



Stepping Up and Stepping In

While many of us viewed COVID as a crisis to survive, our nonprofit community heard a clarion call. As days turned into weeks and the number of people in need grew, our 'front line' health and human service organizations found themselves expanding programs and services, while stretching to identify and address new and increasing needs.

Ashley Quadros of [Hospitality House](#), already sharing a close working relationship with public entities, described their response as follows, "When the pandemic hit, [Hospitality House](#) shifted from a single overnight shelter into a 24/7 shelter operation... Today, we've maintained this expansion because more people need help right now. I am proud to share there have been no lapses in services and instead, services and new programming have only continued to expand."

The [Nevada County Food Bank](#) and [Interfaith Food Ministry](#) both managed to increase their scope of service in spite of dramatic reductions in the number of available volunteers and stringent new health protocols. Phil Alonso, Executive Director at [IFM](#) shares "... we NEVER had to close when the pandemic hit or at any time since then. Overnight, our fabulous staff and volunteers completely switched to a Drive-Thru model so that our regular food distribution events were never disrupted." [Interfaith Food Ministry](#) saw a 40% increase in unique individuals served from 2019 to 2020 with three times the number of new families coming for assistance with supplemental groceries in the first 6 months of the pandemic. They also increased the amount of food they provided per visit from 4 bags to 5.5 per family. Their 2021 data continues to show a higher-than-usual need for food assistance in our community.

[Gold Country Senior Services'](#) Executive Director, Janeth Marroletti, says that, "Our agency continues to provide meals to seniors in need and we are expected to triple the number of meals we provide to seniors this year due the pandemic". They are also working hard on establishing a Senior Center in Grass Valley. [GCSS](#) has played a key part of Nevada County's COVID infrastructure by making its new space available for testing.

The [FREED Center for Independent Living](#) has also reached new heights in spite of challenging circumstances. They doubled the number of people they were able to help transition out of nursing home care, they provided Chromebooks and technological support to connect seniors

and people with disabilities to the resources needed to interface with virtual services and socialize safely while they were under stay at home orders. They have also conducted more than 500 vaccine outreach calls and supported around 80 individuals with disabilities and seniors to get vaccinated.

More impressive than any individual organization's response are the partnerships that were formed to meet these pressing needs. For example, [FREED](#), [Gold Country Senior Services](#), and the [Food Bank of Nevada County](#) teamed up to create a successful food delivery system that is still serving community members in need. Additionally, [Hospitality House](#), [County of Nevada](#), [FREED](#), [Community Beyond Violence](#) and [Turning Point](#) joined forces to expand shelter services into local motels, an expansion of services that continues today.

Companionship, independence, food, and safe shelter are the foundation of a strong and healthy community. Please support these organizations as they look for ways to continue and improve services in an everchanging landscape. You can visit the [CNL Nonprofit Wish List](#) to learn how a gift can help.

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