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Yorkville Common Pantry

8 East 109th Street
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www.ycp.org

It's Awards season at YCP!

- On March 23, 2012, NY1 named Executive Director Stephen Grimaldi as "NYer of the Week" for his leadership efforts to bring healthy food to hungry New Yorkers
- One of five organizations accepted out of fifty-seven non-profits and schools that applied, YCP will participate in the New York Cares Volunteer Impact Program (VIP). As part of VIP, New York City's largest volunteer organization has given YCP a three year grant which will help improve upon and expand our volunteer opportunities and recruitment.



Executive Director Stephen Grimaldi speaks to guests at our 2012 Spring Benefit. *Photo by Michael Leonhard.*



- YCP received the prestigious Hero Award from the the FEED Foundation during their 4th Annual FEED-Raiser and Market event in December 2011. According to FEED Foundation co-founder Lauren Bush Lauren, "YCP is a stand-out example of the FEED Foundation's mission to fight hunger worldwide."



YCP Board Chair, Wendy A. Stein poses with co-founder of FEED Foundation, Lauren Bush Lauren after receiving the \$10,000 FEED Hero Award! *Photo by © Patrick McMullan.*



The Pantry Press

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Spring 2012

New Pantry initiative brings freedom of "Choice"

Earlier this year, YCP adopted innovative procedures to launch a "Choice" model for its Pantry operations. The new model encourages Pantry members to choose the food they would like to receive instead of receiving pre-packed grocery bags. Choice Pantry is designed to meet the needs of our families by providing them the culturally appropriate, nutritionally balanced food they select every other week. At YCP, Pantry members use touch-screen wireless tablets that record their food selection and transmit it to our volunteers to receive and pack. In conjunction with the launch of Choice Pantry, YCP is also introducing YCP Direct, a unique online ordering system found on our website. The alternative to on-site ordering permits members to submit a pre-order by accessing the YCP Direct menu remotely. YCP Direct streamlines food selection by allowing Pantry members to order from home, a community center, or a public library via our website menu. Pantry members can then pick up their order at a mutually convenient time without having to wait in line. YCP's Choice Pantry and YCP Direct encourage Pantry members to check their cupboards and refrigerators before ordering to ensure they receive the food they know they will be able to use. YCP's new initiatives help our families stretch their food dollars, eliminate food waste, and ensure the dignity of our Pantry members. YCP received generous support from the New York State Department of Health "Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program" and The Hyde & Watson Foundation to



build the website menu and purchase the touch-screen wireless tablets.

Recently, we spoke with Pantry member Ollie Reeves, who was thrilled to find out that her diabetes-restricted diet would now be taken into account at YCP. Her ability to choose foods will allow Ollie to stop wasting unwanted food and instead make healthy, nutritious choices based upon her needs. *To learn more about Ollie Reeves, visit our website and click 'What we Do/People we help!'*

New partnership with Single Stop USA

365 YCP is now a partner with Single Stop USA, a national nonprofit that brings innovative solutions to move families up the ladder towards greater economic mobility. YCP's case-management program provides a safety net that ensures all YCP Pantry members, not only receive basic food provision, but also are screened for entitlements and benefits eligibility and fill



out food assistance and Medicaid applications onsite. Thanks to assistance from Single Stop USA, YCP is now able to provide a higher level of care to ensure our visitors are able to apply for and receive their benefits. The impact of the program is illustrated by YCP visitor Samuel. Recently, Samuel lost his job and applied for supplemental food assistance and Medicaid with YCP's help. He continues to receive food packages and stays in touch with his case manager about his job search. 365 YCP assists Pantry members access resources to improve their financial, educational, vocational, and health prospects, eventually leading to less dependence on YCP's food provision.

