

# Stocking the Pantry Podcast, Episode Eight

Innovative Strategies to Engage Low-Income Older Adults in Creating Community Change

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**[00:00:18] Colby D'Onofrio:** Welcome to *Stocking the Pantry*, a CalFresh Healthy Living podcast from Leah's Pantry. We'd like to acknowledge our funder, the CalFresh Healthy Living Program, and equal opportunity employer and provider. 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.

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**[00:01:13] Tee Atwell:** Hello, and welcome to *Stocking the Pantry*. Thank you so much for joining us today for another episode in our special series highlighting sessions at the upcoming CalFresh Healthy Living forum. This year's CalFresh Healthy Living forum will take place at the Hyatt Regency Orange County in Garden Grove, California from October 23rd to the 25th.

**[00:01:39] Colby:** The forum brings CalFresh Healthy Living professionals together to share updates, successes, and new ideas among colleagues. This year's theme is Equity in Action: Supporting Healthy Communities Together. For more information and to register for the forum, please check out the link to the website in the show notes.

**[00:02:00] Tee:** We are very excited to speak with Lena Nasr and Roberto Ramirez about this session, Innovative Strategies to Engage Low-Income Older Adults in Creating Community Change. Before we get into the meat of the episode, we would like to have Lina and Roberto introduce themselves. Please, Lina, let's start with you.

**[00:02:24] Lina Nasr:** All right. Well, first, thanks for having me on here. I'm super excited to be here. My name is Lina Nasr. I guess I'll start with my educational background. I have my bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and my master's degree in public health with concentration in health behavior and education from the American University of Beirut all the way in Lebanon.

I've worked in the field of health behavior and education for over 20 years and for just the last 8 years, I have been with the county's aging and independent services working under the umbrella of CalFresh Healthy Living. I get to conduct nutrition education classes, facilitating classes like Food Smarts, Eat Smart Live Strong, and Around the Table: Nourishing Families.

After completing a nutrition series with a cohort, I get to do one of my favorite things which is I lead the community engagement sessions where I get to work to empower participants to bring about policy systems and environmental changes that can really make a difference in their lives, particularly around improving the access to a more

active and nourishing lifestyle. Every group I work with is really unique and I love getting to know them and really helping them recognize the power that they have, especially when they work together and come to believe in their ability to make change.

**[00:03:39] Roberto Ramirez:** Awesome. My name is Roberto Ramirez. I am the Health Promotion manager at Aging & Independent Services. I like to tell people that my role is just to prove anything that Lina does because she does amazing work. A little bit about my background. I have a bachelor's degree in political science from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, and I have a master's degree in public health from the University of North Texas Health Science Center with a concentration on community and behavioral health.

I've been practicing in the field of public health for over 10 years now. Eight years have been with the Aging & Independent Services. It is otherwise known as an area agency on aging. We share a lot with some of our folks at the conference. I've been working in the field of nutrition education and physical activity promotion, PSE, for quite a while now. I started my career with the younger generations, children, adults, and now older adults so I get to see the entire life spectrum which has been really cool and really interesting as to when we see the different challenges faced at every stage of life.

**[00:04:42] Colby:** That's very interesting. Thank you both so much for sharing your background. We're really happy to have you on the show today. Can you tell the listeners about the work that your organization does in the CalFresh Healthy Living Community? Specifically how this work intersects with older adults?

**[00:05:02] Roberto:** Yes, definitely. I can take this one first. As I was saying earlier, we are the federally designated area agency on aging. Programs that we offer are on a spectrum. For individuals who need more support or who are more dependent, we have our case management programs like our MSSP and home supportive services program. Then we move towards the more independent spectrum which encompass a lot of our health promotion programs which CalFresh Healthy Living falls under.

Things like nutrition education, physical activity promotion, the PSE work that Lina will talk about. Then we also have other programs that we like to intersect with everything else. Our fall prevention initiatives, like our Dignity At Home Fall Prevention Program, our chronic disease health management programs. Then we continue moving on to more independent programs which are like our volunteer programs for older adults who want to be part of our retired senior volunteer program where they get paired up with organizations around town that would benefit from having an older adult be a volunteer. Our Sheriff's Police Department, our congregate meal facilities, places like that.

