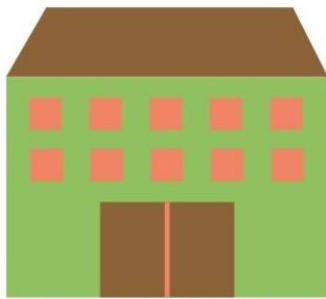

Your 2023 (and Beyond) Impact!

Robin <Robin@mendnj.org>
Reply-To: Robin@mendnj.org
To: Alicia Harrison <alicia@mendnj.org>

Wed, Jan 31, 2024 at 12:55 PM



46 COMMUNITY PARTNERS!



4k+ HOME DELIVERIES!



111 MOBILE MARKETS!

Alicia,

In 2023, you increased access to fresh and healthy food for **over 480,000 people** across 46 community partners! That's 7,000 more people per month who found support through the MEND network, compared to 2022.

With your help, this year MEND will continue to enhance and expand its current programs, launch and lead the Food & Health Equity Coalition of Essex County, and invest in needed infrastructure and staffing.

Thank you for all you do in support of MEND's mission, and [please reach out](#) if you'd like to discuss this work further!

Robin Peacock
Executive Director

MEND Network News



Responsive Programming that Can't be B-e-e-t!

At the December mobile market for the **Maplewood Senior Apartments**, a senior housing center where many residents are of Polish, Russian or Ukranian heritage, marketgoers were delighted to receive two key ingredients (beets and sour cream) for making beet salad, a favorite dish!



New Mobile Market Partner

MEND recently added **Augusta Preschool Academy** as a mobile market partner, and hosted its first free farmers market, providing over 80 families with fresh produce, including mangoes, avocados, oranges, apples, zucchini, broccoli, onions, potatoes, and applesauce!

This collaboration marks MEND's first partnership within the Irvington School District.



A Tradition Continues

For over thirty years, MEND pantry managers have gathered in January to kick off the new year with their Annual Prayer Service.

A former police officer who volunteers regularly for Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in West Orange spoke about how the work affects him personally:

"In my career I saw a lot of the worst [behavior] of people. This [volunteering] lets me see the best of people. It's very healing."

Sister Linda Klaiss, pantry manager at Pierre Toussaint pantry in Newark spoke about the blessing of being part of a network: "Many pantries operate individually. It's wonderful to be... reminded that we are not alone in this work."

Two Unique Ways to Support MEND this Winter!

Maplewood Chili Cookoff

This Maplewood Chili Cookoff returns to The Woodland on **Sunday, February 25th** from **2 - 5:30 pm**. Compete for the title of Top Chili Chef, and/or purchase a ticket and vote with your tastebuds! [Ticket sales begin Thursday February 1, 2024!](#) Event proceeds benefit MEND.

Sponsor the Chili Cookoff Today!



For Your Valentine

Stop & Shop (located at [407 Valley Street, South Orange](#)), will donate \$1 to MEND for each specially marked \$10.99 *Bloomin' 4 Good* bouquet sold during the month of February.

Buy a bouquet and send some love MEND's way!



Advocacy & Impact

Free School Lunch Program to Expand in New Jersey



A new law marks the second expansion of the free school meals program in New Jersey. The law now makes families of four who earn up to \$67,200 eligible for free school breakfast and lunch programs. Private school students will be eligible for the programs for the first time. The law will go into effect for the school year starting in September 2024. [Read more here.](#)

Coalition Formed to Advance Health Equity

MEND is the backbone organization for the newly-formed **Food & Health Equity Coalition (FHEC) of Essex County**. The mission of the Coalition is to increase and improve food access, security, and sovereignty through collaboration, advocacy, education, and coordination of resources.

The Coalition will host its kickoff meeting on Thursday, February 1st. Representatives from over 50 organizations, representing government, academia, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, healthcare, and more, are expected to attend!

This initiative is funded in part by [The Grotta Fund for Older Adults](#).



Additional information can be found [here](#) or by emailing FHECESsex@mendnj.org.