YCP Celebrates its Annual Spring Benefit



250 guests enjoyed a 3-course gourmet meal at Guastavino's while participating in a Live Auction conducted by the evening's Master of Ceremonies, **WNBC-TV Sports Anchor Bruce Beck**. *Photo by Michael Leonhard.*



Board Member Linda Holt presents YCP's Community Partner Award to **President & CEO of ING Financial Services LLC, John Boyles**. Other honorees from the evening included: **Board Member Anne P. MacKinnon** receiving the **Helene Abraham Volunteer Community Service Award** and the **Church of St. Thomas More** recognizing **Dolores J. Morrissey** also receiving the **Community Partner Award**. *Photo by Michael Leonhard.*



Guests enjoyed a live performance by **Jonathan Batiste** and **The Stay Human Band**, a modern jazz ensemble noted for their world-class music, high energy, and uplifting spirit. *Photo by Billy Farrell Agency.*

Client Voices

Meet Guillermo, Project Dignity participant

Guillermo was 62 years old and homeless when he first came to YCP in search of a hot meal and case management services. Project Dignity placed him in a shelter and provided resume assistance, referring him to employment services while helping him fill out housing applications. Thanks to the referral from Project Dignity, Guillermo is currently working part time for a local social service agency. He continues to work with YCP to find permanent housing.



Hot Meal program participants enjoying dinner. *Photo by Lindsay Buckley.*

Faced with hardship, Karen turns to YCP's Pantry

Karen lives in Harlem with her husband and teenage son and, for as long as she can remember she has been the wage earner for the household. To improve her family's economic situation, Karen decided to enroll in nursing school, making her husband's monthly disability check the only form of income. As their financial burden grew, her son informed her that he had decided to forgo his education to help support the family. Karen then turned to YCP for food support. The Pantry packages she now receives from YCP help alleviate the stress of providing for her family while allowing both Karen and her son to continue pursuing their education.

YCP's Nutrition Initiative for Children and Families Program Scores Big

Since 2009, Yorkville Common Pantry has been encouraging healthy eating and nutrition education through its popular Nutrition Initiative for Children and Families (NICF) program. Last year, the 10-class curriculum of interactive nutrition education classes taught 317 youth and their families about healthy food choices and offered hands-on opportunities to practice preparing healthy meals using fresh ingredients, fruits, and vegetables. Last year, YCP embarked upon a year-long evaluation to assess the impact of the NICF course. The research evaluator, generously funded by The Heckscher Foundation for Children, reported that NICF is positively impacting the lives of our participants. The evaluation aimed to measure noticeable change in participants' eating behaviors. As a result of the comprehensive lessons taught in NICF, students have instituted statistically significant positive changes in their eating behaviors. During pre-test evaluation, 79% of program participants reported eating fast food at least once a week. After partaking in YCP's nutrition education class, that number dropped to only 19%, as reported in post-test evaluation. The NICF program provides our Pantry members and their families with substantial and valuable increases in their knowledge of healthy food and behaviors.

*Want to learn more? Visit our website and meet **Edit Cano**, a 10-year-old NICF participant, and her family. Edit and her family will tell you all about NICF and how it has made a difference in their lives! www.ycp.org*



NICF students chopping fresh cherry tomatoes while on a field trip to Katchkie Farms in upstate NY.

Volunteers make it happen!

With an average of 3,600 volunteered hours each month, we thank our volunteers for their incredible part in our transition to a Choice Pantry, our facilitation of YCP Direct, and the many creative conversations that have improved our services.

Our collaborations with volunteers from groups such as Goldman Sachs, WhyHunger, Hampton Inn, Macy's, New York Cares, and FEED's Lauren Bush Lauren have helped pantry members make healthy choices, provided nutrition education to children, supplied fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income families, and prepared nutritious and delicious breakfasts and dinners.

We want to also thank, New York City schools and religious organizations for a fantastic Food Drive season! We distributed donated toys to hundreds of families during the Larry Morales Toy Drive and collected over 10,000 cans of soup during the Souper Bowl!



Volunteers from Talbots smile for the camera before distributing fresh produce to Pantry members.