Dear Friends,

As the Yorkville Common Pantry begins its 25th year of operation, we celebrate the entire extended family of YCP.

“YCP family” encompasses the many individuals and groups from near and far, who this past year helped us to provide a record 1.25 million meals to YCP clients. Members of the YCP family include: the clients who participate in all our programs; the dedicated staff who always puts the needs of the clients first; an actively involved Board providing outstanding support and oversight; sponsoring organizations that raise funds, conduct food drives and volunteer on-site; New York Cares, Mission NYC, YSOP, The Food Bank for New York City and City Harvest who send us food and many weekly volunteers; the creative women who run our fundraising events; attorneys who donate their expertise and services; our caring and compassionate funders and friends; appreciative clients who return to volunteer; visiting schools and church groups from other states who give their time and energy; and, not least, the Bar Mitzvah boy who makes us the beneficiary of his gifts.

YCP’s family also includes thousands of people and organizations who send us contributions ranging from $5.00 to $500,000 a year - many of whom do not know us personally but are inspired to support our mission to reduce hunger and promote dignity and self sufficiency.

This 2005 Annual Report offers “stories” from some of the most dedicated members of the YCP family. We are honored to know them and blessed to work with them all.

With sincerity,

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Chair

Jeff Ambers
Executive Director
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Laura Weissberg
David Wengrod
Roland Woodland

Jeffrey Ambers | Executive Director

Farewell, Jeff

The beginning of YCP’s 25th anniversary year brings us many causes for celebration — but also one reason for sadness. Having spent nearly 14 years as Executive Director of YCP, Jeff Ambers has decided to move on at the beginning of 2006.

When Jeff started with YCP all those years ago, the Pantry served 150 families each week, 150 people ate at the Yorkville Soup Kitchen, there were 12 employees and the annual budget was around $1 million. There was no weekend Pantry, no Breakfast program or case management services.

With great innovation and skill, Jeff and the Board expanded YCP’s mission as the need for food distribution and service programs dramatically increased. Those early programs were expanded and 24/7 YCP was begun. They now serve in total over 800 families weekly. Our staff numbers 28, and the annual budget is $3 million.

Jeff is recognized as an industry leader and respected as a great innovator in the field of emergency food services. We will greatly miss him. However, he leaves a strong and vibrant organization about to embark on an exciting building renovation.

Once the facility is completed, a tree will be planted outside our new front door in recognition of Jeff’s mighty service.

UPDATE ON ROBIN HOOD FOUNDATION AUCTION PACKAGE

In our last annual report, we informed you about four generous donors who excitedly bid a total of $3.2 million at Robin Hood’s annual benefit to fund a major renovation of our facility. We are now nearing completion of those renovation plans. Our plans consist of redesigning the basement, upgrading our mechanical systems, and adding a new floor at street level. These changes will not only significantly improve how we deliver services, but will also improve the quality of services YCP is able to provide. We will have increased food storage space, enhanced kitchen space, and added a new welcoming area for clients and guests. Comfortable seating space inside will eliminate the long waiting lines outside during pantry distribution and the entire building will be handicap accessible.

YCP anticipates starting construction by January 2006. We will relocate to a nearby East Harlem facility so our services will continue uninterrupted. By communicating regularly with our neighbors and clients about these changes, YCP believes the transition will be smooth with minimal service disruption.
Stories from the Pantry Family

It is the narrative of thousands of people woven together that creates our unique Pantry family, and it is their stories, voices and images that we have gathered here:

*The bonus of volunteering is being a part of the nicest group of people I have ever worked with.*  **John Zurcher, Thursday Pantry Volunteer**

*It’s seeing the people we are helping that keeps me coming back every week.*  **Ed MacGrath, Thursday Pantry Volunteer**

*It’s nice to be a part of the community and helping to see the needy get assistance and food. We’re here from 9AM – 12PM doing bags, and it is nice to meet different people and make new friends from different places, different countries.*  **Martha Williams, Berniece Timberlake, Isabel Montanez, Mary Encarnacion, Thursday Pantry Volunteers**

Our talented and caring 28-member staff, including former clients that have moved forward and are now YCP staff:

