



MERCY  
BROWN BAG  
PROGRAM  
SENIORS HELPING SENIORS

# IMPACT REPORT FY 2024



# From the Director's Desk



**Janice  
Roberts**  
Program Director

## Key Stats for FY24

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**80**

Distribution Sites

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**2,355,140**

Pounds of Food

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**8,583**

Households Fed  
Each Receiving groceries  
twice monthly

Dear Friends of Mercy Brown Bag,

As the Mercy Brown Bag team leans into the second half of 2024, we pause in this report to look back on an exciting and transformative year for Brown Bag, beginning in July, 2023 and ending in June of 2024.

Focusing on building the most sustainable Brown Bag possible, our team morphed into a mighty Team of Ten orchestrating resources to deliver food across 77 sites to almost 9000 vulnerable older adults in Alameda County. We extend our most sincere thanks to all of you who worked by our side as volunteers, partners, and donors to make this year a success!

Census reports tell us 1 in 10 of Alameda County's seniors are food insecure. We are working hard to address this essential need, and today Brown Bag feeds 50% more seniors than we did 5 years ago.

To enable a strong, resilient organization, FY24 was marked with a laser focus on clean data. Both internal and external operations introduced dozens of new processes as we registered and tracked every bag of groceries, in compliance with USDA guidelines, whose food we are fortunate to be able to distribute to our elders.

Another significant change was the introduction of a new inventory management system: tracking all 2 ½ million pounds of Brown Bag food! This complicated initiative began with mentoring by our partners at Alameda County Community Food Bank (thank you!) and involved all members of the staff and partners across the network. Year one saw substantial progress and we expect a clean report as the auditors finish their review in the coming weeks.

Mercy Brown Bag has continued to see significant growth in demand for food from those in need. With over 800 new registrations in the first six months of calendar year 2024, we know we need to grow. Stay tuned for a capacity expansion project! This is only possible with YOUR support. More to come on that! Our deepest appreciation now to you for being our partner in the community, and bringing food to those elders most in need.

