



WEST SIDE  
CAMPAIGN AGAINST HUNGER

# ANNUAL REPORT



FISCAL YEAR  
**2023**

JULY 1, 2022 –  
JUNE 30, 2023





## LETTER FROM CEO & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY SILVERMAN

Dear friends and supporters,

For 44 years, West Side Campaign Against Hunger (WSCAH) has been leading change across the emergency feeding sector, consistently pushing boundaries and advocating for systemic improvements. Our mission is to alleviate hunger by ensuring that all New Yorkers have access with dignity to a choice of healthy food and supportive services.

In the last year, WSCAH continued to reach tens of thousands of New Yorkers in need. Our city-wide network, with 30 food access points and a growing home delivery program, served over 123,000 distributions of healthy groceries. In total, we provided 3.9 million pounds of food, 55% of which was fresh produce. Despite historic slowdowns in city processing of benefits, we connected more than 1,000 families to vital supports, including over \$2.2 million in SNAP (formerly food stamps) assistance.

WSCAH remains steadfast in our commitment to making healthy food and benefits enrollment accessible in the neighborhoods where our customers live. But this is not enough. We continue to pursue innovative initiatives through collaboration, research, and advocacy efforts intended to improve the system itself.



**Our partnership with NewYork-Presbyterian (NYP) is yielding groundbreaking research** on the impacts of WSCAH's food distribution on the health of our customers.



**We are advocating at both city and state levels** through written and oral testimony, elected official site visits, and constant engagement with key agencies to push for a more equitable, healthy, and sustainable emergency feeding system.



**Our leadership and collaboration through the Roundtable: Allies for Food Access** is increasing the impact, reach, and resiliency of emergency feeding organizations across NYC.

These accomplishments would not be possible without the dedication of our incredible staff, supporters, volunteers, partners, community of customers, and everyone who is committed to nourishing hungry New Yorkers.

With gratitude,

**Chef Gregory Silverman**





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# WSCAH'S IMPACT



Distributed over **3.9 million** pounds of food through **123,000** household distributions of healthy groceries



**55%** of all food distributed was fresh produce

Helped customers access nearly **5,000** benefits including over **\$2.2 million** in SNAP benefits

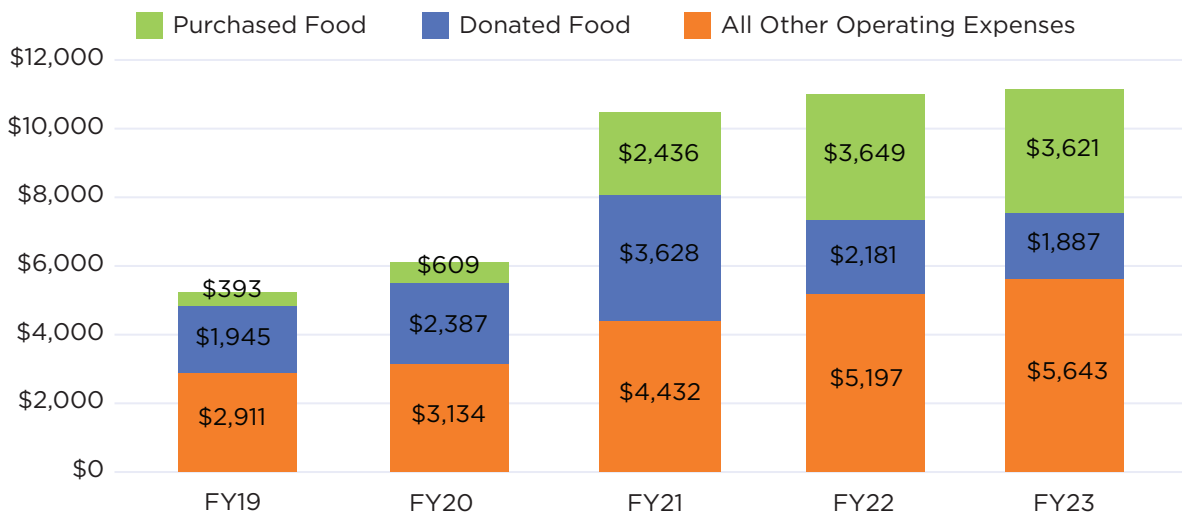


Engaged more than **2,000** volunteers who contributed nearly **20,000** hours of time



Served over **80,000** customers

## WSCAH 5 YEAR BUDGET GROWTH FY2019 - FY2023 (Thousands)



The information shown here was abstracted from WSCAH's audited financial statements for fiscal years 2019-2023. **Our fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. For purposes of the chart, FY19 is July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. All other listed fiscal years follow the same pattern.** Audited financial statements are on file at West Side Campaign Against Hunger, 263 west 86th Street, New York, NY 10024. A copy of the audited financial statement filed with the New York State Office of Charities Registration may be obtained on request from West Side Campaign Against Hunger or at [www.wscah.org](http://www.wscah.org).



