

# FBank

By Chavon

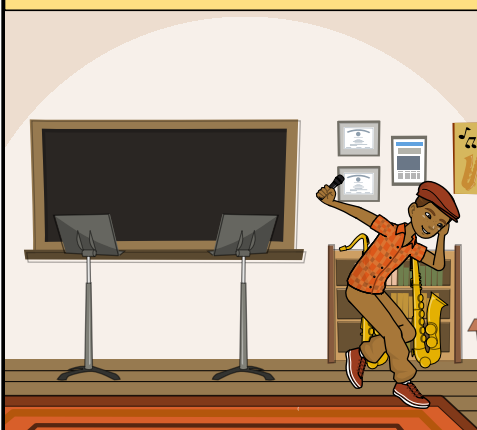
## Food Insecurity In Our Neighborhood



Meet a group of friends from Pacific Park High School...they come from different backgrounds, and their individual interest make them unique in many ways.



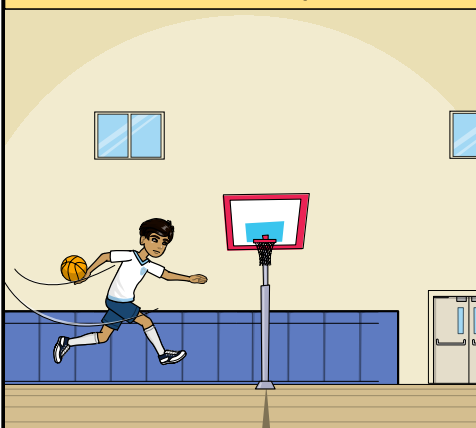
Marley is from Puerto Rico. He loves to create music to dance to.



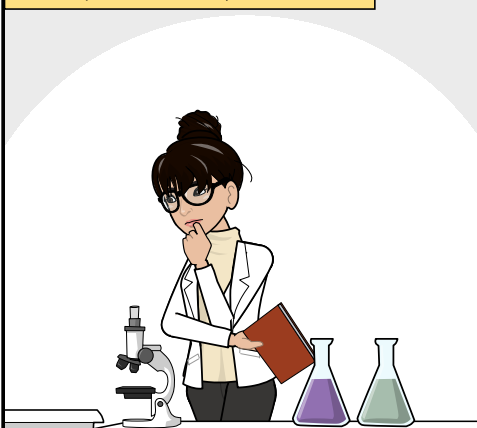
Ronnie originally from Lancaster...spends hours creating art.



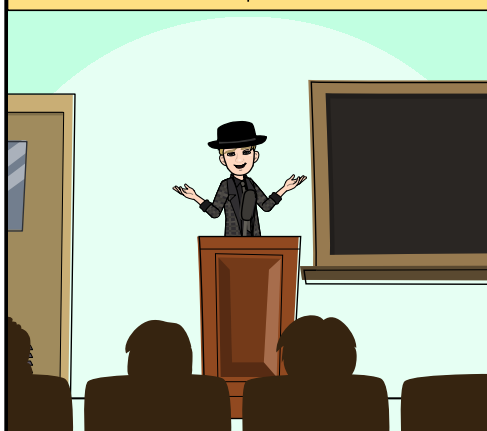
Milan is a 4 year foreign exchange student from Japan. He is a basketball M.V.P. and avid gamer.



Blanca a native from Santa Monica, loves discovery...science is her passion.



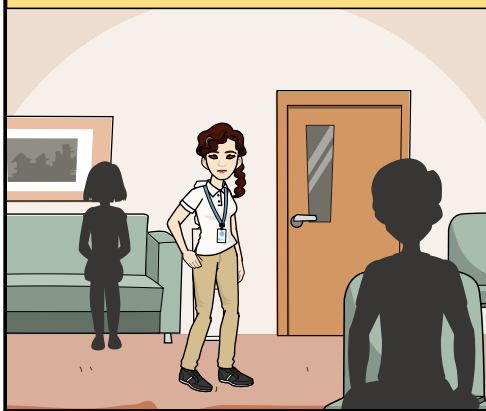
Tanner originally from Idaho, loves politics and is involved in school leadership.



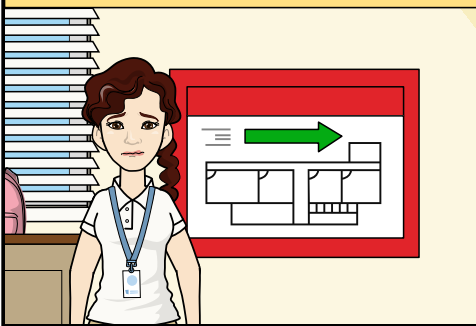
Despite their differences, they are all great friends...but even friends have "secrets" or things they may be ashamed to tell one another. This secret is what makes them have more things in common then they realize...

Can you guess what that is ?

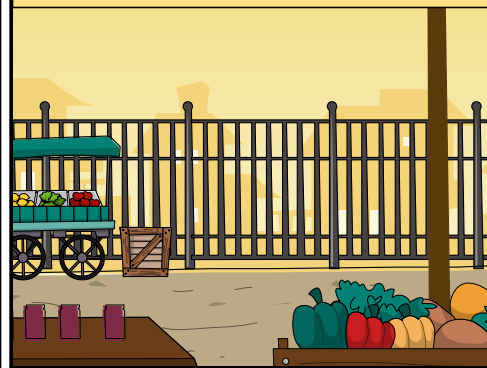
This is Shelly... she serves as the After School Center Director, at Pacific Park High. She loves her job, and the students love her too!



