

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

YOUR NEWSLETTER FROM SOUTH COUNTY OUTREACH

SUMMER 2024

INSIDE

2

From Despair
to Hope

3

Heartfelt
Thanks

4

Making a BIG Impact
in Small Ways

2nd

Pantry opened
in Laguna Niguel
in 2024



Thank you for
helping SCO
expand our
services to serve
more people in
Orange County!



From Struggle to Strength: How Your Support Transformed Jasmine's Life

Jasmine stood at the door of South County Outreach, taking a deep breath. Relief washed over her as she entered the pantry. This place had become her sanctuary, a vital resource in her journey of resilience. Thanks to donors like you, Jasmine's story is one of hope and renewal.

Jasmine has known her share of ups and downs in life growing up in a bustling household in Santa Ana with her parents and four siblings. But when she was 13, her world turned upside down when her father left to return to Mexico, where he had another family unknown to her.

While becoming a young mother at the age of 19, Jasmine remained determined to have a stable life for herself and continued to navigate the welfare

system, even experiencing bouts of homelessness until finding temporary refuge in a hotel in Anaheim.

When her brother returned from the army, he stepped in to support Jasmine and her children. In 2023, a spark of determination reignited within Jasmine. She enrolled back in school, focused on earning her high



Thanks to you,
Jasmine has
groceries to feed
her whole family!

Continued on page 4



A Letter from LaVal

Dear friends and supporters of South County Outreach,
Thank you for your unwavering support of South County Outreach. In this issue, we share stories of struggle to success, often from those who don't appear in need but struggle to get by. This summer, we expanded our programs, enhanced our food pantry, increased rental and utility assistance, and launched new initiatives for long-term stability.

This was made possible with the opening of our new pantry in Laguna Niguel. You are the cornerstone of our efforts, and because of you we continue reach and support even more people in need throughout Orange County.

Thank you for your dedication to our mission.

LaVal Brewer
President & CEO

From Despair to Hope: Desiree's Success

Desiree came into the pantry in Laguna Niguel near tears, explaining that she had been doing laundry next door when she discovered South County Outreach. She bravely shared that she had been living in her car, struggling to find a job, and losing weight because she couldn't afford enough food. With just \$120 in her bank account, she had to make the heartbreaking decision to also give up her service dog.



Desiree found
success and hope
thanks to
your support.

When the team assured her that SCO was here to help, a visible weight lifted from her shoulders. She gratefully shopped in the pantry, learned about our additional resources, and was encouraged to visit our thrift store. Her demeanor noticeably brightened from the time she entered the pantry to when she left.

Desiree's experience reinforces the importance of our mission: to serve our community with empathy, offer hope to those in despair, and provide food and support to those facing insecurity. Each person we assist, like Desiree, reminds us why SCO is here—to make a positive impact and uplift those who need it most. Desiree recently shared that she even got a new job! Her success reaffirms our commitment to compassion and our belief in the power of community support.

Heartfelt Thanks

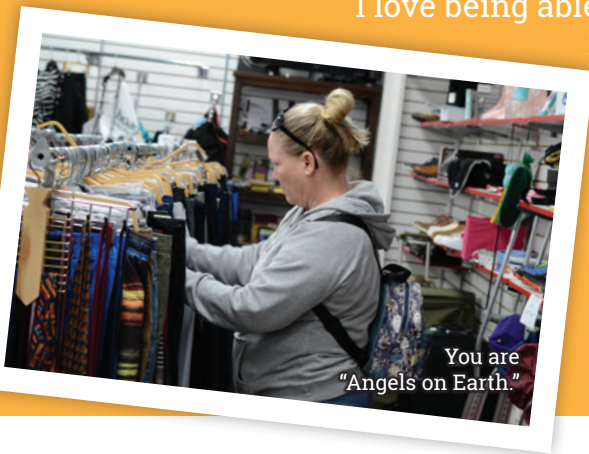
Stories from those we serve

I had nowhere to go. My neighbor introduced me to South County Outreach, and they helped my family with food, utilities assistance, and referrals for additional support.



I had a great experience at the food pantry. I love being able to select items.

I am so happy to also be able to purchase clothes at the thrift store for my little boy, almost new and very affordable.

