

A NOTE FROM STEPHEN




New York Common Pantry entered 2024 knowing that the number of individuals and families seeking our services had been climbing exponentially for months. Nearly three million people in New York City are struggling to make ends meet and 50% of working-age households do not earn enough to meet the minimum cost of living in the city to cover housing, food, healthcare, transportation and childcare. Single mothers experience the highest rates of income inadequacy, with 86% unable to cover the cost of basic needs when young children are present. The high cost of these basic necessities, the end of Pandemic-era benefits and tax credits, and wages that have not kept up with inflation continue to impact the most vulnerable among us.

Inflation and the increasing prices of groceries not only affect our neighbors at the checkout counter, but they affect NYCP. To ensure we can maintain our commitment to providing quality food and services to the community, we are actively working to reduce our food expenses.

We started by expanding our space. The recently purchased and renovated Food Storage and Distribution Hub in Hunts Point has three times the space of our former warehouse, providing bulk storage for nearly 600 pallets of food. In addition, our work as part of The Roundtable: Allies for Food Access keeps us at the forefront of evolving the emergency food system through collaboration, collective purchasing and sharing of best practices. The Roundtable organizations are on the front line of emergency food provision, and we have been placing bulk food orders together for shelf-stable pantry items and fresh produce, working together to minimize service duplication and sharing food rescue pickups and deliveries. Bulk food purchases have started to save us upwards of 20% on key staples.

Our ability to purchase and store more food means we can serve more people at a lower cost. We served more than 10 million meals last year and with the rise in hardship in our city we plan to serve twice as many in the next few years. NYCP continues to be here for all those in need in the community and we are grateful for your support so we can continue to provide this level of service every day.



Stephen Grimaldi
 Executive Director

MEET OUR GUEST: JO RUIZ



Jo Ruiz is a native New Yorker from the Bronx and currently resides in Manhattan. She was introduced to the Pantry through Melody, her good friend and neighbor, and they have been coming to the Pantry together for more than 5 years. The Pantry helps her save money on food for her family of 7. Jo says she loves the variety of vegetables she receives as the seasons change.

MEET OUR VOLUNTEER: NATALIE GRANT



Natalie is a senior at Hunter College majoring in Public Health and is actively involved in the CUNY Food Justice Fellowship. Her favorite thing about volunteering at NYCP is the atmosphere. She says not only has she created connections here but she developed a routine that gives a sense of security. It has been a meaningful experience for Natalie, and through working with other volunteers, she learned about their lives and also received advice about her own journey.

FILL THE BAG BENEFIT



This year's Fill The Bag Benefit brought the physical Pantry to Ziegfeld Ballroom! The evening's host, NBC News Anchor **Willie Geist**, and NYCP Board Chair, **Margie Sung**, gave a fun-filled demonstration of Choice Pantry ordering and showed off the high quality of the fresh produce while NYCP staff **Justin Phillips** and **Anthony Duncan**, led by "The Estée Lauder Companies Distinguished Volunteer Award" winner, **Andy Dsida**, packed the personalized orders of healthy food.

Our Live Healthy! team hosted a nutrition education and farm share table to showcase another NYCP program supporting healthy eating in the community. The more than 300 guests were served The Live Healthy! Recipe Club's "steamed vegetable dumplings" during the cocktail hour. Auctioneer **Lydia Fenet** led the crowd in a rousing Paddle Raise to help us raise \$1 million+ to support NYCP's programs to reduce hunger and poverty in NYC. This year NYCP honored long-time partner PIMCO with its "Distinguished Partner Award."

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