

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



**THE  
FOODBANK**  
of Monmouth and Ocean Counties

A member of  
**FEEDING  
AMERICA**

## HUNGER WON'T WIN HERE

Fall 2016

## Together, We Can Feed Families in Need

**September is Hunger Action Month** – a time when the Feeding America network of Food Banks brings awareness to the issue of hunger in America and in our own towns. This year our focus is on hungry families, a need that continues to grow especially during the Holiday season. The things many of us take for granted like a turkey dinner with trimmings, gifts, parties and holiday cheer, are not experienced by people who are struggling to feed their families all year long. The holidays often add more stress as they try to keep up and still make the children feel they are celebrating something special.

“We depend on all of our neighbors to help other local families in need, and it’s something concrete we can do to help out and to teach our children the importance of giving.”

### Upcoming Events and Ways to Help:

**September 2016 – STUDENTS CHANGE HUNGER** – Make sure your grammar school, middle school, high school, or college is participating in our holiday season giving competition – top schools receive trophies, prizes and a chance to win the Governor’s Cup Award. To sign up and participate during the fall season, contact Ryan at [rhubler@foodbankmoc.org](mailto:rhubler@foodbankmoc.org). We welcome Sponsors!

**September 26, 2016 – The 25th Anniversary of The FoodBank Culinary Classic** – to be held at Doolan’s in Spring Lake from 5:00-9:00 PM. The best tasting event at the Jersey Shore! To get tickets, contact Ryan at [rhubler@foodbankmoc.org](mailto:rhubler@foodbankmoc.org).

**September, 2016 - Donor Appreciation Night** – A special “invite only” evening to celebrate our Silo of Hope Donors for their dedicated support and loyalty to the FoodBank. Interested in becoming a Silo of Hope Donor? See page 3.

**October 1 – November 15th - FoodBank “Families Feeding Families” TURKEY and Holiday Meal DRIVE!** Help a local family enjoy a holiday meal by donating frozen turkeys, chickens or holiday trimmings. We will accept donations large and small (including cash donations) at our locations in Neptune (3300 Route 66) or Toms River at The B.E.A.T. Center (1769 Hooper Avenue - around back of building). For more local drop off points, go to [www.foodbankmoc.org](http://www.foodbankmoc.org).



“We depend on all of our neighbors to help other local families in need, and it’s something concrete we can do to help out and to teach our children the importance of giving. Every year it gets harder to satisfy the increasing demand for turkeys and holiday meals, so we have to appeal to the community for help,” says Carlos Rodriguez, FoodBank Executive

Director. The FoodBank will purchase 6,000 turkeys this year for our 300 feeding partners in Monmouth and Ocean Counties. But it will fall short of our goal which is to leave no family in need without a holiday meal. Last year we distributed 13,000 turkeys - thanks to the donations from our community.

**How can you help?** If you run a business, you can conduct a turkey drive or collect funds to pay for holiday meals. We’ll also gladly accept chicken roasters and turkey breasts for smaller families.

We have several drop-off points in Monmouth and Ocean Counties for individual donations of frozen meat, trimmings and side dishes. Please visit our website at [www.foodbankmoc.org](http://www.foodbankmoc.org) for locations, hours of operation, most requested items or make a gift for purchase of a holiday meal.

***Thanks in advance for your donations and support!***

# Message from the Executive Director

## HUNGER WON'T WIN HERE



## HUNGER WON'T WIN HERE

\$1 Donation = 3 meals



Total volunteer hours = 27,667



\$700= feeds a child for the summer. We served close to 32,000 meals for low-income children



96 Cents of every dollar raised supports food and programs



422,267 lbs of food donated from food drives = more than 351,000 meals



\$6,400 = Approximate cost of Culinary Tuition for one student. This year, 21 students graduated, 18 received jobs



Volunteer income tax assistance with 2,493 hours of volunteer time = \$3,189,959 in tax refunds



As we enter the fall and prepare for a busy season of school activities and holiday planning, we should pause to consider those in our community who might need some extra help during this time of year.

In this newsletter, you will hear from some of our neighbors, like Christina who overcame a series of financial obstacles with the help of a FoodBank Outreach Navigator, or Terrence who got the career boost he needed at our Culinary Skills Training Program. We hope you will join us in our mission to ensure that **HUNGER WON'T WIN HERE.**

The FoodBank is currently providing food and services for more than 132,000 people in Monmouth and Ocean Counties, with the help of 300 feeding partners in our network, including Lunch Break, a top feeding program that offers a choice style pantry for families to select food based on dietary needs.

But we are doing much more than providing help...we are changing lives.

