

2023 Annual Report

Senior Nutrition Program



SANTA CLARA COUNTY



SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY

Letter from the Program

Dear Friends,

In recent years we've had to adapt to evolving circumstances and challenges, while upholding our dedication to the well-being of older adults in our community. The Senior Nutrition Program underwent a transformation during the pandemic, shifting our meal delivery approach to a to-go model to safeguard our participants. In Fiscal Year 2023, dine-in service was reintroduced following the evaluation of public health guidelines and participant feedback. These services offer our older adult community a priceless opportunity to engage socially, alleviating feelings of isolation and enhancing their overall quality of life. Furthermore, we continue to offer to-go meals to accommodate our participants' preferences for both meal delivery options.

We look forward to the positive impact that resuming dine-in services will have within our older adult community. This serves as a testament to our shared commitment to providing our participants with the highest quality services to fulfill their nutritional requirements and social needs.

We want to express our deepest gratitude to our community partners for their unwavering support during these challenging times. Their faith in our mission and our team's unwavering dedication has collectively empowered the program to take this step forward.

We are excited to see the countless smiles on our participants' faces as they enjoy meals with their friends and community members once again.

Senior Nutrition Program Team



Senior Nutrition Program Team from left to right: Pedro Hernandez, Vandana Puri, Trisha Lam, Dieuly Nguyen, Aiysha Ahmed, Sandra Brown, Marilyn Picard, Lilia Roxas, Shirley Lin, Lauren Yamamoto. Not Pictured: Jennifer Kelly

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About Us

Our mission at the Senior Nutrition Program (SNP) is to promote the general health and well-being of older individuals by providing services that are intended to reduce hunger and food insecurity, promote socialization, and delay the onset of adverse health conditions.

Core Services

One of SNP's core services is to provide healthy meals in group settings, such as community centers and faith-based locations. In addition, deliver meals to the homes of older adults who live alone. The program also offers a wide range of other community supports, including nutrition screening, socialization, education, and transportation.

All programs target adults aged 60 and older who have the greatest social and economic need, with emphasis on the following:

- Low income population
- Minority individuals
- Older adults living in rural areas
- Older individuals with limited English proficiency, and
- Older adults at risk of institutionalization

Funding Streams

Services are funded through the following sources:

- County General Fund
- Title III (Federal)
- Title III (State)
- Participant Contributions
- Nutrition Services Incentive Program (Federal)
- Community Donations
- Various Emergency Funding Sources

Year in Review

The aging population in Santa Clara County is increasingly growing more diverse. SNP serves those most in need. Many clients are over the age of 75, living in poverty, women, at high nutritional risk, or Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

1,817,117
Meals Served

864,748

Dine-in Café/To-go

Traditional dining program that provides meals, socialization, and support services in a congregate setting. To-go meals were offered during the shelter-in-place order and have transitioned back to dine-in services.

40,644

Site Home-delivered

Hot, daily meal delivery service offered to clients that participated in the dine-in café program pre-COVID.

142,171

Shelter-in-place

Frozen, weekly meal delivery service for older adults who choose to shelter-in-place and would otherwise not qualify for traditional Meals on Wheels services.

740,976

Meals on Wheels

Frozen, weekly meal delivery program that provides 14 meals and supplemental grocery items to qualifying individuals.

28,578

Neighborhood Meals on Wheels

Daily, hot meal delivery program for nutritionally at-risk older adults that offers a friendly safety check-in.



16,613

Older Adults
Served

5,121 new
participants

50% live at or
below the FPL*

32% live alone

76% BIPOC

51% ages 75+

*The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a measure of income issued by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that determines eligibility for certain benefits. According to HHS, for 2022 the FPL was an annual income of \$13,590 for an individual, and \$18,310 for a family of two.

Program Updates

Return to Dine-in

SNP is one of the safety net programs that provides nutritious meals in a congregate setting to older adults in Santa Clara County. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the congregate meal program transitioned from dine-in to to-go and home delivery. Since 2022, the decline in COVID-19 cases has allowed the SNP to transition back to its original dine-in meal service model. By the end of June 2023, modifications for congregate meals ended, and all SNP sites have implemented dine-in service at the start of July 2023.



Images: Berryessa Community Center, Northside Community Center, Seven Trees Community Center, Northside Community Center, La Comida de California

Vietnamese American Services Center Neighborhood Meals on Wheels

In January 2023, SNP launched its new Neighborhood Meals on Wheels (NMOW) program at the existing Vietnamese American Service Center (VASC). In collaboration with Fresh and Natural Co Food Services, the nutrition staff at VASC delivers 60 daily hot Vietnamese meals with vegetarian options available Monday through Friday to eligible homebound older adults residing within a four-mile radius of the site.

The VASC NMOW is the third home-delivered meal program provided by a nutrition site in Santa Clara County. The Portuguese Organization for Social Services and Opportunities Community Center (POSSO) and Yu-Ai Kai Japanese-American Community Senior Service also provide home-delivered meals to older adults.



Social Media

SNP is new to social media on Facebook and Instagram! Find site information and events plus nutrition and health education, on the County of Santa Clara Social Services Agency accounts:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SocialServicesAgency.SCC>
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/scc_socialservices



Program Updates

SNP Quarterly Newsletter

SNP launched the quarterly newsletter in Summer 2022. Each newsletter shares upcoming events, workshops and resources of interest to its participants. We currently have 632 subscribers with 39% of those recipients opening the newsletter.



Commendations

National Nutrition Month® is an annual education campaign held each March to encourage everyone to learn more about making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. SNP provided nutrition education in multiple languages to 27,329 participants in the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year. On March 13, 2023 the Santa Clara Board of Supervisors recognized SNP in honor of National Nutrition Month®.



Image: Summer 2022 SNP Newsletter; SNP staff receiving commendations in honor of National Nutrition Month.



Flagship Programs

Café Program/Dine-in

This core service offers nutritious and healthy lunches at 37 different nutrition sites throughout the County of Santa Clara. These lunches are cooked on-site, catered by local restaurants or local food vendors, and provide 1/3 of the Daily Reference Intake for an older adult. The Congregate Meals Program is open to all seniors age 60 or over.

During FY 2022–2023, a total of 864,748 meals were served to 14,393 unduplicated seniors across all meal sites.

