



Rising Demand, Unwavering Commitment

This year has been a whirlwind at the Foothills Food Bank, with the construction of our new campus, the big move, and expanded services. But while we celebrate progress, what weighs on our hearts is the growing demand for food assistance, not only across the country, but right here at home.

Our mission has always been to help neighbors through tough times, provide resources for stability, and ideally work ourselves out of business by seeing families regain self-sufficiency. Yet the reality is sobering. Rising fuel costs, skyrocketing rent, unaffordable childcare, and everyday inflation are driving more families through our doors.

When Need Grows Faster Than Donations

We've seen a **17% increase** in pantry visits year to date, but only a **5% increase** in food donations. That means shelves are being stretched thin as more families seek help.

Every donation, every volunteer hour, every pound of food collected makes a difference for a neighbor in need. Together, we can continue to stand in the gap for families and seniors who rely on us most.

Year-to-Date Impact:



25,764 pantry visits
up 17%



1.4M pounds of
food collected
(1.2M meals) up 5%



832 new households
registered in 2025



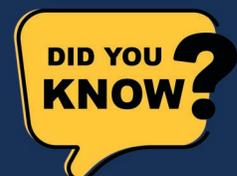
35,200 volunteer
hours



6,000 weekend
snack packs for
children

Help us close the gap.

Visit: foothillsfoodbank.com
or see page eight to give.

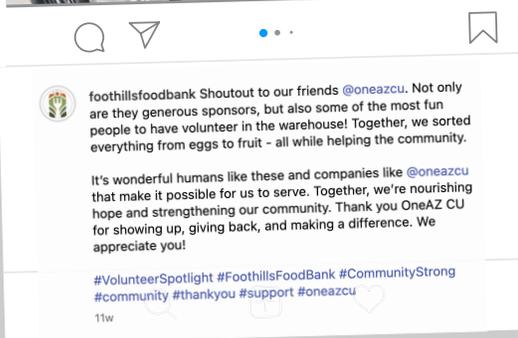
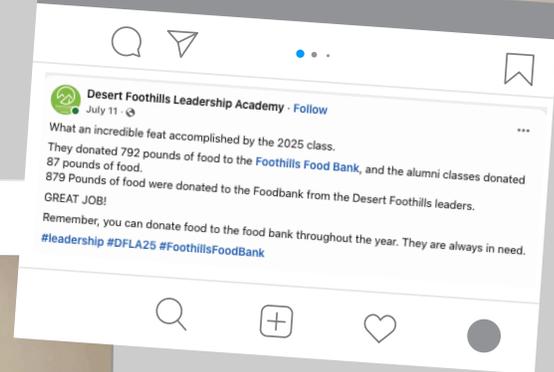


Thanks to the **Arizona Charitable Tax Credit**, every dollar you donate can come right off your state tax bill—doing good while feeling great. Check out this simple opportunity provided by the State of Arizona and see how it fits your tax plan.

Snapshots of Community Kindness

From celebrating a generous grant from Kiwanis Club of Carefree to cheering on Hunger Action Month and a PB&J-packed food drive with the Desert Foothills Leadership Academy, our social media has been buzzing with good news! These Instagram highlights capture just a few of the moments that made us smile, all made possible because of you.

Together, we're creating a stronger, more caring community. You can keep up with the good news, too, by following us on Facebook and Instagram.



The Good Neighbor HOLIDAY PROJECT



WON'T YOU JOIN US IN SPREADING HOLIDAY JOY?

Hop on board and help us spread joy throughout our community by supporting our annual Good Neighbor Holiday Project (formerly known as the Adopt-A-Family). With your help, we can ensure that adults, children, seniors, and military veterans experience a bright holiday season filled with food, toys, and Christmas love.

JOIN THE FUN IN THREE EASY STEPS

1. *Volunteer*

to donate by
December 1, 2025 at
[FoothillsFoodBank.com](https://www.FoothillsFoodBank.com)

2. *Shop*

our holiday wish list.

Gift cards and monetary donations of all sizes are welcome to help fill the sleigh. Wish list can be found on our website.

3. *Drop*

off & fill the sleigh.