*The best part about being YCP’s Volunteer Coordinator is working side by side with volunteers from different states. We pack, we distribute, and at the end of the day they say to me “you guys do good work here” or “I want to come back and volunteer”.*  **Gladys Ortiz, Volunteer Coordinator**

*I didn’t even know what a pantry was before coming here to YCP. My family and I needed help because my husband lost his income after 9/11 and I came here for food and other resources. I was able to be a part of the Pantry Program by becoming a Thursday volunteer and later got a job as Pantry Aide. I was then able to help my husband pay the bills and buy what my kids needed. I can identify with some of my clients. I am here to help, work hard and try to do the best job that I can. We make a difference in people’s lives... it’s an honor to be a part of such a good organization.*  **Maria Bahkt, Case Manager**

*I am responsible for general maintenance. YCP has given me the opportunity to grow in my position and has supported me with skills training like English as a Second Language. I started as a shelter resident and volunteering for YCP...I now have my own apartment and moved from working part-time in the soup kitchen (Dignity Meal Program) to my current full-time position. YCP allowed me to prove that I was capable of doing some really great things...*  **Juan Mendez, General Maintenance**
YCP’s dedicated and involved 45-member Board of Directors:

*It is all about the look of gratitude (and relief) in the client’s eyes when you hand them their grocery bags each week that helps me feel that I can make a difference in their day. I look forward to working with the regular and new volunteers each week. We all share a common goal here and that is what makes YCP so special.*  
**Anne MacKinnon**

*I enjoy the visceral satisfaction of volunteering at the Pantry: doing physical labor that directly helps people in a most basic way, alleviating hunger.*  
**Wendy Stein**

*Years ago there was a call for volunteers to help pre-pack bags of groceries for Thanksgiving – 15 years later I’m retired and still pre-packing bags twice a week.*  
**Roland Woodland**

*I first became involved with YCP through my children’s schools where they would eagerly collect items for Thanksgiving, Easter and Valentine’s Day. Then a mother asked if I could help with the Development Committee and I have been involved ever since. Now my older children ask if they can volunteer so it has become equally important to them as young adults. It makes me feel good that they understand their role in helping people who need some of the support that they take for granted!*  
**Susan Bohan**

Members of our newly-formed Client Advisory Board (CAB):

*Being a CAB member means that I am like a liaison between the people of the community and the staff of YCP. It also means that there is a group of people (other CAB members) that I can feel concern for as if they were a part of my family.*  
**Migna Morales**

*I am an immigrant from El Salvador. I have been living here in NY for 16 years. I have tried to work but I can’t. Once I burned my right hand because of an epileptic seizure. This illness does not allow me to work but I have been able to come ahead. Now that I have met the staff of YCP I don’t feel alone. I will try to become unified with them.*  
**Paula Castillo**

*I have been a client at YCP in some capacity for about 10 years. At one point or another I have used most of the services offered by YCP. That brings me to why I joined the YCP CAB. At times life isn’t always easy; in the last few years when bumps in the road have come I’ve always been able to come to Yorkville and get some kind of assistance, be it food, a referral, or fact-based advice on the road I should take. It is for that reason I am willing to give of myself and serve as a CAB member so that I can genuinely help anyone I can.*  
**Franklin Davis**
Religious Sponsoring Organizations

Our 20 religious sponsoring organizations not only provide volunteers, board members, funds, food and other donations, but further infuse our work with profound meaning and reward. We consider these organizations to be caring members of the extended YCP family, and consider ourselves very fortunate to have their dedication and involvement.

