



## Wrapping Up an Impactful Year

Final Green Bean Events,  
our Annual Appeal,  
and Addressing Senior  
Hunger

Thank You for Your Continued  
Support!

### Green Bean Update

[Kent Place School](#) (KPS) recently hosted a "Stuff the Bean" event to benefit MEND.

After hearing from MEND Executive Director Robin Peacock about how MEND helps support its food pantry network, members of the KPS Community Service Committee collected, sorted, and loaded donated food into the bus. The food will benefit the OLS Food Pantry in South Orange.

Next, [JLOSH](#) and MEND partnered for the [Orange Public School District's](#) first annual Parent Conference on December 1st. There, JLOSH volunteers engaged the kids in activities and crafts - including a *Green Bean* scavenger hunt - while parents attended workshops on topics like, "how to build a home library," and "social emotional learning." 75 families received bags of fresh produce to take home after the event.

## What's Next?

For our last event of the year, we will head to the First Hopewell Baptist Church Food Pantry in Newark on December 19th to distribute bags of fresh produce and extra roaster chickens at the pantry's holiday distribution event.

## Want to Help?

We have a few more volunteer slots for December 18th (to shop) and 19th (to distribute). Sign up now!

[Volunteer with MEND](#)

Are you interested in seeing what goes on behind the scenes? Join a MEND committee!

We are working on lots of ideas for 2019 and beyond, and are building our Programming and Outreach,

Development, and Communications committees now. We would love you to volunteer with us!

**Yes, I'd like to help MEND behind the scenes!**







## Other Opportunities

Some of our member pantries also have hands-on volunteer opportunities this month.

OLS's Holiday Distribution is Saturday,

December 15th, and IFPO's Holiday Distribution is Wednesday, December 19th. Both are accepting food and financial donations, as well.

[Volunteer with OLS](#)

[Volunteer with IFPO](#)

## Donate to our 2018 Annual Appeal!

With your help, we kicked off our annual appeal on #GivingTuesday by raising funds to provide each of our member pantries with \$175 worth of grocery store gift cards for holiday meals for their patrons. Thanks to all who donated to the cause!

But there's more work to be done, and we invite you to join our efforts.

Making a gift to MEND will help support and strengthen our member pantries by:

- helping us expand our *Healthy Pantries, Healthy Patrons* program, the goal of which is to get more and better food to those in need, *because having access to fresh and healthy food should not be considered a "luxury;"*
- helping our member pantries serve their growing numbers of patrons -

*they are on track to feed more people than ever before, and need additional financial and other support to keep up with this demand; and*

- *allowing more pantries to join our hunger relief network, so that they may collaborate with one another to make a greater impact on the communities they serve.*

Please consider a gift to our annual appeal, because our pantries can't do it alone!

Your support will help a food pantry manager buy a new refrigerator to replace one that is broken, purchase fresh and healthy food for patrons to complement what was received from traditional food drives, and have extra funds to rent a truck to transport needed food in bulk.

Every donation helps - no matter the size. Join our efforts to get more nutritious food throughout our food pantry network by donating to our annual appeal.

**Donate now to feed our  
neighbors in need!**

Thank you for your support!







At our monthly Advisory Board meetings, we discuss common challenges faced by our pantries and their patrons, and ways that MEND can help. Photo credit: [Naki Studios](#)



## Addressing Senior Hunger

On an October morning, six volunteers from the St. Joseph's Church food pantry in Maplewood packed their trunks with grocery bags and caravanned a few blocks to Nora Gardens, an affordable apartment building for seniors.

Inside, they scattered, announcing themselves with cheerful knocks as they left bags filled with staples – pasta and sauce, soup and beans – for residents in the building.

The door-to-door delivery has long been part of the pantry's program, serving roughly 55 seniors each month.

“The need has always been there,” said Don Blaesser, who co-founded the pantry in 1999 with his wife Lynne.

According to Feeding America, a network of food pantries across the U.S, more than five million people over the age of 60 struggle with food insecurity. Since 2001, the rate of hunger among this population has increased by 45 percent.

[Learn more about how MEND pantries address senior hunger](#)



Save the Date!

We are planning our annual spring fundraiser - *The Green Bean Gala!* Scheduled for Saturday, March 9th, this event will feature lively music and dancing, fun tasting stations, auctions, and more!

Named for our school-bus-turned-mobile-pantry, funds raised will help strengthen and support our Essex County food pantry network, and provide more fresh and healthy food to our neighbors in need.

Please [visit our website](#) or [email us](#) to learn more!



**MEND**  
Hunger Relief Network  
*Together, we feed our community.*

GREEN BEAN  
**2019 GALA**

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FOOD · MUSIC · AUCTIONS

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**THE WOODLAND**  
MAPLEWOOD, NJ

SATURDAY | **3.9.19**

**Sponsor this event!**



# Happy Holidays from MEND!



MEND

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