Total Meals Served FY22–23 (Summary by Contracts)

Sites	Meals Served
Asian American Community Services	9,837
Catholic Charities	75,382
City of Campbell	14,704
City of Milpitas	19,782
City of San Jose	193,509
India Community Center	17,933
Korean American Community Services	15,652
La Comida	77,804
Los Gatos	20,503
Community Services Agency of Mountain View	38,868
Los Gatos	20,503

Sites	Meals Served
Portuguese Organization of Social Services and Opportunities	35,329
Salvation Army	24,115
Sunnyvale United Methodist Church	41,199
Viet Tu Te	37,229
Vietnamese American Services Center	143,366
Vista Center for the Visually Impaired	2,009
YMCA	46,525
Self-Help at South Bay	13,046
Yu-Ai Kai	19,673
Total	864,748

Participant Demographics (Dine-in, To-go & Home-delivered)

14,393
Clients served

50%
ages 75+

71%
BIPOC

62%
Asian

46%
live at or below the FPL

Café Program/Dine-in Annual Meal Participant Satisfaction Survey

In January 2023, SNP distributed its annual survey to all SNP participants. We received 3,089 responses and here are some highlights.

94%

agree or strongly agree SNP helps them stay healthy

89%

agree or strongly agree socialization at meal sites help them maintain their overall health

92%

agree or strongly agree they are satisfied with the meals provided by SNP

For additional services like nutrition education series, blood pressure checks, bingo, and karaoke provided at the meal site, participants responded:

83%

agree or strongly agree it helps them stay socially connected

71%

agree or strongly agree it helps them eat healthier foods at home

78%

agree or strongly agree it helps them continue to live independently

“Although I didn’t realize it at the time, after my husband died I fell into a deep depression. I slept through breakfast and had wine, chips and dip for lunch and dinner every day. **A friend encouraged me to eat at a meal site.** I was reluctant at first, but enjoyed myself and started attending regularly. **Now I am a volunteer at the site.**”

- Congregate Meals Participant

Flagship Programs

Café Program/To-go Meals

Since the onset of the pandemic, SNP has provided takeout meal services at all its café locations, and some sites have extended this to include home-delivered meals. On February 28, 2023, the COVID-19 State of Emergency came to a close. Carefully, SNP collaborated with local health authorities to assess the implications of reintroducing dine-in services. Recognizing the preference of many participants for the new to-go model, SNP initiated a survey among participants who had utilized the takeout meal service. We gathered 325 responses to gauge the impact of discontinuing this service. Given the continued interest in takeout meals, SNP decided to maintain a hybrid service through POSSO, VASC, and AACI while reopening for indoor dining service.



Images: To-go meals prepared by Yu-Ai Kai Japanese-American Community Senior Service, Korean American Community Services, and Salvation Army - Senior Activities Center

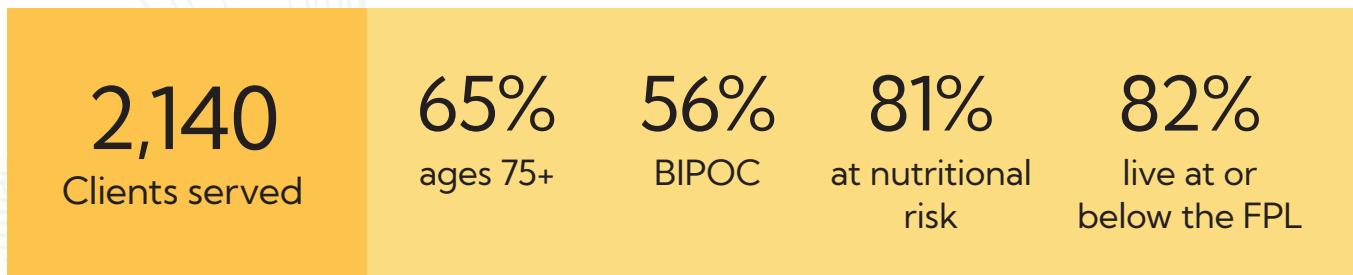
Flagship Programs

Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels (MOW) program is SNP’s traditional home-delivered meals program, and offers one delivery per week with 14 home-delivered meals consisting of two fresh and five frozen lunch/dinner entrees, seven breakfast meals, and additional grocery items such as yogurt or fresh berries to homebound older adults.



Participant Demographics



“**Just thank you very much!** It’s been a great, great help. I am 99 years old and all is greatly appreciated.”

- Meals on Wheels Participant

Meals on Wheels Annual Meal Participant Satisfaction Survey

In January 2023, SNP distributed its annual survey to all SNP participants. We received 148 responses and here are some highlights.

94%

agree or strongly agree SNP helps them maintain their overall health

92%

agree or strongly agree SNP helps them maintain their independence

87%

agree or strongly agree they are satisfied with the meals provided by SNP

74%

agree or strongly agree they enjoy the variety of food offered



Images: Prepared meal; Team preparing meals for delivery.

Flagship Programs

Neighborhood Meals on Wheels

Currently, three sites offer Neighborhood Meals on Wheels (NMOW): Portuguese Organization for Social Services and Opportunities (POSSO), Yu-Ai Kai Japanese-American Community Senior Service, and Vietnamese American Service Center (VASC). All offer hot, home-delivered, ethnic meals to qualified homebound participants. POSSO specializes in providing Portuguese cuisine meals, Yu-Ai Kai provides a combination of Japanese and American-continental meals, and VASC specializes in Asian-influenced meals.

Portuguese Organization for Social Services and Opportunities

POSSO's NMOW participants truly enjoy eating home cooked Portuguese meals and are grateful for the daily check-ins from the drivers and the ability to enjoy meals at home. The meals help many thrive and delay adverse outcomes including chronic disease and social isolation.

11,143
meals
delivered

72%
age 75+

9,578
meals
delivered

71%
age 75+

Yu-Ai Kai Japanese-American Community Senior Service

Yu-Ai Kai's NMOW program provides qualified, homebound participants daily hot Japanese and American meals in the Japantown and Berryessa neighborhoods. NMOW is highly valued in the Japantown community and helps many homebound participants thrive and access nutritious, balanced meals.

Vietnamese American Service Center

VASC NMOW delivers hot, Vietnamese meals with vegetarian options. Service is from Monday through Friday to eligible homebound older adults residing within the site's four-mile radius.