Our congregation needs to thank YCP! We receive so much from this relationship. Each month we have a food drive that lets us share our resources with those in need. Every December a group of parishioners helps to prepare holiday grocery bags for YCP clients. Thanks, YCP, for this opportunity to put our hands where our hearts are. Thank you, YCP, for all that you share with our community of faith and all our neighbors. SARA LAMAR-Sterling, Assistant Pastor, Park Avenue United Methodist Church

- The Brick Presbyterian Church
- The Church of St. Edward the Martyr
- Church of St. Ignatius Loyola
- The Church of the Heavenly Rest
- The Church of the Holy Trinity
- Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church
- Park Avenue Christian Church
- Park Avenue Synagogue
- Park Avenue United Methodist Church
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- St. James’ Church
- St. Jean Baptiste Church
- St. Joseph Yorkville
- St. Stephen of Hungary
- St. Thomas More Catholic Church
- St. Vincent Ferrer Church
- Temple Emanu-El
- Temple Israel of the City of New York
- Temple Shaaray Tefila
- The Unitarian Church of All Souls
Throughout the years we have built relationships with nearby schools that continue to strengthen and expand the YCP family. Community service interns support our efforts and educate their peers about poverty and hunger. Groups from various schools organize food drives, or donate toys, Easter baskets, books and clothing for YCP families. Their commitment is always inspiring and tremendously appreciated.

I love to bring students to Yorkville. It combines the efficiency of a big organization with the heart of a grass roots organization.

ANGELA VASSOS, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES, FIELDSTON SCHOOL

OUR AFFILIATES IN THE ANTI-HUNGER COMMUNITY

The teamwork and collaborative efforts of our affiliates are key to YCP’s efforts. With the Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter and Lenox Hill Neighborhood House we form the East Side Homeless Network, providing critical services for YCP clients. Support from the Partnership for the Homeless ensures successful operation of our Project Dignity Men’s Shelter, and the experience and resource-sharing among the 30 agencies forming the East Harlem Human Services Consortium enhances our work on a daily basis.

We are tremendously grateful for food donations from City Harvest and the Food Bank for New York City. We simply could not operate without them.

We rely on the New York City Coalition Against Hunger to help us stay connected to our peers in the anti-hunger community and to educate us on current hunger policy and related advocacy activities. Organizing clients and supporters to fight for issues like increased access to food stamps and working collaboratively with programs like our own is critical in the fight to end hunger, and we extend our sincere thanks for their tireless efforts.
**PANTRY PROGRAMS** Every Thursday and Saturday, YCP distributes grocery packages to over 700 families. Our unique Saturday program is able to serve the working poor and those participating in education or training programs. Volunteers prepare nutritionally-balanced bags of groceries that provide each family member three meals a day for three days. A typical Pantry bag includes non-perishable items such as juice, cereal, milk, pasta and/or rice, beans, canned vegetables and fruits, miscellaneous items such as soup, snacks, and condiments, as well as perishable items such as meat/poultry, fresh fruits and vegetables, frozen vegetables and bread.

Two extremely dedicated Pantry case managers work with Pantry families to help them obtain needed services and entitlements. They also provide supportive counseling to assist clients in managing change and moving in a positive direction.

We recently implemented the “Family Pantry Card,” a barcode tracking system, which all Pantry clients are currently using. This has speeded up food distribution and helped us better understand and document client need.

**VEGETABLE OF THE MONTH CLUB** Twice a month, case manager Maria Bakht holds nutritional education and cooking classes for Pantry families. Participants learn how to prepare a healthy recipe provided by FoodChange and leave with extra ingredients to prepare that recipe at home. The workshop, which is always filled to capacity, continues to positively impact the lives of participating Pantry clients.

**DINNER PROGRAM** Dinners prepared by YCP’s talented chefs include freshly prepared, tasty, and nutritionally-balanced meals. With the generous help of longtime volunteers, dinner is served every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to approximately 125 guests. Over 28,000 meals were served this year, and include such recipes as baked chicken with collard greens and seasoned rice, beefstew with egg noodles and mixed veggies, or oxtails with vegetable rice and mashed potatoes.
24/7 YCP operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, three-hundred sixty-five days a year and serves over 134,000 meals annually. These meals provide nutritionally-balanced grocery packages that contain a three day supply of food for each family member, as well as ready-to-eat brown bag meals for those who arrive hungry during nighttime hours.

The 24 hour commitment of staff and volunteers has ensured the program’s success as 24/7 YCP continues to expand in response to New York City’s hunger crisis. In its first two years of operation, 24/7 YCP’s target population was primarily low-income people throughout New York City who were unable to access emergency food because other food pantries were either closed or out of food.