In community,

*Janice*





122K

Bags Distributed

1.7M

Meals Served

505

Volunteers

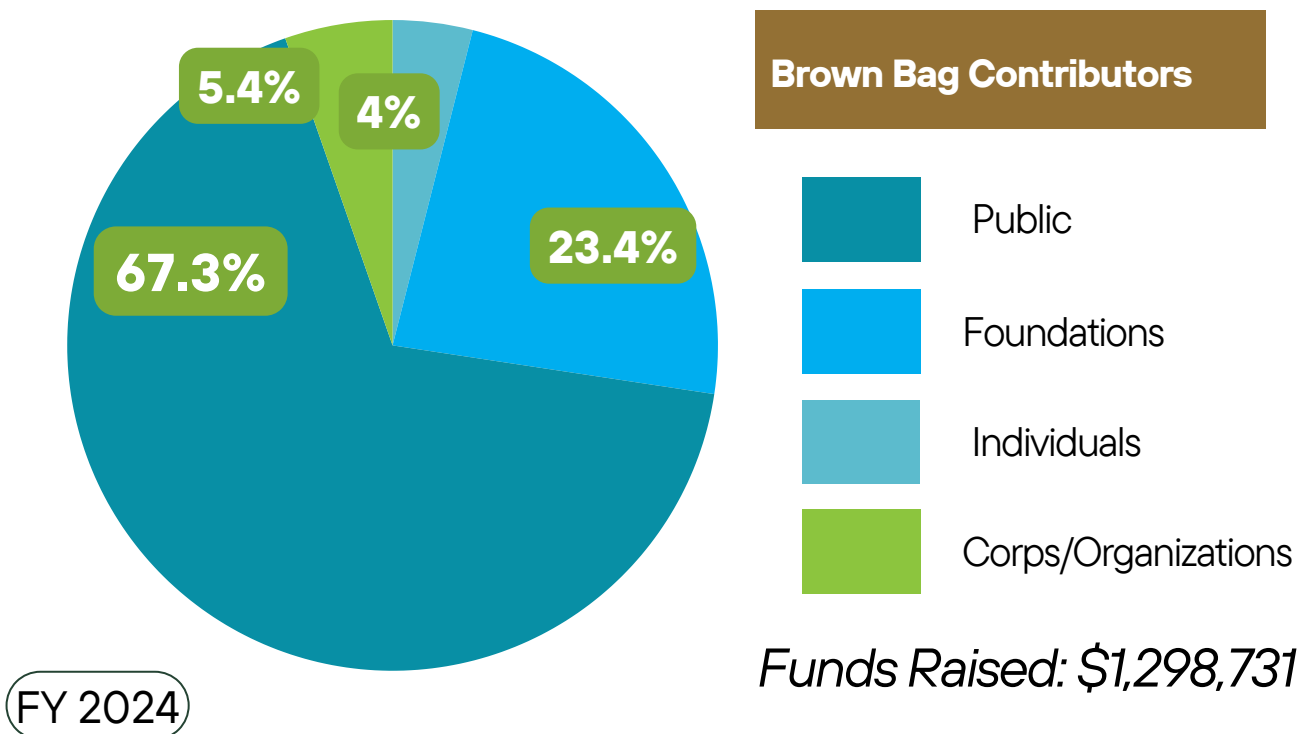
18K

Volunteer Hours

Program Impact

# Funding Breakdown

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Supporting the Brown Bag Program is no small feat, and we're deeply thankful for the generous contributions we've received. Whether it's monthly donations from caring friends, significant gifts from dedicated foundations, or vital support from government agencies, every dollar strengthens our impact and enhances the quality of life for our neighbors.

Your compassion, generosity, and commitment are the driving force behind our work and essential to our mission!