8,213
meals
delivered

53%
age 75+

Neighborhood Meals on Wheels Annual Meal Participant Satisfaction Survey

In January 2023, SNP distributed its annual survey to all SNP participants. We received 110 responses and here are some highlights.

96%

agree or strongly agree SNP helps them maintain their overall health

93%

agree or strongly agree SNP helps them maintain their independence

95%

agree or strongly agree they are satisfied with the meals provided by SNP

91%

agree or strongly agree they enjoy the variety of food offered



Flagship Programs

Home-delivered Meals for People Sheltering-in-Place

Since the start of the pandemic, SNP has ensured older adults in the community have access to nourishing meals by partnering with TRIO Community Meals to expand Home-delivered Meal (HDM) services to individuals self-sheltering at home.

Like the regular HDM program, this self-sheltering HDM Program offers one-delivery of 14 home-delivered meals a week. However, the service population differs due to the relaxed eligibility criteria.

With the End of Major Disaster Declaration (MDD) flexibilities, this program was impacted the most. The flexibilities offered during the pandemic ended in April 2023 and all participants on this program were asked to transition over to the traditional home-delivered meal program or attend the closest congregate dine-in meal site to prevent disruption of services.



Participant Demographics

355

Clients served

63%

ages 75+

50%

BIPOC

84%

at nutritional risk

70%

live at or below the FPL

C1 Home Delivered Meals Survey

In May 2023, SNP distributed its annual survey to all SNP participants. We received 53 responses and here are some highlights.

94%

agree or strongly agree HDM helps them maintain their overall health

90%

agree or strongly agree HDM helps them maintain their independence

90%

agree or strongly agree are satisfied with HDM



Photos: Meals being prepared and packaged for delivery.

Flagship Programs

Friends from Meals on Wheels

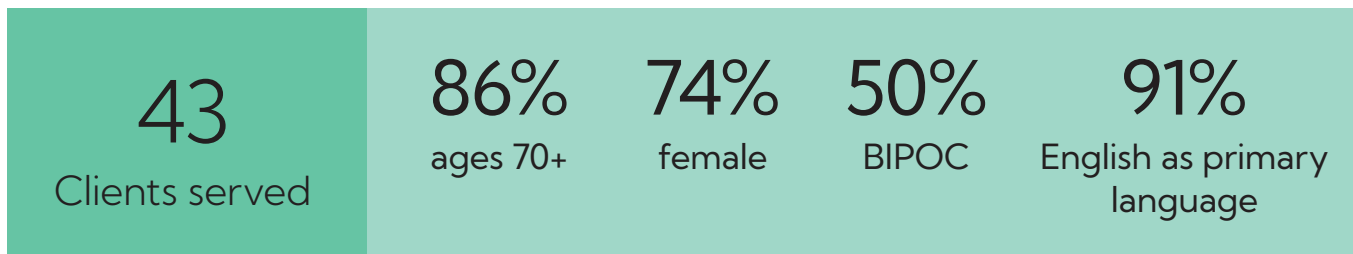
The FMOW program seeks to increase socialization for isolated and homebound older adults. As a result, having a positive impact on their physical and mental health, happiness, and quality of life. Clients receiving Meals on Wheels or NMOW could participate in regular friendly phone calls or home visits to talk, listen, receive community resources and a monthly newsletter. Activities provided to FMOW participants include:

- Initial home-visit assessments
- Subsequent home-visits
- Telephone calls
- Exercise home-visits or virtual calls
- Pet food deliveries
- Birthday card and gift deliveries

Studies have shown that socialization decreases stress, increases self-esteem and reduces mental health issues such as depression. Increased socialization and the associated benefits mitigate the development of chronic health conditions, allowing seniors to maintain their independence.

The Senior Nutrition Program released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Friends from Meals on Wheels Program in FY22 to continue its goal to increase socialization for isolated and home-bound seniors. Due to the inability to find a vendor to continue the service, SNP rolled out a needs assessment survey among our current home bound clients to better understand the needs and will determine whether to release another RFP in FY24 to select a vendor that can provide these services.

Participant Demographics



Friends from Meals on Wheels Annual Meal Participant Satisfaction Survey

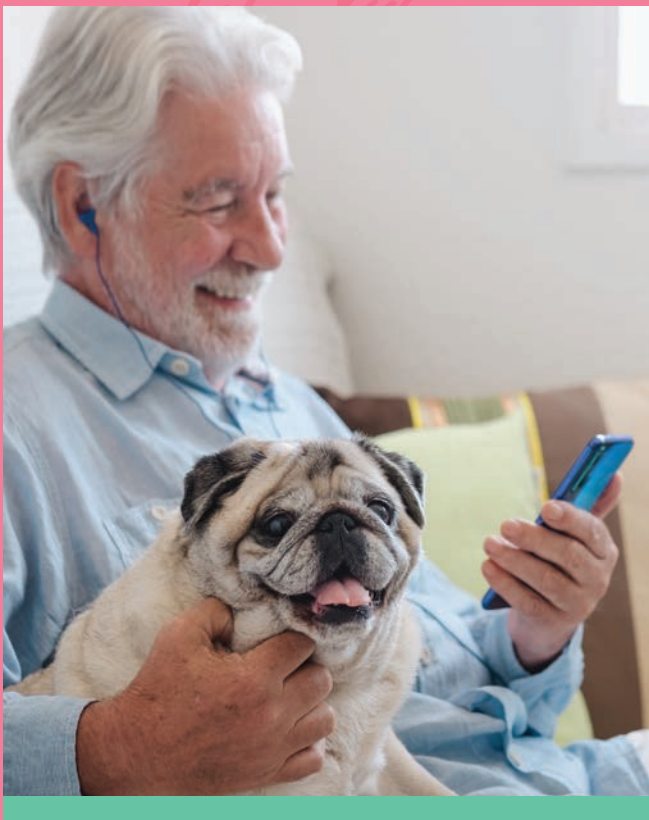
In May 2023, The Health Trust distributed a survey to all participants who were enrolled in the FMOW program. We received 38 responses and here are some highlights.

92%

agree or strongly agree they are more socially connected

92%

agree or strongly agree the program is important for their well-being



Flagship Programs

Mobility Management Program

The Mobility Management Program (MMP) provides free transportation benefits to eligible, registered dining program participants to access cafe sites and engage in social interaction with others. Benefits include monthly bus passes, gas cards, and Paratransit rides.

