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“Pack the Pantry” Virtual Food Drive Tackles Food Insecurity at Local Community Colleges

50% of area college students are experiencing food insecurity.

SAN DIEGO – November 1, 2023 – According to recent research, 50% of college students in San Diego face food insecurity, which means they do not have reliable, consistent access to food. This obstacle increases the likelihood that students will miss classes or drop out of school.

With the fifth annual **Pack the Pantry** virtual food drive, California Coast Credit Union is partnering with local community college campuses, the San Diego Food Bank, and the North County Food Bank to raise funds and fill local college food pantries and nutrition centers with healthy food.

Cal Coast President & CEO Todd Lane said, “Pack the Pantry is more important than ever due to the rising cost of food and supplies caused by inflation. Our goal through this virtual food drive is to ensure that community college students have access to nutritious and healthy meals so they do not have to worry about where their next meal will come from. We encourage the local community to join us in helping to keep food pantries and nutrition centers stocked on community college campuses across the region.”

During the month of November, you can donate online to help provide much-needed food to local community college food pantries and nutrition centers at

<https://www.calcoastcu.org/packthepantry>. Donors can even select which campus food pantry/nutrition center they want their donation directed to. For every dollar donated, the food bank can purchase the equivalent of two meals for students in need.

“Pack the Pantry is an outstanding campaign that directly benefits students throughout the region. This campaign ensures that all ten community colleges will have an ample food supply in their food pantries and nutrition centers, so that healthy meals will be available to students when they are in need,” said Dr. Star Rivera-Lacey, superintendent/president of Palomar College and chair of the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community College Association (SDICCCA). “We are grateful to Cal Coast Credit Union for taking the lead on this food drive.”

Both the San Diego Food Bank and North County Food Bank are donating their services to support the **Pack the Pantry** food drive by managing the online donation portal and delivering the food to the community colleges at the end of the fundraiser.

Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank CEO Casey Castillo shared, “Cal Coast Credit Union has been a steadfast community partner of the San Diego Food Bank through its annual Pack the Pantry Food Drive. This campaign is critical in helping the Food Bank support the on-campus food pantries of local community colleges who are providing a vital service to students and their families facing food insecurity. With the help of the local community and Cal Coast Credit Union’s generous members, we can all rally together to help food-insecure students have continuous access to nutrient-rich foods, so they can stay focused on their education.”

For more information on the **Pack the Pantry** virtual food drive, visit www.calcoastcu.org or call (858) 495-1600 and ask for Community Relations.

About SDICCCA

The San Diego and Imperial Counties Community College Association is a collaboration between the six community college districts in the two-county area. Member institutions include Cuyamaca College, Grossmont College, Imperial Valley College, MiraCosta College, Palomar College, San Diego City College, San Diego Mesa College, San Diego Miramar College, San Diego College of Continuing Education, and Southwestern College.

About the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank & North County Food Bank

Established in 1977, the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank and its North County Food Bank chapter are a critical component to the welfare of San Diego County, providing food to people in need, advocating for the hungry and educating the public about hunger-related issues. Through a combination of programs and partnerships with 500 San Diego County nonprofit charities, the Food Bank acts as a central repository and distribution point for donated food. Learn more at: SanDiegoFoodBank.org and NorthCountyFoodBank.org

About California Coast Credit Union

Established by San Diego teachers in 1929, California Coast Credit Union is the longest-serving financial institution based in San Diego County. With more than \$3.5 billion in assets, the credit union serves over 200,000 members through its local network of 25 branches and 60 shared branch locations, and 30,000 fee-free ATMs nationwide. California Coast is not-for-profit, provides no-cost financial education for adults and youth, and is committed to improving the lives of its members and others in the community. Anyone who lives or works in San Diego or Riverside counties can be a member. For more information, visit www.calcoastcu.org or call (877) 495-1600.

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