Time to give: UA 4 Food needs your cereal, peanut butter, canned goods and more

University Communications
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As you fill up your shopping cart and pantry at home, don't forget to set aside a few nonperishable items to bring to work. Your donations can help battle hunger in Southern Arizona and help UA 4 Food [1], the University's annual food drive, top last year's impressive results.

The monthlong food drive began Monday and runs through May 1.

Last year, the campaign brought in 5,054 pounds of food and $1,610 in monetary donations, well above the 3,129-pound total from 2019, before it paused for two years due to the pandemic.

Donations are being evenly divided between the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona and University's Campus Pantry, which provides food staples at no cost to students, faculty and staff. The student-run program also operates a rooftop garden on top of the Student Union Memorial Center that provides fresh produce for the pantry.

"A lot of people go without enough food, and that is a need that is not always seen," said Nick Hilton, assistant director in the office of Government and Community Relations. "We want people to know that they don't need to be embarrassed and there is help available to them. We will help to restock the shelves, especially because most people give in the fall or around the holidays."

During this year's campaign, which began Monday, members of the campus community are encouraged to donate nonperishable items by dropping them off at one of the more than 100 donation boxes on campus. A list of donation box locations [1] is available on the UA 4 Food website.

As part of a new partnership this year, donation boxes will also be available at 33 Chase Bank locations throughout Tucson. Monetary donations to the Campus Pantry [2] or Community Food Bank [3] can be made online.

UA 4 Food concludes on May 1 with the popular Stuff the Cat Tran event, where people can donate food at a drive-through collection spot at the traffic circle behind the Student Union Memorial Center. Volunteers will then load the donations onto a 40-foot-long Cat Tran shuttle parked between the Mall and Old Main for delivery to the Campus Pantry [4] and the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona.

On May 1, donations for Stuff the Cat Tran can be dropped off at the traffic circle off Mountain Avenue near the Second Street Garage and the Student Union Memorial Center.

Hilton says he's still looking for ambassadors and volunteers to help promote the campaign and to organize trips into the community to collect donations.

“There is no greater joy than giving,” said Ravindra Bhat, computer application and database developer in the Office of Budget and Planning and a UA 4 Food ambassador. “It feels wonderful to be part of the noble cause of raising funds and food donations for our students and community in need. Every little bit helps and together we can do a lot.”

Anyone interested in volunteering can email Hilton at hilton@arizona.edu [5].

The most needed items include:

- Peanut butter
- Oatmeal
- Cereal and granola bars
- Canned tomato products
- Canned meats
- Canned soups
- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Rice
- Pasta
- Packaged nuts and seeds

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