Our results so far, include:

- A successful launch of The B.E.A.T. Center in Toms River, where Ocean County residents can access food, education and other resources.
- With the help of a foundation grant, a Pediatric Mobile Pantry has been added to two locations, the Jane H. Booker Family Health Center in Neptune and the Ocean Health Initiatives in Lakewood. These mobile sites allow increased access to healthy, nutritious food for children in need of healthier diets.
- A 2016 Summer Food Service Program, that provided over 1200 meals per day to 17 programs, including 6 in Ocean County.
- An outreach team that provided assistance for clients applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Affordable Health Care and the Earned Income Tax Credits through Free Tax Preparation for an estimated \$11 million in benefits back to our neighbors and community.

We continue to provide comprehensive solutions to help vulnerable populations, including children, seniors and veterans. We also advocate and spread awareness about hunger, and we continue to depend on your support to help us achieve our goals. Please give!

I encourage you to learn more about the FoodBank by scheduling a tour at 732-918-2600 or visit us at [www.foodbankmoc.org](http://www.foodbankmoc.org).

From our family to yours, we wish you a wonderful fall and holiday season to enjoy this amazing shore community that we call home.

Sincerely,

  
Carlos M. Rodriguez



A member of FEEDING AMERICA

3300 Route 66  
Neptune, NJ 07753  
(732) 918-2600  
[www.foodbankmoc.org](http://www.foodbankmoc.org)

Follow us on



The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties earned a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for seven consecutive years. This distinction means the FoodBank, a 501 (c)3 charitable organization, outperformed most charities in America in areas of efficiency, fiscal integrity, and effectiveness.

### 2016 Board of Trustees

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Executive Director  
Carlos M. Rodriguez

# Pediatric Mobile Pantry is FoodBank's Latest Health Initiative

The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties began testing a new program for low income families with children who use local health clinics. The program includes a new Pediatric Mobile Pantry, which provides fresh produce to families with children at two local health clinics, Jersey Shore University Medical Center's Jane H. Booker Family Health Center in Neptune, and Ocean Health Initiatives in Lakewood.

Most health care professionals know that a lack of nutritious food can create multiple health issues, but providing healthy food to patients can be difficult due to the cost of fresh produce. Now staff can identify families with children who would benefit from the program and provide "food prescriptions" for fresh produce, dairy, and whole grains as part of their overall health plan, just as they might prescribe a medication for high blood pressure.

Children who would benefit from the program are identified and provided "food prescriptions" for fresh produce, dairy, and whole grains as part of their overall health plan.

The Mobile Pantry is stationed at a location that clients are already visiting, making healthy food both accessible and affordable, two of the biggest challenges for low-income families. It may also help patients keep and attend regular clinic appointments, which in turn, will help them maintain their overall health. Additionally, the FoodBank's Nutrition Coordinator will go with the Mobile Pantry to each site in order to offer cooking demonstrations on pantry items and education on child nutrition.

The coordinator will also hand out recipes and bring child-friendly nutrition games in order to help people incorporate healthy food into their daily life.

"More than 40,000 children in Monmouth and Ocean Counties lack access to the nutritious food children need to learn and have a healthy and active lifestyle. This new collaboration with pediatric clinics provides free fresh food and produce, the essential nutrients for a healthy diet, to families in need at the same time they receive healthcare from our partners," said Carlos Rodriguez, Executive Director of The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties.



This program was made possible by a generous grant from Our Family Foundation, Stop & Shop's Charitable Organization.

*Arlene Putterman, Communications Advisor for Our Family Foundation*

# FoodBank's Feeding Partner Spotlight:

*Lunch Break Houses One of Monmouth Counties' Largest Client Choice Pantries... and Much More*

Lunch Break in Red Bank is one of Monmouth County's most vital social service agencies as well as one of the top three feeding programs and is open six days a week. In one month, Lunch Break's soup kitchen serves an average of 6,500 meals and provides 1,200 families with groceries from their choice model pantry. In addition to meals, Lunch Break also distributes new and gently used clothing, offers on-site health and wellness outreach and benefit services, a garden market, homebound meal delivery, children's cooking classes, an internet cafe, employment board, community dinners, backpack programs and much more.

"At Lunch Break everyone is served with compassion and dignity. In 2015, our programs and services were utilized 155,093 times by individuals and families. We are proud of the work we do here together with staff, volunteers and our board, because together, we bring Help for Today and Hope for Tomorrow to so many who struggle," says Gwendolyn Love, Executive Director.



*Gwen Love:*  
A LEGACY OF CARING

"At Lunch Break everyone is served with compassion and dignity."

Together with a committed staff, Lunch Break is helped by over 1,500 dedicated volunteers annually. On a daily basis, approximately 70 volunteers come into Lunch Break's facility on a rotating schedule serving in numerous capacities from fundraising, stocking shelves, to preparing and serving meals.

For more information, visit their website at [www.lunchbreak.org](http://www.lunchbreak.org).

