



Bergen County Food Security Task Force

Year-in-Review 2022

2022 has been another year of successful collaboration for the Food Security Task Force, a part of the Bergen County Department of Human Services. With continued support, our goal for 2023 is to expand our outreach and foster even deeper connections between food pantries and service organizations throughout Bergen County.

2022 Event Recap

1st Round of the FSTF Food Pantry Sustainability Grant

In January, over \$500,000 was distributed to forty-seven food pantries in Bergen County. The grant provided funding to help food pantries meet their infrastructure needs and become more sustainable. Grantees were able to complete massive renovations, acquire new equipment, and create a better working environment for their volunteers. With this grant, more organizations are now able to accept fresh produce as many purchased new refrigerators and freezers.



Before

After



Photos provided by
the Ascension Church



2nd Annual Food Pantry Summit

In May, we hosted our 2nd Annual Food Pantry Summit. Over thirty-five pantries across the county attended. Food pantry staff were able to share and discuss their challenges with each other and learn about different social services available throughout the county.

Hunger Action Month

September 1st marked the beginning of Hunger Action Month. This month is dedicated to putting an end to hunger across the country.

2nd Round of the FSTF Sustainability Grant

We were pleased to announce the launch of the 2nd round of the Food Pantry Sustainability Grant Program. The Task Force is in the final stages of the process and applicants should find out very soon if they were awarded, with the funds being distributed in early 2023.



Bergen County Fall Harvest Festival

The Food Security Task Force attended the Bergen County Fall Harvest Festival. In addition to providing information and resources to the public, the Task Force received donations that were then distributed to nearby food pantries.

Feed the Front Lines 3rd Phase

Ridgewood's Feed the Front Lines began its 3rd phase! With the increase in need within our food-insecure population, Feed the Front Lines began supplying meals to food pantries. 12,000 ready-to-eat meals were distributed to food pantries each week from September to December during the 3rd phase.



Hunger Action Month Town Days

We would like to take a moment to recognize some of the food pantries that attended their local Town Days. We encourage every organization to attend events to continue cultivating relationships with potential volunteers, donors, and those in need.



From Top Left to Bottom Right: RAP/People's Pantry, Parkside Community Church, Jewish Family & Children's Services, St. Anne's Food Pantry

2022 Event Recap Cont.



Lunch & Learn

Lunch & Learn Series

From July to November, we hosted five educational meetings, discussing topics such as community outreach, fundraising, and nutrition. Thank you to the Bergen County Division of Senior Services Nutrition Unit, the Tepper Foundation, Englewood Health, and the Bergen County Mental Health & Addiction Services for your presentations. We look forward to next year's Lunch & Learn series!

Thanksgiving Produce Distribution

In November, The Task Force teamed up with the Community Foodbank of New Jersey and distributed over 70,000 pounds of fresh produce to 30 food pantries across Bergen County before Thanksgiving. This distribution would not have been possible without the generous help of all the volunteers who attended.



Sheriff's Office Turkey Drive

Thanks to the Bergen County Sheriff's Office, 3,000 frozen turkeys were donated to the Center for Food Action and food pantries across the county to be distributed to families for Thanksgiving.



2022 Event Recap Cont.

Hometown Hero: Mark Friedberg

In December, Mark Friedberg received the Hometown Hero Award from Congressman Josh Gottheimer. Mark has been volunteering with the Food Security Task Force and has been a vital member of the team. With his extensive IT background, Mark has been assisting with the launch of Oasis Insight, our new food pantry management software. Thank you, Mark, and congratulations!



Franciscan Community Development Center Renovation

Leveraging the FSTF Sustainability Grant, the Franciscan Community Development Center of Fairview, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, began their food pantry renovation in October. The FCDC serves up to 3,000 clients each week and their facility was in desperate need of an upgrade. Their renovation includes a walk-in refrigerator, additional storage, and a complete overhaul of the current pantry. During the renovation, FCDC has continued serving their community.



FSTF Team Update

New Member: Stephen Shuler

In November, Stephen Shuler joined the Food Security Task Force as an Assistant Program Analyst. Stephen graduated from Montclair State University in 2019 with a degree in Justice Studies and a minor in Sociology. Shortly after graduating, he spent six months hiking from Georgia to Maine on the Appalachian Trail. Later, Stephen would go on to complete an AmeriCorps term with the NY-NJ Trail Conference. Since the completion of his service term, he has been looking for more opportunities to give back to his community and was ecstatic to join the Bergen County Food Security Task Force.

Feel free to connect with Stephen at: sshuler@co.bergen.nj.us or 201-336-7409



Farewell to Kayleigh, Kimberly, and Lucine

It is bittersweet for us to announce that Kayleigh, Kimberly, and Lucine have moved on from the Food Security Task Force. Kayleigh received a position working at the Office of State Senator Andrew Zwicker as the Scheduling and Community Outreach Coordinator. Kimberly is now working as an Academic Coordinator at the Shawangunk Correctional Facility. Lucine is now the Director of Communication and Policy for the Bergen County Board of Commissioners. We wish Kayleigh, Kimberly, and Lucine the best of luck as they continue forwards along their career paths!

2023 Projects & Events

We have several exciting projects and events to look out for in 2023!

Expansion of Oasis Insights Network

A select few organizations have been a part of our pilot program for the Oasis Insight food pantry management software in 2022. In early 2023, the Food Security Task Force will begin distributing the software and equipment to food pantries for free.

3rd Annual Food Pantry Summit

After the resounding success of this year's Food Pantry Summit, we have already begun preparations for the 2023 Summit. More information to follow in early 2023

2023 Lunch & Learn Series

The Lunch & Learn series will be making a return in 2023 with presentations from new and returning organizations. The sign-up sheet will be available in early 2023.

Social Services Directory

We updated our Social Services Directory and plan to continue the expansion into the new year. A new feature of the directory is the inclusion of QR codes for quick access to an organization's website.

Thank You



Thank you to all of our partners for a wonderful year. Food insecurity is an obstacle that no single organization can tackle alone. By being a part of this network, we collectively can make a long-term difference in the lives of those in need.



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