



2020

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

OUR MISSION

Alleviate hunger
in our community
through the
acquisition and
distribution of
nutritious food.

OUR MOTTO

Food for
today,
hope for
tomorrow.

OUR COMMITMENT

We will never
turn clients away,
and there will
never be a waiting
list at CdP.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Family,

I want to share with you, the funders, supporters, and volunteers (in short, our family) Casa de Peregrinos's (CdP) activities in 2020. This report is our way of taking stock of and reporting on our accomplishments for the year, because you are what makes every one of them possible.

We're taking a different approach to the Annual Report this year – instead of trying to tell you everything we did, we want to focus on two things: the effect of COVID on CdP, and the status of the new facility. These two things have re-shaped us as an organization during 2020.

When 2020 began, our plans were ambitious: to serve more low income families in Doña Ana County, seek out new ways to expand services, and work on board development and infrastructure needs. We had identified outreach

activities, partnerships to develop, and activities to move the plans for a new building ahead.

Little did we know what was ahead. Just like the rest of the world, we were blindsided by COVID.

Even in the midst of the pandemic, CdP remained committed to providing healthy, nutritious food to families experiencing a financial crisis. We balanced our commitment to service with safeguarding the health and safety of staff, volunteers and clients, taking aggressive precautions to avoid the spread of the virus with social distancing, requiring personal protective equipment, and diligently sanitizing the facility and equipment.

In 2020, CdP personnel served over 35,000 people -- 5,000 more than we have ever served in one year -- without turning anyone away, or placing them on a waiting list. Our doors remained open to all those in need. We addressed this increased

demand thanks to the ingenuity, creativity, and hard work of the staff, board, volunteers and contributors like you.

Our team pulled together, supported each other, and came up with creative ways to safely serve our clients. Our donors, individuals, foundations, and public partners gave financial support to a level unprecedented in our history. What we have seen during the COVID epidemic surpassed our wildest expectations.

And, this year, CdP has seen one of its longstanding dreams becoming a reality – a new home for the pantry. We currently operate out of a 4,000 square-foot facility which was designed in 2003 to annually distribute 500,000 pounds of food. By 2012, CdP was distributing twice that much, and by 2020, CdP distributed more than nine times the amount for which it was designed: over 4.7 million pounds of food. We no longer fit in our space, and there is no capacity for expanding the existing building.

In 2020, in a stunning demonstration of their commitment to fighting hunger and food insecurity in our community, the City of Las Cruces purchased the Horse 'N Hound building next to the Community of Hope. This will now be CdP's warehouse, pantry, and food distribution center. Planning and design work are in full swing, and our preliminary schedule predicts a June 2022 ribbon cutting.

With this building, CdP will be able to increase the amount of food that is stored and distributed, and allow us to expand our vision of providing "hope for tomorrow" with a teaching kitchen, clean room, and increasing the ancillary services we can provide our clients.

This is the opportunity of a lifetime. We've come so far from our roots at a kitchen table in La Mesa, and from my first week as the director (June, 2011) when we served 38 families and ran out of food on Friday.

We will keep you updated on the building progress, capital campaign plans currently in the works, and opportunities for donor participation as they are developed. With my profound thanks for standing with us during this challenging time, I remain,

Yours truly,

Lorenzo Alba, Jr.
Executive Director, CdP

THE EFFECT OF COVID ON FOOD INSECURITY

of color, and this has only increased as a result of COVID. In a national survey in March 2020 among low-income adults, 44% were food insecure. However, 48% of Black households, and 52% of Hispanic households were affected with food insecurity. Compared to other groups, a higher proportion of Latino workers are employed in the leisure and hospitality industry, and a lower proportion are employed in roles that can be performed at home. As a result, the unemployment rate among Latinos spiked to 18.9% in April 2020, higher than any other racial/ethnic group, impacting this population's susceptibility to food insecurity.

The COVID epidemic has drastically exacerbated food insecurity, nationwide and in our own community. It has impacted jobs, child care, income, and housing, bringing financial uncertainty and insecurity to the lives of millions. Over the past five years, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates of food insecurity in the United States have hovered around 11% to 12%. But, as of March and April 2020, national estimates of food insecurity more than tripled to 38%. Feeding America, the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States, estimates that 17 million more people could become food insecure because of the pandemic, bringing the total to more than 54 million people, including 18 million children. New Mexico is predicted to experience a 4% increase in food insecurity between 2018 and 2020 as a result of COVID.