## HELP ENSURE THAT HUNGER WON'T WIN HERE

**For 132,000 people in Monmouth and Ocean Counties, hunger is a year-round problem.**

With a gift of \$1,000 or more annually to The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, you join a special group of dedicated families and individuals—**Silo of Hope Society**—those who are deeply committed to providing for the most basic of human needs, food.

Silo of Hope members make up 84% of our individual donations, critical to keeping us strong. Your leadership support assists the FoodBank's mission to alleviate hunger and build food secure communities in Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

**If interested in becoming a Silo of Hope member, contact Diana Flippo at 732-643-5843 or email [dflippo@foodbankmoc.org](mailto:dflippo@foodbankmoc.org).**

### Silo of Hope Society

Silo of Hope has six levels of annual giving, starting at \$1,000

- \$1,000+ Seed of Hope
- \$2,500+ Gardener of Hope
- \$5,000+ Gatherer of Hope
- \$10,000+ Cultivator of Hope
- \$25,000+ Nourisher of Hope
- \$50,000+ Leader of Hope

## From Getting Help to Giving Help

- Christina's Story



Christina

Christina was living in a home, working, and awaiting the arrival of a foster child when Super Storm Sandy hit. The storm caused a large hole in the roof and the rain that came in buckled the wood floors. When she applied for FEMA help, she was told the damage was not significant enough for funding, so she had to use up her savings to repair her home.

The following year, while working, an unexpected surgery caused her temporary disability. While trying to recover her mobility, she was suddenly in need of financial help and food assistance but kept getting turned down for benefits. That is, until she met with a FoodBank outreach member who was, in Christina's words, "relentless in her efforts to help. She never stopped and didn't give up until I had all the resources I needed to get well and care for my family. Her name was Susan and she was amazing." Christina used Visitation Relief Center and Peoples Pantry in Toms River for food and clothing and continued to meet with Susan to sign up for healthcare, SNAP, and income tax help. She didn't realize she could claim foster children as dependents until Susan, a VITA trained tax preparer in the Benefits team, amended Christina's tax return and generated a substantial earned income credit welcomed by Christina and her family.

*"Thank you so very much to everyone at The B.E.A.T. Center for all your hard work! Your big hearts, filled with care and understanding to all the families that come through those doors, is greatly appreciated. Thank you for the many programs available and for providing guidance and help to receive the assistance needed...thank you for treating me the same; no different from others without hard times. I want to show the same compassion and I want to Pay it Forward." - Christina*

Today, Christina is back to work part time and will receive a healthy tax refund so she can begin saving again. She is pleased that she can now visit one location - The B.E.A.T. Center - to get food, services and share a meal at the JBJ Soul Kitchen with her family. She is excited to begin volunteering at the Soul Kitchen and give back to the community that helped her.

## From FoodBank Culinary Training Class to Executive Chef - How I Got Here

By Terrence Stewart, JBJ Soul Kitchen - Executive Chef  
Graduate of FoodBank Culinary Training, July, 2010

***"Follow what you love and things will begin to happen for you."***

I was cooking and baking as part of a family business from the time I was 14, so I had skills but not the certifications I needed to get a good kitchen job. Vocational school didn't seem worth it, since I already had knowledge. When I heard about the FoodBank's Culinary Skills Training Program and that I would graduate with ServSafe Certification, it worked for me so I applied and was chosen as a student.

I was very impressed with Chef Ray Cattley and saw him as a great role model that I could mirror. He was informative but also charitable. Once I graduated, things really began to happen for me. Chef Ray suggested I interview at Lunch Break in Red Bank and soon after that I met Jon and Dorothea Bon Jovi and began working with them at the very start of the Soul Kitchen idea, before there was a restaurant. When the restaurant opened in 2011, I was offered the position of Executive Chef, and have been here since.

At JBJ Soul Kitchen, I see people who want to help and those in dire need, and I feel good that they can come

here and get a delicious meal made with healthy and fresh ingredients. When I hear "great meal," that's my small way of giving back to the community.

There are only four of us here and it gets really busy. We start fresh every day with a different group of volunteers who I have to organize and manage, while getting a meal on the table for everyone. But it all works out, and everyone gets something out of it.

I've met some famous chefs and even sat down for a conversation with President Bill Clinton, but I'm not someone who needs the spotlight. I believe anything is possible if you want it enough and everyone can give something back. When you follow what you love, things will begin to happen for you.



Terrence Stewart, JBJ Soul Kitchen - Executive Chef

It costs about \$6,400 to put a student through the program, and it's at no cost to them. We depend on the generosity of those who contribute to make success stories like this happen after each graduation. The program is 13 weeks and provides adults in need of employment with job skills training, food prep experience, job readiness skills, ServSafe and CPR certifications. For more information, visit [www.foodbankmoc.org](http://www.foodbankmoc.org).