

Stocking the Pantry Episode Three: Stories of Dignified Access and Nourishment

[00:00:11] Colby D'Onofrio: Welcome to *Stocking the Pantry*, a CalFresh Healthy Living podcast from Leah's Pantry, where we share fresh thoughts and fruitful conversations. On this show, we discuss any and all things community nutrition, food equity, and nutrition security. This is a space for thought leaders to share success stories and strategies for equity-centered and resilience-building initiatives. We hope to foster collaboration and community, as well as leverage strengths among listeners, guests, and hosts as we share ideas and dreams of building a more equitable future where everyone has access to healthful nourishing food.

[music]

[00:00:55] Colby D'Onofrio: Hello, Tee, how are you today?

[00:00:58] Tee Atwell: I am doing pretty well, how are you, Colby?

[00:01:00] Colby D'Onofrio: I'm feeling good. I'm feeling good. The sun is shining. That gives me some oomph to get my butt out of bed in the morning. I'm feeling good today and really, really excited to share this conversation and this episode with everyone today.

[00:01:16] Tee Atwell: I am super stoked about this episode as well. We have some great speakers. Before we actually get into that, I overheard what I think is a hilarious joke, and I'm just wondering if you would like to hear it.

[00:01:31] Colby D'Onofrio: Oh, definitely. 110% in fact.

[00:01:35] Tee Atwell: Okay, here we go. How do you make an egg roll?

[00:01:40] Colby D'Onofrio: I feel like this is going to be a punny answer, but I want to start describing the literal steps to make an egg roll, [laughs] which I actually don't know. [laughs] To be honest, Tee, I don't know, how do you make an egg roll?

[00:01:54] Tee Atwell: You push it [unintelligible 00:01:56]

[laughter]

[00:02:05] Colby D'Onofrio: Today we're really excited to share a really wonderful conversation that we got to have with Francis Villalpando and Sharon Plunkett. Francis is the nutrition services manager for the LA Regional Food Bank, and she strategically manages programs to help Angelino communities adopt healthy lifestyles. Francis joined the nutrition services team at the LA Regional Food Bank in 2020 to support pantry leaders with client-centered best practices. She is trained in copy editing, culinary arts, and the Nutrition Pantry Program implementation. In case anyone isn't

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familiar with our Nutrition Pantry Program, it's also referred to as NPP. If you hear us saying that throughout the episode, this is what we're referring to.

The Nutrition Pantry Program provides a process for implementing practical client-centered strategies for a more health-focused environment in all types of food distributions. These are often food pantries or mobile pantries. They might be at a college site or within a larger food bank. Sometimes they're just really, really small pantries that are operating out of like a church basement.

I have had the opportunity to work a bit closely with Francis because she is a very seasoned implementer and has provided such wonderful feedback to the Leah's Pantry team about the implementation process, areas that she could use more support in, and also the successes that implementers are having. She holds a Master's of public administration and a Bachelor of Arts in art history from California State University, Long Beach.

[00:03:46] Tee Atwell: Wow. What a diverse background and experience, and I really feel like Sharon shares that same quality of having that diversity and experience. Sharon is the senior director of Workforce Development and Social Innovation at St. Joseph Center, which is a regional Los Angeles nonprofit dedicated to equity, ending homelessness, and even balancing the economic scales for the Angelino communities.

[00:04:11] Colby D'Onofrio: I actually recently learned that St. Joseph Center operates the largest food pantry on the westside of LA. Did you know that?

[00:04:19] Tee Atwell: I had no idea. Wow.

[00:04:22] Colby D'Onofrio: Yes. Along with all the other amazing programs they offer, they really are the real deal out there.

[00:04:28] Tee Atwell: Okay. Kudos to SJC. Snap. Snap. Just as in Sharon's title, she oversees workforce development initiatives at St. Joseph Center, which does provide life-changing access skills and resources to marginalized communities. Sharon comes from a background in computer science and software engineering, and leverages 20 years of experience in technology, business, and the financial sector. On top of that, she also oversees a suite of food services designed to mitigate food insecurity and promote nutrition and health.

