



2 scoops

— winter 2022 —

MAUI FOOD BANK
Helping the Hungry

Realtors Work Wonders on Maui to Help the Hungry

When Debbie Arakaki found out how much the need to help the hungry had grown in Maui County, she stepped up to help. And not for the first time. Debbie, a Realtor-Broker with Compass, hosted her first food drive for the Maui Food Bank in 2015. It was so successful that she decided to do it again the following year — and every year since.

Then, in 2021, Debbie and her colleagues Anis Bel and Patrick Rolfes joined forces to gather financial contributions for Maui Food Bank. They launched their fundraising campaign in early October, and to everyone's amazement, raised \$65,000 by November 5 — enough to provide 260,000 meals for those in need of hunger relief!

Debbie is thankful for the many kindhearted donors who generously supported her fundraising efforts. “People from all over contributed to make this fundraiser successful — neighbors, friends, families, business associates, and local companies,” she explains. “It was really encouraging to see so many people willing to do their part to help the hungry.”

Debbie pledges she'll continue her efforts to keep the Food Bank's shelves stocked, and regularly encourages others to consider conducting a food and fund drive, too.

Mahalo to Debbie and her team of supporters for this generous contribution to Maui Food Bank.



Patrick Rolfes, Lisa Isoda, Debbie Arakaki, Tabatha Patel and Anis Bel



Debbie Arakaki

“It was really encouraging to see so many people willing to do their part to help the hungry.”



MAUI FOOD BANK

Helping the Hungry

760 Kolu Street
Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone: (808) 243-9500
www.mauifoodbank.org

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Our MISSION

Maui Food Bank's mission is to help the hungry in Maui County by collecting and distributing food through community partnerships.

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from the desk of RICHARD YUST



Increased Need Inspires Increased Generosity

We've been pleased to observe that several Maui County economic indicators have recently been trending positive, suggesting that our island Ohana is starting to return to some form of "normal."

Of course, that doesn't mean that all Maui County residents have emerged from the trials of COVID, but it seems to be a step in the right direction.

Here at the Maui Food Bank, we ramped up our efforts during COVID to meet the exploding numbers of residents who needed food assistance due to layoffs. Normally, in pre-COVID times, we served around 10,000 people a month. But due to the pandemic, those numbers swelled to 52,400 people in October 2020.

Here's another way to look at the increase in need: In 2019, the Food Bank distributed 2.8 million pounds of food. The following year, we distributed 7.3 million pounds of food, and in 2021, as the pandemic began to subside, 5 million pounds of healthy food was distributed — still nearly twice the amount distributed just two years prior, before the pandemic struck.

A key element that enabled the Maui Food Bank to expand so quickly to meet this unprecedented demand was contributions from many new foundations. Among these were several mainland foundations that stepped up to help feed the hungry in Maui County by providing generous funding to purchase food.

Food drives to collect food for distribution have also been initiated by schools, places of worship, local businesses, government offices, and large corporations.

We at the Maui Food Bank are humbled by the generosity of so many members of our community, and we're thankful for this outpouring of support on behalf of those in Maui County who are food-insecure.

Mahalo for making a difference in a very real way, and here's to better days to come!

Richard Yust
Executive Director



Planned Giving

Planned gifts are rooted in values. Bequests are a way for people to make a large, meaningful, lasting gift. Consider becoming a Maui Food Bank *Planned Giving* partner and make an impact for decades to come.

Maui Food Bank Surprised by an Especially Sweet Donation

Sometimes donations come from the most unexpected sources.

Recently, the Maui Food Bank was especially delighted to receive a donation of local honey from a young Maui entrepreneur named Cyris.

Cyris' family has been beekeeping since 2016, and during the Covid shutdown, Cyris and his sister Talei, ages 16 and 13 at the time, decided to start a business selling honey from their family's beehives.

Cyris designed the Ha'iku Hives logo and manages the day-to-day hive operations. Talei is developing a line of beeswax lip balms and candles. Together, they're responsible for packaging, labeling, and shipping all their products.

As if this isn't impressive enough for a couple of Maui teenagers, Cyris recently donated some of his honey to the Maui Food Bank. He explained, "I believe it's important to share with others. We have a lot of homeless people here on Maui, so I'm donating some of what I've been blessed with to help those in need. When people work together, we can make a difference!"