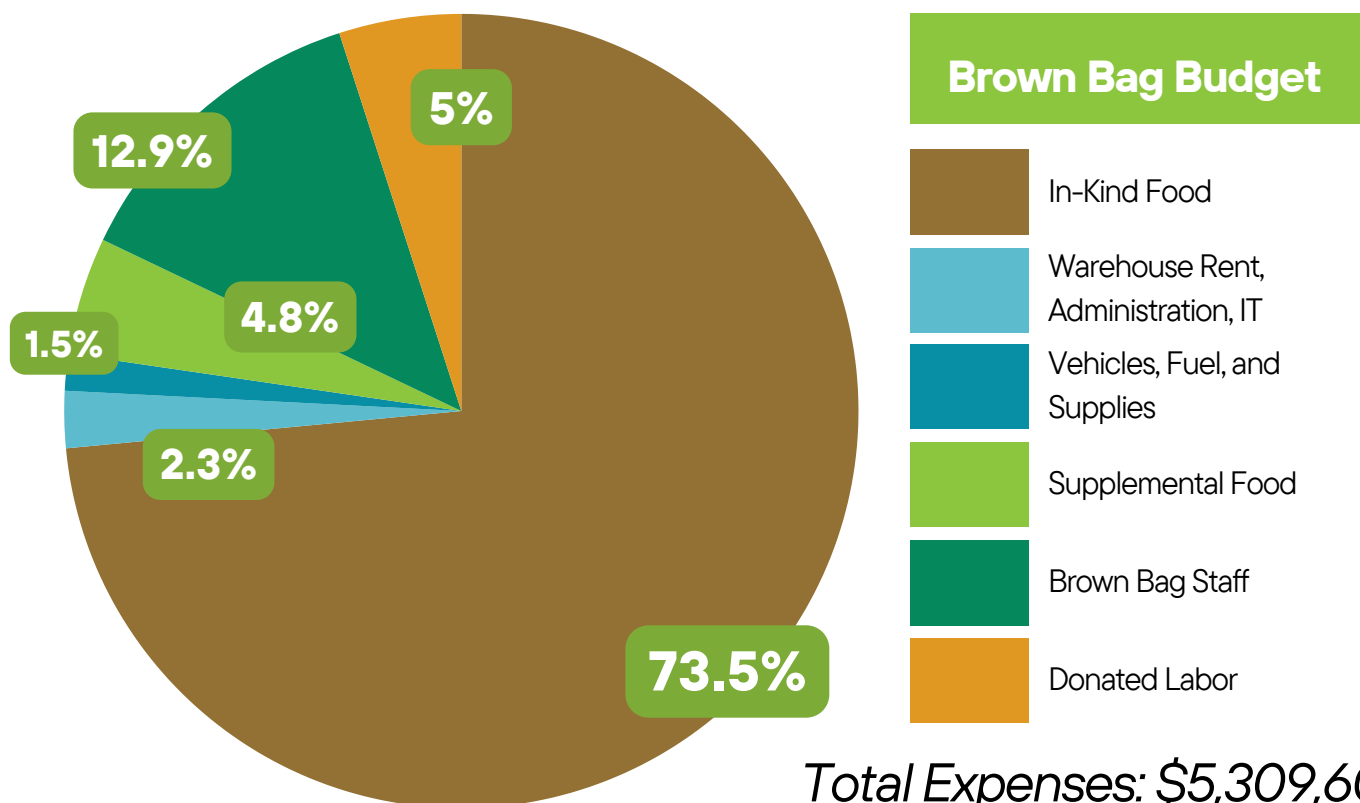


# Budget Breakdown

FY 2024

In 2024, Mercy Brown Bag Program faced new challenges as demand increased (over 800 new registrations just in the last 6 months) and food became more difficult to get while prices inflated. Our on-site grocery, the CommonSpirit Health Store, offering a variety of seasonal fruits, vegetables, and fresh proteins, exploded with over 2000 shoppers each month.

Our Mercy program recipients average only \$1,068 a month in income, making them some of the most vulnerable neighbors in our community., 100% of these seniors, when surveyed, report our food provides healthy outcomes. So we know we are part of the solution to the ills befalling them. UC San Francisco Homelessness research shows that nearly 50% of unhoused individuals are seniors, with an average income of \$965 before losing their housing, highlighting the critical need for our support.



# Meet Mick W!

Mick W. came to Mercy Brown Bag via Memphis, where he grew up and joined the Navy right out of high school. 62 years of age on New Years Eve, Mick called our office searching for food one year ago.

Mick is no stranger to the kitchen. In the Navy he attended the Naval Cooking Academy, straight out of boot camp,. He later served as “Mess Specialist” and cooked for 3000 fellow servicemen and women on board, before he was transferred to Concord Weapons Station and helped to cook for 5000.

After the Navy, Mick continued to cook for others in multiple different restaurants. In between, he earned a degree in Theology from Patton University in Oakland. Briefly homeless, and living out of his car, he appreciates the life he has built today in Oakland and living in an apartment.

Mick is a meat lover. When he first came to Brown Bag, he sought out the canned ham to cook with his breakfast eggs, or meat for chili. He loves to cook chicken in all of its forms: chicken adobo, teriyaki chicken, baked chicken, and on special occasions (like last Christmas when Brown Bag was giving out cornish hens) he'll even garnish with an orange, garlic glaze.





# Meet Regina King!



At 75 years young, retired nurse Regina King has been getting groceries from Mercy Brown Bag for 7 years! With a monthly income of only \$1,100, money for food is tight after the cost of rent, insurance, medical bills, utilities, and living expenses. She tells us that Mercy Brown Bag is a blessing. Most of her food comes from our groceries, and she only has to make one trip to the store each month to supplement! With the extra funds saved, she is happy to be able to buy trinkets and gifts for her grandson!

Her favorite part of our grocery bags is the wide variety of fruits and vegetables. She says that not only does MBB save her money, but it keeps her healthy! She enjoys cooking up recipes like stir fry with our greens, bok choy, onions, chicken, and eggs! She says eggs always come when she needs them most, and eats them with every meal, one egg at a time!

