



# Sacramento Hunger Commission

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## **1. Introductions to new Hunger Commissioners**

Dawn Dunlap

Dawn is the Nutrition Educator for Sacramento City Unified School District. She loves her work because a major part of it involves children and finding ways to educate them on nutrition and overall health so that they actually walk away with knowledge that they can apply. She is passionate about finding creative ways to educate about, and to improve on all of the factors involved in creating healthy lives. One of those factors is accessibility to healthy foods; without that accessibility, she feels that the work she does will be of little significance. She feels honored to be a Hunger Commissioner and it is her hope to play a part in finding creative solutions to increase accessibility to healthy foods and to continue to help people live healthier lives.

Margie Erwin

With 14 years of experience in the field of community nutrition, Margie developed and directs the Nutrition Education Program at the Center for AIDS Research, Education, and Services (CARES). The program includes individual medical nutrition counseling and a monthly HIV/AIDS nutrition education program called "Dinner with the Dietitian." At these monthly

dinners, anyone HIV/AIDS positive, friends, and family members can receive a free nutritious meal while they learn about various nutrition and physical fitness-related topics. Food for “Dinner with the Dietician” is sponsored by churches and grants from pharmaceutical companies. Margie recently traveled to Africa with the Health Education Africa Resource Team (HEART) to develop an HIV/AIDS nutrition program in Kenya. See [www.africaheart.com](http://www.africaheart.com). Margie loves to play board games and ping-pong with her husband of 14 years and two upper elementary school children.

#### Rebecca Fuller (returning)

Rebecca’s career of response to poverty and hunger was inspired early by her childhood experience of poverty in Placer/Sacramento. During 16 years with CA Department of Human Assistance, she has been:

- Eligibility worker and supervisor
- Social Worker in employment services
- Social work supervisor
- Food Stamp (Farm Bill) work with CA Department of Social Services
- DHA Food Stamp Program Specialist
- Acting Health Program Coordinator at Senior Nutrition Services Meals on Wheels (currently)
- Sacramento County DHA Volunteer Coordinator (currently)

Rebecca has worked with the Hunger Commission since autumn of 1998 as Commissioner, Vice Chair, and Chair. She and husband David Hall have 2 daughters, age 8 and 2 \_.

#### Shawn Harrison

Shawn is one of the founders of Soil Born Farm Urban Agriculture Project and currently serves as the organization’s executive director. He was born in Sacramento and has lived here most of his life, witnessing the area’s rapid growth and transformation. He has a B.A. in History of Public Policy from U.C. Santa Barbara and a master’s degree from U.C. Davis in International Agriculture Development. In Santa Barbara, he started doing an internship in organic agriculture that involved working in local community gardens. This urban agriculture experience left a lasting impression and set him on a path that he is still following. In 1997 he met his current business partner Marco Franciosa during an intensive certification program in ecological horticulture. Their dreams to create an urban farm that reconnected people to food were formulated at this time. In 2000 the dream became a reality when they broke ground on Hurley Way here in Sacramento. The time and need for such a project could not have been more right.

#### Barbara Ramey-Clark

After many years as a child laborer, inspired by her hero Cesar Chavez Barbara began her path of social activism as a paramedic and health care worker. Among other projects for the disadvantaged, she was instrumental in establishing a homeless park’s soup kitchen and a church’s long-lasting food closet. Her impressive list of appointments includes membership on Oakland’s Homeless Commission for two terms; membership on a city/county taskforce collaborating with the Red Cross in securing legislation responsible for establishing the Henry J. Robinson Multi-services Center for the homeless; membership on the Board of Housing California; membership on the Board and Housing Chairperson of the Executive Committee of Sacramento Housing Alliance. She has served as President of Northern California Conference SDA Community Services, overseeing over 100 food/clothing closets. Currently she is Assistant Director of Capital City Adventist Community Services, serving hunger needs in the South Sacramento area.

## 2. Featured organization: **Soil Born Farm** by Shawn Harrison

Founded in 2000, Soil Born Farm Urban Agriculture Project started as a one and a half acre market garden located in Sacramento County. The original farm is a small urban oasis nestled among houses, apartments and a junior high school. The farm is the product of two farmers' dream to create urban organic farms that not only preserve and nurture plots of undeveloped city land, but foster a sense of community by reconnecting people with locally grown food. Years of hard work and a commitment to these ideas have transformed this first farm into a productive and exciting program that produces both healthy organic food and healthy experiences.

2005 marks our first year as a full-fledged tax exempt non-profit organization. Finally, we are able to move more directly and effectively toward our expanded goals focused on low income food production, food access, and food education. Towards these ends, 2005 and beyond programming includes the development of a larger food production site in Rancho Cordova along the American River Parkway, the FEED Del Paso Heights collaborative project, and our pilot program "Connecting Food, Health, and the Environment" at Jonas Salk Middle School. For more information about these programs or to learn more about volunteer opportunities and events please contact the farm at (916) 718-3563.