Gifts, gift cards and monetary gifts can be dropped off during Fill the Sleigh at Foothills Food Bank's west warehouse door (look for signs)



4250 E. Carefree Highway, Cave Creek.



UNIVERSAL SOLAR

Need additional help? Email our Elf Hotline at info@foothillsfoodbank.com or check out [FoothillsFoodBank.com/holiday](https://www.FoothillsFoodBank.com/holiday) or call Angel at 480-488-1145 x 251.

Deadline to deliver gifts is December 3, 2025.

Register at [FoothillsFoodBank.com/holiday](https://www.FoothillsFoodBank.com/holiday)

Amazon Wish List: Good Neighbor Holiday Project 2025

Back-to-School Drive Shows the Power of Community

This year's Back-to-School Drive brought out the very best in our community to support the young leaders of tomorrow. Thanks to generous sponsors, partners, and neighbors, we distributed 850 backpacks filled with school supplies to local students, up from 650 last year, a 31% increase.

According to CashNetUSA, the average cost of school supplies at Target is \$138 per student. For families already living paycheck to paycheck, that cost can be a real challenge, especially with more than one child.

That's why community support is so critical. This annual fall campaign is fueled by generosity from every corner of our community. Desert Foothills Library once again joined us on-site with free books through its 400 Books 4 Kids program, and Kids Need to Read shared new books with young readers.

Additional support came from individual donors, Anthem Giving Circle, AZ Metals, AZ Foothills 911, Kiwanis of Anthem, Kiwanis of New River, Legacy Hospice, Rotary of Scottsdale, and Western Container.

“Our community is always very generous, which makes supporting kids in our community possible,” said Leigh Zydonik, Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center Executive Director. “Because of your support, students started the school year ready to learn and ready to shine.”



Books provided by KIDS NEED TO READ are always a hit with our new readers, and their parents.



Filling their backpacks with supplies and hearts with encouragement, these young students are ready for success.



Desert Foothills Library volunteers distributed books at Back-to-School events in Cave Creek and Black Canyon City.

From the Heart of a Grateful Grandmother

Helen is a strong, independent woman who raised a family, supported her husband, and together carefully saved for their future. But when her husband passed away, medical bills and final expenses drained her savings. Today, she lives on a small pension and Social Security check that barely covers living expenses. Like many seniors in Arizona, she finds herself stretched thin, and groceries have become a luxury. Her Social Security doesn't keep up with rising costs.

"You don't really know the meaning of humble until you ask your daughter, who is also a mother, to pay for your prescriptions," Helen said, with both sadness and resolve. "We did everything we thought was right when raising our family and planning for retirement. Our kids do what they can to help me, but they are raising children, and I know that's expensive, too."

Reasons for Rising Food Insecurity Among Arizona Seniors

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Growing senior population= more individuals at risk.

Fixed incomes and rising housing costs create financial strain.

Limited job opportunities for older adults.

Food deserts in Arizona restrict access to groceries—especially challenging for seniors with mobility issues.

Stigma and lack of knowledge prevent some seniors from seeking food assistance.

