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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

12th Annual East Bay Innovation Awards – 2025 Legacy Awardees Announced
12th annual East Bay Innovation Awards event to take place in Oakland on Thursday, March 27, 2025

Oakland, California – The East Bay Economic Development Alliance (East Bay EDA) is pleased to announce the selection of the **Alameda County Community Food Bank** and the **Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano** as the Legacy Awardees for the 2025 East Bay Innovation Awards.

Often referred to as the “Academy Awards of the East Bay,” the [East Bay Innovation Awards](#) is the premier program of its kind that celebrates and honors the extraordinary companies and organizations that contribute to the East Bay’s legacy of innovation. For more than a decade, this annual awards ceremony has showcased outstanding companies and organizations from Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. As a part of this event, East Bay EDA recognizes a “Legacy Awardee” to acknowledge a company or organization in our region that has had an enduring and meaningful impact on the people who live and work here in our region.

The crucial work being done by this year’s Legacy Awardees compelled an early announcement of their selection in recognition of the far-reaching and longstanding impact that these organizations make in our communities. Although the challenges around food insecurity and hunger are unfortunately not new to our region, the approaches and strategies taken by both East Bay food banks to address them have indeed been quite innovative, particularly when the COVID-19 pandemic began to upend the lives of so many families and residents in our region.

“The biggest reason I decided to join Alameda County Community Food Bank was this organization’s reputation for innovation in the name of hunger-relief,” said Regi Young, executive director, who joined ACCFB from Houston Food Bank—the largest food bank in the nation—three years ago. “I’m deeply proud of the core work we do to nourish our community facing record need. And yet we know that to truly end hunger for good, we must push the boundaries of what it means to be a Food Bank. On behalf our staff and board, we are honored to be recognized by East Bay EDA for our organization’s history of impacting our community.”

Among the accomplishments during its 40-year history, Alameda County Community Food Bank was the first food bank in the nation to stop distributing soda; developed the first—and longest-running—CalFresh (food stamp) outreach department; and recently became the first food bank in California to implement a Food as Medicine model in which it is reimbursed by the state’s healthcare program, Medi-Cal.

“For nearly 50 years, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano has worked tirelessly to provide food for hundreds of thousands of residents annually. Throughout our history, we’ve evolved to provide the most critical level of service during our community’s highs and lows – to meet what our neighbors needed at any given time,” said Caitlin Sly, president and CEO of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

What started as a handful of hunger fighters giving out bread out of a truck in 1975 has grown to a safety net of 260 partners and 10 programs in Contra Costa and Solano Counties. We've been proud to have created key programs – like our Community Produce, Senior Food, and Child Nutrition Programs – to serve and help close nutritional gaps for the most vulnerable in our communities.

We're very excited and grateful to receive this recognition as a 2025 Legacy Awardee. We also acknowledge that our work is far from done. Our dedication to innovating in service, while centering our community, continues to be paramount.”

Despite being cornerstones of the communities they serve, both organizations are seeing a drastic decline in government funding and rely on individual, community-driven donations to help support their work. To donate to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano or the Alameda County Community Food Bank, go to their respective websites at www.foodbankccs.org or www.accfb.org.

Both of the 2025 Legacy Awardees will join East Bay EDA and this year's other East Bay Innovation Awards finalists in March 2025 at the Oakland Scottish Rite Center for a fun-filled evening presented hosted by [Gia Vang of NBC Bay Area](#). Sponsorships and table purchases for this event are currently open – visit [here](#) for more information. Sponsorship packages for this event are on the East Bay EDA [website](#) and individual tickets for this event will be going on sale in January 2025.

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About East Bay Economic Development Alliance: Founded in 1990, the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (East Bay EDA) was born out of the recognition by top leaders of the need to work together and tackle shared challenges. Today, East Bay EDA is a 150+ member organization that serves as the regional voice and networking resource for strengthening the economy, building the workforce and enhancing the quality of life in the East Bay. The organization is a cross-sector, public-private partnership that promotes strategic economic development throughout Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. For more than 30 years, East Bay EDA has convened diverse networks of business, government, and community leaders who embrace the extraordinary value of our region as an unrivaled place to live, work, and do business. Learn more at <https://eastbayeda.org>.

About Alameda County Community Food Bank: Alameda County Community Food Bank has been at the forefront of hunger relief efforts in the Bay Area since 1985. The Food Bank serves a community in which 1 in 4 residents experiences some level of food insecurity. The Food Bank's core work includes distributing food through a network of approximately 400 food pantries, meal programs, and other community organizations, as well as direct distribution programs including school-based and home delivery distributions. This year, the Food Bank will distribute the equivalent of 48.8 million meals worth of food. In addition to its extensive emergency food programming, ACCFB's hunger-relief efforts include California's largest CalFresh (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) outreach department, anti-hunger advocacy, food as medicine, and food recovery and sustainability efforts. Alameda County Community Food Bank was named Feeding America's Food Bank of the Year in 2016; is an accredited charity by the Better Business Bureau; and for 17 consecutive years has received Charity Navigator's top rating — Four Stars — ranking the organization among the top 1 percent of charities nationwide.

About the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano County: Founded in 1975, The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano is a critical resource, serving local families and residents in our communities. Our mission is leading the fight to end hunger, in partnership with our community and service of our neighbors in need. Through our partnership with Feeding America, the Food Bank distributes nutritious food directly to clients as well as through a network of over 260 partners and nonprofits — serving 65,000 households every month. The Food Bank also strategically engages in advocacy work to raise awareness and mobilize support to end hunger, and we are recognized as one of Feeding America's Hall of Fame honor roll members for excellence in advocacy.