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UNIQUE SUTTER HEALTH INVESTMENT COLLABORATIVELY ADVANCES SENIOR NUTRITION IN YOLO, YUBA AND SUTTER COUNTIES

Woodland, Calif. — A recent \$150,000 investment by Sutter Health to both Meals on Wheels Yolo County (MOW Yolo) and Meals on Wheels Yuba and Sutter Counties (MOW Yuba/Sutter) is fortifying the future of senior nutrition in a multi-county region by simultaneously increasing the number of older adults nourished and the organizations' sustained fiscal prowess to continue to serve them.

"Eat Well, Age Well: Yolo + Yuba/Sutter Seniors" supports previous capacity investments by Sutter Health and other public and private sources to spark MOW Yolo's extraordinary 300% growth in nutrition provision to Yolo County seniors since early 2022. The initiative furthers MOW Yolo's foray into both medically tailored meals and the provision of meals to other nonprofit senior nutrition providers as an important revenue stream. Concurrently, MOW Yuba/Sutter – administered by Agency on Aging Area 4 – gains an opportunity to connect at least three-and-a-half-dozen seniors in those counties currently waitlisted for nutrition due to funding deficits with dependable, healthy meals.

"This partnership was a clear choice for Sutter Health because it aligns with our community health investment priorities and brings innovative, collaborative solutions to our communities," said Angelika Corchado, Director of Community Health for Sutter Health's Greater Sacramento Division. "Yolo, Yuba and Sutter Counties have growing senior populations, and many older adults face barriers to much needed resources, especially in rural communities. Supporting programs like Meals on Wheels helps increase access to nutritious meals, which is a powerful way to prevent chronic diseases, and in this way treats food as medicine. We're proud to support these efforts to improve the health and well-being of older adults in our region."

Actions already underway made possible by Sutter Health's community health investment include the purchase of institutional frozen storage equipment and the initial lease of space to

house it on behalf of MOW Yuba/Sutter. Upon delivery and installation in October, MOW Yolo will begin 12 months of consistent production and delivery of medically tailored and standard frozen meals to MOW Yuba/Sutter, sufficient to remove a minimum of 42 seniors in those counties from nutrition wait lists and provide each of them with five meals per week. While MOW Yolo operates an institutional meal production facility in Winters – the Meals on Wheels-Sutter Health Senior Nutrition Center – MOW Yuba/Sutter relies upon outsourced restaurants for the meals the organization provides to seniors.

Plans are in motion to mark the launch of meal deliveries to these homebound seniors in Yuba and Sutter Counties with an early fall celebration. Participation by Sutter Health team members, representatives of both MOW Yuba/Sutter and MOW Yolo, and local dignitaries and supporters are intended.

"At a time when diminished funding has resulted in a reduction in our ability to provide nutrition to every senior who needs it, this investment by Sutter Health offers hope and healthy meals to more local older adults," shared Brittany Lathrop, Program Manager/Developer for MOW Yuba/Sutter. "Not only are we able to do more immediately, but the uplift in our frozen storage capacity portends the potential for a deeper, cost-efficient partnership with MOW Yolo over time to sustain and expand the increased availability of nutrition to seniors in our communities."

To address funding shortfalls as one-time pandemic-era public funding faded last year, MOW Yolo focused upon reimbursement revenue relationships with other nonprofits in the region to supplement private philanthropy and threatened Older Americans Act federal funding to sustain services to all 1,100+ seniors currently nourished by the organization countywide.

"No senior welcomed to MOW Yolo services over the past three years thanks to American Rescue Plan pandemic dollars, or any other public or private source, has been stripped of nutrition access to date due to a lack of funding," explained Joy Cohan, Executive Director, MOW Yolo. "Preserving the once-in-a-lifetime impact of those investments is MOW Yolo's highest priority, followed closely by the continued pursuit of ongoing funding sufficient to meet the full nutrition and socialization needs of the more than 8,000 Yolo County seniors living in poverty."

In addition to providing meals each week to local seniors via both home-delivery and "Café Yolo" congregate dining programs throughout the county, MOW Yolo funds that mission-driven work in part via reimbursements to produce meals each weekday for three other nonprofits. These contracted organizations include Dignity Health for Yolo Adult Day Health Center in Woodland, Yolo Cares for Galileo Place Adult Day Center in Davis and Joshua's House Hospice for unhoused individuals in Sacramento, and Chico State Enterprises/Passages Area on Aging for senior nutrition programs in both the City of Chico and Colusa County.

"It's an honor to add Agency on Aging Area 4's MOW Yuba/Sutter program to this esteemed list of meal partners, thanks to Sutter Health's confidence in both organizations to fund this innovative partnership," added Cohan. "To the extent that this partnership can be sustained and expanded over time to ensure that more seniors in Yolo, Yuba and Sutter Counties are able to age in place healthily and safely, we are grateful and inspired to be involved."

To learn more about MOW Yolo's mission to nourish and engage seniors in Yolo County, or to donate, volunteer or to connect with nutrition services, please visit https://mowyolo.org, email info@mowyolo.org, or call 530-662-7035. To engage with MOW Yuba/Sutter, see https://www.yubasuttermow.org/, contact yubasuttermow@agencyonaging4.org, or call 530-670-0033.

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