# INNOVATIVE MODELS OF HEALTHY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

## Access to Healthy Food

WSCAH's food access program distributes USDA MyPlate balanced groceries across 30 distribution sites in Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens, and Brooklyn. We partner with community-based organizations such as schools, hospitals, and social service providers to ensure local food access in high need neighborhoods, and reduce travel time and cost for our customers.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are essential for a healthy lifestyle, and WSCAH is dedicated to making them readily available to our community. For this reason, at least 50% of all pounds of food we distribute are fresh produce.



*“WSCAH has provided an essential service to our families who have lost income and have to spend more on additional items.”*

**—Phipps Neighborhoods, WSCAH Community Partner**

## Digital Choice Pantry

We are stewarding new technologies and tactics designed to empower our customers, community distribution partners, and other emergency food providers. The aim of our Digital Choice Pantry is to allow customers to make decisions about food type and pick-up location from the convenience of their phones. This model supports enhanced food access, enabling customers to obtain healthy food closest to where they live. In FY2023, 846 families received food through the Digital Choice Pantry.

*“I receive my SNAP benefits early in the month and, because of high inflation, I use them up before the end of the month. I rely on the food box for the final weeks. It has been a very important part of my life.”*

**—Digital Choice participant**



## Healthcare Collaborations

WSCAH works with healthcare institutions that prescribe healthy food as a tool for reducing food insecurity and creating positive health outcomes. One of our longstanding collaborations is with NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP). Our Food FARMacy program in partnership with NYP provided 542 food insecure NYP patients with twice-monthly distributions of healthy food. NYP health care teams screen their patients for food insecurity and those who screen positive, and are pregnant, age 0-5 and/or 65+ with two or more emergency department visits in the past year, are enrolled in the Food FARMacy program.



## Home Delivery Program

Food FARMacy integrates with WSCAH's Digital Choice Pantry allowing customers to choose from a variety of box types, including a combination of produce, low-fat dairy, lean proteins, and grains. Those food boxes are delivered directly to their door.





# FY2023 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## TO TRULY FIGHT FOOD INSECURITY, THE WORK MUST BE A COMMUNITY COLLABORATION.

