

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Foothill Unity Center, Inc.

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO JHOANA HIRASUNA

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT. YOUR PARTNERSHIP EMPOWERS US TO CONTINUE PROVIDING LIFE-SAVING FOOD AND VITAL SERVICES TO OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED. TOGETHER WE HELP CULTIVATE HOPE, COMPASSION, AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES.



Dear Friends of Foothill Unity Center,

As the newly appointed Executive Director, a role I embraced with great enthusiasm on March 3, 2025, I am deeply honored to connect with you through this 2024 Annual Report. While I am just beginning my tenure, this report reflects a year of remarkable achievements, a direct result of the unwavering commitment of the Foothill Unity Center family. I extend my sincere admiration to everyone involved in making such a significant difference in our community.

I am inspired by the organization’s mission to empower our neighbors in crisis to achieve self-sufficiency, and I am eager to contribute to this vital work. Moving forward, my priority will be to foster collaboration, strengthen our programs, and explore innovative ways to address the evolving needs of our community. Your continued support, whether through generous donations, dedicated volunteerism, or impactful partnerships, is essential to realizing this vision.

I look forward with great anticipation to the opportunities that lie ahead and to working together to deepen our impact on the lives of those we serve.

Warmly,

Jhoana Hirasuna
Jhoana Hirasuna
Executive Director



CLIENT PROFILE

11,236
INDIVIDUALS SERVED

5,616
FAMILIES SERVED

1,523
FAMILIES ARE
NEW TO THE CENTER

4,004
CLIENTS ARE FOOD
INSECURE & LIVE BELOW
200% OF THE FPL

2,200
CLIENTS LIVE IN EXTREME
POVERTY (BELOW 50%
OF FPL = FAMILY OF 4
STRUGGLING WITH LESS
THAN \$15,600)

2,462
CLIENTS ARE LDREN

2,348
CLIENTS ARE SENIORS

*In 2024, Federal Poverty Level
(FPL) for family of 4 = \$31,200,
family of 1 = \$15,060*



NEIGHBORS **HELPING** NEIGHBORS

For over 40 years, Foothill Unity Center has helped individuals and families in need with programs that focus on: Food, Health, Crisis Case Management, Job Development, Housing and Homeless services, supported by our Volunteer Program.

MISSION

We help neighbors in crisis attain self-sufficiency by partnering with the community and using our resources wisely to provide vital support services with love and dignity.

VISION

Foothill Unity Center, Inc., envisions a community where: - All have their basic needs met, including the need to give - All get the necessary support to become self-sufficient - All are treated with love and dignity . . . all the time.

POSITION STATEMENT

Foothill Unity Center, Inc., a federally designated Community Action Agency, is the leading safety net providing food, health services, housing, and employment resources to bridge the gap in times of financial crisis. FUCI serves thousands of families and individuals each year to prevent homelessness before it begins. Through its proven, individualized case-management model, breadth of vital community partnerships, and robust volunteer base, FUCI provides the largest, most efficient food distribution in the San Gabriel Valley.

CORE VALUES

Leadership | Empathy | Integrity | Inclusivity | Equality



93 cents out of every dollar goes directly to programs and services



COMMITTED TO TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Foothill Unity Center is proud to be recognized for our services and our impact on the community. We have received top ratings from charity watch dogs and positive reviews from the community. Accountability and transparency are important to us. Year after year we have been awarded with a five-star rating from Great Nonprofits as a top-rated charity, as well as the Platinum Seal of Transparency rating by Guidestar and the highest rating from Charity Navigator.



HOW WE AFFECT CHANGE

HELP

Through programs and services that address basic needs

HOPE

From a responsive and caring community

HEALTH

Economic stability, nutrition and wellness

Helping People and Changing Lives!

Foothill Unity provides a lifeline to low-income and homeless neighbors in need. By removing barriers and providing access to resources and support, we create pathways to self-sufficiency. We serve twelve cities along the Foothills of the San Gabriel Valley: Altadena, Arcadia, Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bradbury, Duarte, Irwindale, Monrovia, Pasadena, Sierra Madre, South Pasadena and Temple City.

VERONICA'S STORY

Veronica, is a 43-year-old who had been unhoused for 11 years. With a bright and positive nature, Veronica continues to inspire those around her, even through hardships. In Veronica's words, "I don't wish this on anyone because no one should have to starve, but I'm very fortunate as there are people in worse situations than me." Foothill Unity provided hot meals, clothing, showers, and health services. After extensive work with Foothill Unity's social services, she has finally been housed in her hometown of Pasadena. Veronica expressed gratitude for finally having a home to feel safe, "I can cook for myself and clean after myself and I can still help myself... They've done so much for me." Veronica continues to advocate for Foothill Unity, raising awareness of its programs to help others in need.