Food insecurity has always had a disproportionate impact on communities

Although vaccine availability will relieve some of the impacts of COVID, economists predict that the economic impacts will take years to fully dissipate: the chief economist at Moody's Analytics predicts that the 22 million US jobs lost during the COVID pandemic in the spring won't be regained until early 2024, most of them in retail, leisure, hospitality, and recreational activities. Here in Doña Ana County it is expected that 39,000 jobs will be lost over the next five years, according to a recent economic assessment by the Community Economics Laboratory which mapped the scope and impact of the pandemic on the county's economy. Job loss, largely because of the pandemic, will have the greatest impact on food service, hospitality, health care, and social assistance. Around 20,000 jobs are projected to be permanently lost.

THE EFFECT OF COVID ON CASA DE PEREGRINOS

Casa de Peregrinos has significantly changed its operational models to reflect the seriousness of COVID and maintain the health of its staff, volunteers and clients. Consulting with the Health Department and Roadrunner Foodbank, Cdp began, in March, to restrict the number of volunteers and clients inside the facility at any one time, and after another month, closed the lobby entirely and began to deliver carts to clients outside.

We are taking aggressive sanitizing and disinfecting precautions as well: all carts are disinfected after every use, and everyone is required to wear masks and gloves while handling food. All staff and volunteers undergo a daily temperature check, and are sent home if their temperature is elevated, and a monthly professional disinfecting service has been hired to deep-clean the pantry.

Early on, Cdp began seeing financial challenges due to COVID. Major events that Cdp has long depended upon to

"It's impossible to describe in a few sentences how this pandemic has affected our mission at Cdp and this community. But, I will say that the outpour of generosity during this time has been amazing and heartfelt. Knowing that we're making a difference by giving hope to our community affected during this difficult time has been beyond meaningful."

~DIANA A., PROGRAMS
MANAGER AT CDP

generate food and cash were cancelled, including:

- **THE BATAN DEATH MARCH**, which generates over 30,000 pounds of food.
- **TASTE OF LAS CRUCES**, which, with the help of the Rotary Clubs, raises \$15,000.
- **STAMP OUT HUNGER**, a food drive organized by the postal service which generates over 50,000 pounds of food.





And that was just the beginning.

The Food Rescue Program, which traditionally brings in approximately 35,000 pounds of food per week, dropped to less than half of normal because the shelves in local markets were so depleted that little remained to donate. This resulted in an ongoing cost of over \$6,000 per week to replace rescued food with purchased products. By the year's end, Cdp had spent over \$430,000 on food purchases, compared to just over \$187,000 in 2019.

More families came to us for help.

By every measurable indicator, service levels skyrocketed in 2020 as job losses and unemployment from COVID increasingly impacted our community.

- Cdp served over 35,000 individual clients, an increase of 5,000 over the average number for the last three years: over 16%.

- We saw an increase of almost 75% in families coming to the rural pantries.
- We served more homeless clients by September 2020 than we did in the entire year of 2019.
- We distributed almost 3,000 more food baskets through the Food Security Program than we did in 2019.
- The amount of food that we distributed exceeded 4.7 million pounds, a huge increase from the 3.8 million pounds in 2019.

The pressure on pantry staff rose

as well. Hours for food distribution at the central pantry were extended to minimize the number of clients at the pantry at any one time, and we began to prepackage food for the mobile pantries to maximize social distancing, creating an extra level of preparation work for pantry staff. With fewer volunteers, we needed to hire temporary employees to fill the gap, which has

had a budgetary impact as well. All of these changes have impacted Cdp, increasing the monthly operational cost due to the increased cost for food and personnel. We have continued to provide approximately 85 pounds of food in each basket, a fact of which we are very proud.

COVID IS CHANGING HOW CDP DOES BUSINESS

COVID will impact our services for years to come: more local unemployment, more families needing service, more new clients requesting help, and much more food needing to be made available. COVID has driven Cdp to innovate in ways that will stand us in good stead throughout the duration of this crisis and beyond.

We are creating new, more efficient service models.

Cdp has observed many food distribution programs utilizing a "drive-up" model, where food boxes are placed in a client's car with no contact between the provider and the client. We are working now to create such a service by allowing clients to self-register electronically. Clients without access to a computer, new clients, or clients with unique needs such as homeless clients, would continue to have the opportunity to receive face-to-face COVID-safe service.

Drive-up service will provide numerous benefits. Probably the biggest is the decrease in waiting time for clients. A trip to the food pantry can typically take hours, as clients need to sign in, wait for an available interview volunteer, complete the interview, and then wait for a cart to be assembled for them. Drive-up service will also mean less space will need to be designated for a waiting room, which is important as Cdp launches the development of a new facility.

Cdp has long been seeking ways to make our services more accessible to more families. With an electronic sign-in/drive-up system, we believe many more families will be able to receive nutritious food through Cdp.

