

more to  
**share**  
summer 2020



MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING  
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## a message from the president

Dear Friends,

As I write to you, there's no shortage of unknowns. Will there be more waves of this pandemic? What will the upcoming school year look like? When will our economy recover? When will many in our community be able to return to work?

But in the midst of these questions, I keep coming back to a singular fact: your generosity is second to none. Looking back on the past few months, there is absolutely no way we could have made it through without your kindness, compassion and willingness to step up and say, "I'll help."

Many of you are fighting your own battles related to COVID-19, and yet you've committed to helping others in need. I'm here to tell you it's making an incredible difference.

As this pandemic spread, we saw a 20 percent drop in our volunteer base. That's a devastating blow when you consider how much our volunteers contribute to our work. But just as quickly, we witnessed an influx of 2,500 new volunteers!

They couldn't have come at a better time. Across the board, our programs have increased their service anywhere from 50-60 percent. Our community is facing hunger like never before and your partnership makes it possible to be there with nutritious food.

I hope you take the opportunity to read the stories on the following pages. Those we serve are incredibly grateful for you, especially during these challenging days. You're giving neighbors like Charlotte (page 7) nutritious meals — and one more smile each day.

We truly don't know what the future holds, but I have hope because friends like you continue to show up, continue to give and continue to care. Thank you!

Warmly,

Tara A. Ellis  
President & CEO

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## college student thanks you

Collin, 23, has big dreams for a future as an animator — and he's thanking you for helping fuel that dream with nutritious food.

"It's definitely provided me with the ability to take opportunities that I have presented to me a lot more readily," Collin says.

Collin, now a senior at Villa Maria College, recalls his sophomore year when he decided to fully commit to achieving his college and career goals. He became a full-time student, but giving everything he had in order to finish college was hard on his budget. In fact, he began to struggle to afford food. That's when he started visiting Sister Mary Josette Food Pantry, a partner agency of FeedMore WNY.

**"it makes me feel very, very lucky. i couldn't ask for more"**

Collin says the food he receives from the pantry allows him to supplement the groceries he can buy. And because he enjoys cooking, he says he can stretch the food he receives from the pantry to last at least a week.



Collin

"For the most part, I try to cook all of my own food," he says. "I try to eat as healthy as possible."

After graduation, Collin plans to drive to California to fully pursue his dream of being a cartoon animator. But right now, he wants you to know how grateful he is for the gift of nutritious food.

"Because I'm a student...it makes me feel very lucky. I couldn't ask for more."

With each gift you give, you're making more dreams possible for countless students like Collin. Thank you!



**you give  
hope to  
your neighbors  
in need!**

**animeals helps neighbors  
feed their pets**

Many of our vulnerable neighbors who receive home-delivered meals live alone and rely on the companionship of their pets to provide comfort and friendship. In fact, some of our clients choose between feeding themselves or feeding their pets, compromising their own health in order to provide for their companions. FeedMore WNY supports home-delivered meal clients with companions through our AniMeals program. On average, the AniMeals program feeds 100 pets per month. This program solely relies on pet food donations and designated gifts in order to continue to

provide this program to our clients and their pets. Please consider giving today to support this program by calling Liz Lucas at (716) 822-2005 ext. 3090. Thank you for your support!

**feedmore wny  
community garden**

FeedMore WNY's Community Garden, our garden in memory of J. Milton "Zeke" Zeckhauser, is a space for community members to learn to grow their own produce through garden and nutrition workshops, education and hands-on experience. The space also provides fresh, locally-grown produce to our partner agencies and clients.

FeedMore requires pre-registration to work in the garden and access is limited to FeedMore staff and registered volunteers. Volunteers are being scheduled for 2-hour shifts on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays and opportunities include assisting with watering, weeding, harvesting and general maintenance.

If you would like to volunteer in the community garden, or harvest from the garden, please visit our website at <https://www.feedmorewny.org/get-involved/volunteer/> or contact Marla Ryan by email at [mryan@feedmorewny.org](mailto:mryan@feedmorewny.org) or by phone at (716)822-2005 ext. 3091.



Jay

## volunteer urges: “now is the time”

When Jay Marks’ work as a theatre technician was put on hold in March due to the pandemic, he turned an extreme difficulty into a special opportunity to serve his community.

“Now is the time to do what you said you’d do before,” Jay says of volunteering during the pandemic.