[00:05:07] Colby D'Onofrio: Wow. These ladies have really interesting background work experience, and you can tell that they bring that to their jobs at LA Regional and St. Joseph Center. We're really excited to share this conversation with you and we hope you all enjoy it as much as we did.

[music]

[00:05:27] Colby D'Onofrio: Can y'all talk a little bit about how you found each other, and Francis, from your end, what kind of recruitment strategies have you found successful in your work as an implementer for the nutrition pantry program?

[00:05:40] Francis Villalpando: In 2020, the food bank was funded by the LA County Department of Public Health through the CalFresh Healthy Living Grant to implement the nutrition pantry program at eight different pantry sites. St. Joseph Center had been a longtime partner of the food bank and was already doing a lot of cutting-edge work, as you've heard, with providing resources and programming to its members.

It was a very natural connection for us to invite them to participate in NPP. Luckily they accepted, again, this was during COVID, so a lot of agencies were hesitant to take on anything new, but we were very grateful that St. Joseph was on board. We did have to do quite a bit of outreach and strategizing to recruit agencies during that time. That included hosting a number of virtual meet and greets, that way we could get to know the pantry administrators and get to listen to what their concerns were about taking on this type of work during that time, and together come up with solutions or potential ways to go around it and still have them participate.

We also had a lot of one-on-ones just to follow up with them, "Hey, have you thought about it? We could still do some of these things in a more flexible manner." We were able to use some of the CalFresh Healthy Living grant funds to purchase basic equipment that would entice the pantries and hopefully get them on board, because it was equipment that they needed to support their focus areas.

We tried to bring them on board that way as well as just presenting this as an opportunity for them to see it as professional development for themselves, their teams, even their volunteers, so this was an open call. We also shared that previous participants use their certification to stand out when they apply for grants, and also to just stand out as customer-centered organizations in their communities. We tried all of those strategies and ultimately we were able to get our initial eight cohort of pantries.

[00:07:59] Sharon Plunkett: Everything that Francis said, they were exceptionally patient with us, and they presented what would be involved in the certification in a way that it made it easy for myself to consume and to actually see down the way, okay, so this is what it would take to implement that. Great. What I want to point out about the program specifically is that we saw it as a way to uplift our team through this really challenging time.

We saw it as a way to provide a space that was inherently positive and creative and constructive, and used that space and that forum to sprinkle the work and sprinkle the service delivery with that mindset, that thinking that like, "Look at this line of people. What does that say to you? Think about this, your work isn't about filling bags with potatoes. It's about making sure that people don't just experience hunger, but that they have access to decent quality nutrition. Why is that important? Why does it matter to you?" Honestly, being engaged with the Nutritional Pantry Program through the

pandemic was a lifeline. It really helped us and helped me support the team, kept them going, added fuel to the fire.

It's hard when there's physical duress to see beyond, to engage with why our work is important and how we deliver the service is important, and how do we make this pantry accessible and friendly and welcoming? How do we get rid of any sense of shame that might be there for somebody trying to come to a pantry during a pandemic maybe for the first time ever, and how do we make sure that our pantry is seen as a way we're going to support you in helping make sure your family has good nutrition throughout no matter what economic circumstances you're dealing with. We're very grateful for the program and the timing of it.

[00:10:10] Colby D'Onofrio: It sounds like the timing of an official adoption of a trauma-informed approach hit at a time when the world and everyone in it was experiencing a massive collective trauma together. For some people, it had more lasting dramatic effects than others, but it was-- we often talk about adverse experiences. This was one massive adverse experience that we all experienced at the same time, but the different aspects of each of our individual lives meet the outcome, and the impact it had on us very different.