Besides being a valued recipient, Regina has also been a volunteer with Brown Bag for the past 7 months! Quoted as saying “I don’t like to be idle”, she works with us on top of her long-time service to the homeless community. She enjoys her time as a MBB volunteer, highlighting the opportunity to interact with people of all nationalities and learn about our differences. She also is grateful to help them as much as they help her, as she has learned that for many of our recipients, their bi-monthly Brown Bag trip provides some of their only social interactions.

Getting to meet and build relationships with people that she loves while volunteering, she finds the service fulfilling. Regina says it best, **“When you bring joy to people that is good, it’s almost like a ministry”**

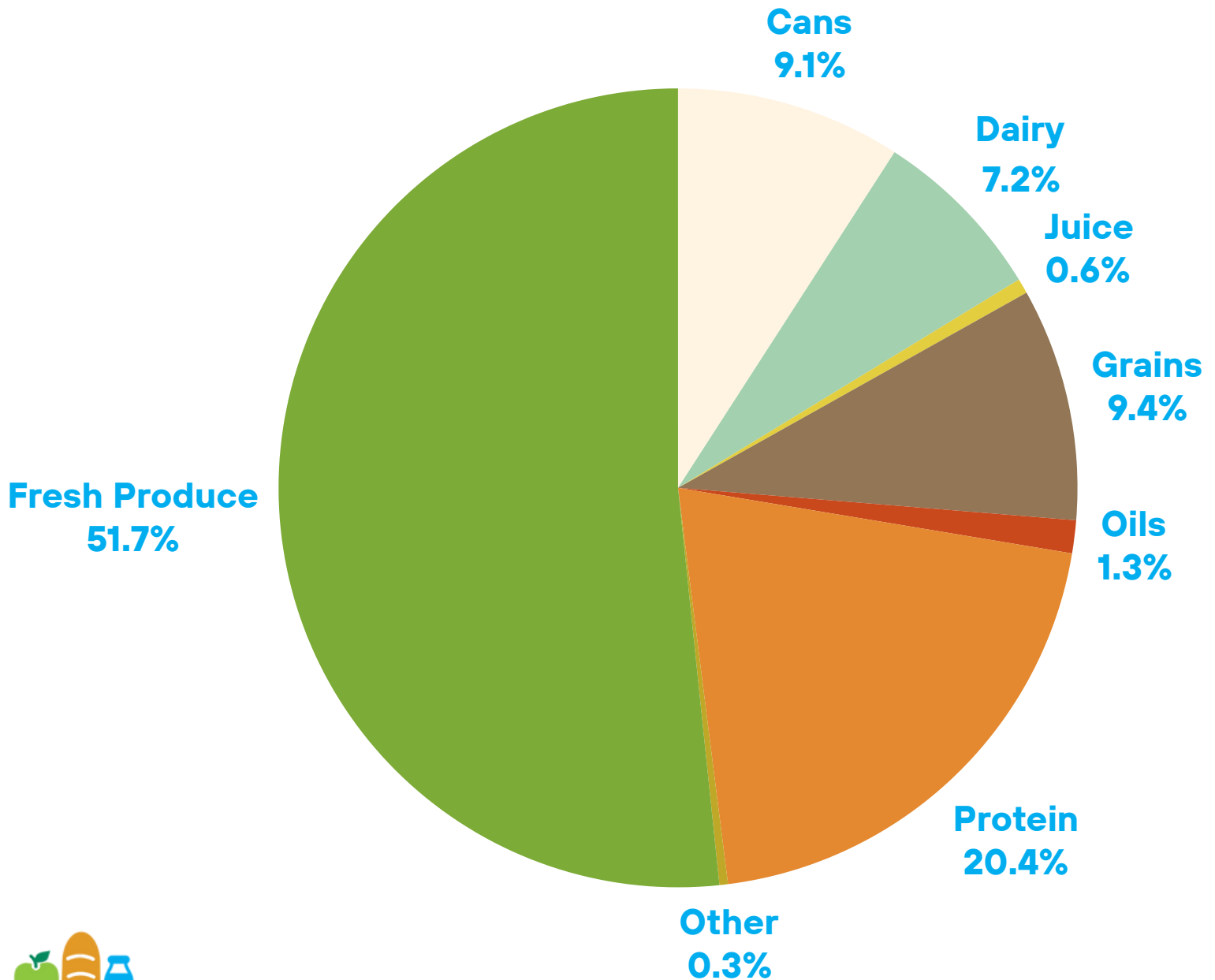
A big thank you for your support from Regina, Mick, and all of our recipients!