CARA'S STORY

Cara Adams, an elderly woman caring for her husband who suffers from dementia, relies heavily on the services provided by Foothill Unity. "We've had all of our animals come here...I've been a member of the food pantry for quite a few years and I take advantage of everything they offer" she says. "My husband and I try to survive on social security so they really help me, especially with pets." Foothill Unity Center's weekly groceries and veterinary services provided through their partnership with Pasadena Humane have been a lifeline for them. Cara expresses profound gratitude for Foothill Unity, "It's essential in the communities they serve. You've got to have a place where people can fall back on, otherwise, you'll just skip through the cracks and that's horrifying. That scares me the most." The center not only supports her family but also provides a sense of security and hope in challenging times.



ANITA'S STORY

Anita, currently lives in her car with her two dogs. "I would like to be in a house, but I make the best of it...one of the hardest things is finding a safe place to park at night." Foothill Unity helps Anita with food and resources. She states how they go above and beyond, "One thing that really touched my heart, is that I don't eat eggs, and they warm up a special breakfast for me without eggs, and it blows my mind that they remember. They all know my name, and I'm like 'How do you know my name!' I thought that was really cool. Foothill Unity Center is very helpful and it's a good place to come. The center's compassion is really outstanding and I really appreciate them. I really do." Anita hopes to have a safe place to call home for herself and her two dogs.



LEE'S STORY

57-year-old Lee was born in the San Gabriel Valley, and growing up wasn't easy for him. From a young age, Lee learned how to take care of himself; he would make money by doing paper routes. He shared, "I knew how to be homeless because I grew up homeless." Lee spent a lot of time on the streets before coming to the Foothill Unity. Lee understood that to receive help from others, he had to want to get better. He said, "They gotta want it, it has to be in the person." Foothill Unity provided counseling and support services, always offering a helping hand. At this moment, Lee has been housed for three years in an apartment he can call home. He is grateful to the hard-working and caring staff for their support and assistance throughout his journey.



THE NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY

Food Insecurity

25%

of families are food insecure in LA County

41%

of low-income LA County households suffer severe food insecurity

29%

of LA County households are affected by nutrition insecurity (limited access to healthy food) with Asian communities being disproportionately affected

only 29%

of food insecure LA households receive CalFresh and only 9% receive WIC

In our 12 city service area:

3X

Average cost of housing in the U.S.

41%

of families pay more than 30% of their income for housing

+32,000

households severely cost burdened, having housing costs that exceed 50% of income

LA Cty Homeless Count

75,312

Total Homeless Count, LA County.

55,365

Unsheltered, LA County

Sources: LAHSA and Pasadena CoC, 2023 homeless counts. Foothill Unity Center Community Assessment, 2024 - 2025 | Food Insecurity in Los Angeles County, July 2023, USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research, Understanding America Study

We are providing access and opportunities, and removing barriers for the low-income and working poor, providing a safety net of services to the disadvantaged to prevent homelessness, and supporting the underserved homeless population. We serve twelve cities along the Foothills of the San Gabriel Valley: Altadena, Arcadia, Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bradbury, Duarte, Irwindale, Monrovia, Pasadena, Sierra Madre, South Pasadena and Temple City.

USC Dornsife

By Ileana Wachtel
July 9, 2024

LA County faces dual challenge: food insecurity & nutrition insecurity

USC Dornsife study finds 1.4 million adults are affected by both food and nutrition insecurity, with young adults, Hispanics and Asians at greatest risk, potentially compromising their health. Limited food availability is linked to major physical and mental health issues. The number of Angelenos who experienced nutrition insecurity in 2024 increased to 29% of households.



by Steve Chiotakis
July 19, 2024

Beyond hunger: How nutrition insecurity affects Angelenos

It's one thing to be hungry. It's another to be malnourished. "What we eat is actually the leading cause of death for folks in LA County — because of diseases like diabetes and heart disease. ... Asian residents were more likely to be nutrition insecure, but didn't have a higher risk for food insecurity. And it was the opposite for Latino residents — they had a higher risk for food insecurity, but had average risk for nutrition insecurity



By Josh Haskell
April 17, 2024

LA County residents' quality of life rating hits lowest ever

The high cost of living in LA County has pushed the satisfaction level of residents back to its lowest ever, with some renters fearing they'll become homeless, according to an annual UCLA survey.