That's what we do in our department. I'll throw it over to Lina so she can talk a little bit more about specifically where our CalFresh mission program are.

**[00:06:21] Lina:** To expand on what I was previously saying I get to work with about four to five older adult groups a year where I get to do the nutrition education classes. The meetings are most often in apartment complexes, but they can also be at senior

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centers or community centers, even at faith-based locations like churches, right? After the nutrition class ends, something that we do at Aging Independence Services that we've come to see it really as a best practice is to hold a reflection celebration class right after the nutrition series where we also introduce the topic of community change.

For the celebration, we celebrate our personal successes, for example, oh, someone started eating a salad with every dinner, or maybe they started taking a walk every morning. We celebrate, we pass out certificates, and then afterwards, we shift our focus to looking at the different determinants of health, particularly the community's impact on our health. It sounds like two different topics completely, but we found a way to make it smooth and all work and people are usually excited about the second part because all along they've been hearing about stage two of this class.

We lead them through this simple process that you'll be learning more about at the forum if you come to our session where we basically show them that where they live, their direct environment can really have a big impact on their behavioral choices. For example, if we live in a home that is surrounded by unsafe sidewalks, or no sidewalks at all, it's of course a lot harder for someone to go out on a walk. Even the idea of telling people to eat seasonal produce when, maybe they're living in a food desert where it may be really hard for some people to access any kind of fruit. Especially if they lack transportation, it's even harder.

As participants see slowly that where they live really, really matters, we have them stop. Now, literally, we have them stop because the class ends and we actually need to assign it as homework for the next week, that they look critically at their own environment. We tell them, "Pay attention to the factors in your environment that are either helping you or getting in the way of you making those healthy choices. Really pay attention to those things instead of just blaming yourself like, "Oh, I can't get up out of my bed and walk." Really look at things that are there in the environment that are influencing that."

The following week comes and then they tell us what they notice. We start off with resources and they may tell us things like, "There's a nearby park that always feels very inviting for me to go and take a walk there," or there might be a nearby food distribution where they might be getting a nice produce box every week or every month. They might say things like the service coordinator at the site who offers a lot of programming.

These are all things that sometimes are listed, but there's a lot of other things as well. After they list the resources, they then list the barriers they recognize. They may list things like the lack of safety in their neighborhood or the tripping hazards on the sidewalk, the lack of motivation they have, or the expensive or not-so-fresh produce at the market nearby. What's really neat about this process is that they're all sitting together listening and what naturally happens one can really see that they're not alone is it brings the group closer together which is really to see.

This is important in order to have that social cohesion that can then help groups work together better and move projects forward. Based off this list of barriers and resources, they are able to then look critically and see what projects can be done to help themselves really overcome those barriers. It is through this process that we then help the group in coming up with the projects that they come up with. The projects can range from resident- led walking groups conducting walk audits and reporting unsafe sidewalk issues to the city or starting a garden project or finding a means for transportation to a congregate meal site or even coming up with potluck recommendations.

These are just some of the cool projects that have resulted from this process. It's really neat that every group we work with, is different and comes up with truly different projects.

**[00:10:25] Roberto:** A lot of the work that we do is really meeting our residents where they are and having them realize, again, the strengths in their community and the barriers in the community. Like Lina was saying, do you have a park? Great, that's a strength, but do you feel safe walking to your park? That's a barrier.

Then making sure that with our expertise and perhaps even the connections of knowing who at the city or who at the county or who at this organization can help break down those barriers. Maybe install lighting so that the walk to the park is a little bit more welcoming and inviting after dark or in the early morning, or maybe we need to re-stripe the crosswalk so that older adults feel safe when walking from one street to the next to reach that park or that grocery store.

That's conversations that we start having and what we try to have our older adults realize, and not only that, but empower them to be able to make those calls, make those determinations, and be advocates for their community.

