

Transitional Assistance Department

CalFresh Recognized for Increasing Participation, Awareness

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The Transitional Assistance Department (TAD) is reaching out to individuals and families in San Bernardino County to increase participation in the CalFresh program by participating in several community activities. The department's efforts to improve accessibility and participation in the CalFresh program have not gone unnoticed.



The CalFresh program was recognized during the annual California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) CalFresh Forum. The CalFresh Forum consists of speakers and presenters dedicated to the improvement of policy for, participation in, and access to the CalFresh program. Program administrators and advocates work to improve the program and strengthen the communication between the two groups. The annual Program Access Index (PAI) results were also announced at the February event. PAI is a county-level analysis and measurement of CalFresh use among eligible low-income individuals versus individuals who signed up and participate in the program.

'Freshy' Awards were given to individuals and organizations that have been innovative in improving the CalFresh program and/or increasing the participation. San Bernardino County was awarded a first place PAI 'Freshy' for a large County with a rate of .928. San Bernardino County also ranked third overall among California's 58 Counties for having the highest CalFresh use when compared to the number of low-income County residents.

"State officials have pushed counties to increase participation among eligible residents," said Steve Couchot, regional manager.

The department has raised awareness in a variety of ways, including promoting the state's www.C4Yourself.com website, which results in 30 percent of San Bernardino County's CalFresh applications.

"San Bernardino County's doing a good job with outreach; the word is out there that people can get these benefits they're entitled to," said Lynda Rush, chairwoman of the Economics Department at Cal Poly Pomona.



Nancy Swanson, TAD Director was nominated for a 'Freshy' Award for Best Performance by a County Administrator to Improve CalFresh. Swanson has directed and overseen outreach and efficiency strategies targeting increased CalFresh participation and improved technology use with a focus on customer experience.

"To receive such a prestigious award is truly humbling. It was an honor to be recognized by CFPA for our continued efforts in promoting the CalFresh program," said Swanson. "The success the county has achieved in increasing the number of individuals participating is a reflection of our staff's commitment to ongoing collaborations with faith and community-based organizations."



Deputy Director James Locurto accepts a Freshy Award on behalf of TAD.