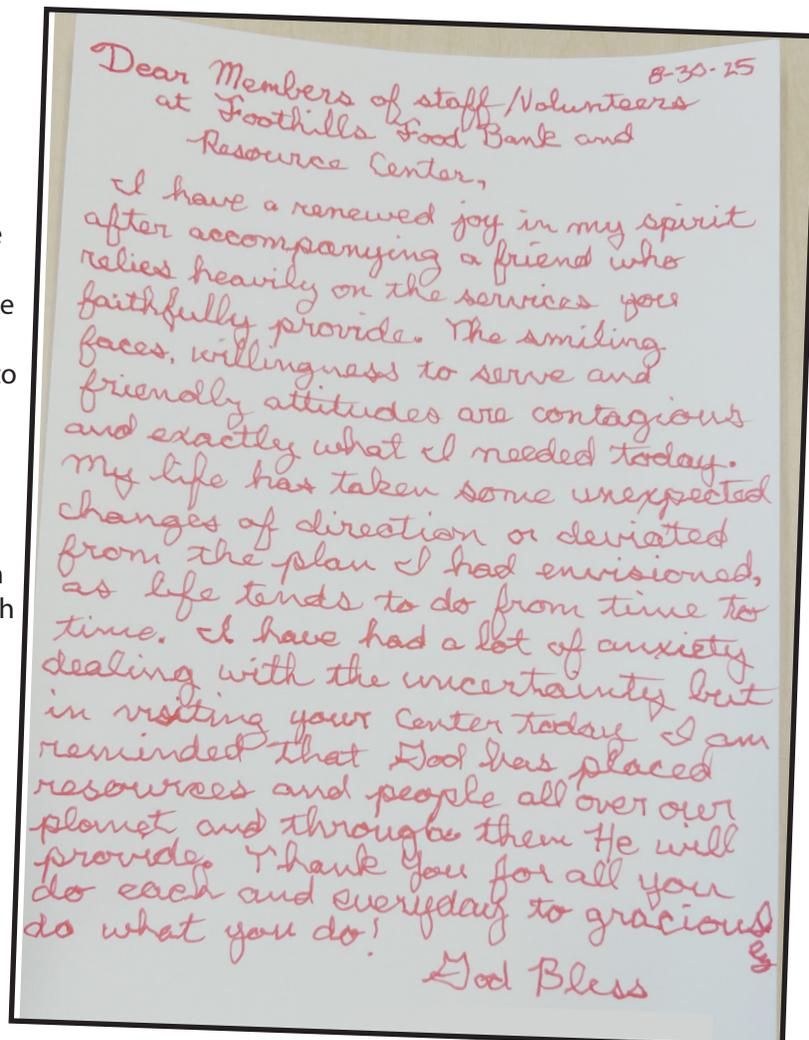
*Source: Arizona Food Bank Network

A friend from her church told Helen about Foothills Food Bank. At first, she was skeptical. "If it seems too good to be true, it probably is," she admitted to thinking. But she made the call. A kind and professional advocate welcomed her, met her inside at the Mirabel Marketplace when she arrived, and guided her through available resources. Helen soon had access not only to canned goods and personal health items like shampoo and toothpaste, but also fresh fruit, vegetables, milk, and cheese, the basics many take for granted. "And then, my helper asked if she

could give me a hug," Helen recalled with a smile.

Not long after Helen's visit, the food bank received this note of gratitude. It may have been from Helen, or from someone just like her. What matters is the message: thanks to the generosity of this community and the support they provide, seniors are not alone.

Because of you, Helen can take a deep breath and know that we all have her back.



*Names are always changed to protect the privacy of our food bank guests.



New leadership team members include (left to right) Jim Widen, Mirabel Market Pantry Manager; James Hutchenson, Director of Operations; Angel George, Community Resource Manager; and Ashley Sampeer., Volunteer Coordinator.

Welcoming Four Leaders Dedicated to Service

Foothills Food Bank is growing, and so is the heart behind our mission. We're thrilled to welcome four new team members whose compassion, experience, and dedication to helping others are already strengthening our work.

Each brings a unique background but shares the same commitment to serving our neighbors with dignity and care. Together, they are expanding the reach of our programs and the warmth of our community.

Angel George, our new Community Resource Manager, is passionate about connecting people to the help they need most. She brings both professional expertise and a caring heart to her role, guiding clients toward resources and services that provide hope and stability.

Ashley Sampeer joins us as Volunteer Coordinator. With her welcoming spirit and strong organizational skills, Ashley is dedicated to supporting the more than 350 volunteers who are the backbone of our mission. She is committed to making sure every volunteer is trained, and feels valued, and is inspired.

James Hutchenson, our new Director of Operations, brings a wealth of experience in leadership and hospitality. James oversees the systems that keep the food bank running smoothly, from warehouse operations and logistics to distribution, and is focused on maximizing the impact of every gift, ensuring donations are used responsibly and with respect for the trust our supporters place in us.

Finally, we are thrilled to celebrate **Jim Widen**, who has been promoted from top-notch volunteer to Mirabel Market Pantry Manager. Jim's dedication and deep knowledge of our programs make him the perfect leader for the Cave Creek Pantry, ensuring families have dignified access to nutritious food. Jim is also our resident chef, sharing his talents in our demonstration kitchen and beyond.

Together, they bring energy, compassion, and expertise that will strengthen our mission for years to come.

