

MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MEND Summer Food and Fund Drive  
A Little Cash Goes a Long Way to Feed the Hungry**

In the past two years, the number of clients served by MEND's food bank has more than doubled to as many as 25,000 people – your Valley neighbors – who otherwise would go hungry. The economy has taken its toll on all of us, but it's been especially hard on the Northeast Valley where MEND – Meeting Each Need with Dignity – has served families in need for 40 years.

Summertime is the toughest time for food banks, a fact driving MEND's Summer Hunger Campaign, \$40 for 40 Years. The goal is to collect \$40 donations from 1,000 businesses, churches, organizations and individuals to match a \$40,000 donation to the Stop Summer Hunger Campaign.

MEND is urging community members to open their hearts to help their neighbors. Packing lunch for work each day instead of eating out, skipping that coffee stop on the way to the office... there are so many ways that the more fortunate can save a few dollars to help families who can't afford basic groceries.

"Three or four dollars here and there add up quickly, and if for a few days each week people set that money aside, we could wipe out hunger in the Valley," said Marianne Haver Hill, MEND's President and Chief Executive Officer. "MEND is urging offices, churches, organizations and other to work together to hold their own food drives or collect \$40 – or more – to help us celebrate 40 years serving the community by continuing our mission through the summer."

At MEND headquarters in Pacoima, clothing, food, job training, computer instruction, English as a second language classes, showers for the homeless, tutoring for children, medical, dental and vision care and other services are offered to struggling families. The organization is volunteer run, spending just 5 percent of its total budget on administration and fund-raising. MEND does not apply for government grants, to ensure that it is unencumbered by red tape and restrictions.

For 40 years, MEND has fed the hungry, and yet has been challenged each summer as donations slow down and client applications go up. As state funding to the poor is scaled back to help balance the budget, families in need turn to MEND for more help to get back on their feet. That need is very real: MEND goes through almost 250,000 pounds of donated food each month. And as the largest food bank in the Valley, MEND helps serve more than 30 smaller food pantries and distribution programs throughout the area.

Groups and individuals interested in helping the \$40 for 40 Years campaign for July and August may contact Erick Lopez at 818-686-7335 or erick@mendpoverty.org. Or donors can participate in MEND's Virtual Food Drive by going to MEND's secured website, [www.mendpoverty.org](http://www.mendpoverty.org).

**ABOUT MEND**

MEND serves as many as 32,000 poverty-level clients each month while keeping operating costs at or under 5%, is the largest, most efficient and most comprehensive poverty-relief organization in the San Fernando Valley. MEND's mission is to break the bonds of poverty by providing basic human needs and a pathway to self-reliance.