This past year, 24/7 YCP embarked upon a new project in response to Food Bank for New York City’s research that identified those areas having the highest number of people at risk for hunger or not receiving any food assistance. Our outreach efforts also targeted eviction intervention programs and family shelters without sufficient food.

24/7 YCP’s annual operating costs are over $300,000 and continue to grow as our outreach efforts expand program participation throughout the five boroughs. We continue to seek funding for this unique and critical program.

PROJECT DIGNITY Project Dignity breakfast is prepared by our staff every weekday morning for nearly 150 homeless men and women. Our experienced chefs always prepare their meals with nutritious, wholesome ingredients with a balance of protein, fruit, juice, hot cereal and bread. Dedicated Mennonite volunteers serve our guests with dignity and care.

PROJECT DIGNITY HYGIENE SERVICES offers on-site showers, laundry services and haircuts to homeless men and women throughout the week. Additionally, we invite various community outreach workers, such as Lenox Hill Neighborhood House job counselors, Food Stamp advocates, and Settlement Health HIV counselors into our meal programs to assist clients.

PROJECT DIGNITY CASE MANAGEMENT provides counseling and referral services, working with up to 50 meal program guests weekly to help them obtain housing, jobs, entitlements, substance abuse treatment and other medical and social services.

PROJECT DIGNITY SHELTER includes a 12-bed men’s shelter, ensuring a safe overnight community seven days a week, with on-site housing-focused case management.

CLIENT ADVISORY BOARD
In September 2004, Deb Goldstein and Jessica Silver, our Hunter College School of Social Work graduate interns, worked with the New York City Coalition Against Hunger to create a model Client Advisory Board (CAB) with the goal of promoting client participation and empowering YCP clients to improve their own lives while enhancing Pantry programs.

The CAB has since created and implemented a Client Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, as well as two editions of a quarterly newsletter. They continue to provide peer education to fellow clients about obtaining government benefits and building leadership skills in order to boost economic well-being. The hard work and participation of CAB members is greatly appreciated, and we look forward to continued collaboration in the years ahead.
Volunteers

Volunteers joined together to create the Pantry in 1980. This small group of dedicated people has since evolved into hundreds of volunteer groups and individuals contributing their talent and time towards the goal of reducing hunger in our community. The diversity of volunteers is inspiring. The dedication to the mission is profound. The camaraderie energizes and sustains our efforts, and we thank you from the depths of our hearts.

Please contact Gladys Ortiz, Volunteer Coordinator, at 212.410.2264, ext 110 to become part of this unique experience in our community.

Volunteering at YCP is a rewarding, hands-on experience, working with dedicated staff and volunteers for a GREAT cause! Candice Frawley, Board Member and Thursday Pantry Volunteer

Handing a bag to a client is an instant reward. Better than writing a check. Guy Baldecchi, Thursday Pantry Volunteer

Helene Abraham Award 2005

In 2003, the YCP Board established a Volunteer Community Service Award in memory of Helene Abraham, one of our most dedicated, committed, and passionate volunteers and longtime Board member. The third annual Helene Abraham award was presented to the Sugar Hill Mennonites by Helene’s granddaughter and YCP Board Member, Antonia Abraham, at our annual Spring Benefit at Mercedes-Benz Manhattan.

Bernice and Lawrence Penner accepted the award on behalf of the 100 plus Mennonites who have volunteered at YCP for the last 15 years. Every week, Mennonites contribute over forty hours to the Pantry, serving breakfast, packing and distributing Pantry bags, and giving haircuts to Project Dignity clients. Their efforts truly highlight what it means to serve others with dignity and respect, and we are incredibly fortunate to have worked side-by-side with them for so many years.

I enjoy keeping things working smoothly and the enthusiasm of the volunteers. Jefferson Smith, Mennonite Leader
Without the generous donation of over half a million dollars of goods and services from individuals, schools, businesses, agencies and religious organizations, YCP would be unable to fulfill our mission. We thank you for your giving and for being a part of the extended YCP family.
Grants and Gifts

With the generous support of all our donors, regardless of the dollar amounts, YCP has continued to reduce hunger and provide needed support for thousands of low-income New Yorkers. We are committed to continuing to provide efficient and effective services, and it is with great sincerity that we thank you for sharing in our mission.