MEND Impact Snapshot

2023 marked the second full year of "MEND on the Move," a program designed to increase access to fresh and healthy food through monthly mobile markets and bi-weekly home deliveries - coordinated with 25 community partners. Your generosity allows this program to continue to grow and evolve; last year, nearly 80,000 servings of fresh food were provided to program participants! Thank You!!

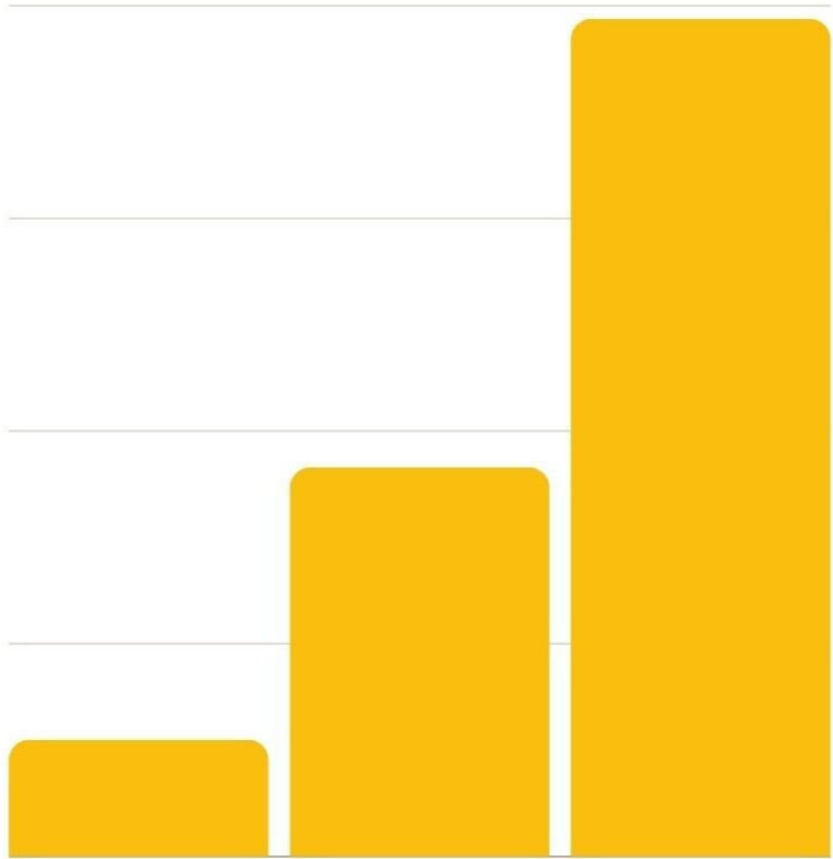
Total Servings

80,000

60,000

40,000

20,000



2021 2022 2023

Volunteer in the New Year!

Join the Volunteer Fun! Sort and pack produce, set up and manage a mobile market, or deliver food to a pantry!

Sign Me Up!



MEND extends its gratitude to the many corporations and foundations making a commitment to healthy hunger relief in Essex County, NJ. Your consistent support allows MEND to provide the highest quality fresh food and produce to all those seeking supplemental food assistance throughout the MEND network.

The Able Baker
Albertsons
Amazon in the Community
Baillie Gifford
CBIZ
City of Newark: *Nourishing Newark Grants Program*
Columbia Bank Foundation
Community FoodBank of New Jersey
Community Health Connections Foundation, Inc.
Community Offshore Wind
Conway Family Foundation
The Deerfield Partnership Foundation
Elevate to Even Plus, Inc.
Fraentzel Foundation
G.L. Engineering
Gourmet Foods International
Hamstra Charitable Foundation
Healthcare Foundation of NJ

Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Metrowest NJ:
Grotta Fund for Older Adults
The Knight Family Charitable Foundation Inc.
L&M Development Partners Inc.
Long Arc Foundation
Orange Orphan Society
Provident Bank Foundation
PSEG Foundation
The Reitman Foundation
Rockefeller Capital Management
Schumann Fund
Sisters of Saint Joseph
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Stop & Shop Supermarket
The Tepper Foundation
The Wawa Foundation
The Wood Foundation
Tito's Handmade Vodka
Verizon Foundation
Worthy Management, Inc.

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