**[00:11:26] Tee:** So powerful, especially with these intentional approaches. I really want to thank you for highlighting the multi-layers of our experiences and the diversity within sites and sectors with the focus on community change, social determinants of health, and the impact of our environment on our own choices, access, and behavior, and really the importance of pausing and reflecting.

Thank you so much for laying that foundation. Sounds like the county of San Diego is doing great work, engaging with older, I like to call them wiser adults in the San Diego community. Our wiser adult population is rapidly growing. I think the last 100 years, the population of people 65 and over have increased at a rate of five times that of the total population. There is a stereotype that people of a wiser age are slow and less intelligent, [buzzes] wrong, [chuckles] and their years are contributing to society of us being behind, [buzzes] wrong. What I really think is that we all know this not to be true. They have so much that they offer, they have so much wisdom that they have provided and they've laid the foundation that we're walking on. Can you tell us a little bit about what is different about working with and providing education to wiser adults?

**[00:12:53] Lina:** Yes. People are living longer, but especially if you sat through one of our community change classes, you'd see that they are everything but passive members of society. I don't know if I could do that [buzzes] wrong. [chuckles] Totally agree. You would see them really having candid conversations with one another. They're thinking critically at how they can improve their community and then going out and actually making change happen. Definitely not passive. Sometimes as they're considering solutions to a barrier, you'll catch them.

That's the cool thing about working with older adults. They can reminisce at how things used to be and how things used to be like, it used to be easier to do certain things. I'll ask like, what was it? Why can't we do that now? We dissect components that made it possible back then, and we come up with ideas for how we can make it happen today.

This was a case in one of our groups, one of the older adults, she had lived all her life in Somalia, and she was saying how she didn't like the taste of many fruits and vegetables anymore. That was a barrier. Previously in her country, she was used to always having access to that fresh produce because that's all really she had access to. She would eat from the land, she would drink fresh milk from a cow. Everything was just so fresh. She said there was no refrigerator and she couldn't access processed foods. It was too expensive or too far away. She explained how she missed that freshness of the food and then it was cool.

This was a very diverse group that we were working with at the time, but participants from Ethiopia who were also in the class were like, "Yes. Totally. That's our experience too. We miss that freshness as well." The conversation after that shifted to like, "All right, so what can we do here? How can we access fresh fruits and vegetables? Is there a garden? Is there anything nearby where we can either start up or is there something we can work with?"

This was the conversation that really led to the motivation behind the group reaching out to a neighboring youth organization that ran an urban farm. By connecting with this group, they have gained a space to garden at that garden, and they are regularly provided with fresh produce from that urban farm. In gratitude which is really neat also, is that the older adults have also invited the youth from that organization to come to their quarterly potlucks, which they're holding at their apartment. That's something really neat that happened.

In general, what I love about working with the older generation is that they have such valuable life experience and you just have to tap them really to see all that they can offer. Sometimes we are just too busy running around and just doing what we are doing that we just don't tap them to see all that they can and are willing to offer. I can see how negative stereotypes can come up, but it's really an unfortunate thing as it's our loss when we don't really notice all that older adults can offer to our society.

**[00:15:34] Roberto:** I think that points to a key factor. Our older adults are our fastest-growing resource. When you consider where we're going to be in a few years.

San Diego County has about 910,000 older adults over the age of 60. By 2030, which is a few years from now, seven years from now, we're expected to surpass over a million older adults in our county.

What does that mean? Many people think of that being a major challenge. How are we going to meet the needs of these older adults? When you think about what else these older adults mean to our society, like Lina was saying, they're an exceptional example of where we've been. If we tailor how our communities are growing and how our communities are being developed to be age-friendly that are appropriate and that are welcoming to anybody from 0 to 100 and plus, then we'd be able to engage with our youth as well as with our older adults in the same manners in a very similar way.