$100,000 + Donors

ROBIN HOOD FOUNDATION

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HUNGER PREVENTION NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HPNAP), NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Mr. Luis Zimbaro

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Frequently Asked Questions — what volunteers always ask!

Q. Who comes to 24/7 YCP in the middle of the night?
There are many reasons for people to be hungry in the middle of the night. Some are working several jobs and cannot come during the day. Some are homeless families who are often not placed in a shelter until late at night. Some are homeless who need our “brown bags” to sustain them until the morning. No matter the reason, 24/7 YCP is always open and able to respond to emergency situations with care and concern.

Q. How do you keep up with the growing number of people who need food?
YCP is now serving a record 1.25 million meals a year. We never run out of food, never close our doors, and never turn anyone in need away. To achieve this, we are constantly seeking new funding sources and rely heavily on volunteers to operate programs and conduct food drives.

Q. How do those in need find out about the Pantry?
Most commonly, clients are referred to the Pantry by a neighbor or friend. Along with this informal “word-of-mouth” referral, we are always publicizing our programs to community-based agencies, religious institutions, hospitals and related settings where people in need of assistance might learn about us.

Q. How many people volunteer their time to YCP?
Either as individuals or a group, 50 - 60 volunteers come to the Pantry every week to make sandwiches and prepare walk-away meals for 24/7 YCP, pack and distribute food for Pantry programs, assist with delivery and storage of food, and assist with clerical and administrative tasks.

YCP Staff

We thank each and every YCP staff member for their caring and commitment. We could never operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and serve 1.25 million meals without our phenomenal team!

Since 1980 our staff has grown to a diverse team of 28, with 19 full-time employees. Several of our staff are former YCP clients and volunteers, and we especially commend their successful efforts.

YCP Employees: are listed alphabetically because not all were available for this photograph. Jeff Ambers, Anthony Anderson, Maria Bakht, Allan Brown, Sheila Corrales, Laure Favre, Michael Fields, Ronald Francis, Wendel Franks, Jimmie Gadson, Lee Gardner, Anthony Graham, Shari James, Jonette Jamison, Juan Mendez, Larry Mimms, Gladys Ortiz, Guadualupe Simon, Yolanda Singleton, Marion Williams.

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YCP's Total Ending Net Assets for fiscal year ended June 30, 2005 are $1,229,503.

The above information was abstracted from unaudited financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005. Audited financial statements are on file at Yorkville Common Pantry, 8 East 109th Street, New York, NY 10029-3402. A copy of the annual report filed with the New York State Office of Charities Registration may be obtained on request from Yorkville Common Pantry.

Yorkville Common Pantry is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501 (c) (3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code and has been classified as a publicly supported charitable organization under Section 509 (a) (1) and qualifies for the maximum charitable contribution deduction by individual donors.

How to make a Gift to YCP

Several supporters have remembered YCP in their wills. If you would like to discuss will bequests and other planned giving techniques, in order to provide YCP with a more stable long-term financial base, please contact Executive Director, Jeff Ambers, at 212.410.2264, ext. 115.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Yorkville Common Pantry is dedicated to reducing hunger and promoting dignity and self sufficiency. Our services are provided in the Upper East Side and East Harlem to our neighbors in and around these communities.

CREDITS

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Elke Rosthal
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2005 Spring Benefit

Once again we are very grateful to Mercedes-Benz Manhattan for inviting us to use their Park Avenue showroom to host our 400 guests at YCP’s annual Spring fundraiser. Honorary Chair Wendy Gartner Salles and Co-Chairs Hilary Brown and Marilyn Lubell organized the evening’s festivities, with the assistance of YCP’s Development Committee, chaired by Barbara Gooss.

Several hundred individuals and companies came together with donations of prizes, services and special events for our raffle and silent auction. It was a wonderful opportunity for volunteers and supporters to mingle and celebrate their shared commitment to the Pantry’s mission.