In recent years, demand for MMP service was low due to the pandemic. As more dining sites are opening their doors for dine-in service, SNP foresees rapid growth among MMP usage—especially increases in Paratransit rides and bus pass benefits.

4,620

bus passes

4,625

gas cards

3,013

paratransit
rides



Participant Demographics

1,239

Clients served

48%

ages 75+

82%

BIPOC

32%

live alone

75%

live at or below
the FPL

RYDE (Reach Your Destination Easily)

RYDE is an affordable curb-to-curb transportation service for older adults 65+ living in parts of Santa Clara County. It is a collaboration between the Saratoga Area Senior Coordinating Council (SASCC), West Valley Community Services (WVCS), the County of Santa Clara, and the City of Morgan Hill. RYDE serves the communities of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga, Morgan Hill, and parts of San Jose. The majority of RYDEs are provided by volunteer drivers. The County's RYDE program is funded by VTA's 2016 Measure B Program. The County's RYDE program expansion provides rides for eligible participants in the following zip codes: 95110, 95112, 95116, 95118, 95119, 95120, 95122, 95123, 95124, 95129, 95130, 95139.

In May 2023, SNP seized the chance to reevaluate the RYDE framework within Social Services Agency (SSA). After a thorough cost assessment, it was suggested that the RYDE coordinator role within SSA be shifted to SASCC. SNP will maintain collaboration with WVCS and SASCC to promote the program and process all invoices required for submission to VTA for reimbursement. Simultaneously, our non-profit agencies will concentrate on arranging transportation for eligible older adults.



Between June 13, 2022 –
March 1, 2023



5,771 total marketing materials distributed (including direct mail postcards)

4,210 postcards mailed as a direct mail campaign

90 applications processed

17 fully registered clients*

72 rides completed

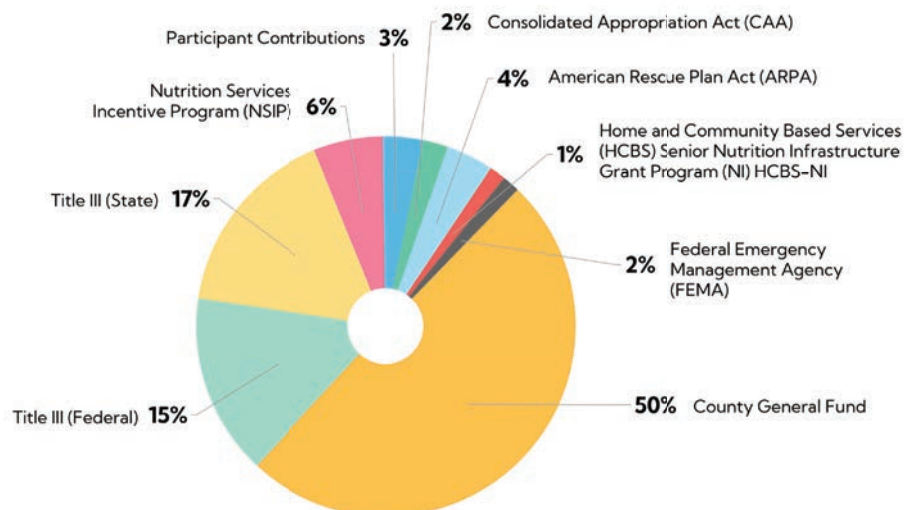
*Fully registered RYDE clients who have registered and provided a deposit.

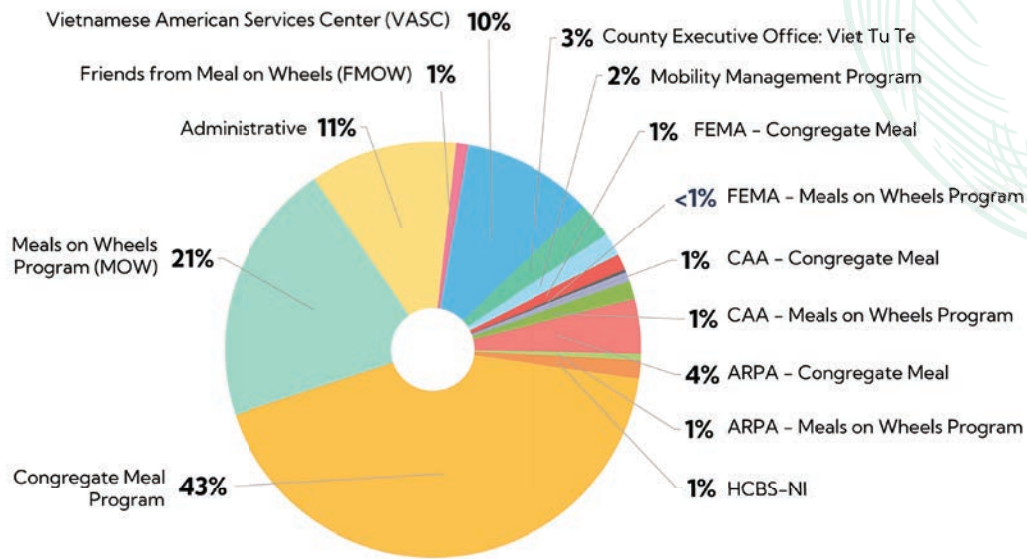
Funding Highlights

In FY 2022–2023, SNP expended a total of \$15,482,169. SNP received a variety of state and federal dollars from the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA) Title III Funds and Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) Funds. The Consolidated Appropriation Act (CAA), American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) program, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) all contributed funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the Mello–Granlund Older Californians Act, the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Senior Nutrition Infrastructure Grant Program (NI) HCBS–NI provided a one time funding opportunity intended for capacity and infrastructure improvements at Senior Nutrition Program meal sites. The grant allowed meal sites to purchase, upgrade, or refurbish infrastructure for the production and distribution of congregate or home-delivered meals.

