



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION: Celebrating Our Points Of Light

April became National Volunteer Month as part of President George H. W. Bush's 1000 Points of Light campaign in 1991. This April, Food Bank of South Jersey's remarkable volunteers did not get celebrated in all the ways FBSJ intended due to the rapid rise in food insecurity impacting our region due to COVID-19.

- April was to carry with it an event to celebrate the contributions and impact of many longtime volunteers.
- April was to be a month of energized, engaged and robust volunteerism at our Pennsauken headquarters – with hundreds of volunteers actively working side-by-side to sort donated food and pack nutrition boxes for our region's seniors.
- April was to be a celebration.

While April 2020 was not the April we thought and hoped it would be, it was no less significant in terms of the resilient and unbreakable spirit of volunteerism that is the foundation of the Food Bank of South Jersey.

The Food Bank of South Jersey was started in the City of Camden by a small and visionary group of dedicated volunteers. These

volunteers were committed to feeding the hungry – children, families, seniors. This small group took it upon itself to, in June of 1985, formally launch what today is the largest hunger-relief organization serving South Jersey.

Today, the Food Bank of South Jersey distributes more than 15 million pounds of food a year to four counties relying upon it to feed its food-insecure residents.

"Volunteers are often seen as just the helpers of an organization, assisting in a variety of jobs and taking care of tasks to relieve staff. However, our volunteers are, in fact, an integral extension of an organization – this is true especially in food banks across the country as we rely on volunteers to help out with nearly every part of our operations," states FBSJ Volunteer Services Manager Gerald Tieyah. "Day in and day out, from sorting and packing food to distributing the food into the communities and to the people in need, our nation's food banks could not do all that is needed without volunteers."

Food Bank of South Jersey volunteers are not only extensions of the organization – they are its very foundation.

"FBSJ was started by volunteers giving their time and energy to meet the needs of the community and that tradition continues today through the current COVID-19 response," shares Tieyah. "Throughout our 35 years, thousands upon thousands of volunteers have made certain our operations are successful in fulfilling its founding mission to feed South Jersey."

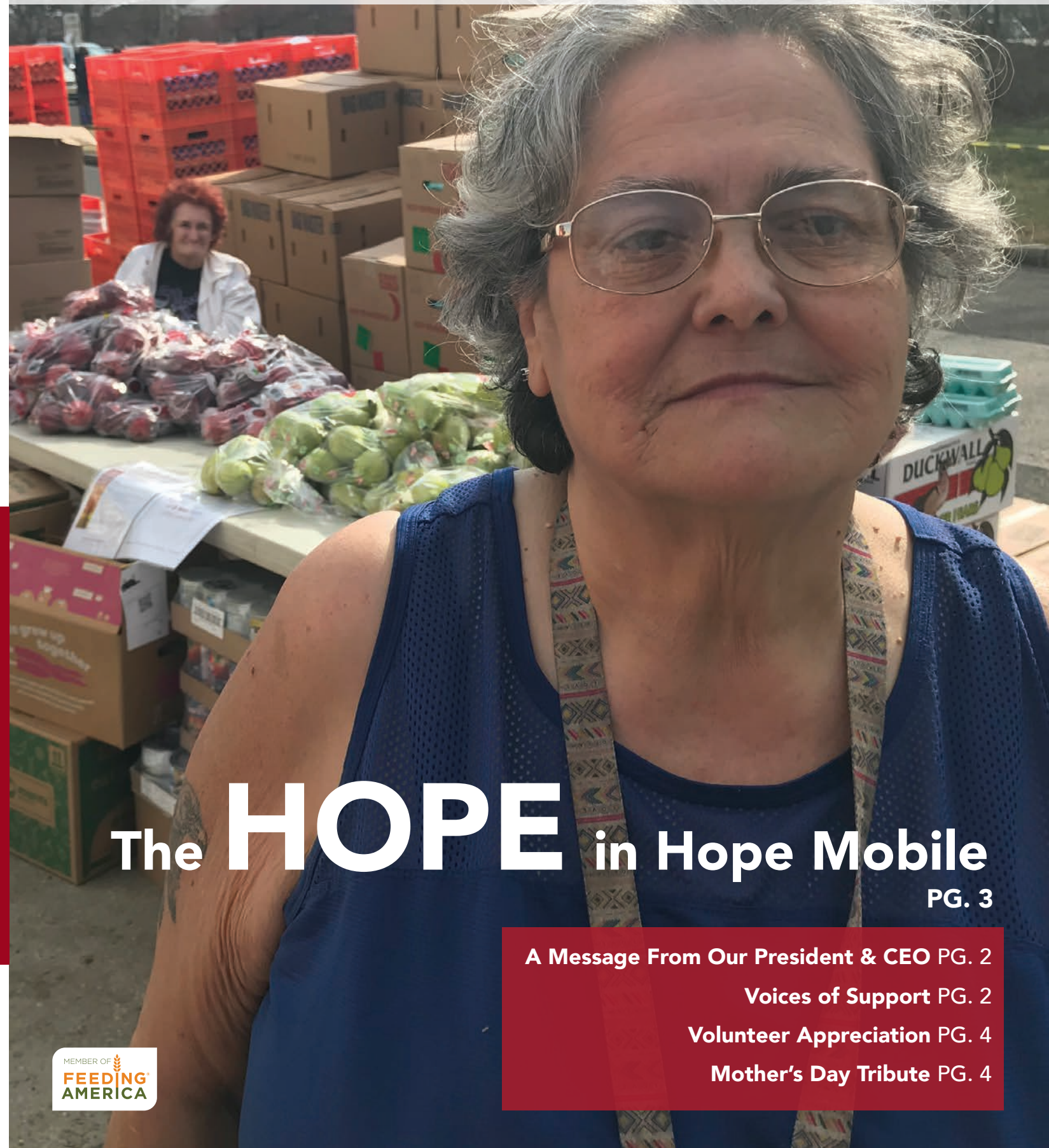
Right now, more than 10,000 volunteers join us each year to help our neighbors in need. Interested in being a point of light with the Food Bank of South Jersey? Find out more about volunteering with FBSJ at www.foodbanksj.org.



