



THE ROADRUNNER ROUNDUP

Spring 2023



MEMBER OF
FEEDING
AMERICA

Roadrunner Food Bank's President and CEO to Retire

Mag Strittmatter, Roadrunner Food Bank's President and CEO informed the organization's Board of Directors of her intent to retire at the end of June this year. The announcement was made by Strittmatter during the January 2023 board meeting. Currently, the board is in midst of the search process. Board and community members involved in the search include:

- Corey Cruz, Vice Chair
- Dinah Garcia-Tolley, Board Chair
- Janice Lucero, former Board Member
- Margie McNett, past Board Chair
- Eugene Sun, MD, Board Member

Corey Cruz is serving as the lead of the search committee. The board is in the process of working with a recruitment firm to assist in the national search for a new person to head up the nonprofit.

Strittmatter has been with Roadrunner Food Bank since January of 2018 and is the 5th person to lead the food bank since its founding in late December 1979. She has led the food bank's response throughout the pandemic when need was skyrocketing as new families, children, seniors and adults were facing hunger, many for the very first time. Under her leadership, the food bank increased the amount of meals and pounds of food provided at a critical juncture for New Mexicans in need. It was the largest amount provided in the organization's 40 plus year history.

In addition, Mag's work while at the food bank has led to increased support to help the organization and its statewide network. For the past few years, the food bank has faced unprecedented increases as inflation has significantly impacted the cost of food and fuel to the food bank and the people that it serves.



After her retirement from the food bank, Mag plans on moving back east to be closer to immediate family.



Make an Impact with FreeWill

Are you looking for a way to make a greater impact and save on your taxes at the same time? You can support Roadrunner Food Bank's mission and help provide nourishing meals to New Mexicans experiencing hunger by donating your appreciated assets and avoid paying capital gains tax. Or, if you are 70.5 or older and have a traditional IRA, you can give a 100 percent tax-free donation directly from your retirement account. We invite you to learn more at rffb.org/stock or rffb.org/qcd.

Meet a Few Members of Our Team!

Roadrunner Food Bank has many phenomenal staff members who work hard to help New Mexicans experiencing hunger every single day. Here are some reflections about what it means to them to live our mission.



Myanisha Andrews is the SeedCorps Program Manager of the Community Initiatives Department and helps run Roadrunner's SeedCorps AmeriCorps Program. She shared, "One of my most memorable experiences so far here at Roadrunner is the moment I realized I work closely with people who care about

others, who are front and center with our community and willing to offer help, resources and lend an ear. The realization that I was surrounded by people who truly care about making an impact and who are willing to do what is best for our fellow New Mexicans was very captivating to me. There are no judgments or assumptions, just big hearts that are willing to help and serve! I faced food insecurity as a child and most of my adult life. I know how it feels to not know where your next meal will come from, so being surrounded by caring individuals that help those that are still in situations like I was growing up, means a lot to me."



Barbara Guenther is the Manager of Volunteer Programs at Roadrunner. Her favorite food bank experiences include having had the chance to work outdoors during the Stamp Out Hunger food drive and at one of our mobile food distributions. She shared, "It was fantastic to work alongside our extraordinary, talented and dedicated volunteers," she shared. "With so much bad news these days, it's inspiring to see and experience community members come together to support our mission!"



Gilbert Armijo is the Warehouse Distribution Lead at Roadrunner and manages a team of 4-5 employees who play a huge role in getting the food out to our agencies and onto the plates of families every day. He shared, "One of my greatest memories so far here at the

food bank would have to be the time I got to serve as extra help for our drive-through distributions. This memory was special to me because as a distribution lead and warehouse worker, I got to see firsthand the families we helped. Car after car we loaded turkeys, bread, milk, assorted dry goods bags/boxes, and produce. Such an amazing experience and it really made me appreciate the work we do here on the distribution team and as an organization overall here at Roadrunner Food Bank. I highly recommend helping at one of our mobile food pantries and interacting not only with families and people we are helping but also with our organization's volunteers, employees, and SeedCorps members who help make all this possible week by week."



The Five T's — Choose Your Own Adventure!

People often ask us how they can get more involved with us and how they can truly make a difference. That's where the Five T's come in.