Funding Source	
County General Fund	\$7,693,259
Title III (Federal)	\$2,388,555
Title III (State)	\$2,563,791
Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP)	\$911,202
Participant Contributions	\$526,163
Consolidated Appropriation Act (CAA)	\$332,873
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)	\$622,721
Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Senior Nutrition Infrastructure Grant Program (NI) HCBS–NI	\$214,111
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	\$229,494
Total	\$15,482,169





Expenditures	
Congregate Meal Program	\$6,610,120
Meals on Wheels Program (MOW)	\$3,170,466
Administrative	\$1,766,011
Friends from Meal on Wheels (FMOW)	\$142,122
Vietnamese American Services Center (VASC)	\$1,567,500
County Executive Office: Viet Tu Te	\$438,711
Mobility Management Program (MMP)	\$278,148
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - Congregate Meal	\$194,407
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Meals on Wheels Program	\$35,087
Consolidated Appropriation Act (CAA) - Congregate Meal	\$110,439
Consolidated Appropriation Act (CAA) - Meals on Wheels Program	\$222,434
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) - Congregate Meal	\$657,945
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) - Meals on Wheels Program	\$74,668
Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Senior Nutrition Infrastructure Grant Program (NI) HCBS-NI	\$214,111
Total	\$15,482,169

Community Engagement

Kassandra Velasquez, Intern & Earn

The Intern and Earn program provides SNP with an opportunity to help CalWORKs families and children with real-life workplace experience. Students gain workplace experience while continuing their education. Kassandra Velasquez had the opportunity to intern with SNP this year. Kassandra worked on multiple projects, including digitizing paper registration forms, entering data for surveys, conducting analysis in Qualtrics, and gathering SNP site features for the SNP website.



Jennifer Fong, Dietetic Intern

SNP collaborates with San Jose State's Department of Nutrition and Food Science to train future dietitians. Under the supervision of SNP's dietitians, student interns receive practical experience in food service and community nutrition. SNP hosted Jennifer Fong FY 2022-2023 who applied classroom knowledge to hands-on work experience. Jennifer created social media content, nutrition education handouts for the participants and food safety training for site staff.

March National Nutrition Month®

National Nutrition Month® promotes making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The theme for this year was "Fuel for the Future." SNP celebrated National Nutrition Month® in March 2023 and Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day on March 9th. For this occasion, participants enjoyed healthy meals, engaging nutrition education presentations, and gifts of appreciation. On March 13, 2023, the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors recognized SNP in honor of National Nutrition Month® with a Proclamation.





Holiday Gift and Giveaways

In December 2022, SNP provided 1,376 scarves to Meals on Wheels homebound seniors and 85 scarves to Neighborhood Meals on Wheels participants at POSSO and Yu-Ai Kai.

In March 2023, SNP distributed 2,011 ponchos to older adults at 32 meal sites to help them keep dry during the rainy season and 2,090 First Aid Kits to older adults at VASC, MOW, and NMOW.

Senior Nutrition Program Website

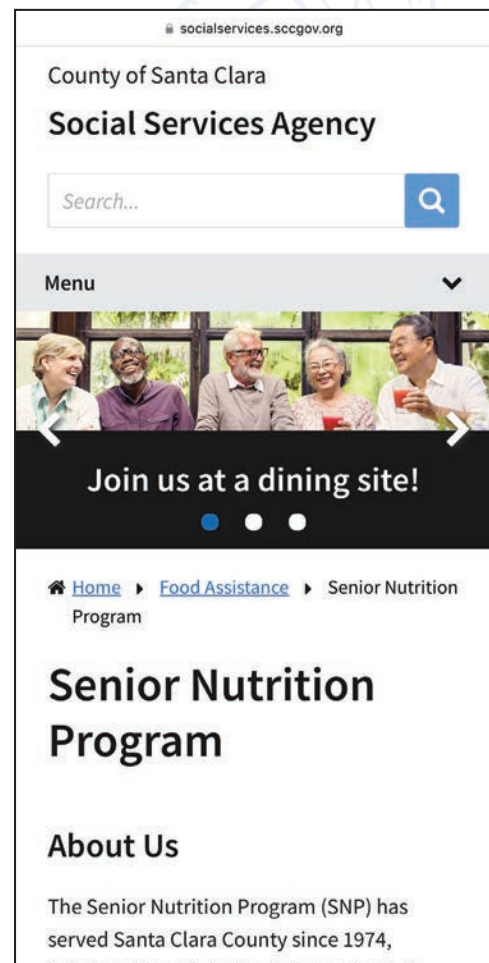
The SNP website has the latest information on SNP café sites and flagship programs. Participants can stay connected through a quarterly newsletter showcasing program updates, community resources and events. Participants can easily use the Café Program Locator to find site locations, cuisine options, links to site-specific websites, plus other site features. In addition, participants can register for meals, submit inquiries about the MOW program and view the menu.

SNP partners have easy access to best practice resources including required site documentation and program Policy and Procedure Manuals. The meals-at-a-glance dashboard can be used to find up-to-date SNP meal service data and allows filters for specific months and years.

7,559 unique website visitors

714 visits to the cafe locator

939 visits to MOW intake form



Stories from the Community

Kinh-Thi Huynh, VASC

Born in 1944, Ms. Kinh-Thi Huynh shares that this year she celebrates her 80th birthday. She was born in Saigon, Vietnam, and immigrated to the United States in 1978, where she has lived for over 45 years. During her free time, Kinh-Thi enjoys relaxing, watching TV, and listening to music. She specifically enjoys listening to *cải lương*, a Vietnamese folk opera.

Kinh-Thi has been attending the Senior Nutrition Program at the Vietnamese American Service Center (VASC) since June 2023. Before joining the program, she explains how she struggled with loneliness and isolation. This negatively affected her mental and physical health, occasionally contributing to irritability and restlessness. However, after participating in the Senior Nutrition Program, she feels her mental and physical well-being has improved significantly. Kinh-Thi looks forward to her daily visits to VASC and enjoys eating a variety of meals. Kinh-Thi enjoys the tasty meals served and provides her with opportunities to try foods she cannot prepare at home. Happily, she reports the food is so good she was able to gain two pounds as a result of improving her nutrition status with access to healthy, delicious meals.



Although she's only been attending the Senior Nutrition Program at VASC for 3 months, Kinh-Thi highlights that staff are respectful and always happy to help. She truly believes that the Senior Nutrition Program fosters socialization among older adults, allowing them to share their experiences with each other. Her dream is that VASC will be able to continue providing services and expand to other locations, allowing other older adults to stay healthy and thrive.

