

WAGE CENTER PARTNER WITH SUNY AND BLC TO PROVIDE FOOD FOR NEIGHBORS IN NEED



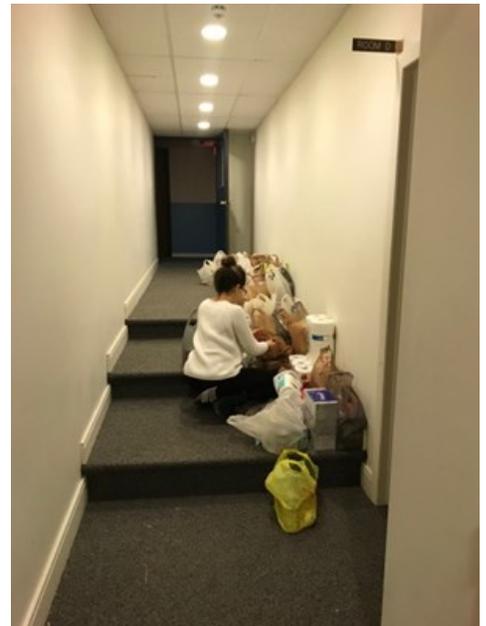
Bethlehem Lutheran Church distributed Thanksgiving baskets for families in need of some extra holiday assistance. Volunteers from the WAGE Center packed with Masters of Social Work interns from the State University of New York at Albany. Each basket consists of a box of food, a bag of paper products, cleaning and personal care items, as well as a grocery gift card to supplement nonperishable pantry items. Adding a bit of cheer to each box are beautiful quilted potholders made by a BLC member.

WAGE Center staff and SUNY interns shopped for holiday items and gift cards before sorting and packing the enormous bounty delivered by the BLC Youth Group in their door to door pantry collection effort. Sizable cash donations and constantly streaming food item donations at BLC also make this type of effort possible.

Regular food pantry volunteers sort, date and shelf food items throughout the year and work on special projects such as food basket distribution, food drives and eventually the moving of the pantry from the lower level to the



new upper level location. By partnering with the WAGE Center and SUNY Albany interns, outreach goes far into our local community, helping those who are most in need of supplemental food assistance.



Some of the recipients of seasonal and emergency food boxes are new immigrants struggling to make it in a new environment, neighbors in the Bethlehem community, and Albany city residents who have fallen on hard times. WAGE Center clients receiving case management services are sometimes found to be in need of items to provide a holiday meal. Throughout the year, more than one hundred families are assisted by this collaborative outreach.