This Month’s Highlights…

**From the Desk of Irene Reynolds: In The Spirit of Gratitude**

November is the month that celebrates gratitude, but this year in particular, it seems especially hard to find things to truly be grateful for. After all, 2020 has thrown some pretty big rocks at all of us. Besides living amidst a global pandemic, there have been wildfires, social unrest with protests against racial injustice, and economic disruption. In order to stay optimistic, I say embrace each day and take notice of the little things that bring happiness to your lives. Here in the OUSD Nutrition Services department, we have so many things to be thankful for this year, and by keeping our focus on the positive, we have been able to rise to every challenge thrown at us. This team is truly amazing. Think about it, we have changed our operation multiple times to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in our community — that alone is something to be truly proud of and grateful for! And that is not all we have accomplished. By making operational changes, we have learned new skills, conquered the use of new technological tools, and have become a leader of innovation on the national level for other school districts to watch and follow. Gratitude is important because it keeps us centered and reminds us that we are all connected for a larger purpose. It lifts us up and gives us comfort when life gets difficult and reminds us there is always something to be thankful for. I am truly grateful for each and every member of this team and all of the accomplishments we have made together. I look forward to each day working with all of you and serving our community. I wish you all a very happy Thanksgiving and hope you too find gratitude all around you. - Irene

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**OUSD Golden Ticket Winners**

Two weeks ago, we gave away prizes to 100 lucky students and their families across Oakland in celebration of National School Lunch Week. Each of our 22 distribution sites were given between 3-9 golden tickets to randomly insert in their food bags for the lucky winners to find. The prizes included Ayesha Curry frying pans, bags of school supplies, 8 bikes, Wal-Mart gift cards, and over 50 Wilson Footballs!

*Congratulations to our winners & thank to you for making it happen!*

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**Upcoming Changes to Our Menu and Operational Updates**

This month, we will be reducing the amount and frequency of individually wrapped products and replacing them with fresh, bulk items for our families to eat and cook at home. These bulk items will include whole fresh fruits and vegetables and ready-to-heat and serve items, such as our new Javi’s Empanadas! Starting 10/26, our families also will only need to come to our distribution sites once a week to pick up 7 days’ worth of food. Please begin to share this news with our customers! We are also excited about increasing home delivery across the city of Oakland. We will be closing some sites to transition to being a home delivery distribution site. Families from closing sites are being asked to sign up for home delivery or visit another distribution site.

During the week of November 16-19 we will be providing two-weeks’ worth of food, enough to cover the week of Thanksgiving which are non school days and Nutrition staff will not be working. *Thank you for all of your hard work serving OUSD families!*

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**Meet Our New Buyer, Kristen Hickman!**

*Hi, I’m Kristen!* I was born and raised in New York City and am a proud product of the NYC public school system. After receiving my Bachelor’s in Hospitality Management, I have had a varied career in food service management in many different sectors. I also have certificates in culinary arts and baking and pastry, which has helped me to become a more well-rounded manager. As the Procurement Specialist for Nutrition Services of OUSD, it is my vision to acquire local products for our students to enjoy that are delicious and nutritious. I look forward to working with local providers to bring new and exciting products to the students of OUSD.

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**November Birthdays**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yolanda Abad</td>
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<td>Melody Jones</td>
<td>11/18</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia Franco</td>
<td>11/21</td>
<td>Joaquin Miller</td>
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