Richard Oehm, Meals on Wheels

Mr. Richard Oehm describes himself as an entrepreneur. Despite being 66 years old and born completely blind, he shares how he never allowed his disability to hinder his career aspirations.

Richard shares that he first learned about the Meals on Wheels program through his wife's daughter, who had initially signed his wife up for it. When his wife fell ill, MOW meals lightened his responsibility of having to cook since he was busy with care giving responsibilities. Although she passed away in 2020, Richard remains motivated by his fulfilling and rewarding career. Richard shares that after his wife passed, he wasn't planning to continue using the MOW services, however, his delivery driver encouraged him to stay enrolled.

Since 2020, the MOW program has provided immense benefits for Richard. He finds the meals easy to prepare, especially given his busy lifestyle with work. While he continues to shop for groceries when possible, being blind makes it challenging. He shares how the MOW deliveries save him time and ensures he cannot find an excuse to skip meals. Richard further states he looks forward to eating the fresh salad and fruit that is included in the weekly meal deliveries. Richard also enjoys his interactions with the MOW delivery drivers, stating they are always friendly and cheerful. Overall, he loves participating in the MOW program, as it makes it easier to eat healthy and nutritious foods, without having to spend extra time preparing food himself.



Partnership Highlights

Public Health Department: Nutrition Education

SNP collaborated with the Public Health Department (PHD) to champion health and wellness by increasing access to fresh, local produce and nutrition-focused education. SNP promoted Farmer's Market attendance and utilizing cost-reduction benefits (such as CalFresh EBT, CalFresh Dollars, and Market Match) through the SNP quarterly newsletter and nutrition education sessions. Farmer's Market Coupons were distributed to participants to increase their buying power, allowing them to enjoy more fresh fruits and vegetables at home. In partnership with SNP, PHD conducted interactive presentations on "Quick, Healthy Meals and Snacks" and "Eating Healthy on a Budget" at SNP meal sites, empowering participants to make healthy food choices and maximize food resources.

SNP Gives Back: Staff Serves Holiday Meal

In the spirit of the holiday season, the SNP staff volunteered during the Christmas holiday meal at Salvation Army. The participants enjoyed a special meal of steak, green beans, mashed potatoes, an orange, and a holiday cookie.



Behavioral Health Department: Training on Empathy

In December 2022, the SNP partnered with Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Department and Gardner Health Services to provide staff training on "The Heart of Compassion in the Delivery of Nutrition Services." The training was conducted by specialists in Mental Health, Social Work, and Marriage and Family Therapy. This was a useful tool for staff working directly with older adults in the community.

Images: SNP staff serving holiday meals at Salvation Army

Happy Hollow: Senior Safari

Welcome to the jungle at Happy Hollow Park & Zoo! Senior Safari is an exciting way to socialize with friends and enjoy the outdoors with unique animals and learn about community resources. Not only did visitors get to ride a roller coaster, view a jaguar, capybaras, meercats and pet goats, but many visitors attending received a SNP giveaway and information about our programs. Senior Safari was held on the fourth Thursday of every month from May – October.



Home and Community Based Services Senior Nutrition Infrastructure Grant Program

This grant was allocated to support subcontractors in addressing overdue structural and equipment enhancements to expand their capacity and improve efficiency. This grant initiative placed a premium on investing, improving, and rejuvenating infrastructure for the preparation and delivery of congregate or home-delivered meals. Noteworthy enhancements included updated flooring, a fresh coat of paint, new kitchen equipment, and the procurement of fuel-efficient vehicles for meal distribution.



Partnership Highlights

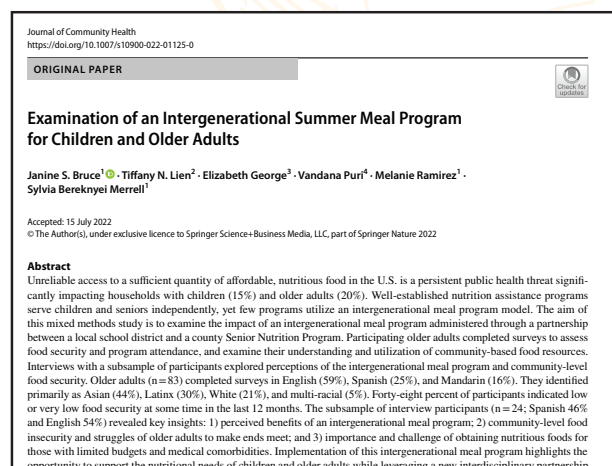
Public Health Department: Distribution of Farmer's Market Coupons

In partnership with the Public Health Department, SNP distributed Farmer's Market coupons to meal sites located close to a market. The coupon allows the participants to purchase fresh, seasonal produce. Four-hundred and fourteen (414) Farmer's Market coupons were redeemed by Senior Nutrition Program participants. In addition, the Market Match CalFresh program offers participants with an EBT card to double their money, up to \$15 free per day, at participating Farmer's Markets.

Stanford Study: Examination of Intergenerational Summer Meal Program

SNP collaborated with Dr. Janine Bruce, a professor from Stanford University, to assess the effectiveness of an intergenerational summer meal initiative for both children and older adults. In 2019, SNP initiated a 6-week lunch program at Rengstorff Park in Mountain View, where several older adults brought their grandchildren to play. The collaboration started in 2019 and concluded with a study published in 2022.

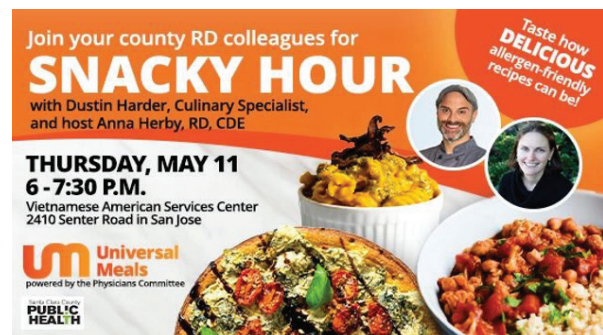
Remarkably, the program achieved outstanding success, despite SNP's relatively limited outreach efforts. The study, which was published in the *Journal of Community Health* in 2022, highlights that this intergenerational meal program model displays substantial potential for extending existing programs to a new demographic. Additionally, it offers the added benefit of providing older adults with increased opportunities for social interaction with younger generations. Furthermore, contributing to the well-being and overall quality of life for both individuals and communities. The complete study can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-022-01125-0>



Images: Grandparents eating meal with grandchild; Example image of published study.