[00:10:46] Sharon Plunkett: Yes, and I think that's the most important thing we do at the pantry is you walk through the door, you are welcomed, it's a dignified experience, it's orderly, it's clean, we pay attention to the whole environment and that's-- the NPP program really drew attention to-- We got time to sit and think about, "How do we do that better? How can we refine this and improve it and really create that mindset ongoing with our team?" It was hugely enriching, and the pantry is far the better for it, noticeably.

[00:11:24] Tee Atwell: Well, that is great to hear and that really helps and opens up the question now, then. Let's talk a little bit about policies, systems, and environments. We're talking about environments, we're talking about policies, maybe that we're not really thinking about what changes, especially when the pandemic came along, needed to take place, and what that even looks like in what we call a PSE or a policy system and environment change. This can be very overwhelming and daunting. The name in itself, PSE, or policies, systems, and environments. I'm like, "Whoa, do I have to change the world?" Francis, I would love to know, how do you explain these complicated PSE programs to someone who is not really steeped in a public health lingo or in the CFAHL world, or CalFresh Healthy Living world?

[00:12:17] Francis Villalpando: Well, the short answer is that I don't.

[laughter]

[00:12:22] Tee Atwell: A good workaround.

[laughter]

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[00:12:25] Francis Villalpando: We have four NPP implementers on our team, and when we introduce NPP to a new agency, we approach it from the perspective of the pantry administrators. We tell them that we are here to help them elevate the great work that they're already doing. We present the six key focus areas like a menu of options in a way that's relatable to their daily work. For example, we ask them, what would be most beneficial at this time, given your situation with your food distribution?

That may be managing their inventory better, or writing operation procedures, or perhaps it's reducing food waste so they're not wasting money or wasting food as part of their whole process. Whatever it is, we start there and gradually build on their work plans based on their bandwidth and preferences. I don't come at them saying, "Okay, these are the PSEs," because the PSEs, as they do the work and they make these improvements, I think the PSEs will naturally come when we start documenting everything, but we don't start or lead with that.

[00:13:45] Colby D'Onofrio: It sounds like you really focus in on meeting the pantry where it's at, because I've been at Leah's Pantry since April 2022, and I had never heard the term PSEs before. I'm still finally wrapping my head around it. I can only imagine an overworked pantry leader who's like, "You want me to do what now?" [laughs] When you approach it from that strength-based way of, there's already great work you're doing, which I think NPP is very strength-focused.

Now, how can I support you in this program to elevate that? I love the word elevate that you use, because it really is about elevating pantries in the pantry work they're doing to meet the needs of the community in a way that is effective and efficient for everyone involved.

[00:14:32] Sharon Plunkett: A pantry is a system. It is a system, it has a supply chain input, it has output food, it has customers, members, it has inventory, and there's a way that when the team begins to-- It's like those exercises where you have all these emotions, but the moment you start to label them, you begin to have a little bit of agency with them, and the same thing with a pantry, with the team when you begin to understand, "Oh, yes, that's your intake system, and then this is this," and have people actually think about the environment in that way.

You can make refinements that can have a dramatic effect on the quality of the service delivery. That makes everyone feel good. Just the idea of sometimes I think the nomenclature or the way that we talk about things from, say, administration side, can sound like, "Well, there's no intersection there," and really we're all talking about the same thing.

[00:15:41] Colby D'Onofrio: Sharon, you come from more of a engineering, data-driven background, so that, I think is a strength that you bring to this work that a lot of us don't have, is that you're already primed to think in systems, in relations, into how is this all intersecting to affect each other?

[00:16:00] Sharon Plunkett: Yes, absolutely. Even introducing that as a concept to the people who are doing the actual work can have a dramatic effect. People think of systems design or systems thinking as what people in a room over there with a whiteboard do. The reality is, the pantry, you've got a set of resources, and then you've got a way that you can align those resources, allocate them, use them.

