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THE 27TH ACTION AGAINST HUNGER® FOOD DRIVE NEEDS NONPERISHABLE ITEMS TO HELP STOCK PANTRY SHELVES

— *One in 10 New Jersey Residents Live at Poverty Level* —

WOODLAND PARK, N.J. — Sept. 21, 2018 — The Action Against Hunger® Food Drive is scheduled to be held on Sunday, September 30, 2018, from noon and 4 p.m. throughout North Jersey. Coming off the summer months where donations are at their lowest point, pantries are stretched and in need of contributions to restock their shelves so that they can provide help for those in need. This year donations will be accepted at more than 80 locations throughout northern New Jersey.

The lead local emergency food pantries that will receive and distribute the food packages include: Center for Food Action, Bergen County; CUMAC/ECHO, Passaic County; MEND, Essex County; and the Interfaith Food Pantry, Morris County.



“While there is good news from the Census Data that New Jerseyans fared slightly better in 2017, reporters at *The Record* recently cautioned “that poverty and inequality remain and New Jersey still has significant economic hurdles to overcome.” said Jennifer Borg, President of the Foundation of Northern New Jersey Inc. (formerly known as North Jersey Media Group Foundation).

In the September 16, 2018 article [New Jersey is rich and getting richer. But lots of poverty remains.](#) *The Record* reported “One in 10 state residents — and one in seven children — lives in poverty, and the state remains one of the most expensive to live in, with homeownership costs that lead the nation. Moreover, the improvement in 2017 was not uniform. Overall wages failed to grow after accounting for inflation, while income growth was uneven and the chasm of income inequality between rich and poor barely changed.”

With help from donors, the food drive helps feed thousands of families throughout Bergen, Essex, Passaic and Morris counties, and ensures that the pantries continue nutrition and health education-related programs specifically for those who need it most -- seniors, children, and the infirm.

Cash Donations

Cash donations are the backbone of this effort, as pantries can stretch the dollar more than individuals can. Donations can be made online at ActionAgainstHunger.com or mailed to Action Against Hunger, P.O. Box 75, Hackensack, NJ 07602-0075. For more information about the drive, drop-off sites and how you can help, please visit the [website](#) or call 973-305-8326.

Most-needed Nonperishable Items

Food items that can be donated on Sept. 30 include: nonperishable, foods such as canned vegetables, meats, fish and fruits; hearty soups and stews; pasta; white and brown rice; peanut butter; enriched cereals; oatmeal; pancake mix; powdered or evaporated milk; 100 percent fruit juice; baby formula; and low-sugar and low-sodium foods for those with special dietary needs.

Action Against Hunger is administered by The Record. Sponsors include 1010 WINS, Acme, Foodtown, The Record, Kings, ShopRite and Stop&Shop.

Sidebar:

Food drive helps individuals and families on a grassroots level overcome food scarcity issues, and provide healthy options, and other solutions that help relieve hunger. Here are ways that the pantries are helping with food and beyond.

Bergen County: Center for Food Action

“The food and funds collected during the Action Against Hunger Food Drive are essential to our ability to continue to provide food to our neighbors in need. Although emergency food is at the core of our mission, [Center for Food Action](#) understands that low-income families and individuals often need a variety of other services to help them get back on their feet, and we are addressing these needs constantly to help all our clients,” said Jennifer Johnson, Director, Communications and Community Relations, CFA. “Because seniors represent our fastest-growing demographic, CFA is developing special senior packages for distribution — for example, special diabetic-friendly bags to address the growing number of clients suffering from diabetes. Other CFA programs include: our Homelessness Prevention Program, to keep families and individuals in their homes; the Weekend Snack Pack program, to provide food to children on the weekends when free and reduced-price school meals are unavailable; the Community Garden Program, to increase our ability to add fresh vegetables to our food packages; the Smile Pack Program, to provide dental-care products to low-income children; and our statewide work through the New Jersey Anti-Hunger Coalition to advocate for statewide programs that help low-income families and individuals.”

Passaic County: CUMAC

"In 2017, [CUMAC's](#) flagship program, its food pantry, served monthly groceries to 30,586 individuals. In 2018 we are continuing to see that we will be exceeding those numbers as we move to also distribute fresh fruits, vegetables, and bread daily along with monthly groceries. The 2018 Action Against Hunger Food Drive where non-perishable/canned staples are collected complements CUMAC and comes at a critical inflection point as we look towards aiding in creating healthier and more full meals for the individuals and families who we are serving,” said Mark Dinglasan, Executive Director, CUMAC. “Feeding people is about giving people food, but ending hunger is about providing support that educates and empowers others. Such a lofty vision is only possible when great people come together and the Action Against Hunger Food Drive is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished when great people and organizations come together. We are grateful to all of our grocery store and community partners for their

participation in this drive, and we are excited to be working with the Foundation of Northern New Jersey Inc. once again for this effort."

Essex County: MEND

"Community food drives like the Action Against Hunger event are essential to our operations. [Meeting Essential Needs with Dignity](#) (MEND/CCANNJ) strengthens and supports a network of 17 food pantries located throughout Essex County, NJ, by providing them with supplemental food, funds, volunteers, and a monthly forum for collaboration. MEND recently launched a new mobile food pantry, *The Green Bean*, to increase its pantries' ability to access and provide more fresh and healthy food and other needed items to our patrons," said Robin Peacock, Executive Director, MEND. "Participating in The Action Against Hunger Food Drive helps us fill our pantries' shelves with much-needed food. As the number of people our pantries serve continues to grow, engaging local communities to support our efforts through events like this helps us do even more for our neighbors in need."

Morris County: Interfaith Food Pantry and Resource Center

"It is sometimes difficult to believe that there are so many people quietly struggling to provide enough food to meet their family's needs right here in our own communities. In 2017, the [Interfaith Food Pantry and Resource Center](#) distributed well over 1.13 million pounds of food to Morris County residents in need during close to 19,000 visits to one of our distribution sites or by our Healthy Choices Mobile Pantry," said Carolyn Lake, Associate Director, Interfaith Food Pantry. "Since nearly 60% of the food we distribute comes from the public, The Action Against Hunger Food Drive plays a key role in filling our shelves with the shelf-stable food we regularly need, which enables us to supplement this food with other items such as fresh fruits and vegetables, "rescued" frozen meats and prepared foods, bread, dairy and other "extras". We distribute healthy, fresh produce through our Healthy Choices Mobile Pantry, visiting smaller food pantries and low-income senior housing units throughout the county, and offer "Free Farmers Markets" to those visiting our distribution sites. The Action Against Hunger Food Drive provides us with the key items we need to keep the shelves stocked and ensure all county residents, young, old and in-between have access to enough food to stay healthy."