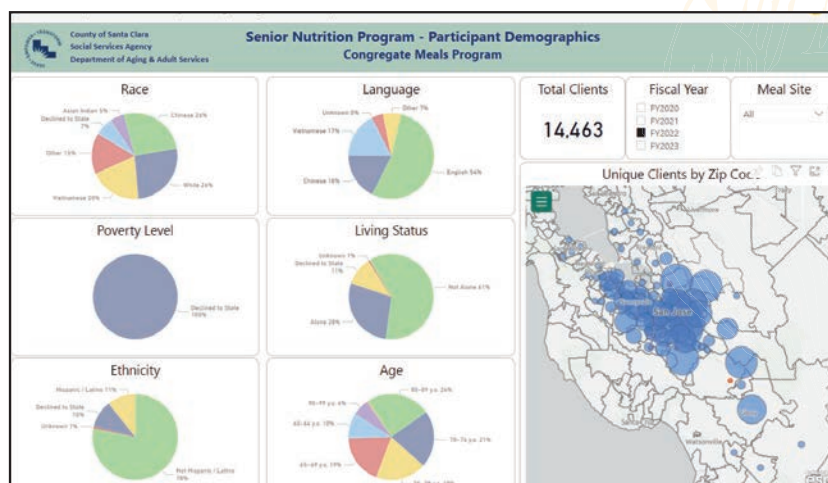
County Dietitians Networking Event: Launch of Universal Meals

In collaboration with SNP, Santa Clara County Public Health Department hosted Universal Meals' "Snacky Hour" at the Vietnamese American Services Center (VASC) in May 2023. The Universal Meals program, designed by the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine, provides formulated guidelines that deliver well-rounded and nutritional recipes devoid of animal products, gluten-containing grains, nuts, and common allergens. This was an educational and taste testing event for registered dietitians and health professionals.



Technology Service and Solutions Department: Demographic Dashboard by Meal Site

SNP in partnership with Technology Service and Solutions (TSS) Department successfully launched a comprehensive dashboard that displays annual data by site for the entire fiscal year. It also displays demographic information like race, poverty level, ethnicity, age, living status and language most spoken at meal sites. The dashboard is available at the SNP website under the Partner Connections and Resources page: <https://socialservices.sccgov.org/food-assistance/senior-nutrition-program/partner-connections-and-resources>.



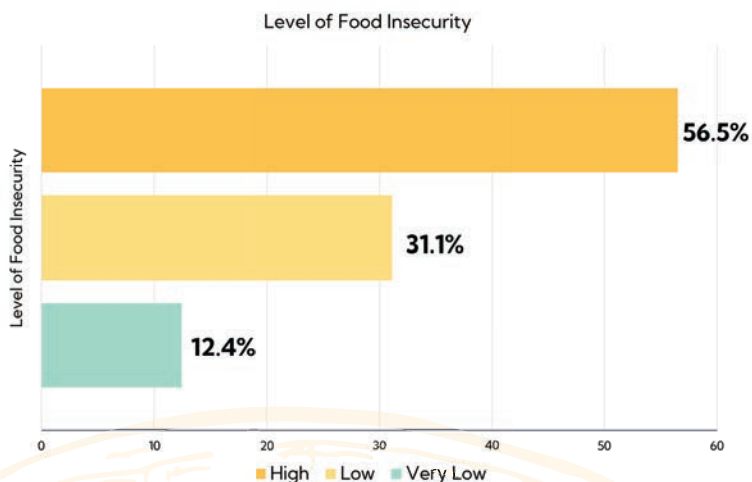
Images: SNP and Santa Clara County Public Health Department hosting "Snacky Hour". SNP Demographic Dashboard.

Partnership Highlights

Office of Research and Evaluation: A Study of Food Security Among SNP Participants

The Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE), in partnership with SNP, conducted a comprehensive study to investigate the repercussions of discontinuing CalFresh emergency allotments on food security, as well as potential racial disparities in food security among their clientele. In May 2023, more than 1,700 SNP clients actively participated in the survey, representing roughly 10% of the entire SNP client base. The survey incorporated questions derived from the U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module.

The analysis revealed that 56.5% of the respondents reported experiencing high food security, while 43.5% of the participants reported experiencing low food security and very low food security.



Findings revealed that 69% of SNP respondents self-reported receiving CalFresh benefits.

Twenty-one percent of the survey respondents self-reported facing trouble meeting their food needs post-allotment discontinuation; however, no immediate negative impact on food security was found one month after the expiration of the CalFresh Emergency Allotment.

Lastly, findings from logistic regression analysis indicate that, in comparison to White Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders were more likely to report low or very low food security. Vietnamese Americans self-reported the lowest food security among Asian Americans. No significant racial differences were noted between White Americans and other racial/ethnic groups.

69%

of SNP survey participants received CalFresh benefits

21%

of SNP survey participants experienced difficulty in meeting food needs since allotment expired

New Opportunities

Database & New Scanner

TSS is in the process of developing a novel data collection system designed to centralize all program data, aiming to simplify and streamline the data collection and input procedures. Additionally, TSS is working on an application that can be installed on County-owned devices, which will expedite the scanning process at each meal site.

Nighborhood Meals on Wheels Expansion in FY24

Multiple studies have demonstrated that providing home-delivered meals is an effective strategy to enable homebound older adults to remain in their homes instead of transitioning to nursing facilities. Presently, our menu exclusively provides frozen meals to homebound older adults across the county, but it does not cater to the diverse ethnic preferences within the community.

Our objective is to enhance our home-delivered meal program by introducing Asian cuisine options, fresh meal choices, and hot meal selections for homebound older adults, thereby offering broader and more inclusive meal options.

Restaurant Dining

A growing number of elderly individuals in the Bay Area are extending their working years due to the increased cost of living. The restaurant voucher initiative aims to ease the concern regarding where older individuals in the workforce can find affordable meals, especially during non-traditional meal hours. Introducing a restaurant meal program will expand meal service hours to encompass evening meals at specific restaurants.