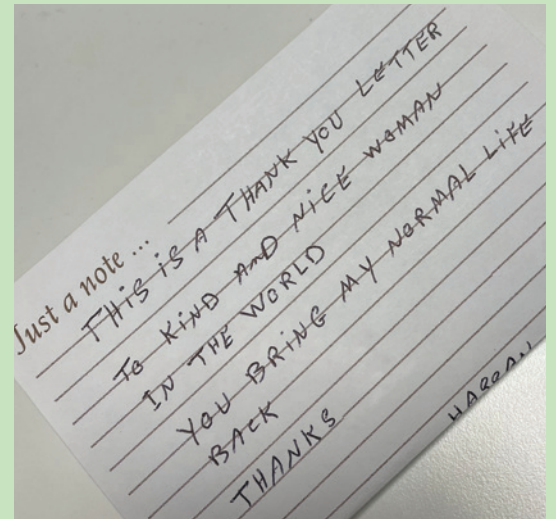


You bring my normal life back, thanks.



You can continue to help our neighbors in need by visiting www.sco-oc.org/summer

Client Connections



You are giving people their lives back. Daniel shared a heartfelt note with our team, and a moving story of hope:

How did you come to SCO?

My wife left at the start of the year and our finances were tied together. I needed help with rent since I was unable to work or get a loan.

How did you use SCO's services?

I met with an SCO staff member and she sat down with me to find resources. I started using the pantry every month. I am so happy to have groceries, it is very helpful to me.

How has SCO changed your life?

I was very relieved to come here and feel support during a stressful time in my life.

Thank you for helping people, like Daniel, help themselves everyday.

Making a BIG Impact in Small Ways



Thanks to supporters like you, South County Outreach expanded into Laguna Niguel with a new pantry and thrift store, enhancing our community outreach. In addition to providing food, SCO issued special vouchers for our nearby Upscale Resale thrift store, making essential items more affordable for our clients.

Recently, one of our Irvine pantry regulars, Jane, found convenience and relief

at our new Laguna Niguel

location. Working nearby, she could now easily stop in on her way home. With her voucher, Jane purchased a butter dish—a small luxury she previously couldn't afford. This purchase brought her immense joy and a practical solution for the butter she received at the pantry.

Inviting our clients to shop at our thrift store embodied our mission to support them with dignity and respect. Your generosity strengthened our community, empowering individuals like Jane to improve their lives one step at a time. Together, we can continue to make a meaningful impact and create a more connected and supportive community.

From Struggle to Strength *from page 1*

school diploma and pursuing her career as a veterinary technician. Balancing her studies with her role as a mother, Jasmine was constantly finding ways to improve her life.

One day, while browsing Facebook for "Free Food," Jasmine stumbled upon South County Outreach. Curiosity led her to the pantry, and it soon became a lifeline.

Each visit to the pantry brought a sense of community and comfort. The monthly visits provided enough food to sustain her family for weeks. The volunteers were a constant source of kindness, remembering her family's specific needs and their thoughtfulness made Jasmine feel seen and valued.

South County Outreach offered more than just food; it provided Jasmine with hope and stability. The support allowed her to focus on other essential aspects of life, like paying bills and caring for her children. She no longer felt alone in her struggle.

As Jasmine looked around the pantry, she felt a deep sense of gratitude. South County Outreach was not just a place to get food; it was a community that uplifted her during the toughest times. With their support, Jasmine found the courage to rebuild her life and provide for her family. Thank you for making a difference in Jasmine's life and many others like her.

YES! I want to give...

- ☐ \$250 can feed a family for a week
- ☐ \$500 can feed a family for 2 weeks
- ☐ \$750 can feed a family for 3 weeks
- ☐ \$_____ to feed a family in-need



Lauren Ruiz
Director of Development
7 Whatney, Suite B
Irvine, CA 92618
949-687-2411 / lruiz@sco-oc.org

Every
\$250
can feed
a family

☐ Please charge my gift to:



CARD NUMBER

EXPIRATION DATE

AMOUNT

CARDHOLDER'S NAME (please print)

PHONE NUMBER

CARDHOLDER'S SIGNATURE (required)

TODAY'S DATE