A Community United to End Hunger

From the moment doors opened, the **2025 Empty Bowls Market** was bursting with energy! The Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center was transformed into a festive community hub featuring live music by the Black Mountain Girls, raffles, food trucks, and VIP service right in the warehouse. Hundreds gathered; neighbors, artists, and volunteers from Sprouts and the Sonoran Arts League, all working together to raise awareness and support for those facing hunger. Big thanks to sponsors Tech 4 Life, Gina Cable, Realtor, Roadrunner Restaurant, the Black Mountain Girls, who generously donated their time and talents, and the food bank volunteers who together made this day of hope, fun, food, and community spirit possible! Thank you to all who contributed, including shoppers, raffle and auction donors, and MCSO.





PO Box 715
Carefree, AZ 85377

ECRWSS
Postal Customer



HOURS & INFORMATION

■ Cave Creek

4250 E. Carefree Highway
Cave Creek, AZ 85331
Mailing: PO Box 715, Carefree, AZ 85377
(480) 488-1145

Food Sharing

Monday - Friday: 9:00am - 2:00pm
(480)488-1145 office
(480) 943-1462 reservations

Donation drop off hours

Monday - Friday: 8:00am - 2:00pm

■ Black Canyon City

34550 S. Black Canyon Hwy
Black Canyon City, AZ 85324
(623) 374-9441

Food Sharing

Tues., Wed., Thurs: 9:00am - Noon
Wednesday: 3:00pm - 6:00pm

■ New River Community Pantry

Hosted by My Crossroads Christian Fellowship Church
42425 N. New River Rd
Phoenix, AZ 85086
(623) 465-9461

Food Sharing

Friday: 11:00am - 1:00pm

■ Salvation Song Ministries Pantry

Hosted by Desert Hills Community Church
34835 N 7th Street (just north of Carefree Hwy), Phoenix
(623) 581-0627
Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 3:00pm-6:00pm

■ The Care Center Pantry

Hosted by Crossroads Church
42105 N 41st Drive, Anthem
(623) 466-7964
Food Sharing
Sunday - 11:00am - 1:00pm
Tuesday - 6:00pm - 8:00pm

■ St. Luke Catholic Church

Mobile Foodshare
19644 N. 7th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85027
Fourth Wednesday of every month
3:00pm - 5:00pm

Email: Info@foothillsfoodbank.com

foothillsfoodbank.com



Shop our Merchandise store at:

www.PixeleyesShop.com/ffb

Discover Arizona's Unique and Best Kept Tax Secret

When you donate to the Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center through the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit, you can get your donation amount back in your state taxes without needing to itemize your return.

And you don't have to wait to make your tax-credit donation. Do it today and get ahead of the year-end tax rush!

The maximum credit donation amount for 2025:

\$495 single, married filing separate or head of household; \$987 married filing joint.

*Visit the Arizona Department of Revenue website for details AZDOR.gov/tax-credits
Our Qualified Charitable Organization Tax Credit ID is 20514.*

Charitable Donation Form

Because of you, we can make a huge difference in the lives of children, families, single people, veterans, and seniors experiencing food insecurity and financial difficulties. **Your gifts stay in our community and provides support to our neighbors.**

Foothills Food Bank is a 501(c)3 non-profit. Your donation is 100% tax deductible and may qualify for the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit.

You may also donate online at foothillsfoodbank.com/donate

- Please accept my donation to support neighbors experiencing hunger.
- I want to leave a legacy. Please accept my capital campaign donation of \$_____ to help build a stronger community for years to come.
- I'd like to be an ongoing supporter. Please accept my donation noted below and charge my credit/debit card every month.



Donate today.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Amount Donated _____ Amount enclosed _____

(Please make check payable to **Foothills Food Bank.**)

Or

Please charge my VISA _____ MC _____ Discover _____ American Express _____

Card number _____

Expiration Date _____ Security Code (3 digits on back of card) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please mail this form to: **Foothills Food Bank, PO BOX 715, Carefree, AZ 85377**

OUR PURPOSE

To uplift individuals and families experiencing food insecurity by providing reliable, nutritious food and other resources to support a brighter future, while empowering them towards a path of self-sufficiency.

See our new YouTube Channel: [Foothills Food Bank](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)