The way we serve our clients has changed.

Where we were yesterday.



Where we are today.



We are working differently but distance doesn't change our work.



WE'RE EXPANDING SERVICES TO THE SOUTH COUNTY

COVID has also driven Cdp to increase its services in the Sunland Park community, which has been a goal of ours for years. This area borders Texas and Mexico, and it experiences nearly twice the poverty rate of Doña Ana County as a whole; 46.2%. Neighboring Anapra is among the lowest income neighborhoods in the United States, with an income lower than 93.7% of U.S. neighborhoods and has a higher rate of childhood poverty than 93.8% of U.S. neighborhoods.

Thanks to a grant from the Con Alma Health Foundation, Cdp has partnered with The Southern New Mexico Project, (an all-volunteer project which involves a number of initiatives for low-income families in the southern part of Doña Ana County) to distribute 200 food baskets each month through the end of the 2020. The City of Sunland Park provides the site, and the Southern New Mexico Project organizes the monthly distribution of groceries. Their support and participation permits Cdp to provide food baskets



to clients without any additional infrastructure or distribution systems.

EVEN DURING THE PANDEMIC, WE WERE ABLE TO BRING JOY TO FAMILIES DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Cdp has provided a Thanksgiving dinner basket since its earliest days (the first time was in 1997, when 100 turkeys were distributed). This program has grown to become one of the most cherished of all of Cdp's services, as it allows families to celebrate the holidays in their own homes, without feeling pressured by the cost of a festive meal. This year, our Thanksgiving food basket distribution changed to a drive-up service, requiring additional staffing, but it was the only way to ensure proper safety standards. Knowing that many of the holiday meal options for low income families (such as holiday dinners hosted by soup kitchens) would be limited due to social distancing, we worked doubly hard to guarantee food baskets for the Thanksgiving holiday. This would not have been possible

without the assistance of New Mexico State University, who provided their facilities, Tawney, Flores and Acosta Law Firm, and the Albertson's Foundation for major financial support.

Partnering with other organizations providing holiday meals and consolidating our buying power has allowed this program to grow. In 2016, we distributed 1,300 holiday baskets, a number which grew to 3,672 by 2019. Despite the challenges of COVID, we exceeded that number in 2020, with over 3,800 turkey baskets distributed, more than we have ever provided before.

A STRIKE AGAINST HUNGER

We've been innovative in our fundraising events as well! Now in its second year, the Hunger Strike, a 24-hour food strike to raise funds and awareness as part of September's Hunger Action Month, is well on its way to becoming Cdp's signature event. During this year when in-person fundraising events were cancelled for safety reasons and organizations across the country were struggling to modify events to a virtual format, the Hunger Strike has begun to catch the imagination of the Las Cruces community.

All participants need to do is to commit to refrain from eating for a 24-hour period, advertise their participation



"Washington Federal has supported Casa de Peregrinos annual Turkey drive for the past few years. The WAFD Bank Foundation provided over \$14,000 of donations this year and we continue to be impressed by the Cdp commitment to providing for the hungry in the Mesilla Valley."

**~RICK SUPPLE,
BRANCH MANAGER
WASHINGTON FEDERAL**

to their friends and family, and ask for their financial support. Five Hunger Strikers initiated this event in 2019, raising \$24,000.

In 2020, the number of participants quadrupled including four of the five original hunger strikers, Cdp Executive Director Lorenzo Alba and Board President Eric Walkinshaw, Bulletin Publisher Richard Coltharp, and City Council Member (and former Cdp Board member) Gabriel Vasquez. Several board and staff members and their families, such as Ricardo Gonzales and his two daughters, and many other community members fasted for several hours during the course of the Hunger Strike. The 2020 Hunger Strike generated \$30,665, a significant increase. Planning and recruitment for the 2021 Hunger Strike is already underway.



A NEW HOME FOR THE CASA DE PEREGRINOS EMERGENCY FOOD PROGRAM

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Many of you have seen this building as you drive along Amador and wondered what would be occupying it after the previous owners moved out. This will be the new home for CdPI.

Pictured right, the office building and the warehouse will finally provide CdP with the space we need to adequately serve all of those in Doña Ana County in need of nutritious supplemental groceries.

The city's purchase of this building, and state funding for remodeling will allow CdP to triple its current space.

With this, we can accommodate more food, more staff, more volunteers, and more clients. It will allow us to increase our Food Rescue Program, which also increases the amount of food that is kept out of landfills, and provide clients

with a more accommodating and comfortable setting.

