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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK RECEIVES \$50,000 GRANT FROM *HUNGER IS* TO FIGHT CHILDHOOD HUNGER

Grants awarded by Hunger Is, the joint charitable initiative of the Albertsons Companies Foundation, doing business as the Safeway Foundation and the Entertainment Industry Foundation, will support efforts to provide daily breakfasts and eradicate childhood hunger throughout 33 states.

Santa Rosa, CA – March 8, 2017 – The Redwood Empire Food Bank (REFB) has received a \$50,000 grant from *Hunger Is* to help solve childhood hunger. The Albertsons Companies Foundation, doing business as the Safeway Foundation and the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF) announced that *Hunger Is*, their joint charitable program designed to raise awareness and funds to end childhood hunger in America, awarded over \$4.6 million to fund 110 programs that aim to feed hungry children living in neighborhoods throughout the country.

Hunger Is again invited qualified organizations to respond with approaches to increase access to free and reduced-cost school breakfast, to improve the nutritional quality of breakfast programs, and to expand weekend, summer and vacation feeding programs. The funds were raised through the *Hunger Is* fall in-store fundraiser at Safeway and the rest of the 2,300 locations in the Albertsons Companies family of stores in 33 states and the District of Columbia. The fundraiser generated donations through customer purchase of participating products as well as customer donations at the check stand. To date, *Hunger Is* has raised more than \$18 million and funded 273 programs. Feeding America, a nation-wide network of food banks, including the Redwood Empire Food Bank, was a national beneficiary and a current partner of *Hunger Is*. A list of all grantees can be found at hungeris.org/grantawards.

The \$50,000 *Hunger Is* grant will go towards feeding children in the local community living in households that struggle to provide sufficient and healthy meals, including supporting daily breakfast. Currently only half of the 22 million children in the U.S. eligible for free or reduced-cost breakfast receive this most important meal of the day. Students qualifying for free or reduced-

cost school lunch are automatically eligible for breakfast. However, not all schools participate, and some schools provide the breakfast program before school hours, making participation difficult for students who cannot arrive at school early (compared to in-classroom breakfast programs).

As Sonoma County's leader in hunger-relief, the REFB responds to the immediate needs of 82,000 people facing hunger through 15 innovative programs. The generous grant from *Hunger Is* will help to provide vital funds needed to fuel the REFB's Farm to Family School Pantry Program (FFSP), which provides fresh produce, healthy groceries, and nutrition education to families with children in high-need schools. Providing children with foods that will ensure a well-balanced diet is at the heart of our FFSP. This funding will allow the REFB to continue distributing nutrient-dense breakfast foods three times a month, including protein-rich foods such as fresh eggs and 2% milk.

"We are so grateful for this generous grant from *Hunger Is*. It is with support such as this that we are able to ensure adequate nutrition is accessible to the thousands of children in Sonoma County who do not always know when they will eat their next meal," shared Hillary Jarcik, REFB Director of Development. "Through our Farm to Family School Pantry Program we are able to provide the healthy and nutritious foods that children in our community need to be active and engaged in school, and grow up healthy and strong."

More information about the issue is available at [HungerIs.org](https://www.hungeris.org), along with simple ways for individuals to donate.

About *Hunger Is*

Hunger Is, a joint charitable program of the Albertsons Companies Foundation and the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), is designed to build awareness and raise funds in an effort to eradicate childhood hunger in America. Funds raised through *Hunger Is* directly benefit programs focused on combating childhood hunger and improving health-related outcomes. For more information, visit www.HungerIs.org.

About Redwood Empire Food Bank

The Redwood Empire Food Bank (REFB) is the largest hunger-relief organization serving north coastal California from Sonoma County to the Oregon border. Since 1987, the REFB has provided food and nourishment to those facing hunger, currently serving 82,000 children, families and seniors in Sonoma County, while striving to end hunger in our community. The REFB collaborates with local and regional partners to obtain and distribute 15+ million pounds of food annually, the equivalent of more than 34,000 meals every day. Through more than 200 of our own direct service distributions and

partnerships with 177 other hunger-relief organizations, we form a network of over 450 weekly and monthly distribution sites serving low-income residents in Sonoma, Lake, Del Norte, Mendocino and Humboldt counties. Visit www.refb.org or call 707-523-7900 to learn more.

About the Albertsons Companies Foundation

Founded in 2001, the Albertsons Companies Foundation, formerly the Safeway Foundation, supports causes that impact our customers' lives. Albertsons Companies stores provide the opportunity to mobilize funding and create awareness in our neighborhoods through the generous contributions by our customers, our employees' passion and partnerships with our vendors. We focus on giving locally in the areas of health and human services, hunger relief, education and helping people with disabilities. Albertsons Companies and the Albertsons Companies Foundation have invested \$2 billion in our neighborhoods since 2001. For more information about the Albertsons Companies Foundation, visit www.albertsonscorporation.com/foundation.

About the Entertainment Industry Foundation

Founded in 1942, the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF) is a multifaceted organization that occupies a unique place in the world of philanthropy. By mobilizing and leveraging the powerful voice and creative talents of the entertainment industry, as well as cultivating the support of organizations (public and private) and philanthropists committed to social responsibility, EIF builds awareness and raises funds, developing and enhancing programs on the local, national and global level that facilitate positive social change. For more information, visit www.eifoundation.org.