# The Contents of a Bag: A Nutritious Assortment

**2,355,140**  
**pounds of food**

**51.7% Fresh Fruit  
and Vegetables**



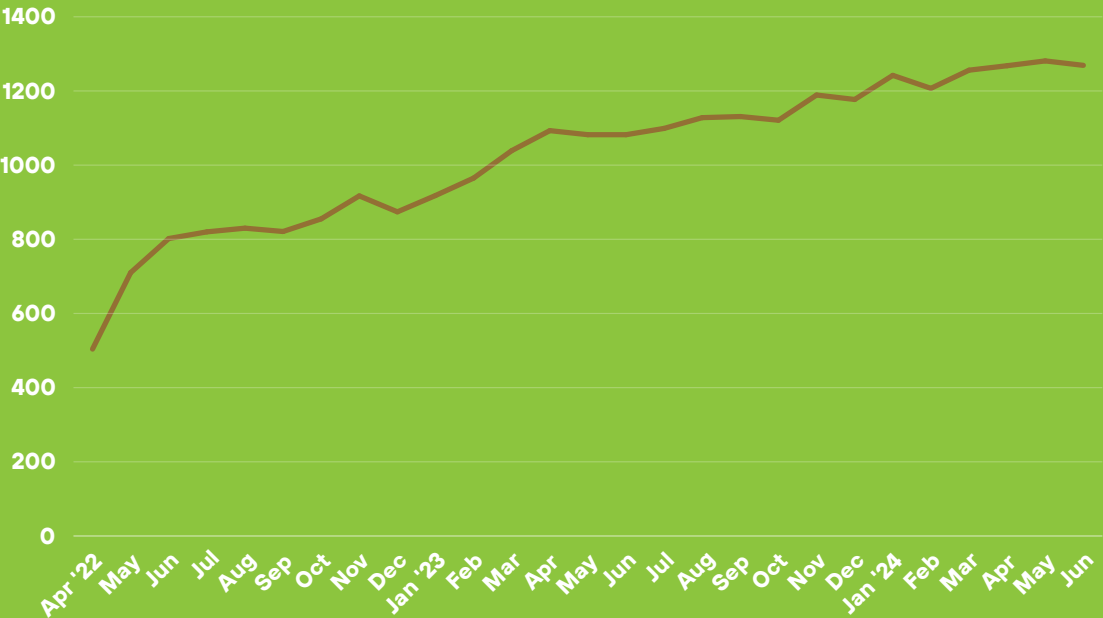


# COMMONSPIRIT HEALTH GROCERY



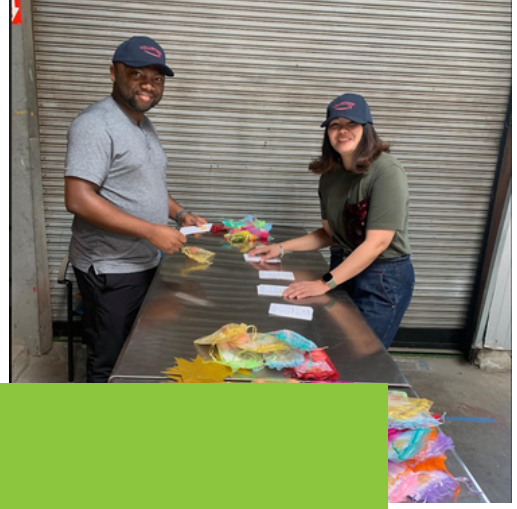
Total Visits\*  
\*In FY24  
**26,088**

Each visit means one bag of nutritious groceries taken home to feed our low income seniors