While the resources currently raised represent only a part of the total cost, the grants from the State Legislature and the purchase of the Horse 'N Hound building have set us on our path for a capital campaign to complete the project. We are extremely grateful to the local legislators who supported this project, and the members of the City Council for their vision in purchasing the building.

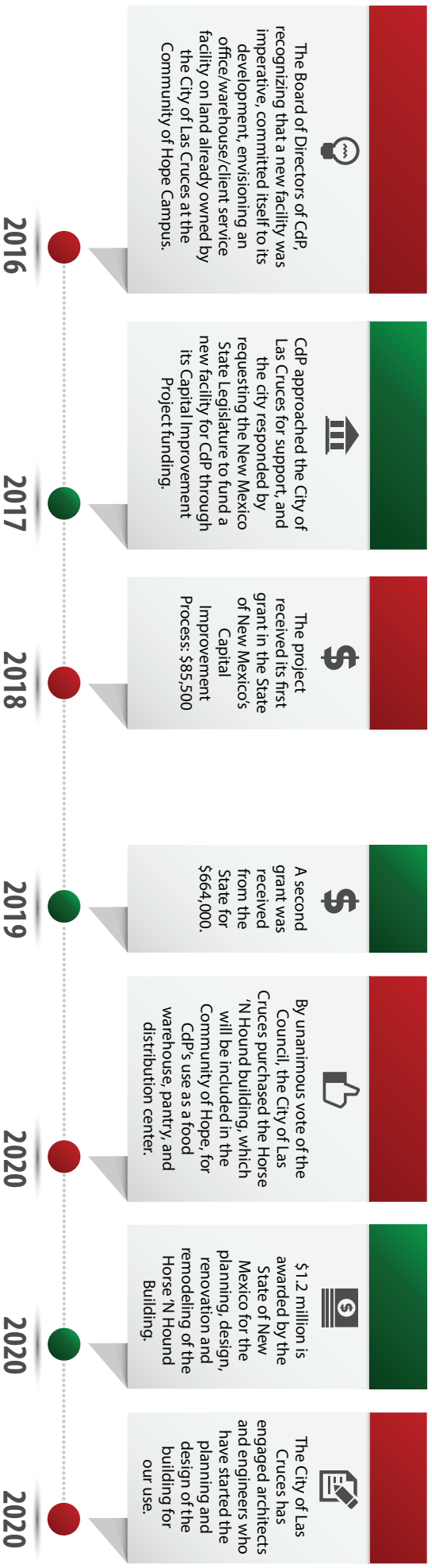
With this space, CdP will be able to more fully address our motto, "Food for today, hope for tomorrow," as it finally gives us room to provide other services

to our clients to help them escape

systemic, generational poverty. CdP has always welcomed other organizations to utilize CdP's distribution system to help families gain access to health and income-related programs: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs, and legal aid programs, among others. With this new space, we will be able to host other organizations on site to increase these collaborations. We are also planning a demonstration kitchen for nutrition education programs, electronic sign-up and drive-up programs to ease waiting times, and facilities that enable us to invite community partners to provide other services on site to our clients.



THE PROJECT CHRONOLOGY TO DATE HAS BEEN:



SOME OF THE QUESTIONS WE'VE GOTTEN ABOUT THE BUILDING

Does more money need to be raised?

Yes! The acquisition of the building is a huge resource, and state funding will go a long way, but the property requires significant remodeling. Cdp will continue to seek out private and public sources to complete the project. There is no doubt that this will be one of the biggest challenges we have ever undertaken.

Cdp has committed \$200,000 from its 2021 budget to kick off a capital campaign, HOPE FOR TOMORROW, which will bring in government, corporate, and individual and organizational gifts, incorporating sponsor recognition: bricks or tiles to commemorate gifts at different levels, and/or providing naming opportunities for particular rooms or facilities within the building.

What will the building look like after the remodel?

We want a facility that makes the overall, multi-agency food distribution system in Las Cruces significantly more efficient and streamlined, and makes space available to the small pantries which also depend on donated food and commodities but lack storage for their inventory.

The preliminary design is a 13,000-square-foot building with docks for 18-wheeled vehicles, office spaces, meeting and conference facilities (which we will share with other community groups), reception and client waiting areas, designated areas for assembly and distribution of carts, adequate parking for clients, volunteers, and staff, interview areas for client intake, and a drive-up window for pre-ordered carts. We will also take this opportunity to install a demonstration kitchen, so much-needed nutrition education programs can be provided to our clients.

We are decreasing the energy footprint

of our work, incorporating solar panels to provide heating, cooling, and cold storage. We will also be utilizing green landscaping techniques to reduce air, soil, and water pollution. The building will also will incorporate artwork in the public areas through the Art in Public Places program of the City of Las Cruces.