Los Angeles Times

By Jireh Deng - June 19, 2024

Pandemic-era meal delivery program is set to end. Thousands of L.A. seniors could go hungry

5,800 seniors at risk of losing this food resource because the program is scheduled to expire this fall and the city may be hard-pressed to extend it because of a looming budget deficit. Los Angeles is a uniquely car-centric city, and many seniors who don't qualify as 'homebound' still cannot drive or safely walk the distances required to meet their daily needs for meals. Many of the senior residents in Chinatown face a food desert after local grocery stores shut down in the wake of Walmart's arrival and departure from the historic neighborhood.

USC Dornsife

By Ileana Wachtel
December 9, 2024

Food insecurity in LA County remains well above national average

25% of households still struggle to put food on the table, amid cuts to food programs and lingering high costs. USC Dornsife researchers found that 1 in 4 L.A. County households — about 832,000 — experienced food insecurity. Among low-income residents, the rate is 41%.



by Jackie Fortiér
March 28, 2024

LA's High Housing Costs Hurt Health

Over half of LA County households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, making it difficult to afford health care and nutritious food. That's according to the county's latest health survey of thousands of Angelenos. It's a 12% increase since the last survey in 2018.

FOOD PROGRAM

Many neighbors in our community are one job loss or medical crisis away from food insecurity. Foothill Unity Center leads the fight against hunger and poor nutrition in the San Gabriel Foothills through our food distribution, community kitchen and nutrition education programs.

Food distributions include food for a week for those who have the means to refrigerate and cook food, plus bag lunches and hygiene kits for those experiencing homelessness. Food boxes are delivered to seniors, homebound, and disabled clients who cannot drive. Thanksgiving and Holiday Food Distributions are special events that are added to the food distribution.

We continue to be driven to improve the quality of our food and services. In 2021, after a year and a half of extensive training, our Center was awarded the title of Nutritious Food Pantry by LA Regional Foodbank. We aim to include fresh nutritious produce with all our food distributions.

 **791,797**
TOTAL MEALS


 **16,230**
MEALS FOR HOMELESS

 **2,688**
FOOD BOXES DELIVERED
TO SENIORS & DISABLED



HEALTH PROGRAM

Access to healthcare, education on ways to manage chronic health diseases, and assistance with navigating the healthcare system. Among the other services we provide are dental and vision screenings, dental procedures, eye exams, glasses, and eye glass vouchers from mobile and on site dental and vision clinics, flu vaccines, blood pressure screenings, nutrition, physical and mental health, and education that includes workshops, classes, exercise groups, and healthy cooking/recipe demonstrations and flyers. We leverage our workforce annually with over 200 work trainees, including nursing students pursuing licenses, and interns in social work and Americorps.

 **5,749**
DIABETES AND VITAL HEALTH
SCREENINGS, FLU & COVID VACCINES

 **87,715**
HEALTH & NUTRITION
EDUCATION RESOURCES

 **280**
VISION SERVICES INCLUDING
EXAMS & EYEGLASSES

 **153**
DENTAL SERVICES INCLUDING
SCREENINGS & PROCEDURES



CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The driving strategy and standard of care practice that supports our core programs through assessment, case planning, care coordination, advocacy, resource linkages, and follow up. Individualized client plans allow the case managers to track progress and make adjustments specific to personal situations. Case management provides access to a complete continuum of services, a safety net that improves the odds of success for an individual to move from poverty to economic security.

 **4,373**
CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

 **435**
FAMILIES

 **2,420**
DIAPER PACKAGES

 **4,329**
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
TAXIS, DIAL-A-RIDE, TAP

Crisis case management related services including resource referrals, services for victims of domestic violence, food, health, transportation, housing & job development.

HOUSING & UNHOUSED SUPPORT PROGRAM

Provides food and hygiene support for the unhoused. Works on permanent and temporary housing placement solutions and services, such as motel vouchers, rental assistance, eviction prevention, and related services to those experiencing urgent emergency and chronic housing needs, navigation, retention, temporary housing, and rapid rehousing.

 **852**
HOUSING SERVICES FOR
185 families, including
749 motel vouchers &
9 permanent placements

 **4,112**
CLOTHES, SHOES, CHARGING STATIONS, INCLUDING
2,697 HYGIENE KITS

 **1,627**
MOBILE SHOWERS OFTEN WITH
FREE HAIRCUTS

 **130**
FREE LIFELINE CELL PHONES WITH COVERAGE &
CHARGING PORTS

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Our integrated services with our core programs would not be possible without our Volunteer Program that includes hundreds of dedicated volunteers who help to support all our programs and special events.