## Unique Visitors

This shows how many individuals came through our store each month, beginning from our store opening in April of 2022



## VOLUNTEERS: CRITICAL TO OUR SUCCESS

Our Mercy Brown Bag volunteers are the heart and soul of our program—without them, we couldn't feed the seniors we serve! Volunteering has always been central to MBB's mission, which began with a small group of Mercy Retirement and Care Center residents over 40 years ago and has since grown to include over 500 dedicated and passionate individuals. Our volunteers not only support our cause but also enjoy a fun, interactive experience that fosters community connections and combats social isolation, especially among our older volunteers. We are deeply grateful for their unwavering support, kindness, and commitment, which enables us to reach so many people each month.

*"I am proud to be a senior helping other seniors"*

– Judith Charbuck

*"I may not be able to change the world, but I can help Mercy Brown Bag get nutritious food to low-income seniors, and that feels great"*

– Mary Roberts, Mercy Store



# Hear from our Volunteers!

## The best in the business



### Sutapa

Sutapa began volunteering a few months into the COVID pandemic in 2020. Reading about low-income seniors, home-bound and hungry, was excruciating- she imagined her grandmother in a similar plight.

Sutapa found Mercy Brown Bag and committed to delivering 20-25 bags of groceries to a Castro Valley distribution site, every week, for a couple of years. Later, she transitioned to making several home deliveries to those in need in the Oakland area, on a bi-weekly basis.

Sutapa is an exceptionally reliable volunteer. She has also involved her 75-year-old mother, 5-year-old daughter, mother-in-law, and a family friend in her volunteering efforts, helping them learn about food insecurity in Alameda County. On a side note, Sutapa has also been very dedicated to taking selfies (... with the groceries), with a resulting page in her annual family photo album documenting the volunteer opportunities with Mercy Brown Bag. We are truly grateful for her commitment and creativity in supporting our community!

### Erika

Erika is an outstanding volunteer with Mercy Brown Bag, dedicating three mornings a week to provide translation services at our CommonSpirit Health store. Her commitment to supporting seniors began over a decade ago with Saha Housing, where she first encountered MBB at one of our distribution sites. Erika's positive attitude and versatility allow her to take on various roles as needed, ensuring the smooth operation of the store.

Often the face of the MBB store, Erika greets our recipients with warmth and pride, helping them access the fresh, nutritious food they need to stay healthy. She is always available to answer questions and add a welcoming touch to our services. Additionally, Erika enriches our store with her beautiful handmade Chinese New Year decorations each year and occasionally delights us with her delicious homemade potstickers. We truly couldn't manage without her!



# A FOCUS ON OPERATIONS



This year has been a year full of great growth in our operations! We converted two senior centers and a residence to our Farmer's Market/Client Choice model, focusing on our core tenants of dignity and respect, while also reducing food waste. We also acquired a senior center, putting our open site total to 11 at the end of FY24, increasing access to nutritious groceries. Additionally, we distributed over 500 reusable bags in our reusable bag program pilot! Between the bags and conversion to Farmer's Market, we reduced our paper waste by over 1,000 bags a month.

\* By the end of FY '24, we had all 77 of our sites actively tracking each distribution in our software. Rigorous tracking and collaboration improved accuracy of deliveries.

\* In July 2023, we distributed 9,921 bags, and by June 2024, we are now serving and tracking 10,480 bags. This means we're now feeding at least 300 new seniors each month!

100%



Sites now actively tracking

559



Increase in bags served each month by the end of year



# OUR WORK ON THE ROAD



## One in a Million (or at least 5%)

We were so excited to welcome our first female Community Coordinator/Driver to the team – Emmalaine Mendez will celebrate her first year October 9. She came to us via FedEx, and we couldn't be happier to have her! Routinely getting accolades from the communities she serves, Emmalaine is a member of an elite group: only 5% of the commercial drivers across the US are female, and Brown Bag is proud to have this one!



