ways to get involved with your favorite nonprofit. However, we know that sometimes you want [\[Read More\]](#)



January is  
#NationalSoupMonth!

# south county outreach



## **South County Outreach**

7 Whatney, Suite B, Irvine, CA 92618

[www.sco-oc.org](http://www.sco-oc.org) | 949.380.8144

### **Food Pantry**

7 Whatney, Suite B, Irvine, CA 92618

Phone: 949.380.8144, ext. 207

### **Hours:**

Monday-Thursday 9am to 2pm | Friday 9am to 11am

### **Upscale Resale Thrift Store**

23461 Ridge Route #D, Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Phone: 949.855.4158

### **Hours:**


Monday-Friday 11am-5pm | Saturday 10am-4pm | Sunday 10am-3pm


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### **Social Handles**

 South County Outreach (@outreachoc)

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