Local Foundations Congratulate Long-Time Food Bank Leader Larry Sly on Lifetime Achievement Award

November 4, 2019, Contra Costa County, CA:

Local foundations and grant-making organizations are applauding the selection of Larry Sly, Executive Director of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, for a Lifetime Achievement Award. Mr. Sly has served as Executive Director of the Food Bank for 42 years and will be presented the award by the East Bay Leadership Council on November 7, 2019.

“Larry Sly is a true Contra Costa community hero. Over the past 42 years, he has continually lifted up the issue of hunger and food insecurity in Contra Costa. Larry’s vision and leadership has transformed the Food Bank into a critical community institution that meets the immediate needs of our most vulnerable residents while also working to address the root causes of hunger and poverty,” said Bob Uyeki, CEO of the Y & H Soda Foundation.

Building up the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano from an agency that distributed 36,000 pounds of food in its first year to over 25 million pounds of food in 2018, Larry’s efforts have ensured that hundreds of thousands of local families have had nutritious food to put on the table over the last four decades. With the increasingly high cost of living in the Bay Area, many working families cannot afford basic needs, and 1 in 8 people in Contra Costa and Solano counties turn to the Food Bank each month.

In addition to helping reduce hunger meal by meal and person by person, Mr. Sly is a leading voice at the local and state level for policies that address the root causes of hunger. “Larry is a change agent with long-lasting, positive impact in Contra Costa County and beyond. His leadership has been pivotal in improving systems and services that increase food security in our community,” remarked Melissa Stafford Jones, Executive Director of the Dean & Margaret Lesher Foundation.

“Larry recognizes that fighting hunger is about more than distributing food. His advocacy has been critical to county efforts to link more residents to nutrition benefits,” said Sean Casey, Executive Director of First 5 Contra Costa. Mr. Sly also has served on numerous boards and advisory groups at the local, state, and national level to improve food programs and policies and the distribution of food throughout the state.
Funders highlight Larry’s innovation, entrepreneurship, tenacity and partnership. Stephanie Rivera, Director of Community Health Improvement at John Muir Health stated, “Larry’s dedication to addressing food insecurity and creating healthier communities is a shared value. His vision, leadership and innovation has impacted the communities of Contra Costa and Solano Counties in such a positive way.”

Lillian Roselin, Executive Director of the John Muir Community Health Fund emphasized the critical partnerships forged by Sly, stating, “Under the leadership and guidance of Larry Sly, our organization has had the privilege of partnering with the Food Bank to seed the successful launch of two impactful health initiatives that are improving the health and wellness of thousands of Contra Costa County’s most vulnerable residents: The Community Produce Program that provides fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income families and the Contra Costa Colleges Food Pantry Collaborative to reduce growing food insecurity among college students.”

Larry is among the longest-tenured and most respected nonprofit leaders in the county and among his Food Bank colleagues throughout California, noted Yali Lincroft, Vice President of Philanthropic Services, Whittier Trust/Director of Programs, Walter S. Johnson Foundation. “He has built a strong foundation for the Food Bank’s continued growth, impact and leading role in addressing food security for ALL people well into the future,” said Ms. Lincroft.