When will Cdp move?

Architects and planners are at work with a goal of finishing their plans by July of 2021, after which the city will open a bid process for a construction contract. With a projected July groundbreaking, an optimistic date of June 2022 has been set for a ribbon cutting.

What will happen to the current Cdp space?

Community of Hope will utilize the space that Cdp currently occupies to address the needs of other Community of Hope agencies, all of which are over-crowded as well.

Can Cdp pull this off?

Yes! Cdp brings to this project stability of personnel and programs, with experienced board members, staff, and volunteers. It also retains the institutional memory of the development of the current facility through board members who were active participants in the original Project of Hope. Our funding base is widespread and includes individuals, organizations, businesses, and religious groups who are passionate about our mission and have a deep understanding of the need to continue to serve the hungry and food insecure members of our community.



Our team is honored to support our fellow nonprofit colleagues at Casa de Peregrinos. As a foundation, we have assisted in raising more than \$100,000 to expand the sustainability endowment for this much-needed organization.

**~TERRA V. WINTER, PHD
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO**



THE PEOPLE WE SERVED

2020 BY THE NUMBERS

FOOD BASKETS DISTRIBUTED

Food Security	25,795
Summer Program	8,660
Rural Program	10,723
Student Pantries	1,993
Senior Pantries	1,108
Thanksgiving Baskets	3,800
TOTAL DISTRIBUTIONS	52,079

UNDUPLICATED CLIENTS

Food Security	17,934
Summer Program	7,145
Rural Program	8,182
Student Pantries	716
Senior Pantries	1,775
TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED	35,752

CdP served 35,752 unduplicated individuals during 2020 at 24 distinct locations, an increase of 5,866 from 2019. With Doña Ana County having a population of 213,000, this represents over 1.6% of the people in the county. *One in every six individuals living in Doña Ana County came to us for help.*

25,813 people were served at the Las Cruces Pantry alone, an increase of 4,723 from 2019. The number of new clients, of which we usually see 1,700 to 1,800, jumped to 2,190 in 2020.

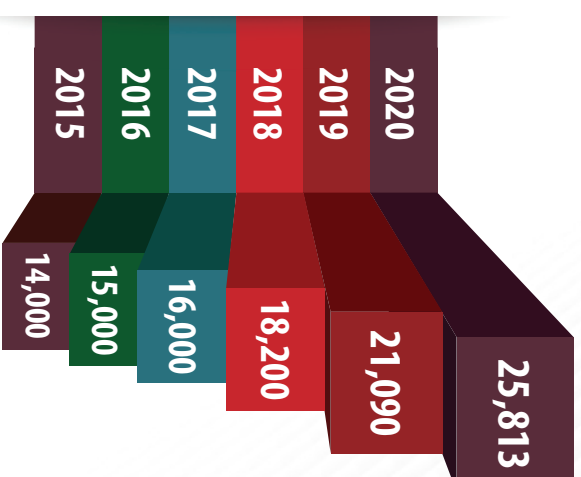
In our community, the impact of the COVID epidemic appears to be hitting the rural pantries the hardest. The number of unduplicated clients served in the rural pantries increased from 4,745 in 2019 to 8,182 in 2020. This is almost a 75% increase in the rural areas.

FOOD DISTRIBUTED

Pounds of food donated	72,883
Pounds of food rescued	797,922
Pounds of food purchased	3,850,060
TOTAL POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED	4,720,865
Value of donated food	\$125,358
Value of rescued food	\$1,372,425
TOTAL VALUE OF ACQUIRED FOOD	\$1,497,783

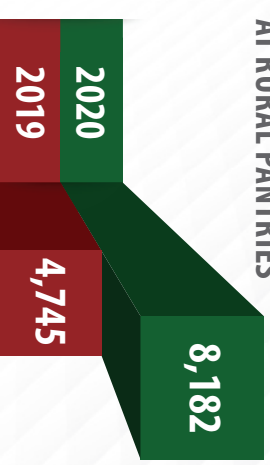
CLIENTS SERVED

AT LAS CRUCES PANTRY



CLIENTS SERVED

AT RURAL PANTRIES



FOOD DISTRIBUTED

In 2020, CdP distributed 4,720,865 pounds of food. A pound of donated food is valued at \$1.72 by the USDA. Therefore, CdP distributed **over \$8 million in resources to the community.**

The amount of food distributed shows an ever-rising trend. The amount has gone up every year but 2020 represents the biggest annual increase that we have ever seen.

