



**OUR LINES  
GROW LONGER  
WHILE  
FUNDING  
SLOWS**

## **RISING ABOVE THE STORM TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY**

The scarcity of eggs and their soaring prices are emblematic of the high cost of food that New Yorkers struggle with daily. It is no surprise then that 1 in 3 New Yorkers has used a food pantry in the past three years. Among them, 2 out of 3 were employed, and the majority worked consistently throughout those three years.<sup>1</sup>

According to a new poll commissioned by No Kid Hungry New York, a majority (85%) of New Yorkers have reported that the cost of food is rising faster than their income, for the second year in a row. To cover these high food costs, the same poll shows 53% of New Yorkers have taken on additional debt in the past 12 months as they struggle to feed their families.<sup>2</sup> Because we purchase 59% of the food we serve, we also are affected by the high cost of food.

While we see the increased need faced by city residents and have stepped up our provision of healthy food to communities in need, we are being squeezed by federal and city government funding cuts. USDA terminated the program that funded New York Food for New York Families, which granted New York Common Pantry (NYCP) more than \$1.5 million over two years to purchase fresh fruit, vegetables and meats from local farmers and items like freshly baked bread from local food producers. In addition, the city is considering slashing its budget to support emergency food providers by 58%.

We are standing firm against these headwinds, pressing elected officials to renew our funding and continuing to purchase food in bulk to reduce costs, increase our food rescue efforts, and expand our volunteer program so that we are able to feed our neighbors in need. As our guest Lisbet Negron said, "Now \$100 only purchases two bags of groceries at the store. That's why I come to NYCP. They give me fresh fruits and vegetables. They even give me pet food for my two dogs. I'm grateful."

<sup>1</sup> "Annual State of Poverty and Disadvantage," Robin Hood and the Poverty Tracker Research Group, Columbia University, Volume 6, Winter 2024

<sup>2</sup> Change Research poll conducted on behalf of No Kid Hungry, released March 2025

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



Stephen Grimaldi at the Rally for a Food Secure NYC to preserve CFC Funding.

These are unprecedented times. New York Common Pantry (NYCP) is facing devastating funding cuts from both federal and city sources. Cuts to the USDA-funded New York Food for New York Families program and the Emergency Shelter and Feeding Program (ESFP) are eliminating critical resources, and plans are mounting to reduce SNAP benefits. In addition, Mayor Adams' proposed budget slashes city funding for the Community Food Connections (CFC) program by 58%, reducing it to just \$20.9 million citywide. Last year, NYCP received \$500,000 in CFC funding, which helped us provide more than 2 million meals -- 18% of our total output.

This is happening while food insecurity in the city is at an all-time high.

- 1.3 million households – nearly 3 million people – in New York are struggling to make ends meet<sup>3</sup>
- More than 3 out of 4 NYC households say affording groceries has become harder in the past 12 months<sup>4</sup>
  - 51% bought less (or no) meat, fish, eggs or other protein, and 45% bought less (or no) fresh produce

NYCP sees this crisis reflected in the volume of hungry families and communities we serve. This past year, we:

- Served more than 11 million meals
- Assisted nearly 730,000 guests
- Expanded our mobile programs to serve 350 community partner sites throughout the city

**“ FEDERAL AND CITY FUNDING CUTS ARE IMPEDING OUR ABILITY TO FEED ALL THOSE IN NEED. ”**

So far, this fiscal year as compared to last, we've seen a 10% increase in need, driven by rising unemployment and soaring food costs. We, and organizations like ours, battle daily to feed the millions of New Yorkers who are food insecure and struggling.

We have concerted efforts underway, reaching out to elected officials at the city, state and federal level, making the case to reinstate or increase the funding for these critical food programs. If you'd like to join these efforts, please reach out to me. We have easy-to-use materials to reach out to your representatives. The more voices they hear, the harder we are to ignore.

Without urgent action, NYCP will be forced to scale back food assistance, leaving even more New Yorkers without the meals they need. Please consider donating during this uncertain time so that we can continue to help all of our neighbors and communities in need.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Grimaldi".