Mahalo to Cyris and Talei for their generous gift to the Maui Food Bank. To witness such caring and sacrifice from such young people is an inspiration to all of us!



Jeff Bezos Donates to Relieve Hunger on Maui

Maui Food Bank Prepared to Immediately Maximize Bezos' Contribution



Jeff Bezos, Founder and Executive Chair of Amazon

Virtually everyone in Maui County has witnessed the economic impact of COVID on the lives of residents in our island community. According to the Hawaii State Department of Labor & Industrial Relations, during COVID-19, Maui County suffered the nation's highest rate of unemployment.

Today, Maui County is slowly recovering from the worst of the COVID crisis, but as with any widespread devastation, recovery takes time, both for individuals and our society as a whole. The severity of food insecurity has now started to decline, but it's still a major factor in the lives of many Maui County residents.

Jeff Bezos, Founder and Executive Chair of Amazon, is making a difference with a significant personal donation to the Maui Food Bank.

"Mr. Bezos' generous contribution will go a long way towards helping the hungry on Maui, Molokai, and Lanai," noted Richard Yust, Executive Director of the Maui Food Bank. "This gift is enabling us to bring in twelve 40-foot ocean-going containers full of food to help us alleviate immediate hunger and restock some of the depleted staples in our warehouse. Plus, we'll be able to buy more fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers. We deeply appreciate the support Jeff Bezos has extended to the Maui Food Bank."

Maui Hotels Actively Helping Maui's Hungry

Despite the tourism industry being financially hit hard during the depth of the Covid crisis, some of Maui's finest hotels contributed substantially to helping Maui's hungry.

For starters, the Grand Wailea (a Waldorf Astoria Resort) and the Ritz-Carlton Kapalua volunteered their properties as distribution centers. They purchased food to fill 2,000 boxes with groceries for those in need. Volunteers from the resorts handed out boxes containing local fresh produce, cereal, chicken, Spam, and more.

The Maui Food Bank is grateful for the generosity of the Ritz-Carlton Kapalua and the Grand Wailea for sponsoring and hosting food distributions in West and South Maui. **"We could not fulfill our mission to help the hungry without the support of community partnerships like these."**



Malika Dudley Coordinates with "Da Maui Sleigh" to Collect Food for Maui's Hungry

Many Maui residents are familiar with "Da Maui Sleigh," which in past years has taken families on sleigh rides during the Holiday Season. During 2020, Da Maui Sleigh didn't provide holiday rides in order to help maintain healthy environments. However, they did encourage neighborhoods to schedule a drive-by to the delight of the neighborhood children.

This gave Malika Dudley an idea. She asked her neighbors to leave food donations for the Maui Food Bank by their mailboxes on the night of the neighborhood drive-by, and asked Da Maui Sleigh to pick up the donated food.

On Christmas Eve, "Santa and Mrs. Claus" arrived in Da Maui Sleigh, and after two trips throughout the neighborhood, they had picked up 400 pounds of food for the Maui Food Bank. Malika was invited to accompany the sleigh as a reindeer to help collect the food and deliver it to the Food Bank.

This idea was so successful that "Santa" returned to Malika's neighborhood on December 16, 2021, and once again Malika's creativity and Da Maui Sleigh's kindness assured that hungry families in Maui County could enjoy a holiday meal together.



Four Maui Keiki Prove You're Never Too Young to Help Others

Have you ever felt like you're powerless to make a difference to food-insecure people on Maui?

If so, check out this story about four Maui kids — ranging in age from 7 to 10 — who decided they wanted to help feed the hungry.

Recently, Austin, Coco, Jackie, and Ben got together and decided to sell lemonade at their own lemonade stand. But instead of pocketing the profits, they agreed to donate their proceeds to help feed the hungry! When patrons asked them, "How much is the lemonade?" the kids replied, "It's free! But we're accepting donations to the Maui Food Bank!"

Before you conclude that four young children can't make much of a difference by offering free lemonade, consider this: Those four enterprising kids raised enough money to provide 1,956 MEALS to hungry people in Maui County!

Big mahalos to Austin, Coco, Jackie, and Ben — four young people who used their ingenuity and caring to help others — and inspire the rest of us!