To the example that Lina was using about the older adults who were from Somalia, they're coming from more agricultural communities. They come with this vast knowledge and experience that this youth group that was right next door can help tap. Again, talking to the same point about our fastest growing resource, that is the connection being made, and that is a mutually beneficial. The youth take something from the older adults, the older adults get that social engagement and that positive correlation to engaging with their neighbors in a new country. Not only that, but physical activity aspects of gardening, the nutritional aspects of fresh produce, and also they're taking something they miss from their country and bringing it home to this country, the access to fresh produce, which is, again, very beneficial and again, being missed in this community.

**[00:17:31] Colby:** I am in love with this image of a group of older adults coming together, first off, advocating for their own needs. This is something that we are not having access to and something that we desperately want and love and frankly need. Being so innovative and creative and reaching out to not only an organization, but I just love that it's a group of young people and that connection to be able to share their experience, their knowledge.

Like you said, Lina, it's our loss when we don't tap into the knowledge and information that older adults have to share. Like you were saying, Roberto, with modern medicine, people are living longer, they're living healthier lives. While this is a wonderful thing, it also comes with a set of challenges. As our aging population is growing and in your work with the older adult population, what kinds of challenges have you encountered and what tools have you used to overcome these challenges?

**[00:18:37] Roberto:** That's a very good question. I think what immediately comes to mind is coming out of the pandemic years where a lot of our work was in person, where our older adults are meeting that need, then COVID hit and then everything was thrown for a loop. Do we reach out to them virtually? Okay. That's an idea, but then what about those older adults that are not connected to the internet, that don't have a device? We're talking about CalFresh-eligible older adults who are already low income, who may be already on fixed income, who are making ends meet barely. These are the realities of the population that we're trying to serve. Asking them to purchase a tablet and internet

access to engage with us remotely was very difficult. Whenever possible, we would try to, with COVID precautions in hand, meet those individuals where they were. Lina and her team were delivering nutrition education items and they were delivering food demo items and teaching older adults remotely on how to eat healthy and maintain a healthy lifestyle through phone calls and whenever possible Zoom meetings. We had older adults who were using the laptops or tablets of their grandchildren to partake in our classes. That was one of the biggest examples of how we were overcoming barriers that were preventing us from reaching our population. Fast forward to now when luckily, things with COVID have subsided, and we have programs to distribute tablets and affordable connectivity programs for internet access, but then we now have more challenges with having to serve multilingual communities that are not only multilingual but our monolingual in a non-native, non-English speaking way. What do we do?

We've had to, in a sense, reinvent the wheel of how we promote nutrition education, to establish contracts with translation entities who can help us translate in Mandarin, or in Somali, or whatever language it may be, and be able to reach those older adults once more in person, in a sense, tailoring our outreach to how we can reach out to them. We have exceptional curriculums that are written and approved for CalFresh from Eat Smarts to Around the Table, that is Leah's Pantry curriculum, all these great curriculums, but being able to reach our older adults, that's I guess our biggest barrier. Lina? What I am missing here? I know you have something extra.

**[00:21:17] Lina:** No. No, you definitely mentioned a lot of great stuff. That's so true. During COVID, yes, it was tough. It was hard. We have to think outside of the box completely. Yes, these days, language is often a barrier when we're trying to reach some of these communities. You reminded me in trying to reach monolingual speakers who don't speak English and there's a lot of need application. I can tell you about, Say Hi, which is a great one that we recently learned about in that we were able to off the cuff, just talk to somebody who didn't speak English, but there's a lot of other ones as well.

In general, I see that a big challenge, often to getting people to the class is that they don't trust their health, they don't know if they're going to be feeling well. One day, they're feeling great the next day their arthritis acts up. That could be a big challenge. A lot of our older adults are also taking care of maybe a sibling or a spouse, that may not be feeling well, so that's also something that may be hard. We've been working with grandparents that are raising their grandchildren, you can imagine how taxing that is on them as well. These things make it very hard to even have them consider joining an effort.

We find it best to lessen the pressure in whatever way we can. We notice that things like emailing out a flyer or posting things out without that face-to-face contact, really doesn't work for this age group. It's really helpful when we can go out and meet that person face-to-face. We've also found this to be a best practices that we have an informal meet and greet as the first class. We show them all that they can get out of the experience and explain how.