The resources are the staff, the resource is the food, the space that you have, the physical environment. The more you engage the entire team with that thinking, the more you're going to see efficiencies just pop up. Nobody really gets lit up by menial work versus I am doing this work, but I'm thinking about how it affects the other thing within the system where I'm operating. That gives me a different sense of my usefulness, my purpose, my whole approach to my work.

It's far more interesting and people are brilliant. If you have everyone at all levels of a system engaged with that thinking, of course it's going to be more efficient, more optimized. All engineers really do is take something complex, break it down, refine it, and put it together in a way where it gets the job done quicker, more cheaply, more efficiently, with less waste. If you apply that to anything, whether it's a pantry or a school or your kitchen, you're going to get better results.

[00:17:49] Tee Atwell: If you have any examples, maybe, of some PSEs or policies, system, or environment changes or opportunities that you made within your organizations or you saw come to fruition within the organizations you serve, we would love to hear a story or so.

[00:18:07] Francis Villalpando: I had to go back and review the work plan because they had just so many things that they accomplished. Of course, they were certified for gold, so that was the top achievement. I'll just rattle off a few and then maybe Sharon can elaborate on-- One of the first things that just sets them apart is that they really thrive in forming and maintaining great partnerships to leverage their resources, whether it be for composting, for increasing their food donations and food variety, for bringing on health clinics or for closed distribution, just such a broad range of partnerships that they were able to get on board to consistently bring more services to their members. It's just fantastic.

They also spent quite a bit of time collecting customer surveys because that was just baseline data that they didn't have that they wanted to make sure that they were listening to what the customers were saying and then going from there to address any gaps. They also did quite a bit in terms of how they set up their food so that the healthy options are at the forefront, and highlighting the healthy messages, bringing forth more produce to cater to their specific cultures.

They have a high Russian population so they had to learn, "Okay, what are the food preferences for Russian communities?" So that we can be ready to serve them, and inclusively bringing forth printed nutrition education material in that language. Just a lot of different things. I think they're still working on writing their volunteer policies and

operation manuals that they're going to be updating, but just an array of things that they did that we're just so proud of all of their achievements. Those were just some of the things that I picked out.

[00:20:13] Sharon Plunkett: We really tried to look to hear from the members themselves, what they needed. We're really looking to implement choice in a pantry. How can we do that without creating bottlenecks and service flow issues and all of that, what is choice? That's really what we're looking at now. What is it to have choice, to give choice, to offer choice to members so that it's meaningful?

It's not as we suppose, well, you just put a shelf there and people can pick. That's not necessarily choice, that is an implementation of choice, but it isn't necessarily the kind of choice that we're looking to achieve, which is making people feel empowered even though they're visiting a food pantry. That's what we're looking at right now, is, what is choice? What does that really mean? How could we meaningfully create choice in our service?

[00:21:17] Colby D'Onofrio: I was doing a training with Adrian the other day and she brought up the fact that we talk a lot about choice in the pantry sector, but really it is this illusion of choice, because you get to choose from what's given. Is it how much choice is that really? Of course, being able to choose from what's given is better than just being given something with no choice at all.

I like that you touched on that, Sharon, if we put a shelf there, okay, you can only pick off what we put on the shelf, but how do we empower people to feel more self-sufficient, to feel more dignified, to feel like there's more beauty in their lives, and how can we uplift them in that way?

[00:22:02] Sharon Plunkett: I definitely feel it's that phrase of everything you've been explaining, of voice and choice.

[00:22:09] Colby D'Onofrio: Yes, I was thinking that too, Tee. I was like, "This is a **[unintelligible 00:22:12]** pillar right here called voice and choice." Y'all are really embodying that [laughs] to the full extent.

[00:22:19] Sharon Plunkett: Yes. It's the idea that you are really examining what you are doing for choice, we all know what choice means. It's having the ability, the agency to choose for yourself what you want or what you need, and just putting things on the shelf is not necessary-- that's choice, but what are other ways to achieve real choice in a way that really does empower someone and leave somebody with that sense of agency and that sense of dignity? It's really interesting because the forum, the nature of the collaboration that the NPP engagement has left us and our team with is really allowing us to have a meaningful conversation about choice. What is that? How are we going to get that done?

[00:23:12] Colby D'Onofrio: Francis, you have a team of implementers. Am I remembering that correctly?

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[00:23:17] Francis Villalpando: Yes. Now we have a total of four implementers that are actively training new pantries. We've worked with nine so far that have been certified and graduated and we have three new ones that we are just onboarding this year in 2023.

[00:23:34] Colby D'Onofrio: As the head or oftentimes I think you were more the front-facing person of the implementer team. Do you all work together for each pantry? Do you divide and conquer? How do you divide the workload and keep the morale high among your implementer team?

[00:23:52] Francis Villalpando: That's a great question because we are shifting right now. We have our nine graduated pantries that are going to be in maintenance mode. We'll still check in on them now and then just to make sure that they have the most latest resources, but we are going to focus on our three new ones this year. We currently have four NPP implementers that have been trained by Leah's Pantry to do this work.

The way that we're going to divvy up this year's pantries are by assigning one per implementer. I have one pantry, Lillian Orta has one pantry, Noami has one pantry, and she's being supported by Tiffany, who is our latest addition. They're going to share one since they are brand new to NPP implementation. We have been doing some of the site visits together just to get everyone on the same page as well as some of the meetings, and we also have monthly NPP strategy meetings where we come together and brainstorm specific situations or troubleshoot if anyone is having any issues with moving forward with their pantries.

It's a much more collaborative process. The way that we are training pantries this year is that we are doing it collectively. Everyone at the pantries, the administrators, are meeting almost on a monthly basis to do group trainings. We lead them through a group training for each of the focus areas together, and then the following month we'll do one-on-ones. That way we can graduate three of them at the same time.

[00:25:39] Colby D'Onofrio: That's very exciting. I'm definitely interested to hear more about how this rolls out. This is a newer rollout method that we're seeing in NPP and I'm definitely very excited to see how this works for you guys. As this program is becoming more popular and there's a bigger need, we're starting to come up with lots of new innovative ways to meet that need and to support communities as we go along.

[00:26:03] Tee Atwell: All right. What are your two top favorite parts about doing pantry work?

[00:26:09] Sharon Plunkett: I think I didn't understand food security. I didn't understand what it means. I didn't look at food security in the way of the immediacy of it. There is a difference between the quality of this and the quality of that. When you think about economic hardship or you think about the economics of dealing with income or a lack thereof, you don't think about what that means in terms of the amount of food that's on a person's plate or the quality of that food.

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Thinking about what the pantry is, what it offers, what it provides for a community that is struggling with hardship and with employment instability so often, the changing workforce with food becoming so expensive, inflation, gas prices rising, energy costs rising, and the effect that a pantry has, the impact a pantry has in a community is massive. My system brain really enjoys that, the changes that we make that are high level or that can seem a little bit remote, tweaks that we make to be able to offer pet food or incontinence products or personal hygiene like feminine hygiene products or specialty goods that are meaningful to certain populations like our Russian immigrants, who we have many members.

Thinking about the effect that that has, because I know what it's like when I sit down and what's on my plate makes me happy, versus what's on my plate just leaves me dissatisfied. There's what food means to us as people, there's what happens when food is strained or our access to food is strained. I think really engaging with that has been-- A food pantry is a food pantry.

There's shelves and there's food on it and people get food and that's it, but it's so much more than that. I love the fact that you can have a real impact on health by making sure that, one, access to good food is available, but two, that nutrition is understood, because it's not really taught in schools, it's not really taught anywhere, and again, you've got families who are affected, there's economic insecurity, and it's like, "Well, we'll just buy the cheaper one."