## Transporting Food Safely!

To meet CA clean air standards, we retired the diesel HINO box truck Miguel had driven since 2008, and bought our first refrigerated truck in March of 2024. This purchase, was made possible by the generosity of the Alameda County Area Agency on Aging and the Fremont Bank Foundation. We are so grateful to both organizations! Built to go a million miles, Miguel will care for it like it's his personal vehicle. (seen here polishing it the day it was delivered – brand new – from the dealer!)

# Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

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## Friends of Brown Bag Up to \$250

- |                         |                                      |                          |                                  |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| - Aaisha Burney -       | - Cynthia Darbo -                    | - Mary Maloney           | - Terri Burge -                  | - Sheridan Adams -       |
| - Vicki Scott -         | - David Dornlas -                    | Roberts -                | - Trang Doan -                   | - Steven K. Edlen -      |
| - John F. Morgan -      | - E. Frances Parker -                | - Nellwyn Randisi -      | - Broadmoor Plaza -              | - Susan Tierney -        |
| - Sisters of Notre Dame | - Fred J. Cattaneo -                 | - Ronald F. Coffman -    | - Donna E. Mather -              | - Tony Gelfuso -         |
| De Namur, US East-West  | - Gertrude McCulloch -               | - Sean L. Poynter -      | - Simon Mazzola -                | - Linda Vick Davis -     |
| Province -              | - John K. Holmgren -                 | - Sherry H. Smith -      | - Martin DePorres Coleman,       | - Barbara Dahlquist -    |
| - Stephen E. Lucas -    | - Kathleen Nichols -                 | - Thomas E. Crumm -      | S.N.D. -                         | - Barbara M. Creedon -   |
| - Tracy Machle -        | - Laurel P. Theren -                 | - Velio A. Bronzini -    | - Gwendolyn Knighten-Smith -     | - Becky Bleich -         |
| - Yvonne M. Dixon -     | - Madeline C. Smoley -               | - Cassandra McCraw -     | - Heather Ripley -               | - Doris Chang -          |
| - Janet Winter -        | - Maria Nieto -                      | - David Franzblau -      | - Alfred F. Cordano -            | - George T. Pohley III - |
| - Nina Manoa -          | - Mark D. Patty -                    | - Gisele D -             | - Alvin Tenpo -                  | - John & Aleso Gourhan - |
| - Carmen Rodriguez,     | - Joan A. Porter -                   | - Jorge Alberto          | - Bernard & Maureen              | - John Hester -          |
| RSM -                   | - Judy Carter -                      | Lopez-Beltran -          | Wroblewski -                     | - Kristi De Serpa -      |
| - Sister Terese Marie   | - Linda D. Chatman -                 | - Katherine and Patrick  | - Eileen A. Plantenga -          | - Lois A. Oakes -        |
| Perry, RSM -            | - Linda Sol -                        | Devine -                 | - Jacqueline O. Jackson -        | - Margaret Mills -       |
| - William R. Stelter -  | - Margo K. Logan -                   | - Lauren Dutton -        | - Janice Roberts -               | - Michele Dana -         |
| - Celeste Green -       | - Ronald W. Cheatham -               | - Robert A. Docili -     | - Jeanette R. Corder -           | - Michelle Baack -       |
| - Jeannette Mccoy -     | - Mary D Brickley -                  | - Sharon Elaine Linker - | - Sanjeev Chakrad -              | - Sandra L Rappaport -   |
| - Anne Marie Dolan -    | - Sister Toni Lynn Gallagher -       | - Sonya Freeman -        | - Rebecca Hunter -               | - Thomas Willis -        |
| - Carole Lela Swain -   | - Keith Petterson -                  | - Anna Varghese -        | - Joshua Sabloff -               | - Wendy Craig -          |
| - Maureen Sirhall -     | - Seniors Caregiving Needs.com LLC - | - Carl Arnoult -         | - Miranda Melone -               | - Wendy Goodfriend -     |
| - Diana E. Mongini -    | - Lorraine Heinemann -               | - Clare M. Krebsbach -   | - Sister Marian Clare Valenteen, | - Shirley M. McNeal -    |
| - Alex Handlers -       | - Cynthia A.W. Puppione -            | - Emily & David Wong -   | Sister Marian Clare Valenteen,   | - Helen Kauth-Pedersen - |
|                         | - Janet M. Wilkins -                 | - Jim O'Laughlin -       | RSM -                            | - Mary Lemionet -        |