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We joke, we always say like, "This is one of the most informal classes you'll ever experience. Come as you wish, participate as you wish." Of course, in the back of our minds, we really want them to all come to every class and participate as much as possible, but we really see this happening naturally as they feel more comfortable and the sense that welcoming environment, they're more likely to participate and come to most of the classes if not every class.

Regarding leadership roles that are important for community efforts, especially for their sustainability, we find that, instead of saying like, "We need one leader for this effort," we usually say, "Okay, how about two or three people take on this role?"

Another important challenge, I think, with participants, especially in the communities we serve, which are communities of color, or low-income communities, is that sometimes people feel unsafe. They just might not trust everything. A lot of times this might be the result of trauma, some kind of trauma that they may have experienced or currently experiencing or perhaps throughout the course of their life, so they are less trusting.

Taking this into consideration, we have made it a best practice to always have a nutrition series before we introduce the topic of community change. That nutrition class always allows us to build the relationships in the class and gain that rapport with the participants that can help us really have them follow through with the community change part and even give us a listening ear. If we just went into a community and just said, "Hey, let's do a garden together," you probably won't get that greater participation.

In addition to the structure, we also ensure that our class is a safe space. Despite the class being very informal, we do have group agreements where we stress the importance of respecting different experiences and different opinions, as long as they are also respectful. This is key to creating a safe classroom where people can be open and honest with one another, this safe atmosphere which will keep people coming back.

To gain trust, which is also key to making a safe space, we also follow through. We say that we're going to do something, we actually do it. For example, if they ask us a question that we can't answer, and we say we're going to come back the next week with an answer, we should come back next week with an answer. It's really important to be transparent. If you forget, let them know, but at the same time, do your best, and being that transparent real self will help them also be more transparent and real with you.

**[00:25:02] Tee:** Why do you think it is important that we discuss how to engage wiser adults at the forum and what do you hope will come out of the session?

**[00:25:12] Lina:** We're the ones on the ground. We're working with the community. We have a responsibility in a way to make their voices heard. Many times well-intentioned individuals or organizations, they decide on a solution for older adults without really consulting with them and ensuring that this is really what would help them. It is based on their assumptions that they then maybe decide to pour money, time, and effort into something that at the end of the day may not be that helpful for older adults.



Through our work, I think we have the opportunity to work with older adults, get to know them over a few weeks, and gain their trust. Through this experience, we get those real conversations that lead us to root problems. It is only at that space and time that we can really talk about meaningful and efficient community change to happen. Going back to what I said before if we're not tapping into the wisdom of our older adults, we're truly missing out. We have to engage with older adults and it's important we know how.

Hopefully, people by coming to the forum, through our session or other sessions, they'll be able to pick up some strategies at how to effectively engage with older adults in the whole community change process.

**[00:26:20] Roberto:** It's easy to say, "Reach older adults do this." Another thing is actually executing the project, the program. One of the things that I've come to realize with this program is that it takes a lot of time to make meaningful change. You may not see from one year to the next a PSE project that is going to impact the lives of these older adults. You can measure incremental change in meetings that you've had with city representatives, with the Parks and Rec department, with your local farmer's market organizer.

That is as important as the actual outcome of the project and whether or not the older adults are actually achieving these policy systems and environmental change that will ultimately help them live healthy, safe, and thriving or whatever lives. I think that that's the important thing to note is that with this project, patience is key, and being able to devote your time with your feet on the ground with your staff, meeting older adults with understanding where they're coming from so that you can again, have meaningful change in the long run.

**[00:27:25] Lina:** That reminds me of something, Roberto. I have a side currently aware as much. We're at the part where we're trying to bring community change. We're in our classes where we're focusing on that. I have to remind myself to be patient because right now there's no manager at the apartment complex and I want to help the group. We need answers so we can move projects forward. It doesn't feel like we're moving.