Senior Nutrition Program Restaurant Meal Voucher

This voucher can be redeemed for one meal on

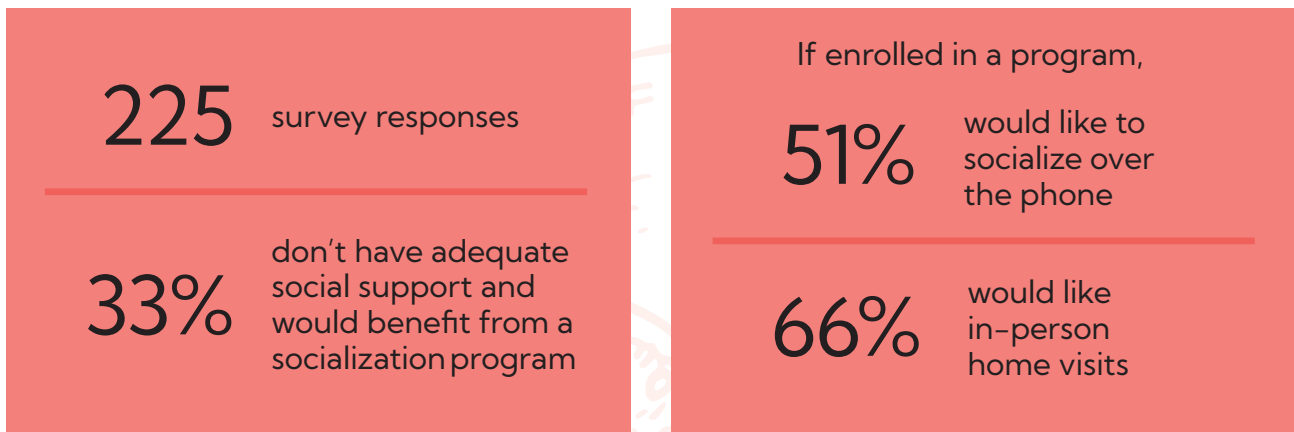
Terms and conditions
This food voucher allows the participant to redeem a meal at DiLac restaurant. This voucher cannot be redeemed for cash. This voucher is good for one time use only.

Grant Funding for Transportation Needs

In FY24, SNP will apply for the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 Grant to improve the mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Funding from this grant would help remove barriers to transportation services and help expand the transportation mobility options available. Through this grant, SNP could cover the operating cost of its mobility management program.

Socialization Opportunities for Home-delivered Meal Clients

To address the need for socialization among home-bound older adults, various community and senior support programs exist, offering activities and services that promote social engagement. These may include virtual meet-ups, phone calls, and home visits. In FY24, we hope to identify a partner in the community to provide such services to our homebound participants.



Activities participants would like to see: chess, bingo, jigsaw puzzles, dominos, help with technology, walking buddy, watching movies together, reading books or newspapers together.

Challenges

End of Major Disaster Declaration (MDD) Flexibilities

Emergency funding often supports services for the most vulnerable members of society, including low-income individuals, the elderly, and those with disabilities. The end of MDD flexibilities and reduction in funds will directly impact these populations, leaving them without critical support. Among the programs affected by this change was the SNP shelter-in-place home-delivery program, initiated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision to discontinue this program was influenced in part by the cessation of MDD flexibilities on July 1, 2023. The participants on this program were referred to Sourcewise and other meal providers in the community. The end of emergency funding had a significant and detrimental impact on essential services across various sectors; Senior Nutrition Program being one of them.

Limited Funding

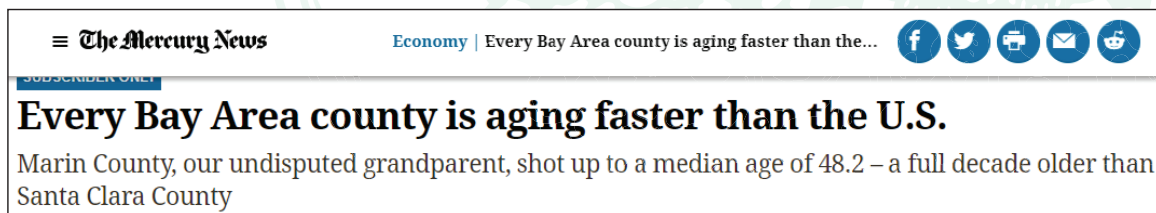
Limited funding will have a profound impact on Senior Nutrition Program services, potentially jeopardizing the well-being of elderly individuals. With constrained resources, the program may struggle to maintain its current level of services, leading to reduced meal options, scaled-back delivery schedules, or even fewer seniors being able to access these vital services. This can translate to increased food insecurity, compromised health, and heightened isolation among seniors, especially those who rely on these programs for nourishment and social interaction. In the long term, such limitations may strain an already overburdened healthcare system as seniors face greater health challenges due to inadequate nutrition and support.


Inflation

With significant food price inflation in 2022 and the expiration of COVID-19 pandemic aid, food hardship has increased for many households across the country. Several older adults turned to Senior Nutrition Program to meet their nutritional needs. As the cost of living rises due to inflation, the purchasing power through the program's funding has become a challenge. If the funding for this program remains flat, it could jeopardize the quality of meals and reach of this vital service, ultimately affecting the health and nutrition of the elderly population it serves. Addressing these challenges is imperative to ensure the well-being of the older adults we serve.

Santa Clara County is Aging

Santa Clara County is facing a significant demographic shift, with its population rapidly aging. This demographic trend is placing increased pressure on essential services like the Senior Nutrition Program, which plays a crucial role in ensuring the well-being of older residents. As the elderly population grows, there is an urgent need to bolster funding for this program to meet the rising demand for nutritious meals, social interaction, and support services. Investing in the Senior Nutrition Program is not just a compassionate choice but a strategic one, ensuring the health and dignity of our elderly citizens. According to the California Department of Finance, by 2026 the older adult population in our county is anticipated to increase by 71,593 adults. SNP projects that over the next five years, the number of participants it serves will increase by more than 2,500 participants.



≡ **The Mercury News** Economy | Every Bay Area county is aging faster than the... 

Every Bay Area county is aging faster than the U.S.

Marin County, our undisputed grandparent, shot up to a median age of 48.2 – a full decade older than Santa Clara County



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S.F.'s population of older adults expected to soar in the next four decades

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***Thank you to our board of supervisors for
their support during the pandemic.***

We're counting on your continued support for
the Senior Nutrition Program.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY



SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY