

A COMMUNITY UNITED: INTRODUCING EL MERCADITO MAYOR

WHEN THE SCHOOL DAY ENDS, WE MAKE SURE HUNGER DOESN'T BEGIN

Feeding Westchester is proud to celebrate the grand opening of El Mercadito Mayor, “The Great Little Market”! This new, in-school pantry at Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community School — launched in partnership with Yonkers Public Schools — is made possible entirely by the collective will of neighbors, educators, and advocates who refuse to let children go hungry.

Every child who attends Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community School deserves to learn on a full stomach. Every family in this community deserves access to nutritious food with dignity. By embedding this resource directly within the school, families can obtain support in a familiar, trusted, and welcoming space.



When a community comes together with a shared purpose, the results can be transformative.

FOOD INSECURITY IS A PROBLEM THAT COMMUNITIES CAN SOLVE.

Yonkers is New York State’s third-largest city, and home to thousands of hardworking families that face the daily reality of food insecurity — a challenge that does not pause for the school year. For many students, school meals are a lifeline, and the market’s impact was immediate: during its very first distribution on April 9, El Mercadito Mayor served 70-plus households.

El Mercadito Mayor is also a milestone in a broader mission. Made possible through the

generous support of the Phelps Community Foundation, this is the fourth in-school pantry that Feeding Westchester has opened in Yonkers since 2025 — a remarkable expansion that’s reshaping how local families access nutritious food.

During this Hunger Action Month, we invite you to reflect on the difference you can make. Food insecurity is not inevitable. It’s a problem that communities can solve. El Mercadito Mayor is proof of that. And we’re just getting started!

Together, we are Feeding Westchester! 🍌

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these stories!*

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**\$1 HELPS
PROVIDE
2 MEALS!**



LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friend,

Fall is upon us, and of course that means the beginning of a new school year. Although that makes many people think of new notebooks, pencils, and schedules, *our* thoughts turn to nutrition, lunches, and energy.

Kids need every possible advantage to focus on their learning, and if proper nutrition is not available, school can be a challenge for them and their families. We're so grateful for the continued support of free meals at school — and for your generosity, which allows us to ensure that students have access to healthy food at home, too.

In this issue, you'll meet two energetic kids, Gianna and Jalissa, whose families count on their local food banks to provide them with proper nutrition. You'll also read about how friends like you inspired Ricky, a dedicated volunteer, to pay your compassion forward.

We're celebrating the grand opening of a new in-school pantry as well. El Mercadito Mayor is an exciting collaboration between Feeding Westchester and Yonkers Public Schools.

Finally, September is Hunger Action Month. There's no better time to stand with us, and our neighbors, to help end hunger across Westchester County.

Thank you for your incredible support! Westchester kids and families couldn't do this without you.

Kristine Borok
President and Chief Executive Officer

GIANNA IS FUELED FOR SCHOOL, BECAUSE OF YOU

YOU HELP CHILDREN STAY NOURISHED AS THEY PREPARE FOR SCHOOL

Children need lots of healthy food to keep them growing, playing, and learning.

With your help, we can fuel children like 10-year-old Gianna. She's starting to feel the excitement of the upcoming school year. But for now, she's spending the last of her summer days at the park, surrounded by friends and enjoying fresh, balanced lunches from her local food pantry.

"This one comes with blueberries, yogurt, and little granola packets," she says, pointing to the meal in front of her. "I like these and the ones with strawberries."

Instead of worrying about where her next meal will come from, Gianna feels carefree. And she's so grateful for the food her local pantry provides, noting that without it, she probably wouldn't have had access to fresh food at all this summer.



Thanks to you, Gianna is heading back to school feeling confident and nourished.

Your gifts give children like Gianna the energy they need to run on the playground, and the brainpower they need to stay sharp in school.

Your commitment ensures that children are ready to take on the new school year ahead! Thank you for building a stronger, healthier future for Gianna and so many others. 🍌

YOU HELP KIDS SETTLE BACK INTO SCHOOL ROUTINES

*THANK YOU FOR ADDRESSING
HUNGER IN AND OUT OF
THE CLASSROOM!*

*Students like Jalissa will soon be
working hard in the classroom.
They'll need nutritious food to stay
focused and ready to learn.*



It's nearly back-to-school season — a time of big changes and new routines. Sadly, for so many of our Westchester children and families, hunger is part of that routine.