1. Time means volunteering — we have numerous ways to volunteer including in our warehouse, around the office, taking food assistance calls, inviting people you know to our "Food for Thought Tours," and/or becoming a Table Captain at our fundraising breakfast called *A Place at the Table*.

2. Treasure means making monetary contributions to support our work — you could join our Roadrunner Club and give monthly, join our Full Plate Society and make a five-year pledge, or simply make a one-time donation. Every penny helps.

3. Talent means you have skills to donate, or your company does, and we may need those skills as part of our daily work.

4. Testimonials mean telling your story and/or telling our story. Whether you faced hunger at some point in your life or are connected with us as a volunteer or supporter — share your story with us. Or, conversely, help us tell our story — share our social media posts and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube.

5. Ties mean opening doors for us and helping us grow by leveraging your social and professional networks.

So, choose your own adventure! If you are already doing one **T**, choose an additional one — or maybe even do all five! Contact us at info@rrfb.org or call us at **505.349.8909**.

Purchased Foods Versus Donated Foods — What's the Difference and Why Both Are Important

Food inventory at Roadrunner Food Bank comes from a variety of sources; some of it is purchased, some of it is donated, but all of it is critical to our mission.

Donated Food

Donated food is the bread and butter of food banks. Roadrunner Food Bank's story began with food donations and food rescue. Food donations may come from individuals dropping food off at our facility, food collected through community-based food drives, and food rescued from retail stores and food distributors. Donated food is a bit more labor-intensive for our staff and volunteers because it requires meticulous sorting to guarantee food quality and safety. However, donated food is extremely beneficial as it comes to the food bank at no cost (except the cost of fuel and labor involved in rescuing food from food industry partners). Donated foods supplement our inventory, and though we may solicit donations of specific items, the majority of food that is donated to Roadrunner Food Bank is a random assortment of various items. It means we need to purchase food to serve the needs of specific programs, communities, and at-risk populations.

Also, donated food isn't always consistent in its availability, and the volume of food donations have been in a decline. This trend has affected food banks nationwide as retailers, wholesalers and manufacturers get more efficient, and inflation pinches peoples' pocketbooks. As a result, our team has had to steadily increase the amount of food that we purchase to continue serving our community members.



Purchased Food



Purchased food is food that we buy, usually at wholesale prices, and we purchase food almost daily. We examine our inventory on hand and determine what items we need to

stock up on. Often, we need protein, whether it is meat (canned or frozen) or non-meat proteins such as peanut or almond butter, and fresh produce. Current economic conditions affecting the cost of food are largely related to fuel costs, packaging, transportation, and production. Price increases have an impact on every decision we make related to food purchases and our overall yearly budget.

Ensuring that we have sufficient levels of inventory, and an appropriate variety of foods is absolutely critical to our mission and the work we do every day. Every bit of food, no matter the source, is handled with care for our fellow New Mexicans. Your investment in our mission is vital to ensuring that Roadrunner has sufficient financial resources to continue to purchase nutritious food varieties that are necessary to serve our community members in need.

To learn more about where we get our food from, visit rrfb.org/our-food. To start a food drive, visit rrfb.org/fooddrives.

We Love Our Volunteers!

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we cannot let it go by without expressing our immense gratitude for the amazing impact that volunteers have at Roadrunner Food Bank. Every individual, every hour given, helps us get one step closer to ensuring that every New Mexican has enough to eat. No task is insignificant, which is why every volunteer shift begins and ends with "Thank you."

Here's a bit of what our volunteers achieved last year:

- ♥ 2,919 individuals and 267 groups volunteered in 2022, donating more than 50,000 hours of time.
- ♥ 71 percent of our volunteers helped with tasks in our warehouse, such as sorting produce and dry goods, and repacking bulk foods.
- ♥ 11 percent of our volunteers provided essential person-power at our drive-through distributions, directing traffic and loading food boxes into vehicles.
- ♥ 6 percent of our volunteers worked directly with neighbors through our Healthy Foods Center, an onsite medical referral food pantry located within our Albuquerque facility.
- ♥ 3 percent of our volunteers helped to unload and sort food at the letter carrier food drives.
- ♥ The remaining 9 percent of our volunteers responded to calls on our food assistance and public benefits helplines, assisted with a variety of administrative tasks in all departments, and helped complete maintenance projects, like giving the Healthy Food Center a fresh coat of paint.



