

Breaks Bread To Community Kitchen



The Palm Beach County Food Bank (PBCFB), United Way of Palm Beach County and Palm Beach County government broke bread to the Food Bank's 24,000 square-foot community kitchen expansion. Upon cutting two six-foot loaves of bread on a 12-foot table to ceremoniously "cut the ribbon," attendees toured the state-of-the-art structure, which is projected to feed up to 10,000 hot, nutritious meals a day to food-insecure children, families, adults, veterans and seniors. The project confronts increasing food insecurity in Palm Beach County where over 173,000 residents lack access to nourishing food to live active, healthy lives.

The PBCFB procures food from grocery stores, farmers, food distributors, wholesalers, and other sources to almost 200 local community partners, including food pantries, soup kitchens and residential housing programs. PBCFB programs reach families, children, and seniors, and connect those in need to available benefits and resources. Partner agencies distribute the products received, including culturally appropriate food and necessities like household products. This process ensures families have access to food when they need it most.

"This kitchen is not just a building, but a symbol of our collective commitment to fighting hunger and ensuring that every member of our community has access to nutritious, delicious meals," said **Jamie Kendall**, CEO of Palm Beach County Food Bank. "Our commitment to this cause goes beyond providing meals. We are investing in our community's future by addressing the root causes of hunger through education, advocacy and collaboration. We believe that by working together, we can create a food-secure Palm Beach County where everyone has access to the resources they need to lead healthy, fulfilling lives."

The community kitchen will now accommodate more than triple the amount of volunteers than the space of the current PBCFB warehouse. Additionally, the facility will prove significant economic impact with a culinary training center and produce processing facility. The training center will allow unemployed and underemployed residents the skills needed to earn a living in the food service industry and to become culinary entrepreneurs while nourishing the county's most vulnerable neighbors with substantial food.

Prior to taking attendees on tours, the ceremony recognized community leaders and elected officials who have been instrumental in bringing the new facility to fruition. Some of those included **Verdenia Baker**, Palm Beach County Administrator; **Mayor Maria Sachs**, Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners; **Laurie George**, President and CEO of United Way of Palm Beach County and **Rick Roth**, Florida State Representative.

For more information visit pbcfoodbank.org or call 561.670.2518.

FIRST ROW: Jamie Kendall and Taruna Malhotra; Marti LaTour and Jamie Kendall; **SECOND ROW:** Maria Sachs, Verdenia Baker and Rev Pam Cahoon; Greg Weissman and Seth Bernstein; **THIRD ROW:** Rick Roth and Laurie Berman; Larry Thompson, Melissa Thackery and Glen Blount; **FOURTH ROW:** Michael Groover and Susan Rabinowitz; Eileen Acello and Chef Doug Barg. PHOTOS: CAPEHART