Of this, 797,922 pounds was rescued food with a value of \$1.3 million. Through the Food Rescue Program, retailers donate perfectly edible food which has passed its "sell-by" date. The Food Rescue Program began

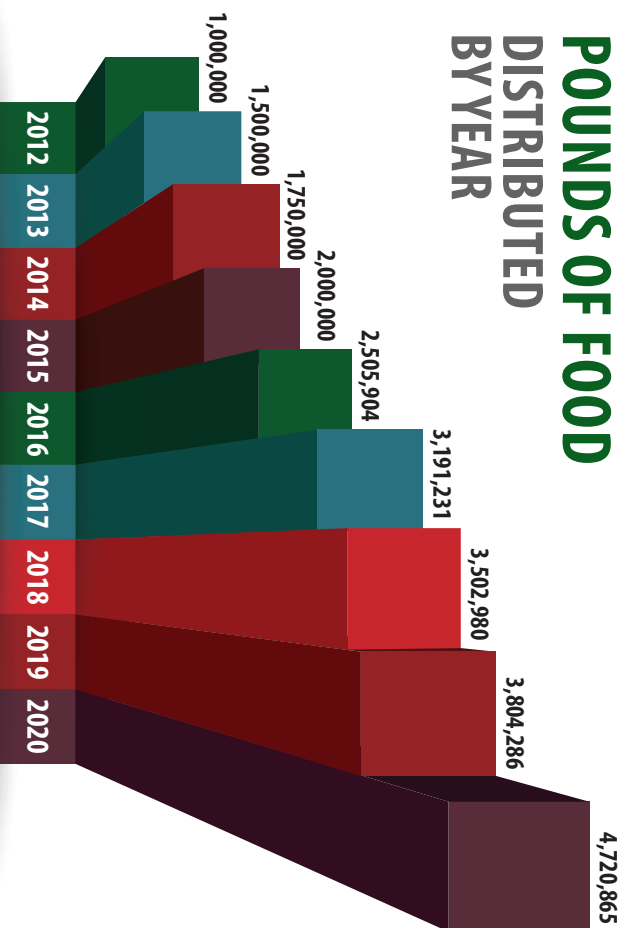
"Personally, it has been very helpful to me and my family. This has provided us with what is necessary, thank God. God bless you that you may continue helping many families in need."

~LUZ, 70

in 2013. Since then, CdP has rescued 6,239,191 pounds of food with a value of \$11.1 million. Due to COVID food rescue decreased from its 2019 level of 1,125,000 pounds, but still represented a significant source of food to



POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED BY YEAR



permit us to maintain our goal of 85 pounds of food per cart. As the weight of a meal equivalent is 1.2 pounds of food, CdP distributed the equivalent of 3,934,054 meals to our community in 2020.

FINANCIALS 2020, FINAL UNAUDITED

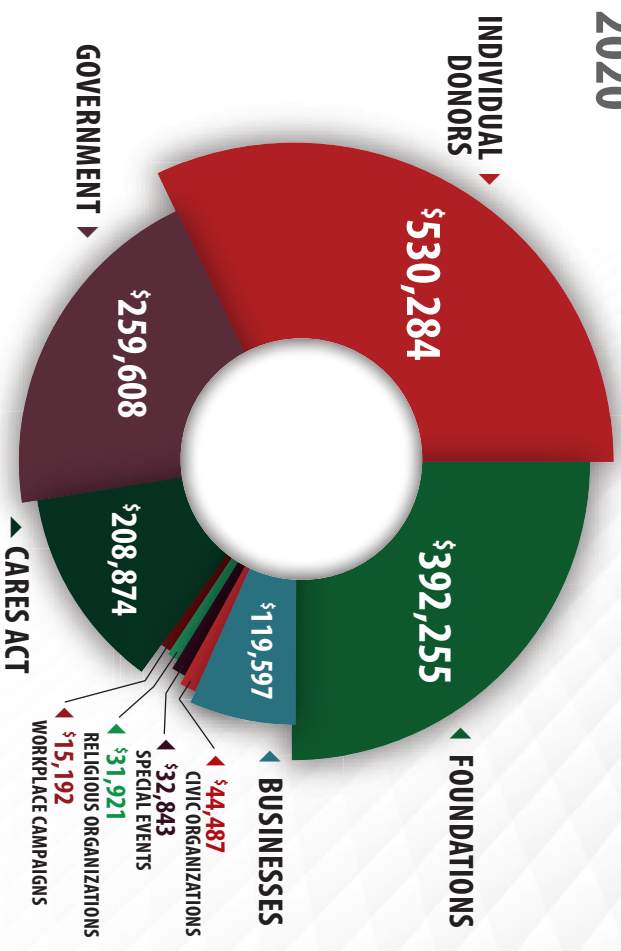
Our financial support is deep and wide ranging, but the biggest source of our support has again this year come from individual donors. We were overwhelmed at the level of support from individual donors which increased from \$177,000 in 2019 to over \$530,000 in 2020. Foundations, businesses, religious, and civic organizations also exceeded previous years' contributions. CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief,

and Economic Security) Act Funding through the Federal government also provided a welcome source of support. The City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County both made it a priority to help CdP continue to provide necessary food to families in Doña Ana County, granting over \$200,000 to help make up for increased costs for food and personnel.