SPRING 2020

A publication of the Food Bank of South Jersey

A Taste of Compassion



The HOPE in Hope Mobile

PG. 3

A Message From Our President & CEO PG. 2

Voices of Support PG. 2

Volunteer Appreciation PG. 4

Mother's Day Tribute PG. 4

Happy Mother's Day to women who shaped us, encouraged us and loved us through it all.

Pictured below are staff members with their mothers, of their mothers or as mothers with their children.



OUR MISSION:

The Food Bank of South Jersey exists to provide an immediate solution to the urgent problem of food insecurity by providing food to people in need, teaching them to eat nutritiously, and helping them to find sustainable ways to improve their lives.



©Copyright MAY 2020

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

A MESSAGE

From Our President & CEO

Where do I begin...

My hope for you is that this newsletter finds you and your family healthy, safe and managing to the best of your ability what are truly extraordinary days for us all.

In this, our Spring 2020 newsletter, I had originally intended to focus on recognizing our thousands of incredible volunteers in honor of Volunteer Appreciation Month and updating you joyfully on the impending milestone of the Food Bank of South Jersey's anniversary – June 24, 2020 officially marks our 35th year of feeding South Jersey.

Unfortunately, my message must deviate to focus on what has impacted us all, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact on South Jersey, and our nation.

You may have seen us featured in recent weeks by the Courier-Post, NBC-10, CBS 3 or PHL-17, as well as Fox 29's Good Day Philadelphia, NJ.com and more regional media. The reason for the attention is the rise in food insecurity in our region due directly to COVID-19.

The impact of COVID-19 on hunger stability in South Jersey is devastating.

We are seeing a 200 percent increase in requests for food, as people throughout our region face job loss. We are seeing thousands of children deprived of regular school feeding programs. We are addressing these issues, and more. Here is a glimpse at what we are doing right now, to help feed South Jersey at this time.

- We are fully operational: Our teams in logistics, warehousing, distribution, advocacy, volunteer management and community engagement are working tirelessly to ensure the flow of food is consistent to our region's most food-insecure communities.
- We are expanding food distributions: Leveraging our strength as South Jersey's largest hunger-relief organization, we are expanding capacity and services to provide emergency food resources and greatly extended food distribution services to all in need during this time.
- We are adhering to CDC guidance: We are working closely with State and Federal officials to conduct operations in the safest and most efficient ways, keeping social distancing protocols a priority at all food distribution sites throughout our region.
- We are responding! We are currently packing emergency food boxes for distribution throughout our region – with emphasis on supplying nutritious, fresh and shelf-stable food resources for individuals, children, families and seniors.

Despite the obstacles and sacrifices we are all experiencing during these days of COVID-19, the Food Bank of South Jersey is stronger than ever. We are managing the flow of food for our region and will continue to provide hunger relief to all who need our help.

As we journey through 2020 together, the values that will guide us – Service, Dedication, Collaboration, Integrity and Versatility – will champion us forward as we serve the nutrition and wellness needs of our food-insecure neighbors.



We are the Food Bank of South Jersey.

