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**United Food Bank**

**Celebrates 35 Years of Providing Help to Community**

**Mesa, Ariz., July 1, 2018**…This year, United Food Bank (UFB) celebrates 35 years of providing vital food services to the East Valley and eastern Arizona, working with 222 member agencies and serving more than 228,000 residents.

Throughout this anniversary year, UFB will host events to honor volunteers and donors, and will participate in a variety of community activities to raise awareness of community needs and how UFB works to address them:

* Cooler expansion?
* Volunteer recognition (or was that done at Friends Breakfast?)
* Any recognitions/proclamations from the City of Mesa?

United Food Bank’s history is deeply-rooted in the East Valley and dates back to July of 1983 when it began operations as United Food Distribution Center, Inc. It started as a nonprofit joint venture among East Valley cities and their respective United Ways to gather and distribute food to East Valley organizations that were helping feed those in need. The organization assisted 28 different community partners that first year, and some are still partners today like the Mesa Senior Center, The Apache Junction Food Bank, and the Chandler Christian Community Center. In 1985, United Food Bank’s service geography expanded to its current area of Gila, Pinal and southern Apache and Navajo Counties along with the original service area in the East Valley of Maricopa County.

United Food Bank has grown to meet the increased need from people in our service area. Our service area of 19,608 square miles includes some of the most remote areas in the state -- Places like Sanders, Arizona, where there are only a couple places to purchase food, and the next town is 40 miles away.

Our mission is to stabilize the lives of hungry, low-income people within our service area by actively acquiring, storing and distributing large quantities of wholesome and nutritious foods to our network of community and strategic partners, combined with advocacy and educational initiatives that enhance lives.

For more information on UFB’s anniversary activities, visit their website at [www.unitedfoodbank.org](http://www.unitedfoodbank.org) and keep up to date by following their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/UnitedFoodBank.

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