

Three Square Food Bank: Vitally Needed in Today's Crisis

I'm proud to serve on the Board of Directors for Three Square Food Bank, an organization that has stepped up to help the thousands of people in southern Nevada who have lost their jobs and businesses due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 virus. The need for food in our community was already high before this crisis, and in a normal year, Three Square distributes more than 41 million meals – the equivalent of more than 50 million pounds of food and grocery products – through its network of community partners.

On March 11, Three Square went into action with a disaster response plan that took several factors into account: the increased need for food in the community, the sudden decline in food donations from retail partners, reduced on-site staff support, and social distancing limitations on volunteer efforts. Three Square's executive team, led by Brian Burton, also had to figure out how to distribute extra food to those in need while maintaining low-contact procedures. Even with all these challenges, Brian and his staff managed to increase food distribution from one million pounds a week to more than 1.3 million pounds.

Children were especially impacted by the Clark County School District's decision to shut down schools, since many of them depend on free or low-cost school breakfast and lunches, as well as backpacks filled with food for weekends. Thankfully, CCSD continues to provide breakfast and lunch to students during school closures, with distribution stations at various schools located throughout the valley.

In an effort to serve as many people as possible, Three Square collaborated with select agency partners and volunteers who have been assisting with food distribution at emergency sites located throughout the valley, ranging from schools, churches and nonprofit agencies, to three Station Casinos properties. In keeping with social distancing precautions, 20 of these sites are 100% drive-through only. Three Square also continues to serve food-insecure seniors through a combination of mobile food distributions and home-delivered groceries.

In order to provide all this emergency food assistance related to the COVID-19 medical and economic crisis, Three Square established a Coronavirus Emergency Food Fund. Private donations of food and cash have made these emergency responses possible, but more funding is needed to keep up their good work. Volunteers are also needed, at off-site locations where food can be safely sorted, packed and distributed in open-air spaces large enough to accommodate social distancing.

I'm amazed at how quickly and efficiently Brian Burton, his team, and community volunteers have responded to this crisis. Hats off to them all for helping southern Nevada when we need them most.

For more information on how you can volunteer or donate to the Coronavirus Emergency Food Fund, please visit threesquare.org or call 702-644-3663.

Best Regards,



Dallas Haun
Chairman, Nevada State Bank