**Stephen Grimaldi**  
Executive Director

3. The 2023 True Cost of Living Report, United Way of NYC and Fund for the City of New York, March 2023. [www.truecostofliving.org](http://www.truecostofliving.org)

4. "Annual State of Poverty and Disadvantage," Robin Hood and the Poverty Tracker Research Group, Columbia University, Volume 6, Winter 2024

# MEET OUR GUEST

## HUGH HARRIS



Hugh Harris, 60 years old, resides in the Bronx and is a Choice Pantry member. As someone who had previously lived in a shelter without access to a full kitchen and now lives in a 'food desert' neighborhood, Hugh has experienced what it's like not to receive adequate nutritious food and seen the issues of food insecurity. He is grateful for the abundance

and quality of fresh food he receives at the Pantry and is appreciative when there is extra produce distributed. Hugh shares, "the reason I am stocking up is with everything going on in the government, you need to make sure you have food because food is really astronomically expensive. I am making sure I get nonperishable things like rice, grains, canned goods, in case an emergency crisis takes place. Nobody in this country should be hungry."

## VOLUNTEER CORNER



**The Buckley School** won this year's Pasta Bowl by collecting 270 lbs of pasta! **The Riverdale Country School** came in second (with 140 lbs of pasta) and **St. Vincent Ferrer Church** came in third (120 lbs)! We appreciate everyone in the

school community who collected and donated this delicious, healthy staple which we provide to our Choice Pantry and Hot Meals guests. Thanks to all of our donors, we collected more than 800 lbs of pasta!

Get involved and volunteer at New York Common Pantry



**8,274**  
VOLUNTEERS  
CONTRIBUTED 29,577  
HOURS SO FAR IN FY25

# STUDENTS DRIVE SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER



Through collaborative efforts, this year's annual MV4NY Ramadan Food Drive run by Muslim Volunteers for New York (MV4NY) was a big success, raising more than \$6,500 to provide meals to communities facing hunger. Students from across the area ran bake sales and sold homemade hot chocolate and lemonade to support the effort. "Our students give new life to our drive. They are really our change makers and driving force," says Sahar Husain, Founding Board Member of MV4NY.

Over the years, our dedicated partner, MV4NY, has generously donated their time and volunteered at the Pantry packing grocery bags and distributing them to Pantry members, as well as serving guests during last year's Iftar dinner hosted at the Pantry. Our partnership goes beyond providing nutritious meals to hungry New Yorkers. MV4NY provides a foundation to build and strengthen a community that works together to improve food security.





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Follow us on social media!



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# FILL THE BAG BENEFIT RAISES \$1.2M

**Fill The Bag Benefit 2025** was a tremendous success, raising \$1.2 million to support NYCP's programs to reduce hunger and poverty in NYC. **Al Roker**, Feature and Weather Anchor of NBC's TODAY, was our host and auctioneer Lydia Fenet created excitement and a flurry of participation during the paddle raise.

"The high cost of food has sent hard-working residents to seek help from food pantries and soup kitchens, many for the first time. The money we raised tonight will enable us to continue purchasing and serving healthy, nutritious food to feed thousands of families in need," said **Stephen Grimaldi**, Executive Director, New York Common Pantry.

This year NYCP honored Restaurant Associates with its Distinguished Partner Award. "Our partnership with the Pantry reflects our shared belief in the power of food to nourish, connect, and inspire. For more than 10 years, we have worked together to support local communities in need with dignity," said **Ed Brown**, CEO of **Restaurant Associates**.



NYCP ED Stephen Grimaldi, Honoree Nancy Cutler (Bloomberg), Board Chair Margie Sung, Host Al Roker (Today Show) and Honoree Ed Brown (Restaurant Associates) at Fill The Bag Benefit 2025.

NYCP honored **Bloomberg** as the recipient of The Estée Lauder Companies Distinguished Volunteer Award. "Bloomberg's commitment to 'Global Reach, Local Impact' is reflected in our decade-long partnership with New York Common Pantry to combat food insecurity in New York City," said **Nancy Cutler**, Bloomberg's Head of Corporate Philanthropy, Americas.