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Dear Friend,

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TRUST, FAITH, AND HOPE

For the past 36 years, I have lived in the Russian River area, and I have relied on trust, faith, and hope to get me through the challenges in my life. In 2000, I was diagnosed with HIV, and in 2016 I was diagnosed with leukemia. During both of these challenging times I decided to put my trust in medical professionals who helped me through both diagnoses. I was also blessed to receive nutritious food from Food For Thought and support from their Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, who put me on nutrition supplements and helped me keep my calorie intake up so I was strong enough for cancer treatment.

Today, I can say I’m both an HIV survivor and a cancer survivor. I’m so thankful for all the support that I have been given. It helped me keep faith and hope that I would be okay. Now, I feel that it’s time for me to give back. I plan on growing flowers and vegetables to give to Food For Thought. Maybe this will inspire other clients to have trust, faith, and hope that it will all work out.

Providing Nutrition Education and Care
Interview with Nina Redman, RDN

Our Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Nina Redman, helps ensure that our clients are getting the food they need to heal. She provides one-on-one nutrition counseling and teaches bimonthly nutrition education and cooking classes. We sat down with Nina to learn more about her work and the connection between food and health.

Q: Can you explain your one-on-one nutrition counseling?
A: My nutrition counseling is tailored to each client’s needs. I look at a client’s medical information and help them find an eating pattern that is most helpful to them. For example, if a client has diabetes, I help them figure out ways to have the right amount of carbohydrates in their diet. I discuss with the client what he or she currently eats and see how we can make their diet healthier.

Q: What happens in your nutrition education and cooking classes?
A: My nutrition education classes are interactive workshops on a topic such as reading food labels, salt, sugar, and others. They are activity-based and we always serve lunch. I also teach a cooking class where we make a meal, practice cooking techniques, and share healthy recipes. These classes help our clients learn how to be healthy and gain a better understanding of food.

Q: Do you believe that food is medicine?
A: Of course! Eating well can help us heal and stay healthy. I see a lot of people living with HIV and other serious illnesses and those who have access to and eat healthy food often improve their health.

Nina teaches every 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 12-1:30 pm at FFT
Originally from Southern California, Food For Thought client Julie has lived in Sonoma County for most of her adult life. For years she has worked as an in-home care provider for the elderly and as a gardener. But in the fall of 2016, Julie knew that something wasn’t right.

“I just started getting progressively weaker and weaker. I was losing a lot of weight and then I lost my ability to speak.”

After a week in the hospital, Julie was told that she had a rare and life threatening blood disorder called thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura. This blood disorder had caused Julie’s weight loss and two minor strokes, which were the reason for her temporary loss of speech.

“Once I was diagnosed, I spent another three weeks in the hospital. I had to have my blood cleaned and some chemo. I also received treatment for malnutrition because I weighed less than 100 pounds.”

Julie was then able to return home and begin the slow recovery process. It was at one of her follow-up appointments that she was referred to Food For Thought.

“Coming to Food For Thought was one of the few things I got to do socially, while I was recovering. My partner and I would come in each week to get our food and have lunch. It was food as a community, and it fed my soul.”

As Julie regained her health, she decided to begin volunteering with Food For Thought. Unfortunately, Julie faced one more health challenge and came down with shingles on her face. But once she recovered, Julie became a weekly volunteer.

“Volunteering gave me confidence and strength because I had been shaken in my ability to function. I wanted to come in each week and see what I could do. I tried different tasks, but I mostly worked stocking produce so I could build my strength lifting all the fruit and vegetable boxes.”

Throughout 2017, Julie volunteered on Thursday afternoons restocking the produce case and taking client orders at the counter. She enjoyed getting to know all the regular volunteers, clients, and staff members.

“I felt like I was part of a family when I was at Food For Thought and I really needed that. I felt productive and just being able to give to others was important.”

Julie is now transitioning back into the workforce and no longer needs our nutrition support. She has very fond memories of her time as both a client and a volunteer at Food For Thought.

“When I was recovering from my illness, I had no fear of not having food to eat because of Food For Thought. I felt connected while volunteering and giving food to people in need—like we are all in this together.”

“When I was recovering from my illness, I had no fear of not having food to eat because of Food For Thought.”

–Julie
WHAT’S GROWING IN THE GARDEN

From kale to pears, our garden has it all, thanks to the hard work of our garden volunteers and staff gardeners. Garden Manager, Doug Gosling explains the thought process behind what we grow in our beautiful organic garden.

“We grow things that are not commonly donated and would be expensive to buy. Some examples are greens for salad mix, asparagus, and snap beans,” explains Doug. Another priority is to grow food that tastes best fresh, like tomatoes or basil.