 **32,368**
VOLUNTEER HOURS

 **839**
VOLUNTEERS

\$559,319
VALUE OF VOLUNTEER HOURS

A **BIG THANK YOU** TO
OUR VOLUNTEERS
WE COULD NOT DO
THIS WITHOUT YOU!



JOB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Helps to improve the economic lives of individuals with hands on assistance to gain employment for those unemployed and underemployed. The program aims to reduce the barriers to employment, thereby ending the cycle of poverty for the next generation. Annually, we supervise work experience trainees and interns, including at-risk youth, transitional youth, adults and seniors.

 **602**
RESUME BUILDING, COACHING,
JOB DEVELOPMENT,
TRAINING AND RESOURCES

 **308**
WORK TRAINEES AND INTERNS
(including **46** work-experience trainees; **88** certifications for forklift and food handling; **2** public health and **1** dietician interns; **6** AmeriCorps Fellows)

Services include onsite training, academic and vocational counseling, resume assistance, certifications, mentoring, financial literacy workshops, tax preparation, job search and assistance with employment placement.

OUR EVENTS

BACK TO SCHOOL

Our Annual Back to School Event helps hundreds of TK through college students of low income families prepare for the upcoming school year, proving them with haircuts, clothes, backpacks, shoe vouchers and essential supplies for the upcoming school year.

 **1,329**
CHILDREN SERVED FOR
BACK TO SCHOOL



PET CLINIC & FOOD BANK

Local pet shelters are overflowing because people struggling to survive cannot afford to feed or take care of their pets healthcare needs. Our Pet Food Bank helps hundreds of families feed their beloved pets. Our vet clinics with the Pasadena Humane Society are hosted several times a year.

 **1,661**
PET FOOD BAGS & VET
CLINIC SERVICES



THANKSGIVING & HOLIDAY DISTRIBUTIONS

Our Annual Thanksgiving and Holiday Distributions help to make the Holiday season brighter for local children and families in need. Families receive huge food boxes with holiday staples for both events, as well as new toys, clothing and gift cards for their children at our holiday event.

 **3,774**
THANKSGIVING & HOLIDAY
FOOD BOXES

 **782**
HOLIDAY GIFT BAGS (WITH GIFT
CARDS, TOYS & CLOTHING)



MORE EVENTS

JOB & RESOURCE FAIR

Our Annual job and Resource Fair helps connect individuals to potential employers. With 20+ vendors looking to hire potential employees, resume-building assistance, and a free BBQ lunch!



STAMP OUT HUNGER FOOD DRIVE

The NALC's (National Association of Letter Carriers) Stamp Out Hunger Food & Donor Drive is the largest food drive of the year. We coordinate with local post offices and many amazing volunteers to collect and sort the food donations.



VISION CLINIC

Our annual Vision Clinic in partnership with the Anugraha Drishtidaan organization run by Dr. Alka Kumar, provides over one hundred pre-registered low-income and under insured children and adults with comprehensive eye exams and eye glasses.



CHILI COOK-OFF

Every year the Santa Anita Park hosts a Chili Cook-Off, benefiting Foothill Unity Center. A day of spicy feasting, thoroughbred horse racing, and fun for the whole family! Dozens of contestants offer chili samples and compete for top event prizes and people's choice awards at Santa Anita Park in Arcadia.



THANK YOU
TO ALL OUR DONORS, SUPPORTERS,
PARTNERS, VOLUNTEERS & STAFF

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A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS



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A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

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We are one of the largest distributors of nutritious food to low-income neighbors

Many neighbors in our community are one job loss or medical crisis away from food insecurity. Foothill Unity Center leads the fight against hunger and poor nutrition in the San Gabriel Foothills through our food distribution, community kitchen and nutrition education programs.



In 2021, after a year and a half of extensive training, our Center earned the prestigious designation of "Nutritious Food Pantry" from the LA Regional Foodbank. We are dedicated to improving the lives and health of our neighbors in need by providing fresh fruits and vegetables.



Foothill Unity Center, Inc.

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

DONATE . VOLUNTEER. GET INVOLVED. GET HELP.

www.foothillunitycenter.org | Info@foothillunitycenter.org

626.358.3486



790 W. Chestnut Ave.
Monrovia, CA 91016

191 N. Oak Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91107

TEXT 4HOPE TO 41444

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