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Subject:	MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger and Jewish Family Service of Colorado Join Forces to Address Hunger Among Seniors
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MAZON | A Jewish Response To Hunger JewishFamilyService

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HUNGER AMONG SENIORS SEEN AS CRITICAL
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger and Jewish Family Service of Colorado Join Forces to Address Issue

LOS ANGELES—December 15, 2014—Thousands of U.S. senior citizens are hungry or food insecure every day and are eligible for government support to ensure healthy meals. But alarming numbers of seniors are either unaware of or ignore governmental support to alleviate their hunger. That is why MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger has launched a campaign in seven states to educate seniors and their families are the available benefits.

There are various reasons seniors are not taking advantage of this assistance. “Some of this is pride,” says Abby J. Leibman, President and CEO of MAZON, “and while understandable, it’s important to help them overcome any shame attached to governmental help. Others are simply unaware the benefits are there for them. The goal of this outreach is to dramatically reduce the alarming statistics.”

According to Ms. Leibman, one in six seniors lives in poverty and 65% of seniors who are eligible for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) funds do not use them.

This issue has reached a critical point as 10,000 Baby Boomers turn 65 every day and 56% of US retirees have outstanding debt. One in three seniors is food insecure and/or disabled. 30% must choose between food and medicine.

Joining MAZON in the Colorado outreach is Jewish Family Service of

Colorado, which serves the Denver and Boulder metropolitan community. Jewish Family Service of Colorado is one of 13 JFS agencies in the seven states who are taking part in MAZON's senior hunger initiative.

"The belief that the community has an obligation to sustain its most vulnerable is deeply embedded in Jewish tradition," says Ms. Leibman. "It is unacceptable that a rising number of our nation's seniors struggle to put meals on the table when we have programs, like SNAP, that could help them buy nutritious food."

"An alarming percentage Colorado's senior population hasn't taken advantage of the SNAP benefits to which they are entitled," says Shelley Hines, Director of Family Safety Net Services at Jewish Family Service. "With MAZON's support, we are able to educate lower-income seniors about program eligibility and help with the application process. A little bit of assistance can make a big difference for a senior on a fixed income."

For more information on SNAP benefits for eligible seniors and assistance with the application process, call Jewish Family Service of Colorado at 720-248-4689.

MAZON is the only national Jewish organization focused exclusively on issues of hunger and is considered one of the leading anti-hunger organizations in the US. The educational outreach program is supported and sponsored by MAZON with funding from the Walmart Foundation.

Founded in 1872, Jewish Family Service of Colorado is a nonsectarian, nonprofit human services agency serving metro Denver and Boulder. Every year, the agency benefits more than 25,000 people of all ages, faiths, incomes, and abilities. For more information, call ***303.597.5000 or visit*** *www.jewishfamilyservice.org****.***

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