When possible, we like to invite clients out to the garden to pick their own fruits and vegetables. “We have a ‘you pick’ policy for clients,” explains Doug. “Last week, clients could go out and pick fresh raspberries. We do this for other crops too like strawberries, kale, tomatoes, and herbs.”

“We Volunteering at FFT is always inspiring. I get to make friends and always get more out of it than I put in.” — Rebecca

The intention of the garden is to create a beautiful space for our clients, and a productive edible landscape. Each year, our volunteers and staff grow and harvest 35 different crops with an annual value of $19,900. As Doug explains, “Fresh organic food is the best food you can give your body. The fact that we can grow beautiful, nutritious, organic fruits and vegetables for our clients is a wonderful gift.”
Help us reach our goal of 30 new GEMs in honor of Food For Thought’s 30th Anniversary!

Become a GEM and provide nutritious food + love to your neighbors living with HIV and other serious illnesses all year long!

Here’s what your monthly donation can do:

- **A $30 gift per month provides**
  - a year’s worth of fresh produce delivered to a homebound or homeless client

- **A $50 gift per month provides**
  - 200 bowls of hearty chef-prepared soup served at our community lunch program

- **A $150 gift per month provides**
  - an entire year’s groceries for one client: fresh fruits and vegetables, chicken and fish, eggs, cheese, yogurt, and healthy grains

Plus, GEMs receive special invitations to donor events, limited mail solicitations, and the joy of helping feed our neighbors in need.

Ready to become a GEM? Simply set up a monthly donation, in any amount, at www.FFTfoodbank.org or contact Kaaren Van Dyke, at (707) 887-1647 x 102 or KaarenV@FFTfoodbank.org.

See page 11 for a full list of our wonderful GEMs!

GEM SPOTLIGHT: Lucy Barnett

“**It’s so easy to give every month and consistently support the cause I believe in.”**

– Lucy

In the 1980s, I was a volunteer with Face to Face and picked up groceries from Food For Thought for my client. I saw firsthand how food made a difference and improved his life. I later became a volunteer at Food For Thought because I was impressed with how organized the agency was at serving so many clients.

I also support Food For Thought financially by making monthly donations through the GEM (Giving Every Month) program. Being retired, I can’t make large gifts anymore, but I can give a little every month. It’s so easy to give and consistently support the cause I believe in. This year, FFT needs 30 new GEMs. I encourage you to think about it. You won’t regret becoming a GEM!
Green Goddess Quinoa Salad

Serves: 6 Prep Time: 1hr

1 jalapeño
3 cups greens such as amaranth, mustards, chard, arugula, or dandelion
2 lemons, juiced
1 cup parsley
1/2 cup cilantro
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 avocados, remove skin and seed
3 tbsp pine nuts
2 tsp salt
1/2 cup olive oil
3 cups vegetable broth
1 cup quinoa, soaked and drained
1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1 red pepper, half-inch dice
1 bunch green onions, chopped
2 tbsp edible flowers

1. Fry or grill jalapeño coated with a little oil, remove seeds and veins from jalapeño.
2. To make the dressing: pulse garden greens, lemon juice, parsley, cilantro, garlic, avocado, pine nuts, salt, jalapeno, and olive oil in a food processor until smooth.
3. Add broth to large stock pot, add quinoa and bring to a low simmer. When the quinoa is just tender, drain and spread out on a cookie sheet to cool.
4. Add dressing to quinoa, add cherry tomatoes, diced red pepper, and green onion. Stir thoroughly, garnish with edible flowers.

“This is a great summer recipe for using the bounty of the garden. You can supplement the greens in the sauce for whatever you have on hand. Wilder greens have a bit more of a bite to them, so you can balance the recipe with more basil and cilantro or a bit more avocado and olive oil. The cherry tomatoes and ripe peppers add sweetness, and the quinoa adds a nutty pop to it all. Enjoy!”
— Chef Coby Leibman

Call for Volunteers

FFT VOLUNTEERS DO IT ALL!
From running food drives at local markets to delivering food, volunteers make sure that our neighbors living with HIV and other serious illnesses receive the food they need to heal. Find a volunteer opportunity that’s right for you at FFTfoodbank.org and join us!

BECOME AN AMBASSADOR
Support FFT’s biggest fundraiser of the year–Dining Out For Life on Thursday, November 29th. Select a role as a breakfast, lunch, or dinner ambassador from restaurants across Sonoma County. Sign up to volunteer at FFTfoodbank.org or contact Helen Myers at (707) 887-1647 x 103.
For the past 30 years, Food For Thought has provided food and love to our neighbors living with serious illnesses in Sonoma County. Our agency began with a grassroots effort: volunteers collecting and bringing food to their neighbors living with AIDS. From then until now, we are neighbors helping neighbors. It is your support that makes it possible for us to meet the nutritional needs of our neighbors living with HIV and expand to feed our neighbors living with other serious illnesses.

