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**ALAMEDA COUNTY CELEBRATES RECORD-BREAKING “STONE SOUP” FOOD DRIVE**

An outpouring of compassion and creativity helped Alameda County’s 2016 Stone Soup Holiday Food Drive and Design Competition achieve unprecedented success in raising employee donations to the Alameda County Community Food Bank.

County employees donated more than 9 tons of food and \$14,000 in cash over the past five weeks to help put meals on the tables of less fortunate residents during the coming holiday season. Both numbers represent new records in Alameda County’s annual Holiday Food Drive.

Employees also used donated food items to fashion creative displays that currently adorn public areas of many County buildings. The displays are designed to engage visitors about the issue of hunger in the community. The creations will soon be dismantled and their edible components will be donated to the Food Bank to help provide nutritious holiday meals to residents struggling to put food on the table.

“Once again, our Alameda County employees have shown through their generosity that they are truly committed to public service and making our community a better place,” said Susan S. Muranishi, Alameda County Administrator. “When we mobilize our 9,600 employees, we really can make a difference.”

To learn more about Alameda County’s Stone Soup Holiday Food Drive and Design Competition, and to view pictures of employees’ many inspired creations, go to: <http://www.acgov.org/government/news/stonesoup.htm>

On Tuesday, the Fourth Annual Stone Soup Food Drive and Design Competition culminated with an awards ceremony led by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, which expressed its appreciation to each of the 14 County departments that participated in this year’s Stone Soup Food Drive.

A panel of judges chose the 2016 Stone Soup Awards based on creativity, inspiring themes, incorporation of food donations into their designs, as well as the most money and food raised. This year’s winners are:

**Best Recipe Award** (Highest overall judges’ scores combining creativity and total food donations and funds raised):

- **The Alameda County Administrator’s Office** for its “**Souper Mario World**” display. The display features iconic symbols from the Super Mario Video Game – including a 10-foot Souper Mario, a 5 ½ -foot-tall plant piranha that doubles as a receptacle where passersby can deposit donated food items for the Food Drive. The display symbolizes Mario ending hunger as he travels throughout the County to feed everyone.
- **The Alameda County’s Information Technology Department** for its “**Pokémon – Go End Hunger**” display. The display is inspired by the popular “Pokémon Go” game and is fronted by a human-sized smartphone frame for onlookers to peer through. The display also includes a Pokéball and two well-known Pokémon characters, Pikachu and Squirtle.

**Chef’s Award** (Highest combined judges’ scores for inspirational use of food donations and creativity):

- **The Alameda County Public Works Agency** for its “**Little Engine That Could,**” which incorporates nearly 5,000 pounds of donated food into a massive train-inspired display that represents the mix of hard work, perseverance and optimism that helped the “Little Train” complete its mission of helping others in need.
- **The Alameda County General Services Agency** for “**The Olympics,**” an Olympic Games-theme display that includes an Olympic flame, a monument showing past Olympians from Alameda County and a 3D rendition of the Alameda County Community Food Bank logo made of chili cans.

**Most Creative Award** (Highest judges' score for creative and imaginative quality of display):

- **The Auditor-Controller Agency** for **“Kicking Out Hunger,”** a football-themed display that was inspired by one employee who noted that Alameda County’s geographic shape resembles a boot – in this case one that is giving hunger the boot in Alameda County. The display incorporates more than 1,300 pounds of donated food.
- **The Alameda County Department of Child Support Services** for its display, **“Helping Feed Alameda County Families with Dory & Friends.”** The display, inspired by the popular children’s movie “Finding Dory,” incorporates more than 1,500 pounds of food.

**Most Inspiring Award** (Highest judges' score for use of food donations in display):

- **The Alameda County Department of Human Resource Services** for **“End Hunger – The Mission is Possible!”** a display that features “Mission Impossible” star Tom Cruise saving the day in the fight against hunger.
- **The Alameda County District Attorney’s Office** for its **“Stop Human Trafficking”** display, constructed with more than 1,400 cans of food to reinforce the office’s mission to end human trafficking in the community.
- **The Alameda County Community Development Agency** for **“Help Hungry Families – Everyone Deserves Their Slice of the Pie,”** showing a slice of pie and the obligatory steaming cup of coffee to send the message that everyone deserves a tasty meal.

**Making a Difference Award** (to departments that dedicated their time and efforts to making a difference)

- **The Alameda County Assessor’s Office** for **“Plug-In and Drive Away Hunger,”** a display focusing on an employee-designed model of a Tesla Model S filled with food.
- **The Alameda County Sheriff’s Office** for **“The Night Before Christmas and the Book of Life,”** two displays created by competing teams within the Sheriff’s Office.
- **The Alameda County Registrar of Voters Office**, which created a short video called **“One CAN make a difference”** that depicts employees donating items to the food drive and urges passersby to also contribute. Employees took part in the effort while completing the vote count for the November 8 General Election.

**Stone Soup Spirit Award** (to departments that demonstrated their Alameda County team spirit):

- **The Office of the County Counsel** for **“Steam Rolling Through Hunger,”** another train-inspired display constructed with cans, boxes and sacks of food.
- **The Alameda County Social Services Agency’s Enterprise Self-Sufficiency Center** in East Oakland for **“Wishing Everyone Eats Well,”** in which soup cans and other items are arranged in the shape of a wishing well where anyone can drop in a coin and believes any spoken wish will be granted.
- **The Alameda County Social Services Agency’s Eden Multi-Service Center in Hayward** for **“Wipe Out Hunger,”** which adopts a surfing theme with food boxes and cans arranged into rolling waves.

A new **Leadership Award** was presented to the **Board of Supervisors**, for demonstrating drive and initiative in taking action against hunger. The Board built its own **Holiday Food House** with cans of food, sacks of rice and a roof made of ramen noodles.

The Alameda County Community Food Bank will gladly accept donations through the holidays and beyond to help the less fortunate in our community. For every \$1 donated, \$6 worth of food is provided to those in need. To donate, go to <http://www.accfb.org/>. Every dollar counts!