We need some okays. We need somebody to say, "Yes, you can do that," or, "No you can't." That way we can put our effort. We just need to know where to focus our energy. I even have to remind myself like, "Man," I was frustrated and I had to be like, "Wait, okay, maybe we need to just put a hold on the class. Where else can we put our effort?" I'm still trying to wrap my brain around what can I do with this group so I don't lose them because I have them at their peak interest. Yes, you have to work with what you have and be patient.

**[00:28:13] Colby:** Yes, we have to work with what we have both as educators and as participants too. Tying it back to what you were saying earlier about helping older adults recognize the environment they're in and how that plays a role in their behavior and the options that are available to them. We as educators also have to recognize the

environment we're in and whether we're waiting for approval from someone or a meeting with Parks and Rec didn't go quite how we wanted it to.

We have to recognize what we have control over and also what is influencing us in our environment and having an impact on us in that way. Really, [laughs] the things you're teaching for older adults really apply both directions. I'm really excited to hear what y'all have to say at the forum this year. What are you most excited about presenting on this topic at the forum?

**[00:29:07] Lina:** Let's see. I think I'm most excited about seeing light bulbs flash on as people hopefully will hear something from us or maybe someone else in the room and it sparks an idea for them or something they can take back into their community. I'm hopeful that for people who don't know how to go from direct education class to a PSE project, that we can show them a simple strategy that we've been using, and hopefully, they can be successful with that process. I'm excited to see people really gain something that they can then take back and simply use in their community.

**[00:29:43] Roberto:** I think for us, and working for the government, you come to a realization that sometimes you have blinders on. "No, we can't do that," or, "No, that's not something that we've done in the past." Being able to think outside of the box and being able to imagine a community where your older adults, your youth, your what have you, are living healthy, are eating great food, are getting their physical activity in, makes you realize there's so much more we can do. There shouldn't be a "we haven't done that before" barrier, or "We don't know how to do that."

There's so many resources out there Lina included, I'm going to put that out there, to be able to tap into and be able to devise a plan to tackle a barrier to healthy eating, healthy living. I think what I'm most excited is for our participants and form attendees to see this presentation as a, "Oh, I didn't think about that." Like Lina was saying, that light bulb moment. One of the more rewarding aspects of this program and also presenting at the conference is that sharing these ideas, the transfer of knowledge.

**[00:30:49] Tee:** I am definitely hearing a lot about connection and piecing those dots together, but also connection on a community level and patience on all levels. Thinking about this, is there one thing you could tell people before attending your session,

**[00:31:07] Lina:** Come with an open mind, ready to learn about different things going on across the state? Take some time before the forum to think about the challenges you may be having. Maybe it's with recruiting participants to your classes, getting buy-in from stakeholders in the process of making a PSE happen, or maybe finding community solutions to barriers that participants are mentioning to you. Think about these things, write them down, come ready to find answers by attending the sessions or talking to people who are doing the same work as you are.

Of course, I have to put in a plug for our session. It'll be on Tuesday the 24th at 10:15. We'll also have a poster up during the poster session where we'll actually be highlighting the work that we started telling you about at that site, Via Alta, where there was four  
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different interpreters in the classroom, providing interpretation going in that class is a unique opportunity where residents can be all together. We'll also have a networking table as well, where we're also going to answer questions and delve deeper into the topic of community change. Definitely check us out.

**[00:32:08] Roberto:** I would add just reiterate what Lina was saying, is have a moment prior to the forum to write down your barriers, your challenges, and then your successes and/or your strengths in your community. Just come with that to the forum and you'll be able to hopefully connect the dots of, "This is a barrier that I've had, this other community had the same barrier, this is how they overcome it. Let me see if I can adapt that to my community."

As much as communities are different, we share something in common. We have a purpose and a goal in common with CalFresh Healthy Living. If you are working in the arena of older adults, and even if you're not, some of the strategies that we've employed and other AAAs or other PSAs have employed also translate to your community. Coming with that list will help you have a headstart on what kind of questions you want to ask to the people who are presenting, who are at the forum.