We all have an easier time of focusing and doing our best when we have access to plenty of nutritious food.

***“I FEEL GOOD WHEN
I GET THIS FOOD.”***

That's why your generosity is especially important to children like 9-year-old Jalissa, who will soon be headed back to the classroom.

She's sitting on a picnic bench at her nearby community center, enjoying a nutritious boxed lunch. Today's box is filled with yogurt, fresh

fruit, and milk — all provided through her local food bank.

Jalissa is wise beyond her years. She wants friends like you to know that she doesn't take this meal for granted.

“I feel good when I get this food,” she says. “It reminds me that there are other people who don't have food. [They're] giving us food, and that makes me happy.”

Because of you, children like Jalissa will return to school soon feeling nourished, focused, and ready to learn. That makes us pretty happy, too!

When children like Jalissa have nutritious food, you give them the fuel they need to thrive and simply be kids. You also show families and neighbors that they are not alone. Thank you for your continued support. 🍌

THIS OCTOBER, FIGHT HUNGER THROUGH A DONOR-ADVISED FUND



Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs) allow donors to receive a tax deduction immediately, then recommend donations to nonprofits such as Feeding Westchester over time. Come join this movement of intentional, tax-smart giving, and make your impact even greater by donating through your DAF on DAF Day — Thursday, October 8 — to help Feeding Westchester provide even more meals to our neighbors in need. **If you have questions, contact Martine Campoli, Director of Individual Giving, at mcampoli@feedingwestchester.org or 914.398.6094. Learn more at FeedingWestchester.org/DAF.**

YOU AND RICKY ARE SERVING UP SMILES!

HE SEES THE IMPACT OF YOUR SUPPORT EVERY DAY

"Volunteering is my way of paying it back."



Ricky is a silly-sock kind of guy, always showcasing a fun pair of socks to help bring a smile to peoples' faces.

He and his silly socks have been a fixture at his local food bank, where he's been volunteering for about 20 years. Being a part of this important work means so much to Ricky because while he was growing up, the pantry was a lifeline for his family.

"I grew up with a single mom who fought and survived domestic violence," he says. "As a kid, [visiting the pantry] meant a lot to me and my brother because we just didn't have a lot of food. When we saw the fridge filled ... we knew we would be happy for another week."

The food bank left a lasting impression into his young adulthood. After graduating from high school, Ricky attended college in an electrical engineering program. That's also when he decided to start volunteering.

Now, nearly two decades later, Ricky's still serving up smiles and nourishing meals to neighbors in need — and he's not planning on stopping anytime soon.

"I needed the pantries growing up. It's what made my mom feel safe, and now I volunteer to help make sure other people feel the same exact way," he says. "Volunteering is my way of paying it back."

We're grateful to volunteers like Ricky — and generous friends like you — who want to help our neighbors thrive. Thank you! 🍌

SEE YOUR IMPACT

April 2025 – March 2026



Neighbor visits,
monthly average

224,000



Child visits, monthly average,
through pantries, deliveries,
and school programs

74,000



Pounds of fresh
produce distributed

7.8 MILLION



Number of
meals distributed

16.8 MILLION



Retail recovery
(pounds recovered)

5.3 MILLION

GIVE MONTHLY. BECOME A NOURISHING NEIGHBOR!

Nourishing Neighbors is Feeding Westchester's dedicated community of recurring donors who provide year-round, sustainable support for neighbors facing hunger.

The fight against hunger has no seasonality. As a Nourishing Neighbor, you can help us provide nutritious food all year long. A monthly gift of just \$30 can provide two meals a day to a neighbor in need. **To learn about becoming a Nourishing Neighbor, simply scan the QR code to the right or visit feedingwestchester.org/donate-monthly.**

Consider making a recurring gift today. Your ongoing support sustains our mission.



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