It's not get less of, you can go and spend \$10 and buy total junk that has no nutritional content whatsoever, but you can fill someone's belly temporarily, and understanding that sometimes, "Okay, this is a little bit more expensive, but the nutritional value that you will get out of it is much greater overall. The fact that education can really empower people to make better decisions and that we can then be there to say, "This is green stuff. This is how you prepare it."

I remember the first time I ate kale, I was like, "Are you kidding? I'm not eating that," but when someone actually teaches you how to prepare it and then makes you aware of how much it gives your body by eating it, it's like, "Okay, I'm going to learn how to prepare it. I'm going to learn how to incorporate it, and I'm going to eat it." If I can source it in a way that I can afford, brilliant. All this has been really rewarding personally to engage with it, because I'm not a food person, [chuckles] I'm not a foodie, I'm not good in the kitchen, let's put it that way.

I have learned to appreciate the power we have to improve people's quality of life is very real. It's not just a bag of onions or a tin of beans. It really is this is meaningful. The bags that we provide to our members, the food we give, it's supplemental income, it's over \$100 worth of groceries each week. That for a household that's struggling, that's a big deal.

[00:30:54] Colby D'Onofrio: The piece about a pantry being more than just a bag of food I think is so key, because for a long time, pantries have just been a source of food,

and then there's been a lot of shame and stigma tied up in that. When we create a more dignified environment that perhaps connects people to other services, creates a community hub for people to interact with each other, and to provide education, knowledge is power. I left high school, I could tell you that the mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell, but I could not tell you the difference between complex carbs and simple carbs.

It wasn't until I got a degree in nutrition that I understood the ways that sugars, carbs, fats, and proteins are processed by our bodies. Once I understood it, I was like, "Okay, I can feed myself now in a way that plays to my energy demands given my day, given my time, given what I have available," whatever it might be. It becomes a fun game, in a way, of understanding how what goes in has an effect on what I put out into the world.

[00:31:57] Sharon Plunkett: Yes, there's the empowerment piece, that the pantry is an opportunity to empower the people who are coming there with nutrition information, with access to whatever-- it's giving some power back to people. Make better choices. Even though income is an issue, here's what you need to know. All the recipe cards, all the menu books, all this stuff, they're gobbled up by our members, all the stuff that the Leah's Pantry, that Francis' team provided to us, because they're beautiful. There's an inherent beauty in you go to a pantry, but then you take this beautiful book home, and it's like, "Oh, I could do this with beans?" Okay, let me try that.

It's engaging somebody at that higher level of creativity, and that's good for the soul, that's good for the heart. It's good for people. There are so many ways that the pantry is an opportunity to enrich. That's why I love it. It really is a hub within the community, and it's a place where, no shame at all. The world's not working right now. There's a lot of people coming to the pantry that wouldn't have dreamed of coming to a pantry five years ago, wouldn't have needed to, that we are accessible and as normal a thing to engage with as a meal service, or what do you call it? Blue Apron, or it's another way to engage. It doesn't say something about how much you're succeeding or not in life. I think that's really important. We try to have it be a beautiful experience.

[00:33:42] Colby D'Onofrio: Yes, absolutely. To the point you said about people who never dreamed that they'd be coming to the pantry, I think a lot of the shame and stigma around accessing pantries comes from a deep place of fear. People see that they could be the person in the pantry line. They realize that everyone else is just like them too, and so if we can teach empathy and if we can teach compassion in that, we're all out here trying our best. We are all just trying to get through this thing called human existence. Turns out it's a bit more complicated than I thought it was, [laughs] but we're all just really trying our best out here and things can change on a dime.

Francis, I want to hear your favorite things about working in a pantry, your top two, and I know that you come from a bit more of a nutrition ed background, which is pretty relevant to a lot of the things Sharon was saying. Whether it's your favorite things about nutrition ed, about pantry implementation, what are your favorite parts about doing this kind of work?

