



Entering 2021 Helping Our Neighbors:

We Need You. It Takes a City to Feed New York City —

Resilient. Hopeful. Courageous. Each of these words describes our fellow New Yorkers. Over the past year, COVID-19 has reminded us of the capacity New Yorkers have to adapt, to find other solutions, and to persevere.

It has also reinforced what we know that hunger has many faces. At any time, anyone can find themselves needing a little extra help keeping food on the table.

With the influx of New Yorkers receiving the vaccine, and life as we know it gradually shifting into a permanent place of normalcy. It may be easy for many to forget that over 2 million New Yorkers are still dealing with food insecurity while trying to rebuild their lives.

In response, since March 2020, New York Common Pantry has distributed over 7.3 million meals to individuals and families across NYC. As we head towards a tentative recovery, we still need your help to ensure we can continue feeding New Yorkers. Make a gift today! ■

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



STEPHEN GRIMALDI, Executive Director of New York Common Pantry

Typically, I reach out each spring to share stories about the people I've met over the past year and the communities New York Common Pantry has been a part of. But this year, nothing was typical. This year, we saw economic stability decline, racial injustice once again at the forefront of the conversation, and the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We know that families and individuals in underserved communities, especially underserved communities of color, suffer disproportionately from these crises. New York City saw 1 million additional people experience food insecurity in 2020, including 1 in 3 children. With growing stressors of finding enough work, educating children at home, and paying increased technology costs, we know recovery will take years.

► We were able to serve because you served us.

While we will recover from the pandemic, and while we may see a drop off in need, food insecurity will unfortunately remain. COVID-19 did not create food insecurity in our city, and its eradication will not solve the systemic inequities that will remain behind.

There is, though, a feeling of change from one year ago, a sense of communities rising and leaning on one another for support, hope and healing. You are an essential part of this. You've supported New York Common Pantry through a year of outside Pantry and

Hot Meal distribution, a pilot Mobile Pantry program, a virtual fundraising event, using fewer volunteers, and seeing an increased demand in our services.

We were able to serve because you served us.

As we continue to seek answers to combat the ongoing crisis that is food insecurity, we look to you, our neighbors, supporters, donors and volunteers. Please take a look at our annual newsletter for stories of resilience and recovery and accept my profound thanks.

Thank you,

Stephen Grimaldi
Executive Director



MOBILE PANTRY DISTRIBUTED OVER **845,000** MEALS SINCE ITS INCEPTION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PANDEMIC.



NOURISH HAS REOPENED OR STARTED **11 SITES** SINCE JAN. 2021, 10% OF PRE-PANDEMIC SITES.



HELP 365 HAS SCREENED AND ENROLLED APPROXIMATELY **100** FRESH YOUTH INITIATIVE MEMBERS, AS PART OF THE MOBILE PANTRY OUTREACH.



LHI DISTRIBUTED OVER **12,365** LBS OF FOOD, WHICH INCLUDED 11,402 LBS OF PRODUCE SINCE JULY THROUGH THE FARM TO COMMUNITY INITIATIVE



THE FOOD MD PROGRAM HAS PARTNERED WITH AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION TO PROVIDE BLOOD PRESSURE CUFFS THROUGH A LOANER PROGRAM TO SUPPORT PATIENTS REFERRED BASED ON HYPERTENSION OR PRE HYPERTENSION.



QUICK HITS

Driving Through COVID

Since the beginning of the pandemic, many delivery drivers were regarded as essential workers, with doctors, nurses, grocery workers, transit workers, and many others who are part of the frontline.

Meet Tommy Robinson. Tommy has worked at NYCP for over 20 years. Like many team members from New York Common Pantry, he has learned to pivot in a time of crisis tackling all of the challenges during the past year.

...no matter what the circumstance, NYCP will find a way to help feed New Yorkers

Tommy reflected on his experience throughout the past three months, one of the coldest and snowiest winters New York City has experienced in years: *"Driving through the snow and it is very cold, you see first hand how many people still stand outside to get food. No matter the weather people still have to eat and feed their families."*

The wake of the pandemic brought on schedule changes and increased drop-offs to schools, churches, and other sites across New York City. Like many people on the front lines, Tommy recollects being nervous, *"But as time went on, I adjusted to wearing a mask and carrying essential items like hand sanitizer and wipes. Through all of the challenges, we make it work! New York Common Pantry has never stopped. We kept going no matter what. When I see the countless lines, and I'm coming to drop off food and essential items families can use, that's all the motivation I need to continue."*

Tommy remains hopeful for a COVID-free NYC to regain a sense of normalcy but knows no matter what the circumstance NYCP will find a way to help feed New Yorkers. ■





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13th Annual Fill the Bag Benefit Enters a Virtual Landscape

On March 4, 2021, New York Common Pantry welcomed and celebrated with executives and friends from volunteers, out of state supporters, and many others as we hosted our 13th Annual Fill The Bag Benefit. However, the room looked different that night as guests joined from their homes to support our mission to reduce hunger and promote dignity, health and self-sufficiency.

The evening honored New York Common Pantry's very own frontline heroes — the staff members who worked tirelessly to ensure that the increased demand for services like hot meals and pantry services were met daily. Deemed a success by many viewers the benefit raised over \$750,000. NBC's Willie Geist captivated guests as the host of the one-hour benefit and Executive Director Stephen Grimaldi brought viewers into warehouses, offices and our Choice Pantry Bronx to share how staff work to feed our neighbors while sharing their first-hand experiences working through the pandemic. ■



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT... PLEASE MAKE A GIFT THIS SPRING!

To make a donation please visit nycommonpantry.org or



DONATE NOW