



PRESS RELEASE

Making A Difference in the Lives of Seniors Through Tennis *Lafayette Teen Continues Tennis Fundraiser for Food-Insecure Seniors Post-Pandemic*

As we move back to the post-pandemic “normal,” it is a sad truth that vulnerable seniors will continue to face food insecurity every day. But during the pandemic, one high school student from Lafayette California, decided he could make a difference in the lives of both young people and seniors, and he isn’t stopping now.

Jake Hammerman has always had an interest in food and his grandparents helped him see some of the challenge’s seniors face. Jake combined that interest with his passion for tennis, so he established Impactful Tennis. Jake and his varsity teammates give tennis lessons to young children in turn for donations to Meals on Wheels Diablo Region. Last year his lessons raised \$14,000 to deliver meals to seniors, exceeding by far his \$10,000 goal. This year, Impactful Tennis has the goal of raising \$25,000 for Meals on Wheels Diablo Region.

“I wanted to make a difference in my community,” explains Jake. “Impactful Tennis benefitted everyone who took part, from the players who were exercising, doing a new sport, improving their skills and getting outside, to the seniors who benefited from the donations that were made. I have grandparents and know how scary and dangerous the pandemic has been for people their age.”

When Jake approached Meals on Wheels Diablo Region, they helped him set up his GoFundMe page and showed him how the money he raised helped deliver meals to 40% more seniors than before COVID-19. “We thought what Jake and his teammates wanted to do was great, and we knew whatever they raised would help us deliver meals to seniors,” explains Caitlin Sly, Meals on Wheels Diablo Region’s Executive Director. “When he exceeded his goal, we were beyond thrilled. Jake and his teammates allowed us to keep up with the increased demand for our services and made a huge difference in keeping seniors from going hungry.”

The pandemic illustrated to MOW Diablo Region how many more elders should have been receiving meals and it also showed how fragile the support system is for seniors. “We learned we had 90-year-old clients who depended on 75-year-old friends to pick up a few things at the market,” says Sly. “Those “younger” seniors were now depending on us to deliver meals, and after more than a year of not being mobile, it will be difficult to bounce back. Many seniors have told us they are nervous about going back to “normal,” so we know the demand will remain high.”

A study from Feeding America shows that 5.3 million seniors (7.3% of the older adult population) were food insecure before the pandemic. That number is expected to grow as the senior population increases.

But Jake Hammerman and his fellow teammates at Impactful Tennis are committed to one tennis lesson at a time to make sure Meals on Wheels Diablo Region can continue to deliver meals to vulnerable seniors.

To help Impactful Tennis reach its goal go to <https://www.gofundme.com/f/impactfultennis>

Meals on Wheels Diablo Region is an independent non-profit and the only meals on wheels in the county to deliver both meals and life-improving services that include, Fall Prevention, Care Management, Health & Wellness, Friendly Visitors, and Friendly Callers.