

Moving Up the Ladder: Advocacy 201

Cindy McCown

Vice President of Programs and Services

Second Harvest Food Bank



Strengths

- Support from stakeholders including partner agencies, faith communities and medical providers and funders.
- Build and maintain relationships with elected officials and their staff.
- Establish a trust with County Social Services/Human Services Agencies resulting in testing new initiatives such as AB 402 (dual enrollment) and out posting eligibility workers.



Successes

- Ability to engage local media
- Strategically position op-eds, editorials and reader letters.
- Engage clients to tell their story.
- Utilize data provided by our food bank, CAFB, CFPA, Feeding America, FRAC and other experts to provide credibility.
- Congresswomen Speier took the “food stamp challenge”. She wrote about it and also challenged fellow representatives.



Experiences & Strategies

- Arrange visits to food distribution sites to provide first hand experiences of our work.
- Have an elected official observe the CalFresh application process.
- Facilitate Educational and Take Action Opportunities - Hunger Action Summit “Food as Medicine”
- Partner with others to raise visibility such as American Academy of Pediatrics “Who’s Hungry? You Can’t Tell by Looking” Campaign