## 3. **Hunger 101**

On February 15, Hunger Commission staff and several commissioners offered the Hunger 101 experience to about 35 Head Start family service workers. **Jake Salcone** did his usual masterful job of organizing, introducing, and wrapping up the session. In the wrap-up, it became clear from responses of participants that there was strong emotional involvement, and appreciation of the difficulties low-income folks face in procuring adequate nutrition.

Following is a descriptive piece written for a publication of Senior Gleaners, Inc.

## *A rare opportunity—Experiencing food insecurity*

We can describe the extent of the problem; we're aware of its roots; we contribute our own time and resources to fight it. But can we truly understand what it feels like to lack adequate nourishment? — Probably not!

The closest approximation we've seen to sharing the anguish of food insecurity is called "Hunger 101". It's an astoundingly realistic experience offered locally by the Sacramento Hunger Commission. Participants assume the identities of various low-income folks, receiving descriptions of their family circumstances and their income and expenses. Knowing how much they can spend on food for the day, they set out to get help from some of the sources represented in the room: bank, food stamp office, WIC office, grocery store, fast food restaurant, soup kitchen, etc. Attempting to fill needs for calories and balanced nutrition with severely limited resources tends to be a daunting experience, though not nearly as daunting as that faced daily by low-income folks.

One can learn more about, and partially experience Hunger 101 online at:  
[http://www.2ndharvest.net/e\\_reference/hunger\\_03c.html](http://www.2ndharvest.net/e_reference/hunger_03c.html)

To arrange the Hunger 101 experience for a group, call the Sacramento Hunger Commission at 916/447-7063 ext. 348.

### **4. AB 1796**

AB 1796—A Nutritional Lift for Recovering Drug Abusers, by Ken Carter

As dark clouds of threatened cutbacks in nutrition programs loom, hunger fighters deserve to celebrate an occasional victory. One of these happened early this year when the implementation of AB 1796 allowed recovering felony drug-users to apply for food stamps. Until then, any felony drug offender was denied this benefit for life—a punishment not inflicted on other ex-offenders including rapists and murderers. While the reprieve applies only to those convicted of drug possession, its author, Assemblyman Mark Leno and supporters hope eventually to pass similar legislation which would apply to all drug offenders engaged in rehabilitation efforts. (This may not be easy, given prevailing attitudes regarding manufacturers and sellers of illicit drugs, plus a mostly nay vote from Republican legislators even for the milder current version. But happily our Republican Governor signed what his Democratic predecessor had vetoed several times.)

Our celebration focuses predominantly on young women and the relief provided for their struggle to pay for food and other necessities for themselves and their young families. The writer and SHC Program Manager Peggy Roark were treated to a dramatic example of a battle against the odds on the part of a young mother recovering from addiction, and living with her daughter in the Mather Community Campus of DHA's transitional housing program. Access to Food Stamps through AB 1796 has played a crucial role in her progress toward self-sufficiency and productive citizenship. Read an account of our interview on the SHC website:  
[www.targethunger.com](http://www.targethunger.com)

### **5. Awards and Transitions**

Our "Everyday Hero"

Hunger Commissioner **Bill Maynard** is one of nine finalists among 4,272 nominees for this year's Volvo for Life Awards. Recipients are recognized for "creating change within their communities that will have lasting impacts for generations to come". Bill is recognized as volunteering to "help those in low-income areas enjoy gardening as a way to beautify their urban landscape while supplementing their diets with the fresh produce they grow". The award acknowledges Bill as a long-time community gardening activist introducing a food-producing landscape initiative at a low-income housing project; volunteering with schools to create gardens and "garden-based learning" and other nutrition-learning opportunities; helping the Hmong immigrant community to relocate their gardens to non-toxic sites, and to organize a farmer's market for the produce they grow; and working to re-write Sacramento's landscaping code to permit food-producing trees, shrubs, and front-yard gardens in low-income neighborhoods.

Bill will receive a \$25,000 award for the charity of his choice, and at this writing, he's in line for a possible further \$50,000 award, and even a shot at a new Volvo car every three years for the rest of his life! Congratulations to Bill Maynard for a well-deserved award!

#### A community food assessment

The Sacramento Hunger Commission was recently honored by the Avondale-Glen Elder Weed and Seed Board of Directors for its work on the Community Food Assessment. In addition **Jake Salcone** received a separate certificate for his leadership role both in the study and in follow-up efforts.

Transitions – The Hunger Commission welcomed a new VISTA at the end of January. **Alison Gould** will be developing partnerships and funding for an edible plant nursery/youth mentoring project which grew out of our original edible landscaping project at Kennedy Estates. She is from Nashville, Tennessee and a recent graduate of Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. **Jessie Brouwer**, who had been working on the Kennedy Estates project, returned to Virginia in mid February.

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