



Senator Oppenheimer Awards \$100,000 Legislative Grant to Food Bank for Westchester

SCOTT GRAHAM XPACS

The Food Bank for Westchester, which is celebrating its 20th year of fighting hunger in Westchester, has received a \$100,000 legislative grant from State Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck). The grant was recently presented to Christina Rohatynskij, Executive Director of the Food Bank for Westchester, by Senator Oppenheimer at a meeting of the Food Bank's member organizations at the White Plains Women's Club. The grant will help support community food bank and feeding programs throughout Westchester County.

According to a recent survey conducted by Feeding America, the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity, more than half of food banks surveyed reported that they have had to turn away people who need food assistance in the last year because of an inability to meet their needs. Over the past year, the Food Bank for Westchester and the agencies that help distribute the food it provides, occasionally have found it necessary to turn away potential clients and reduce the amount of food available to households because of increased demand and stressed resources.

"Westchester families have been affected by unemployment, underemployment, housing costs, inadequacy of food stamp benefits, and the cost of health care, all of which have dramatically affected the ability of low-income families to put food on the table," said Rohatynskij.

"Some Westchester hunger relief organizations have experienced a 100 percent increase in demand since June 2008. The Food Bank for Westchester appreciates the support of Senator Oppenheimer and the New York legislature to help us supply our member food pantries and soup kitchens so that they can feed Westchester residents who are hungry," Rohatynskij added.

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer said that she "looks forward to the day when providing food assistance to needy Westchester residents will no longer be necessary. Until then, we must do all that we can to support our food pantries and soup kitchens in the essential, life-sustaining work that they do."

The Food Bank for Westchester, one of eight food banks in New York State, acquires, warehouses and distributes food to 200 Westchester County hunger relief organizations, including food pantries and soup kitchens, among others. The Food Bank mission is supported by an extensive donor and volunteer network.

The Food Bank for Westchester is located at 358 Saw Mill River Road, Millwood, NY. For additional information, contact the Food Bank at 914-923-1100 or visit www.foodbankforwestchester.org

About the Food Bank for Westchester: The Food Bank for Westchester's mission is to lead, engage and educate Westchester County in creating a hunger-free environment. It solicits and administers donations from both the public and private sector, distributing food through approximately 200 hunger relief member agencies. Its core activity is the

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collection and distribution of donated, government and purchased food. The Food Bank distributes more than five million pounds of food to member agencies annually.

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March 7th,
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