While he’s not working, Jay is available to volunteer with FeedMore six days a week, and he typically puts in around eight hours each day. Though he helps in numerous capacities, he says his favorite time is spent at food distributions.

“It’s great to know that you’re impacting someone’s life,” he says. “There are days that I think ‘Today I’ll take off,’ but then I think ‘If I don’t go, someone may not eat tonight.’”

Jay says he knows some people may have concerns about volunteering during the pandemic, but he is confident in FeedMore’s careful attention to keeping volunteers, staff and clients as safe as possible.

**“of all of the times we’ve said: ‘i don’t have time,’ now is the time.”**

“There are rules out there to keep us safe so we can keep serving people,” he says.

And that’s exactly what Jay plans to keep doing as long as time allows.

“I don’t have the finances to give \$1,000, but I [can give] with my labor because that’s all I’ve got,” he says. “Of all of the times we’ve said, ‘I don’t have the time,’ now is the time.”

Thank you, Jay, and all the faithful volunteers who help make sure our neighbors in need have nutritious food on their tables. You’re making an incredible difference!

The Hunger Heroes Club is a monthly giving program that allows you to easily assist FeedMore WNY Foundation year-round with regular monthly donations from your credit card, debit card, checking or savings account. Your ongoing support will help FeedMore WNY Foundation plan for the year ahead, budgeting and allocating resources to make sure our clients have consistent access to nutritious foods. To learn more about our Hunger Heroes Club, please contact Strategic Gifts Director Elizabeth Lucas at (716) 822-2005 ext.3090 or [elucas@feedmorewny.org](mailto:elucas@feedmorewny.org).

## you brighten charlotte’s days

Charlotte, 81, tries to do something each day that will make her smile when she goes to bed. And since March, she has a little something more to brighten her day: nutritious meals and a friendly face smiling back at her.

“I’m grateful there is someone who makes my day positive,” she says.

**“i’ve always been treated like an old friend; they’re so nice to me.”**

Charlotte has lived alone ever since her husband passed away two years ago. She still has a car but has since stopped driving it due to safety concerns. That made grocery shopping challenging, but she managed it with help — until the pandemic hit.

That’s when Charlotte started receiving home-delivered meals thanks to your gifts to FeedMore WNY.

“I know they have a lot of people they send meals to and I don’t know how they do it, but they do it,” she says, cheerfully. “I’ve always been treated like an old friend; they’re so nice to me.”

For Charlotte, the food she receives and the kindness she’s shown are both gifts she doesn’t take lightly — so much so that

she’s even looking forward to giving back when it’s possible.

“I’m feeling really well right now,” she says. “I would like to volunteer with FeedMore once we go back to our new normal.”

Charlotte wanted to be sure you know how grateful she is for your gifts to FeedMore WNY and the

positive effect it has in her life each day.

“Thank you for what you do,” she says to donors like you.

At FeedMore WNY, we echo Charlotte and thank you for giving so generously on behalf of your neighbors in need.



Charlotte

# you're feeding all generations

Your generosity is making a lasting difference for three generations of women in Sheila's family — she wants you to know how much they appreciate you!

“You help provide nutritious meals that will last the month,” Sheila says.

Sheila, 54, began receiving food from a FeedMore WNY Partner Agency about a year ago. She drove buses for 15 years before tendonitis and knee problems led to her early retirement.

Sheila receives Social Security Disability benefits, but only \$42 worth of SNAP benefits each month. Her granddaughter, Janiya, 18, lives with her and she's a full-time student at Villa Maria College.

**“everyone appreciates you.”**

Janiya also receives a small amount of help through SNAP, but once rent is paid, there's little money left for bills and groceries. Thankfully, your gifts are there to help.

“We get plenty of food,” Sheila says of her twice-monthly trips to the food pantry.

Sheila says she plans meals around the food she receives from the pantry, and she's especially thankful for the meat, veggies and pasta she gets there.

And Sheila also has the assurance that her mother is getting the nutritious food she needs. Sheila's mother, Loria, 88, lives upstairs from her daughter and receives two balanced, home-delivered meals each day through your gifts to FeedMore.

“Everyone appreciates you,” Sheila says, speaking on behalf of herself, Janiya and Loria.

When you give to FeedMore WNY, you make sure that nourishing food is available for every generation across Western New York. Thank you for sharing what you have with those in need!



Sheila