

Arizonans Raise 3.5M Meals for United Food Bank

Written by Alysa Horton

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United Food Bank's seventh annual Summer of a Million Meals fundraiser was joined by 12News and Fry's Food Stores to help families that experience financial hardships during the summer months. This year, the organization provided over 3.5 million meals!

The campaign, which started in May until September 2, held events throughout those four months. Donors could contribute through one of four telethon events with local celebrities, online at azmillionmeals.org, at a registered Fry's store, or during one of the donation events.



During the telethon events on May 17, June 6, July 18, and August 29, over 270 volunteers committed their time to building 165,600 emergency food bags. The help of volunteers and United Food Bank's partners was critical to the campaign's success.

"12News is dedicated to making a positive impact in our community," President Kate Morris said. "For the past seven years, we've proudly partnered with United Food Bank for the Summer of a Million Meals campaign. With the help of partners and generous viewers, our goal has always been to come together as neighbors to help provide meals to those in need."



Along with the need for food for families, rising electricity bills and energy costs because of the summer heat put even more financial strain on Arizonans. Plus, students lack access to school-provided breakfast and lunches.

The financial assistance provided by The Kroger Co. and Fry's, through The Kroger Co. Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation, was a contributor to helping combat issues of food insecurity and food waste in communities.

"Fry's Food Stores has been a leader in the fight to end hunger in Arizona for many years, which is part of our social impact plan," Monica Garnes, president of Fry's Food Stores, said. "Our partnership with United Food Bank and other local food banks contributes to this important initiative."

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Community sponsors also helped make the incredible fundraising effort possible. Meineke Car Care Center, Wells Fargo, Amazon, Waymo, Pin Point Leak Detection, Lerner and Rowe, State Farm, Whataburger and Semper Fi helped to campaign, donate and raise funds.

Since 1983, United Food Bank has been dedicated to providing hunger relief to people in the East Valley and eastern Arizona. As a member of Feeding America, the food bank collects, acquires, stores, and distributes food to communities in five counties, serving over 2.5 million Arizonans annually. These efforts result in the distribution of more than 22.7 million pounds of food each year, equating to an average of 52,000 meals a day. Learn more at unitedfoodbank.org.