Even our CDA folks, I do also want to say the CDA has been very helpful. When we have an idea, when we have a challenge, when we have a thought of, "I don't know if this is allowable or if this will work," we reach out to them and say, "Hey, this is what we're doing. This is what we're thinking. What do y'all think?" Most often it's a, "Yes, go for it. Try it out, see how it goes. We try, we succeed and it's a great time.

**[00:33:22] Colby:** That's awesome. I have never been so excited to talk about working with older adults. I'll be honest, I've always been more of a kid-centered person, but I'm thinking maybe I need to shift some of that interest into the older adult population. Y'all are very inspiring speakers.

[music]

**[00:33:53] Colby:** Before we let you go, we have to ask, what do you both stock your pantries with, literally and/or figuratively?

**[00:34:03] Lina:** Let's see. For me, I guess literally I'm Middle Eastern, so you can bet you'll always have in my pantry some extra virgin olive oil as well as some olives probably and some pita bread, that'll always be there. Figuratively, I am always loaded with ideas, some up-in-the-cloud ideas, but I love talking ideas. Yes, that's what you'd find in my pantry.

**[00:34:25] Roberto:** For me, I am Latino, Mexican by heritage, and you won't ever find me without tortillas and some hot sauce for some reason. I don't know why. It just makes everything taste better. Oh, and limes, you can't forget the limes. Limes on everything. Limes on fruit and some spiciness, delicious. That's literally and figuratively. What do I stock my pantry? I think just an open mind, having an open mind to the work that we do, and not let that be a barrier to having successes and achieve your goal

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because it's very easy to just have those blinders on. Having an open mind and having a yes attitude, just like, "Yes, I think we can do that. Yes, let's try that." I think that'll go a long way.

**[00:35:08] Tee:** I so appreciate that both of you shared literally and figuratively, and it has been a true honor. I can say both of your pantries and I, we get along so well. [laughs] Thank you so much for speaking with us today. We're so excited about your session.

Lina and Roberto will be facilitating Session 1C as in Charlie, and that is the innovative strategies to engage low-income older adults in creating community change on October 24th at 10:15 AM at the upcoming CalFresh Healthy Living Forum. You don't want to miss it, but in the meantime, you can find them online and on social media, and I'm going to pass this one on over to Roberto to go ahead and give us all of that great info on your social media.

**[00:36:00] Roberto:** We are found on Facebook and X, which is formerly Twitter, with a handle @SDCountyHHSA, again @SDCountyHHSA, and then also on Instagram @sandiegocountyhhsa, one word.

**[00:36:16] Colby:** Thank you Lina and Roberto for joining us today and sharing your knowledge, perspectives, insights, and stories. This has really been such a phenomenal conversation. Listeners, we want to hear from you. What are you most excited about for this year's forum? Join The Leah's Pantry Peer Learning Community and tell us the link for that can be found in our show notes.

**[00:36:43] Tee:** Colby and I are very excited to attend the forum this year and we would love to see and/or hear from you there. If you have feedback and ideas for the show or even just want to say hi, please drop by our Leah's Pantry table, but until then, ciao.

**[00:37:00] Colby:** See you there.

**[00:37:03] Tee:** This podcast is a product of Leah's Pantry made possible by the funding from the United States Department of Agriculture, the USDA and their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP an equal opportunity provider and employer. Visit [calfreshhealthyliving.org](http://calfreshhealthyliving.org) for healthy living tips. Thank you so much for hanging with us, and I want to ask you this question. Do you know of any thought leaders or someone doing great work in your community?

We would love to interview them and we'd love to hear from you. Find us online at [leahspantry.org](http://leahspantry.org) or on Instagram handle @leahspantry, or email us at [stockingthepantry@leahspantry.org](mailto:stockingthepantry@leahspantry.org). This podcast is a product of Leah's Pantry made possible by the funding from the United States Department of Agriculture and their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, an equal opportunity provider and employer. Visit [calfreshhealthyliving.org](http://calfreshhealthyliving.org) for healthy living tips.

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**[00:38:32] [END OF AUDIO]**

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