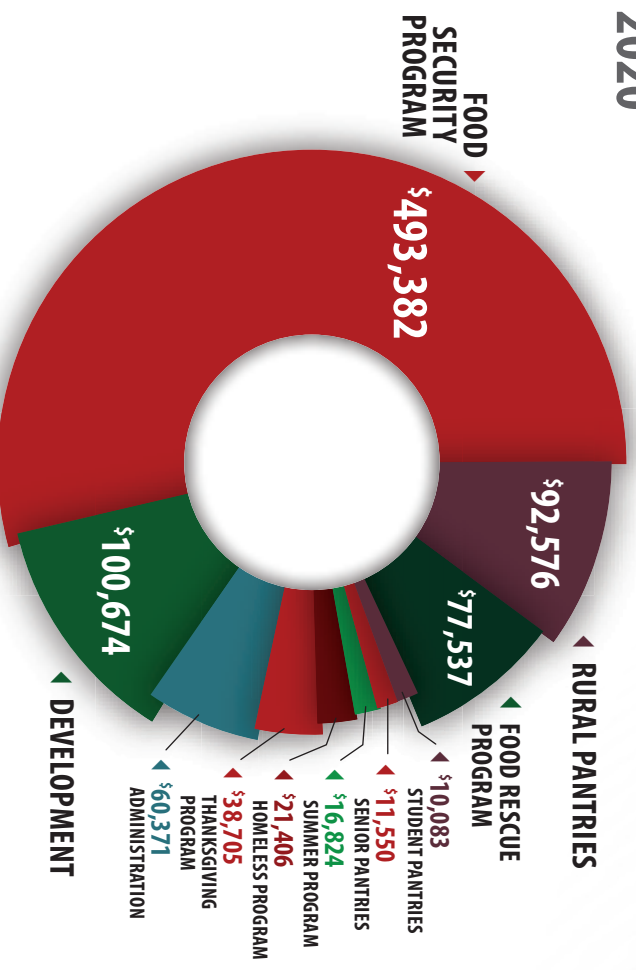
"This service has helped us a lot. The little we earn we depend on for paying our bills. We are left with a little to buy other necessities, thank you for all of your help!"

~DOLORES, 68

SOURCES OF REVENUE 2020



EXPENSES BY PROGRAM 2020



CdP has 13 pantries in rural communities, five pantries in Senior Centers, and three pantries at college campuses as well as the main pantry at the Community of Hope in Las Cruces. We also partner with two food pantries in Sunland Park and La Union. As Doña Ana County covers 4,000 square miles (larger than Rhode Island and Delaware combined), without mobile pantries families could have to travel over an hour to access services.

In 2020, the expenditures for Cdp were \$934,220 (unaudited figure).

Despite increases in the cost of food and increases in personnel costs due to a decreased number of volunteers, GdP has still been able to distribute five pounds of food for every dollar it spends. This is possible only because:

