

For Immediate Release

Contact: Laura Coyle, Director of Marketing
941-544-5878 or lcoyle@allfaithsfoodbank.org



All Faiths Food Bank receives largest grant in its history: Barancik Foundation awards \$626,225 for fresh produce programs

Sarasota – January 26, 2015 – Valerie Snell, 56, is a breast cancer survivor and a regular visitor to All Faiths Food Bank’s Mobile Pantry. She lives in Sarasota with a large family and gets by on monthly disability payments. “I use the cucumbers from the Food Bank to help me detox from the chemotherapy,” she said. “It’s so expensive in the grocery store to buy fresh vegetables and I could never afford that on my own.”

At All Faiths Food Bank, stories like Valerie’s are all too common. Senior citizens, disabled veterans, and families with limited incomes are forced to make difficult choices about the type of food they buy. They regularly choose between paying for shelter or food, and often select foods that are filling but low in nutritional value. In the long term, this contributes to health issues like diabetes and high blood pressure, and in children, hunger inhibits learning, causes behavioral issues, and negatively impacts grade level reading. For so many of these families, the cost and availability of fresh fruit and vegetables is simply out of reach.

All Faiths Food Bank has been awarded the largest grant in its 26-year history from the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation. The three-year grant of \$626,255 will develop a sustainable produce donation and distribution system and expand the Food Bank’s Sprout Mobile Farm Market program. This grant will also support All Faiths’ fundraising efforts as funding for years two and three require matching gifts from other donors.

“All Faiths Food Bank provides critical services to residents in our region who are hungry,” said Teri A Hansen, President and CEO of the Barancik Foundation. “Distributing more fresh produce allows the Food Bank to better serve this vulnerable population and tackle the two major health issues facing the poor—obesity and diabetes.”

Providing fresh produce is a priority and a challenge for All Faiths, the hub of hunger relief in Sarasota and DeSoto Counties. Through its “Sprout Route,” which brings fruit and veggies to areas of highest need, and its Mobile Pantry Program which provides produce and perishables like meat, in 2015, 2.25 million pounds of the 8 million pounds distributed were fresh from the garden. Due to its seasonal nature, many times during the year the produce must be purchased, and sourcing produce in a timely manner is critical to cost and distribution. Building a more sustainable process and accessing local food donors will significantly increase the amount of produce distributed and will lower the cost.

“We are thrilled to have been awarded this grant from the Barancik Foundation,” said Sandra Frank, CEO at All Faiths. “The impact it will have on our residents in need is substantial. Their generosity will allow us to provide a healthier future for the children and families we serve, and in turn, make our entire community stronger.”

As All Faiths adjusts to the rising demand for food assistance, and expands its programming and capacity to serve the most vulnerable in our area, the need for support from the community grows as

well. Long-term grant funding like the Barancik Foundation award allows for innovation, logistical improvements, and measurable outcomes. Together, the Food Bank envisions a stronger, healthier future for the community it serves.

To support the programs of All Faiths Food Bank, or find a Sprout Route or Mobile Pantry Program schedule, visit www.allfaithsfoodbank.org or call 941-379-6333.

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About All Faiths Food Bank

All Faiths Food Bank, awarded a consecutive 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, is a member of Feeding America and the hub of the hunger-relief system in DeSoto and Sarasota counties. Last year, All Faiths Food Bank distributed 8 million pounds of food equating to 6.5 million meals through 184 pantries, soup kitchens, churches, community centers, schools, and programs. Its mission is to lead the community to end hunger. For more information call 941-379-6333 or visit www.allfaithsfoodbank.org.

About the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation

The Charles and Margery Barancik family has long believed in the power of philanthropy to shape our world and enrich the lives of all people. It was the expression of this belief that led them in 2014 to establish the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation—a private, family foundation located in Sarasota, Florida. The Barancik Foundation creates initiatives and awards grants in Sarasota and beyond in the areas of arts and humanities, education and science, humanitarian causes, medical research, and the environment. For further information, please contact Kelly Romanoff at KRomanoff@BarancikFoundation.org.