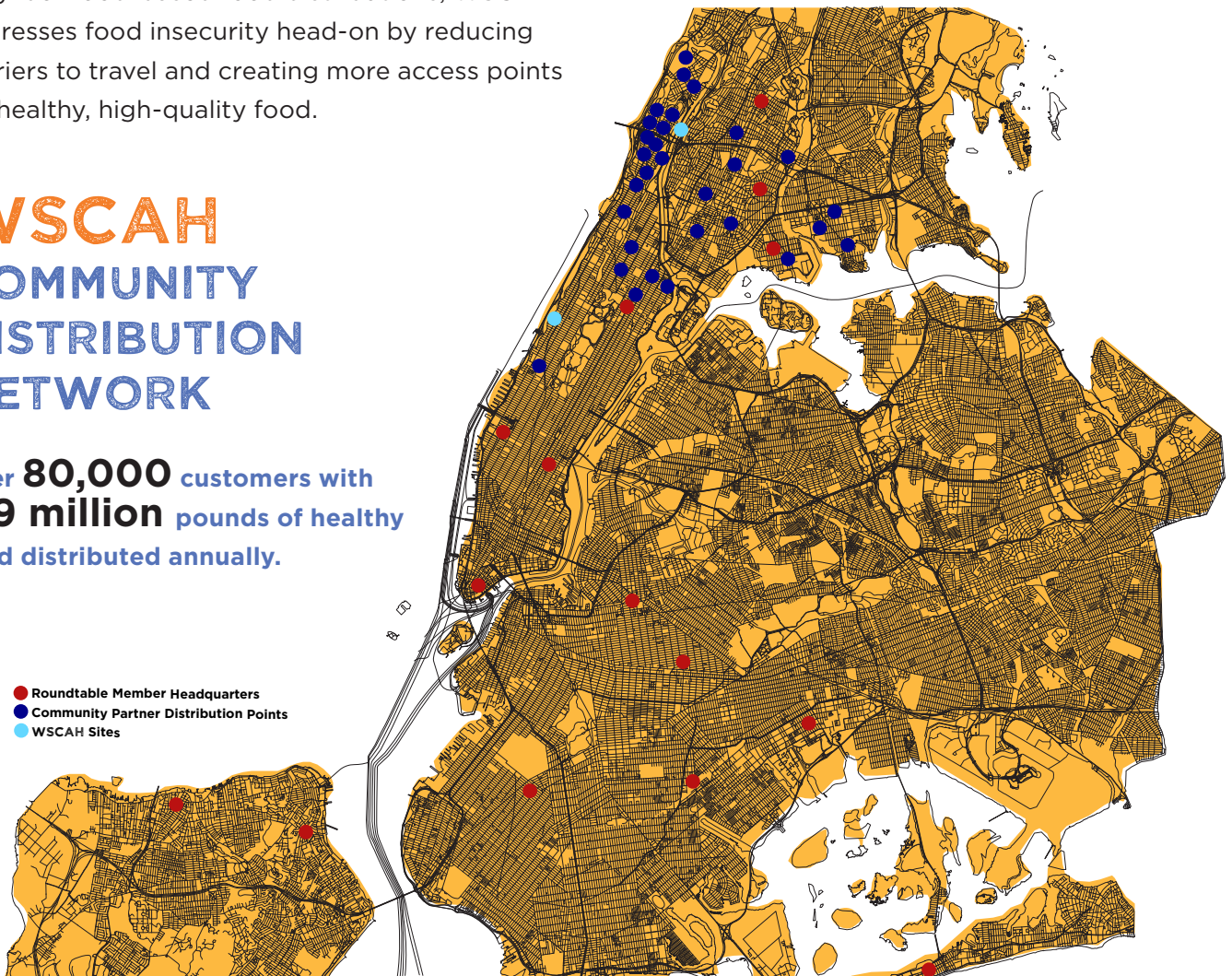
We partner with community-based organizations such as schools, hospitals, and social service providers to ensure local food access in high-need neighborhoods. WSCAH leverages the strengths of like-minded organizations that have trusted relationships with the community and have the organizational capacity to support a reliable and dignified food distribution for those who face barriers to accessing healthy food. By bringing food to people through community-driven, neighborhood-based food distributions, WSCAH addresses food insecurity head-on by reducing barriers to travel and creating more access points for healthy, high-quality food.

Many of our partners are part of the fabric of the neighborhood and have been serving the community for decades. Our partnership allows WSCAH to work alongside them to bring food and benefits to the heart of the areas where those resources are needed most.

### WSCAH COMMUNITY DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

Over **80,000** customers with **3.9 million** pounds of healthy food distributed annually.

- Roundtable Member Headquarters
- Community Partner Distribution Points
- WSCAH Sites







*In these trying times especially with inflation, WSCAH helps immensely to make ends meet.”*

**—WSCAH Customer**

*“This is my first time here, I came all the way from Brooklyn because a friend of mine told me about all the good food this pantry provides, I really love it and I am so thankful.”*

**—Patrick**



*“I love coming to WSCAH because the food here is very good and of very good quality. My favorite products they give are milk, vegetables, fruits and also proteins. Right now I don't have a job and I'm suffering from breast cancer so this food helps me a lot and I am very grateful for this service.”*

**—Andrea**



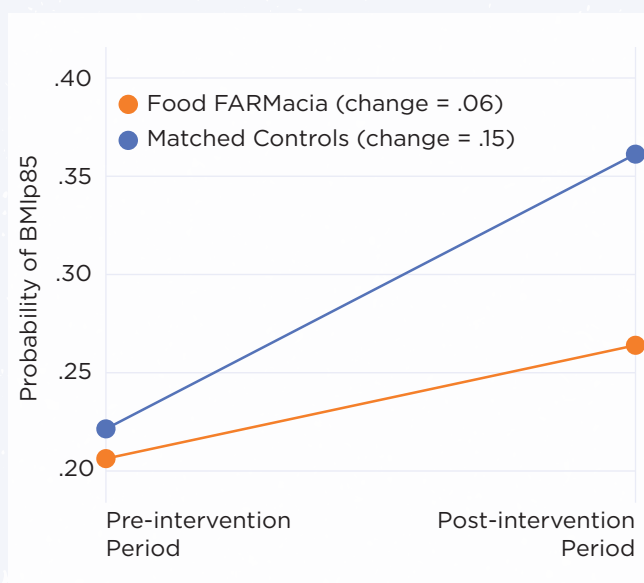
# RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