I am proud to report that 2017 was a great year from a financial perspective. Food For Thought has stable, diversified revenue streams including grants, government funding, individual gifts, sponsorships, event revenue, and bequests. New in 2018 is a three-year program serving Medi-Cal patients living with congestive heart failure, funded by the California Department of Health Care Services.

Food For Thought has a bright and growing future, thanks to your generous financial support and volunteer service.

Diana Laczkowski, President of the Food For Thought Board of Directors

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During 2017, Food For Thought invested $25,619 in improvements to our facilities and received an annual distribution of $71,000 from its endowment fund for client services. Not included above was $45,171 in Depreciation Expense. For more information about Food For Thought’s endowment, please contact RonK@FFFoodbank.org. Our finances are audited by an independent accounting firm, Goranson & Associates, Inc.
Here's what we accomplished together...

**THE NUMBERS**
- Distributed food for **310,527** healthy meals
- **Free** of charge

**FACTS ABOUT OUR CLIENTS**
- **68%** live on an annual income of $18,000 or less
- **47%** live in Santa Rosa
- **10%** are homeless

**TOP 5 DIAGNOSES**
- HIV/AIDS
- Depression/Anxiety
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Cancer

**IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERS**
- **408** volunteers
- **28,171** volunteer hours
- **$819,494** Value

**THE RESULTS**
- **96%** of clients reported feeling cared about, less isolated and lonely
- **94%** of clients increased consumption of fruits and vegetables
- **96%** of clients reported feeling better physically and having more energy
For 30 years, Food For Thought has provided lifesaving nutrition services to our neighbors living with HIV. Today, we serve many clients that have recently been diagnosed with HIV. However, the majority of our clients are long-term HIV survivors.

The effects of HIV over the long-term vary, but most medical experts agree that HIV speeds up the aging process, adding about ten years to a person’s age. This is true in FFT’s client population, where many of our long-term HIV survivors experience the following issues:

- Other illnesses, such as cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, and diabetes
- Dementia and other cognitive issues
- Social isolation and stigma, which unfortunately increase with age
- Poverty: the majority earn less than $18,000 per year

The needs of our aging HIV-positive clients continue to increase, and these clients are having a harder and harder time taking care of themselves. FFT is committed to meeting these increased needs—we’re now providing more home deliveries, hot lunches, and prepared meals than ever before. And as always, we provide a whole lot of love and social support along with the healthy food we give out. By providing these services, we are helping our clients meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and remain healthy and independent.

DID YOU KNOW?

25% of clients have lived with HIV for 30 years

60% of clients have lived with HIV for 20 years

85% of clients have lived with HIV for 10 years

Food For Thought’s work to feed those aging with HIV is only possible with your support. Thank you to our donors and volunteers for making our work possible.

A Heartfelt Thank You to all our Donors!

Donations have been made in honor of...

Ryan Boduch  Nancy Giambastiani  Prasant Tripathy
Rodney DeMartini  Nancy Giannini

Donations have been made in memory of...

Samir Baker  Daya Kaplan  Erik Orav  Stewart Scofield
Dexter R. Clary, Jr.  Brian Kelly  Dennis Paynter  Christopher Shore
Larry Duling  Ted Lawyer  Stuart Peot  Wayne Swisher
Roger Hannegan  Allen Lucas  Michael Price

A Heartfelt Thank You to all our Donors!
Julie and Tom Atwood
Ron and Linda Backstrom
David Baylor and Theresa Helmer
Bethlehem Foundation
Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, Inc.
Community Foundation Sonoma County
Mark K. Cooper
Charles A. Frueauf Foundation
Gilead Foundation
Gilead Sciences
Gimbel Foundation
Impact 100 Redwood Circle
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Estate of Roy Kaufman
Lazy Bear Fund, Inc.
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M.A.C. AIDS Fund
Mert Preston
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The Elder California Foundation
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The Heck Foundation
Patricia London
Laurie Plant
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Wells Fargo Foundation

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Alan Beckstead
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Barry and Gail Ben-Zion
Steve and Robin Black / Uptick Vineyards
Larry and Cecilia Bridges
Naomi and Justice Brilliant
and Timothy Holt
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Animal Hospital of Sebastopol
Marie Chandoha
Daniel W. Clark
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Mark and Pamela Olson / Forestville Pharmacy
Tim Oxford / Oxford Construction
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Redwood Hill Farm and Creamery
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Don Ferrell
Robert Fiedler
Dominque Flores
Jennifer Foley
George J. Fossett
Randi Francis

GEM (MONTHLY DONORS)

The DISH, Summer 2018 | 11
Thursday, November 29, 2018
Restaurants throughout Sonoma County will donate 25% or 50% of your purchase to Food For Thought.
VISIT FFTFOODBANK.ORG/DINING-OUT-FOR-LIFE FOR MORE INFO.