## Nutrition Defenders \$250 - \$499

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Hendrika              | - Misha McKinney -    |
| Hoogenbosch -           | - William M. Blair -  |
| - Aishanie Marwah       | - Hiawatha Harris -   |
| Bhatt -                 | - Lovella Aldridge-   |
| - Claudia Harrison -    | Barney -              |
| - Frank G. Nicewicz     | - Juanita &           |
| Holly Hanke -           | Fred Hall -           |
| - Ron Ellis -           | - Dale D. Wong -      |
| - Ceil Roberts Tilney - | - Anita Dolores       |
| - Jeannette M.          | Marquez -             |
| O'Sullivan -            | - Michael Zabriskie - |
| - Judith M. Stanley -   | - Alvina Montesa Rara |
|                         | -                     |

## Dignity Heroes \$500 - \$999

- |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| - Donald V. Potter -    | - H. Theodore Freeland - |
| - Janet Lockwood Garin  | - Tim Williams -         |
| -                       | - Aulani Cler -          |
| - Jennifer &            | - Constance Callahan -   |
| Abe Family -            | - Cora & Wayne Coleman   |
| - Philanthropic Fund -  | -                        |
| - Judith L.             | - Mindy Creson -         |
| Martin-Holland -        | - Mary Louise Zernicke - |
| - Kent Taylor -         | - Kim Aquino -           |
| - Madeline M. Giachetto | - Lakshmipaty            |
| -                       | Penumarthy -             |
| - Mary M. Giachetto -   | - Rebuilding Together -  |
| - Monica Anderson -     | - Pegeen Brosnan -       |
| - Raymond R. Marchetti  |                          |
| -                       |                          |



# We Couldn't Do It Without You!

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## Elder Champions \$1000 - \$4999

- Newark Rotary Foundation - The Catholic Community of Pleasanton -
- Chevron Matching Employee Funds (Your Cause) -
- Diane C. Lawrence -
- B. Hallenbeck -
- John J. Mara -
- George P. Sabatte Jr. -
- Elida Errante -
- James J. Marchiano -
- Albany Community Foundation -
- John King -
- Kathryn Boselli Vizas -
- Lucille Charmaine Serwa -
- Maureen Lyons, CSJ -
- Mark Hayes -
- St. Mary Magdalen Church -
- Matthew D. Werner -
- Nancy L. Sorenson -
- Pamela Burke -
- Stephen D. Schick -
- Rebecca J. Kurland -
- St. Monica Catholic Church -
- Sarah A. Peterson -
- Sean & Ellen Rhatigan -

## Community Visionaries \$5000 - \$9999

- Fremont Bank Foundation -
- Y & H Soda Foundation -
- The Alameda County Community Food Bank -

## Safety Net Stars \$50,000 - \$149,999

- Emergency Food & Shelter Program -
- City Of Oakland Sugar Sweetened Beverage Fund -
- Senior Assistance Foundation Eastbay -

## Wellness Warriors \$10,000 - \$49,999

- West Davis & Bergard Foundation -
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation -
- The Edward & Elizabeth Kozel Foundation -
- City of Hayward -
- Wayne and Gladys Valley Foundation -
- City of Newark -
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America -
- Ardea Fund -
- East Bay Foundation on Aging -
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas -
- May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust -

## Hunger Vaguards \$150,000 - \$1,000,000

- The Crescent Porter Hale Foundation -
- County of Alameda Area Agency on Aging -



3431 Foothill Blvd  
Oakland, CA