[00:34:41] Francis Villalpando: What I love is the opportunity to work one-on-one with the pantry administrators, whether it be a staff person or a head volunteer in some cases, because I get very bored easily doing the same thing over and over again. When I do the one-on-ones, it's different every single time. Every pantry is a different situation, a different story, different customers. That's what keeps me engaged and interested. I love that because I never know what type of situation or what type of challenge I'm going to get.

I love being able to support those individuals who are already doing so much for their communities, and in some cases, they're right in my own community, which makes it even more meaningful. The three new pantries that we have are just down the street from me here in South LA. I love that I'm able to tie all of my own resources and knowledge and be able to also bring it back to my own community.

[00:35:46] Tee Atwell: What do you stock your pantry with? Whether that be literally or figuratively?

[00:35:52] Sharon Plunkett: Do you want the good answer, or do you want me to be honest?

[00:35:58] Tee Atwell: Honest. Honest. [laughs]

[00:36:03] Sharon Plunkett: I try to have something green in my fridge. I love berries, so you'll always find baby spinach and berries, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, all the berries. I have a weird relationship with sugar, so I try to avoid it. You know that movie, *The Gremlins*?

[00:36:26] Tee Atwell: Yes.

[00:36:27] Sharon Plunkett: At midnight, if they eat after midnight, they turn into little monsters. They were cute and fairy, but now they're just destroying your life. I'm like that when you give me sugar. It's just better for everyone if I just don't eat it. Aside from maybe a couple of weeks at Christmas, I try not to eat sugar at all. What you will find when I'm being bold, is nuts, peanuts and chips. I love potato chips. Love them, and they don't turn me into a monster. I can just eat them and that's it, but nothing happens.

[00:37:03] Tee Atwell: That's a win-win.

[00:37:05] Sharon Plunkett: Of course, I'm Irish, so you'll also find potatoes.

[00:37:10] Francis Villalpando: The top thing that I always have to have in the pantry is peanut butter. I get very anxious if I don't have peanut butter for some reason. I love it, on toast, by itself, in yogurt.

[00:37:25] Tee Atwell: My granny absolutely loves peanut butter to the point where there's a jar and a spoon next to the side of the bed.

[laughter]

[00:37:34] Tee Atwell: Beside the bed too. She's not even going to have to get up and go to the kitchen to satisfy her peanut butter craving, anytime of the night.

[00:37:43] Francis Villalpando: That might be me in the future.

[music]

[00:37:55] Colby D'Onofrio: Thank you so much to Sharon from St. Joseph Center, and Francis from LA Regional Food Bank for joining us for this fruitful conversation today. If you or someone you know is living on the westside of LA and is in need of some extra support these days, please visit the St. Joseph Center pantry, open Monday mornings, Tuesday afternoons, and Thursday mornings for about three hours at each of those times.

For more information about the pantry as well as the amazing other programs and services that St. Joseph offers, please visit stjosephctr.org. That's spelled S-T J-O-S-E-P-H C-T-R.org. If you're able to, please think about making a donation. Everything you donate goes directly to the services and programs they provide for their community.

[00:38:46] Tee Atwell: That's wonderful. Talking about donations, the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank also has opportunities for donations at lafoodbank.org/donate. Just for \$23 a month, you can provide a year's, yes, a year's worth of food for a neighbor in need. They also take volunteers year around. If anyone has experienced food insecurity, please visit lafoodbank.org and click on the find food tab.

[00:39:16] Colby D'Onofrio: Thanks so much for listening today. We'll catch y'all later.

[00:39:19] Tee Atwell: Ciao. Thank you so much for hanging with us. I want to ask you this question. Do you know of any thought leaders or someone doing great work in your community? Well, we would love to interview them, and we'd love to hear from you. Find us online at leahspantry.org, or on Instagram, handle [@leahspantry](https://www.instagram.com/leahspantry), or email us at stockingthepantry@leahspantry.org.

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[00:40:11] [END OF AUDIO]