As WSCAH continues to push change across the emergency feeding sector, we have been strategic in collaborating with institutions that focus on documenting, researching, and evaluating programs that impact societal health. We are so proud to be a programmatic provider with NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) and Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC) as they study the impacts of healthy food distributions on NYP patients who are enrolled in our Food FARMacy Program. By FY2023 CUMC had already published two journal articles showcasing our collaborative efforts. The first, in *Nutrients* (March 2022), and the second during this fiscal year, in *Pediatric Obesity* (March 2023), demonstrated how the Food FARMacy program reduced food insecurity and improved childhood obesity risk factors like BMI.

## ***Pediatric Obesity: Association of a Primary Care-Based Mobile Food Pantry with Child Body Mass Index: A Propensity Score Matched Cohort Study***

This study demonstrated that the Food FARMacy program reduced food insecurity for participating patients and improved childhood obesity risk factors such as BMI (Body Mass Index). Participants had slower rates of BMI increase, and were less likely to be at the 85th percentile or higher, over a six-month period.

This ongoing research underscores the vital role of nutritious food distribution in improving health outcomes, contributing to the growing field of food as medicine. We're excited to continue this important work with NYP and CUMC, exploring how emergency food providers can positively impact health through quality food access.



Woo Baidal JA, Duong N, Goldsmith J, et al. Association of a primary care-based mobile food pantry with child body mass index: A propensity score matched cohort study. *Pediatric Obesity*. 2023;e13023. doi:10.1111/ijpo.13023



This research is enabling WSCAH to assess the effectiveness of our programs through data-driven analysis while providing valuable insights into the health and food needs of the communities we serve. By researching the health impacts of our interventions, we gain a deeper understanding of their connection between our work and health outcomes, enhancing the effectiveness of our healthy food access programs.

In addition, this research is helping us to advocate for policy changes and increased support for WSCAH and our colleagues in the emergency feeding space, by providing evidence-based data demonstrating our impact.