Students often confide in Shelly, and she has earned students trust over the years. She recently grew concerned when students began to come to her confidentially, about some personal things they were struggling with. One of the major issues is food insecurity. Shelly felt that something has to be done, but she could not do it alone...



With the assistance from Shelly, Pacific Park High was able to host a community service event. This was to spread awareness for students, and staff on which organizations are available to them. One of those organizations included, Westside Food Bank.



Westside Food Bank staff set up a pop-up pantry, to give away nutritious food. This pop-up pantry was to ensure that the Pacific Park High School community has access to the food they need.

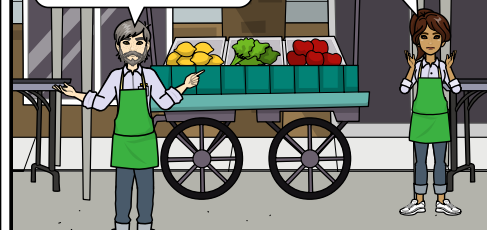


Employees spoke about the variety of programs the food bank offers. As well as educating everyone about food insecurity.



A major issue we like to highlight today, is food insecurity. To be food insecure, means that you do not have reliable access to adequate nutritious food, or lack the resources to purchase it.

A family is also considered food insecure when its members live in hunger, which is what you feel when you do not have enough to eat, or are in fear of starvation.



Many of you may not have known what food insecurity was, however some of you may have experienced food insecurity at some point in your lives. There may even be someone here currently experiencing food insecurity today. Please don't be afraid to let us know! The Westside Food Bank and our partner agencies want to help you and your families!



At Westside Food Bank, we distribute 4.8 million pounds of food every year. We acquire food through donations and bulk purchases. We provide a consistent supply of nutritious food to our member agencies, from our distribution warehouse.



Our community programs include: providing high-protein foods and fresh produce for children. We supply food to UCLA's Food Closet, multiple Santa Monica College food assistance programs and at Mount Saint Mary's University food distributions. We also provide food assistance for veterans and for youth when school is out for the summer.





Blanca's family food insecurity is not consistent, but there are times of the month when food in her household is scarce. Her father wants her to focus on school, instead of working after school to support their family.



Marley's family is homeless, and but they have been saving all their money to find a permanent place to live. This has created a strain on how much they have to spend on food and temporary shelter.



Although Milan is living with a financially secure family, through a foreign exchange student program, he is no stranger to food insecurity. When his parents died and he had to move in with his disabled grandmother, there was not enough money to keep food on the table when he was a young boy. He has decided to volunteer at future pop-up pantry events at school.



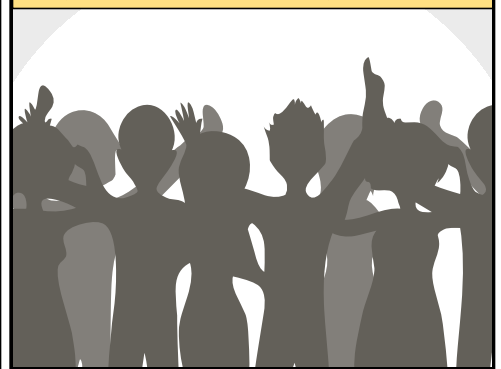
Ronnie has been in foster care half of her life. She recently turned 18, and she is now emancipated. She is currently living in transitional housing until she goes away to college. In the meantime, she is struggling to keep nutritious food in her apartment, and it has affected her grades.



Shelly had experienced food insecurity during her freshman year of college. She found relief through Westside Food Bank's, UCLA food closet. If it was not for the food closet, Shelly would not know where she would be today. She wanted to bring awareness to all in need!



Food assistance sets off a positive effect on the well-being for the individuals and the communities in which they live. Providing assistance to Pacific Park High school was just one of many hurdles to help end the cycle of hunger in the community.



In California, 4,011,960 people are facing hunger, 1,205,260 are children.

More than 1 out of every 5 people in Los Angeles County will experience food insecurity this year.

There is no single face of food insecurity. The need for food assistance varies among children, seniors, college students, people with disabilities, veterans, the working poor, people experiencing homelessness, and others.

About 3 out of 4 American teachers notice their students aren't able to access adequate amounts of food. As, 1 in 7 children face hunger.

People who face food insecurity sometimes have to choose between buying food, and taking care of their families.

Food insecurity often goes hand in hand with housing insecurity. Many of the people our member agencies serve are close to or already experiencing homelessness.

It is possible to end food insecurity in our communities by addressing both the immediate needs of those facing hunger and the root causes of food insecurity.

Westside Food Bank  
<http://www.wsfb.org/>

Data: Map the Meal Gap 2019: A Report on County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2017. Feeding America, 2019. Dupere, K. (2017, June 8). 6 startling facts about CHILD hunger in the U.S.--and how you can help. Mashable.