Volunteers donate their time once a week, once a month and once a year. A couple of hours may not seem like much, but oh, what a difference it can make. According to the Independent Sector, a single hour of volunteering with us can provide up to 100 meals. That's a month of meals. And so, to each

and every individual who volunteers, we say "Thank You." Your time makes a huge difference in the lives of our neighbors in need.

Learn more at rrfb.org/volunteer or contact volunteer@rrfb.org or 505.349.5358.



Grant Helps Provide Expanded Access to Indigenous Communities



Roadrunner received a Feeding America Equitable Food Access grant, funded partly by Morgan Stanley and General Mills, to improve access to nutritious food among communities of color and rural communities. In addition to using a portion of funds to support food distributions in indigenous and rural communities, Roadrunner worked with our four sister food banks in NM — The Food Depot in Santa Fe, The Community Pantry in Gallup, ECHO Food Bank in Farmington, and Food Bank of Eastern NM in Clovis — to deepen our understanding of food access in indigenous communities.

As a first step, Roadrunner board member Travis Suazo, Tribal Government Relations Manager at PNM, hosted a training on working with indigenous communities that was attended by over 40 staff members across all five food banks.

Next, Roadrunner and our sister food banks selected a focus group facilitation consultant with connections to and experience working with indigenous communities. Four information sessions were held with tribal and pueblo leaders to help develop the focus group questions and outreach strategies.

Five focus groups were conducted over Zoom. Some of the major themes raised by participants were as follows:

- Many live in remote areas and must travel several hours round trip to purchase groceries. Grocery stores that are located in rural communities and “closer” typically have higher prices with lower-quality food.
- Some have experienced racial discrimination and profiling when attempting to purchase food.
- Culturally appropriate foods, food sovereignty, and traditional food systems are of great importance.
- Each tribe and pueblo has unique assets and challenges, and ongoing individualized outreach and relationship building with each tribe or pueblo are key to building and sustaining strong partnerships.

Roadrunner is using the findings from the focus groups to inform both our existing work and the development of future partnerships in indigenous communities.

Stamp Out Hunger

Want to be a part of the largest food drive in the country? On Saturday, **May 13, 2023**, the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) will run the annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Participate by donating a bag or two of non-perishable food and leaving it near your mailbox on the second Saturday of May. Your letter carrier will pick it up on behalf of a hunger relief partner in your area.

Food donations in Albuquerque benefit Roadrunner Food Bank. Many communities in New Mexico also participate. Check with your local letter carrier in your area to confirm participation.

NALC has been a partner in alleviating hunger since 1991, when food banks expressed a greater need for food donations in late spring to help boost food donations going into the busy summer months. For more information about the food drive in Albuquerque, visit rrfb.org/stamp. Letter Carriers in Albuquerque will likely place blue bags in mailboxes reminding the community to donate.



Host a Food and Fund Drive this Summer



The summer is the perfect time to host a food and fund drive for Roadrunner Food Bank. Food and fund drives help build community with friendly competitions at your workplace, your faith community, or your group. There are lots of ideas to kick off and spark food donations, like replacing admission costs with non-perishable food, substituting fund drives in lieu of birthday wish lists, reminding your group to participate through the campaign dates you establish and so much more!

Roadrunner Food Bank needs your support; with school out for the summer, children are at a greater risk of hunger. New Mexico is ranked second in childhood hunger, and adults ages 18-59 make up 50 percent of the people Roadrunner Food Bank serves. Food and fund drives provide a direct connection with our community because it's as simple as reaching into your pantry to donate a can of food that will feed someone facing hunger. Roadrunner Food Bank provides support for food drives with a toolkit and a customized fund drive page for online giving. We also offer boxes to help gather your donated items and, if possible, maybe even an appearance from our mascot, Roadie! Make summer as wonderfully splendid as hosting a food and fund drive to help people experiencing hunger. To sign up and get started, visit rrfb.org/fooddrives.