# THE ROUNDTABLE

ALLIES FOR FOOD ACCESS



HOLY APOSTLES  
Soup Kitchen



MET COUNCIL  
The Largest Jewish Communal Social Safety Net in America

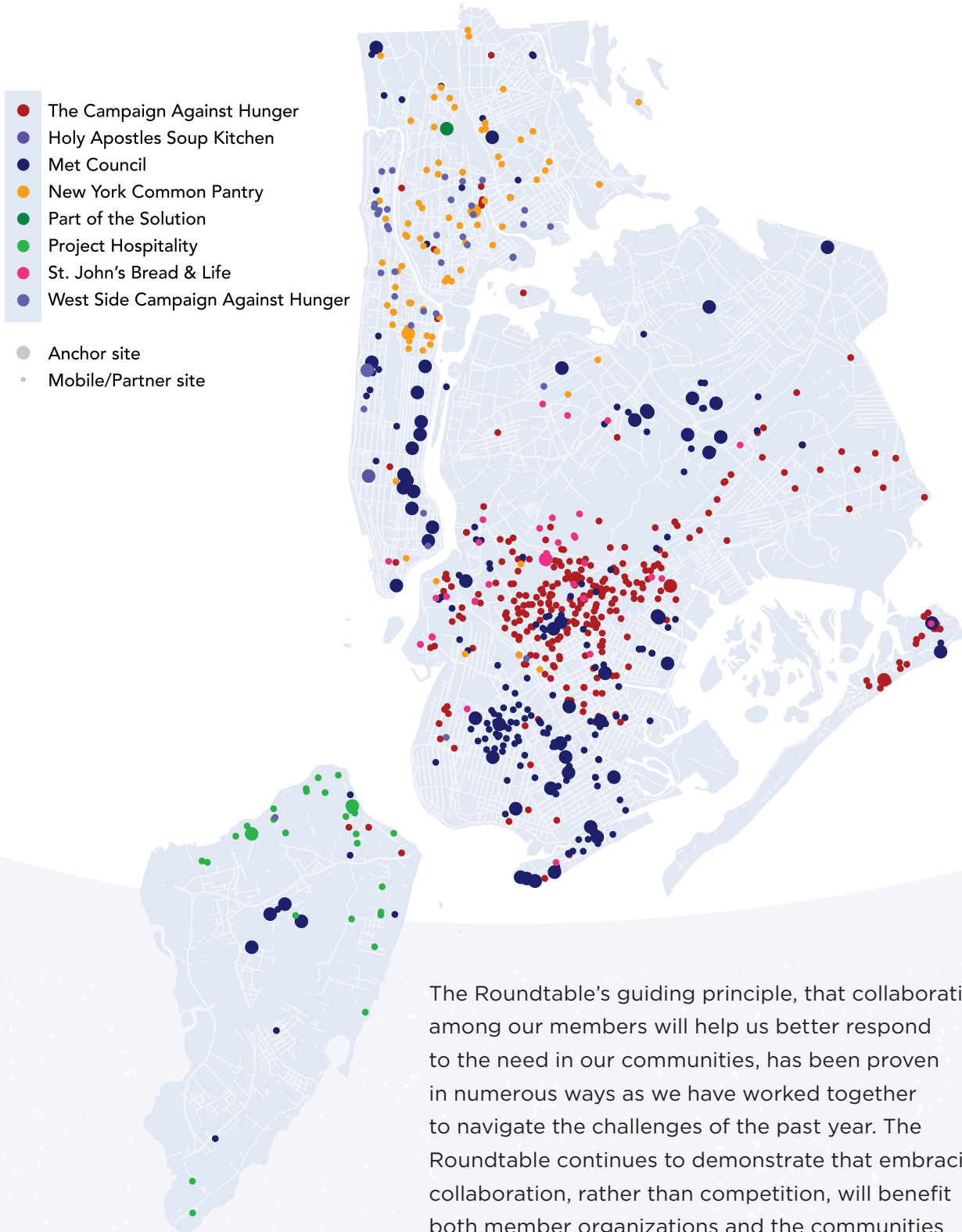


WSCAH's overarching goal is to transform the emergency feeding sector by making our collective work more collaborative, efficient, and customer-centric. This is why, in 2019, WSCAH led efforts to launch The Roundtable: Allies for Food Access. The Roundtable is NYC's first and only dedicated network of emergency food providers collaborating to bring more resources to communities, so none of our neighbors go hungry.

The Roundtable is composed of eight of NYC's largest and most innovative emergency food providers, collectively providing over 52 million meals annually, including 28 million pounds of fresh produce, across 1,239 sites in all five boroughs. The Roundtable's core work consists of strategic purchasing, advocacy, and mutual support. We are leveraging these pillars to reduce costs across the system, advocate for better allocations of resources to frontline providers, and provide direct technical assistance and support to our smaller pantry partners.



# ROUNDTABLE MEMBER DISTRIBUTION SITES



The Roundtable's guiding principle, that collaboration among our members will help us better respond to the need in our communities, has been proven in numerous ways as we have worked together to navigate the challenges of the past year. The Roundtable continues to demonstrate that embracing collaboration, rather than competition, will benefit both member organizations and the communities we serve.



# ADVOCACY

In FY2023, The Roundtable deepened our commitment to advocacy, working in partnership with Equity Advocates, a nonprofit focused on food equity advocacy, to develop a clear agenda and implementation plan to guide our work in the months and years ahead. We've identified policy priorities that align with the Roundtable's mission and within our greatest spheres of potential influence, city and state policy.

**We ultimately aim to achieve the following outcomes:**

- 1. Emergency food providers have greater capacity and autonomy to meet the needs of their communities.**
- 2. NYC & NYS government grant programs that support the emergency food system are redesigned to (1) reduce administrative burden, (2) streamline reporting, and (3) allow potential grantees more flexibility in accessing public funding.**
- 3. NYC & NYS food systems policy and funding decision-making is more equitable and inclusive.**
- 4. NYC & NYS invests in innovation in the emergency food sector.**

Roundtable advocacy includes successfully championing the historic inclusion of fresh produce as a purchasing option through Community Food Connections (CFC, formerly EFAP). The Roundtable has also played an advisory role alongside other nonprofits to HRA in the rollout of the CFC program. We are working with the Alliance for a Hunger-Free New York, a new collaborative emergency feeding network co-founded by WSCAH, to share the best practices and experiences in NYC at the state level.