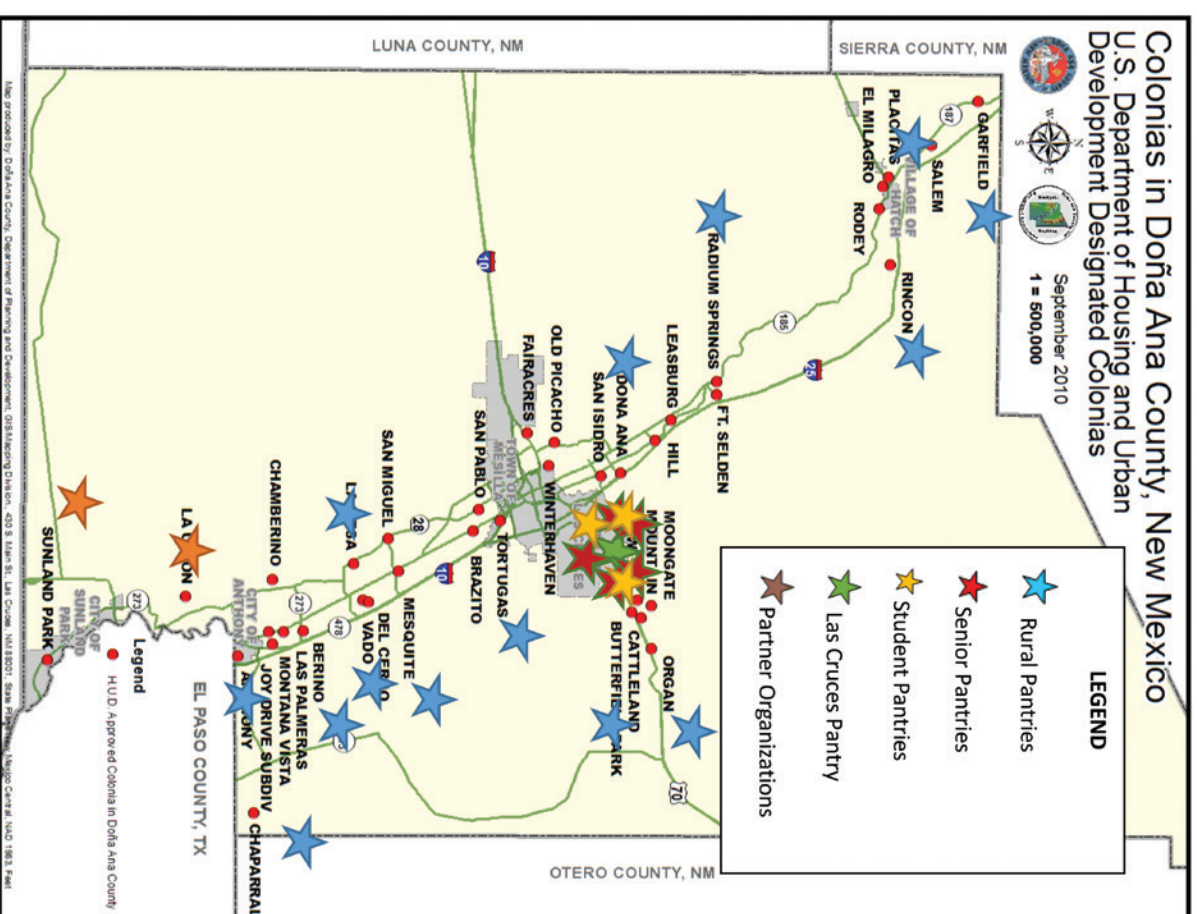
- We manage innovative programs such as the Food Rescue Program. This program brought in and distributed over 79,922 pounds of usable food that was destined for the landfills.
- CDP operates on a shoestring staff and relies upon dozens of volunteers contributing thousands of hours each year packing and distributing food orders.
- Working with Roadrunner Food Bank, we can distribute commodities and other donated food for a small shared cost of pennies on the dollar.

VOLUNTEERS GAVE THEIR TIME

Volunteers have always been the backbone of the distribution system at CdP, and the gifts of time from our volunteers is as essential as the funding received from our donors. This year, volunteers over the age of 65 were asked not to come in due to their increased susceptibility to COVID. Since so many of our volunteers are retirees, this had a significant impact on volunteer hours, but thousands of hours were still contributed in the warehouse in mobile pantries, on the Board and Board committees, and in other capacities.

mittees, and in other capacities.

In 2020, volunteers and community service volunteers recorded a total of 9,016 hours at its pantries and through Board service and committee work. This is the equivalent of 4.3 full time employees, and, based on Corporation for National and Community Service data showing a volunteer hour in New Mexico being valued at \$19.51, represents a contribution of over \$175,000.



BOARD MEMBERS SERVING DURING 2020

(listed alphabetically)

Antoinette Fuentes, Stephanie Guadian, Barbara Head CPA, Sonja Jamilla,
Michelle Najar, Dick Miernyk, George Miller, Tom Packard MD,
Shannon Pestovich, Heather Quiroz LMSW, Brandi Rukovena MA,
Nancy Ryan, Cindy Seipel-Tunnell Ph.D, Yoli Silva,
Patrick Trainor Ph.D MS MA, and Eric Walkinshaw

STAFF MEMBERS SERVING DURING 2020

Lorenzo Alba, Jr., Christina Villegas-Fierro, Diana Alvarez, Rudy Carbajal,
Sam Terrazas, Wayne Conklin, Leticia Garcia, Sandra Mendoza, Michael Barnes,
Cesar Mauricio, Marco Olivas, Bianca Menchaca, Azhar (Ziggy) Abdul-Khabir,
Renea Gutierrez, Jasmine Al-Humrani, Bob Witschi, Ilian Garcia, Brenda Gonzalez,
and Americorp – SEED Corps members Brittany Nickerson and Ryan Singh



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DESIGNED & PRINTED BY

