

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Food Access Saturday: Uniting to Support Working Families**

The economy may be improving since the Great Recession, but millions of people are still struggling to get by because of underemployment, stagnant wages and rising costs of living. According to the California Poverty Measure (CPM), 78% of Californians who are struggling with food insecurity live in families with at least one working adult. In 2015, United Ways of California published a report that identified that despite being employed; approximately 4,561 residents of western Nevada County do not earn enough salary to afford the basic necessities of health care, housing, transportation and nutritious food. Without a living wage, often one necessity must be sacrificed for another.

In keeping with its goal of making impactful change, United Way of Nevada County continually analyzes the biggest needs of the Nevada County community. The United Way of Nevada County Community Impact Committee determined that community members who are employed and just struggling to get by, that can hardly make rent or pay childcare costs, have difficulty accessing nutritious food from the local distribution agencies to feed their families. Currently in Nevada County, supplemental food is only distributed Monday through Friday during traditional working hours. If struggling families are working during the traditional work week they may not have time to pick up this food. Through data, surveys, and community meetings, the United Way Community Impact Committee has been analyzing this challenge and working with the local community to fill this gap in services.

For several months, United Way has worked with Interfaith Food Ministry (IFM) to research, collaborate and develop a program to support the working individuals and families challenged with food insecurity. "It is a pivotal time at United Way as we look at starting a program that could have a very big impact on helping to feed those households that are struggling to get by in Nevada County." said Megan Timpany, Executive Director of United Way of Nevada County.

On May 13<sup>th</sup>, United Way, in partnership with IFM, will begin a 6 month trial of distributing food on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month to resolve the glaring gap in providing food to the "working poor." United Way will be providing a majority of the funding and manpower while IFM will provide the facilities, supervision, volunteers and some additional funding. The program, **Food Access Saturday: Uniting to Support Working Families** is specifically designed for working individuals and families who need supplemental groceries. The collaboration encourages those who have been struggling with food insecurity, but due to working traditional hours, have never received supplemental food support from IFM to participate in Food Access Saturday. Current IFM clients, who are working and find it difficult or sometimes impossible to come during the weekly distribution, are welcome to participate on Saturday. For more information contact United Way at 274-8111 or [admin@uwnc.org](mailto:admin@uwnc.org).