

PRLOG

Food Bank for Westchester Announces \$750,000 Challenge Grant Campaign

The Food Bank for Westchester announced the \$750,000 Lanza Challenge Grant Campaign to reach the fundraising goal of \$1.5 for renovating and equipping a new, larger warehouse-office space that will enable expansion of its food distribution capacity.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRLog (Press Release) - Aug 10, 2011 - Demands for emergency food have climbed steadily in Westchester County, particularly during the past five years, and the Food Bank's 13,000 sq. ft. Millwood warehouse has become increasingly inadequate. The Food Bank has been looking for several years for a larger space and recently signed a lease on a 36,668 sq. ft. warehouse-office space in Elmsford. The larger facility will enable the Food Bank to nearly triple its food acquisition and distribution capacity.

According to Feeding America's 2011 Map the Meal Gap analysis, Food Bank for Westchester in its current facility is far from meeting the needs of our hungry neighbors. Based on the 2009 U.S. Census, more than 95,320 Westchester residents are not sure where they will get their next meal. The 15,925,321 meals needed to feed those food-insecure residents converts to 20.7 million pounds of food per year. In 2010, the Food Bank for Westchester was able to distribute 7.1 million pounds of food, leaving a staggering deficit of more than 13.5 million pounds or 10.4 million meals. The increased capacity of the new facility will allow the Food Bank to close the Meal Gap by nearly 83 percent.

Renovating and equipping the new facility is estimated to cost \$2.2 million. The Food Bank already has \$700,000 on reserve from a previous campaign, so the current fundraising goal is \$1.5 million.

Philanthropist Pat Lanza, of Eastchester, and her family have generously offered a \$750,000 challenge grant. This means that every donation to the Lanza Challenge Grant Campaign will be doubled! The campaign, announced this week, is in effect until January 1, 2011, but the Food Bank hopes to move into the new facility before the year end so the sooner it reaches the \$1.5 million goal, the better able it will be to fight the growing problem of hunger in Westchester.

Donations can be made online -- www.foodbankforwestchester -- by telephone (914) 923-1100, by mail or in person (358 Saw Mill River Rd., Millwood, NY 10546). Donors contributing to the Food Bank for Westchester should specify that their contribution is for the Lanza Challenge Grant Campaign so that their money is doubled.

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The Food Bank for Westchester, one of eight food banks in New York State, is the backbone of the county's emergency food distribution network. The Food Bank acquires, warehouses and distributes more than seven million pounds of food annually to 227 local hunger-relief programs, including food pantries, soup kitchens, residential shelters, day care and senior centers. The mission of the Food Bank for Westchester is to educate county residents, businesses, and government to create a hunger-free environment.

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