Fred C. Wasiak
Fred C. Wasiak



VOICES OF SUPPORT

Investing in hunger relief efforts through the work of the Food Bank of South Jersey builds a stronger, healthier, better South Jersey for us all. We could not accomplish our goals without the support, involvement and enthusiasm of committed supporters.

"The Food Bank of South Jersey is so important to the community and has the most dedicated and wonderful employees and volunteers!" - Susan

"Seeing a contented happy smile on a child's face after enjoying a nutritious meal is evidence of a worthy cause and overwhelming peace to that Mother or Father whose children are recipients." - Gloria

"Your work is more important now than ever. Thank you for providing this service to people in need." - Steven

"This donation is to help those families with parents who have lost their jobs due to covid19 virus and now can't afford to feed their families." - Kathleen

"God bless you & thanks for all you do for the City of Burlington. People really depend on you to live, especially kids" - John

"This is a small thing I can do in this time of uncertainty, where many are in need." - Catherine

"In this difficult time, we wanted to do something to help those who are in need. We came up with the idea of making sure that people are not hungry. Stay healthy everyone." - Pooja

"Thank you for all the work that you do all year long regardless of circumstance, but especially now during these challenging times. Please stay well, and be safe!" - Heather

"Thank you to all who are working to keep people fed. These are trying times. You are the ones who ease the pain for many!" - Laura



The HOPE in Hope Mobile



The energy is compassion. The energy is strength. The energy... is hope.

It's a Friday. It's overcast. It's 6 a.m. in Pennsauken and despite the clouds there is a warmth that fills the air with the unmistakable energy that unites communities, forges friendships and creates opportunities for change.

The Food Bank of South Jersey's Hope Mobile food distributions throughout South Jersey have been busier than ever, as thousands upon thousands of food-insecure people are drawn to the hope they deliver from Pennsauken to Swedesboro, Willingboro to Glassboro and Burlington City to Lindenwold. Hope Mobiles are mobile food distributions, with thousands of pounds of nutritious, shelf-stable and fresh foods and beverages brought to food-vulnerable communities.

For many, Hope Mobiles are a vital food resource to sustain healthy eating in households which include individuals, families and seniors. Plentiful in supplies, Hope Mobiles are, for many in South Jersey, the barrier between sustainable wellness and crushing hunger.

"Now, more than ever, South Jersey relies on our mobile food distributions," reports Fred C. Wasiak, President & CEO, Food Bank of South Jersey. "As South Jersey navigates the increased food insecurity that has come to us in these recent months, the nutrition driven into communities by our Hope Mobile has taken on a far greater meaning for us all."

Thankfully, people like Drew, Carmen and Cyndi put the hope in Hope Mobile food distributions.

Driving Drew: Driving FBSJ's Hope Mobile to locations throughout South Jersey, Drew Johnson covers more than 750 miles a month delivering to 10 locations in seven hunger-impacted towns. Drew always connects with volunteers and participants, making all feel welcome and appreciated.

Careful Carmen: A champion FBSJ team member for more than 15 years, Carmen Perez makes sure Hope Mobiles run smoothly – keeping

organization in place when thousands of items are being distributed to hundreds of people in mere minutes. If there is a food item loaded onto a Hope Mobile truck, Carmen is aware of it – and more. With meticulous care to detail, and an intense commitment to exceeding expectations, Carmen ensures Hope Mobile distributions are fully stocked – and smartly structured.

Selfless Cyndi: Pennsauken's Cyndi Holshue is an above and beyond person. She, along with her daughter, Jamie, leads the Pennsauken Hope Mobile distribution twice every month – as they have done for several years. Reliable, dependable and dedicated, Cyndi was the first person to answer the call when the Food Bank of South Jersey needed to move additional food resources out to the community due to COVID-19. Cyndi's passion for helping others has earned her the respect and affection of her community.

What does it take to drive a Hope Mobile?
It takes a Drew, a Carmen, a Cyndi. It takes a Charlie, a Jennifer, a Ryan. It takes a Robyn, a Wilma, a Jeff. It takes a Renee, a Gerald, a Peter.

What does it take to drive a Hope Mobile?
It takes a village of people, working together, committed and honored to feed South Jersey.

With rising food insecurity impacting South Jersey due to the rapid unemployment, mounting health issues and severe community restrictions crippling life in a COVID-19 world, the Food Bank of South Jersey's Hope Mobile food distributions are seeing a more than 200 percent increase in attendance.

This number will climb in the weeks to come.

Thankfully, there is hope... for us all.

To learn more about FBSJ's Hope Mobile mobile food distributions, or to sponsor a Hope Mobile, contact partner@foodbanksj.org.