# STRATEGIC PURCHASING

## Ongoing Purchasing Work

The Roundtable continues to expand our information sharing and improve strategic purchasing. We are growing our database, tracking food costs, and leveraging the data to negotiate prices with vendors. Our data sharing and price transparency have been particularly important during this period of high food prices and supply chain disruptions, allowing group members to make strategic, informed, and timely purchasing decisions.

## Bulk and Collective Purchasing

We continue to grow the quantity and diversity of products for collective purchasing. Encouraged by the success of our pilot order of nearly 38,000 pounds of oats in 2022, the group made a second order of the same product later that summer. We also negotiated pricing and set up a standing order for monthly deliveries of a full trailer load containing 19,000 quarts of shelf-stable milk.

**By summer 2023, the Roundtable had made 10 orders across four different products (oats, shelf-stable milk, rice, and chickpeas) with savings in excess of \$150K compared to standard distributor pricing.**

# LOOKING AHEAD

## Roundtable Activities in the Coming Year

As the public funding landscape seems increasingly uncertain, even while need across the city grows, the Roundtable continues to advocate for greater transparency in state allocations of anti-hunger funds, and helps drive more funds directly to frontline providers. It is these providers who are best-positioned to ensure that food insecure New Yorkers can access the healthy food they need.

At the same time, the Roundtable will be engaging a new cohort of emergency food organizations through a pilot technical assistance program. This pilot program will offer operational consulting, targeted purchasing analysis, as well as peer support and mentorship from Roundtable members.

Strategic and bulk purchasing remain key opportunities for the Roundtable, yielding increased savings this year and promising further savings as we grow our database and bulk purchasing program. As we work to meet growing demand for food and basic items we are also investigating the possibility of broadening our collective purchasing to include non-food items such as paper goods, toilet paper, baby diapers, and other necessary hygiene products, as well as additional food items such as pasta, cereal, canned goods, and cooking oil.

Throughout all of this work, the Roundtable remains committed to our guiding principle: that collaboration is essential to achieving our vision of a food system where none of our neighbors go hungry.

# BEYOND FOOD

## Access to Essential Benefits

Core to WSCAH's mission is addressing the underlying root causes of food insecurity through advocacy and providing a comprehensive suite of benefits aimed at helping families on their journey to food security. Our team screens WSCAH customers to assess eligibility and enroll them in benefits, including SNAP (food stamps), public assistance/cash assistance, and health insurance programs.



**Delilah Guzman,**  
Senior Benefits Access Specialist,  
signing customers up for benefits

## Note from a WSCAH customer in recognition of Delilah Guzman

*“Last year I experienced a life-altering accident at work, which has since prevented me from returning to my employment. The path towards recovery has been challenging, and I found myself in need of support. I was advised to reach out to WSCAH, a decision that led me to interact with Ms. Guzman.*

*Delilah’s approach to handling my case has been nothing short of exemplary. Her dedication to providing care, compassion, and invaluable guidance throughout the application process for assistance has made a significant difference in my experience. Delilah displayed an incredible level of empathy and professionalism, and it is evident that she is a remarkable asset to WSCAH’s team.*

*I am compelled to highlight Delilah’s exceptional service and the positive impact it has had on my journey. It is employees like her who enhance WSCAH’s reputation and make a real difference in the lives of those you serve.”*



# VOLUNTEERISM

We are grateful to our incredibly committed volunteers who return to WSCAH week after week, year after year, donating their passion and time to make our work possible.

In FY2023, 2,000 volunteers donated 20,000 hours of their time to support our city-wide food distribution efforts at our 86th Street distribution center and across 29 community-based sites.

At our 86th Street distribution center alone, we welcomed 250 volunteers weekly who assisted with set-up, packing food bags, loading and unloading, registration, and distributing 14,000 pounds of healthy food a day to our customers.



## Story from Kaliope Kostas, WSCAH volunteer

*“In the fall of 2022, our family was immersed in the process of finding a high school for our daughter. Trinity School was one of our top choices for its reputation and academic rigor. As we learned more about Trinity, we found we were also drawn there by the school’s commitment to serving the local community and partner organizations. We were pleased to learn that one of these organizations was West Side Campaign Against Hunger (WSCAH).*

*We first came to know WSCAH through our weekly CSA. We inquired what happened to vegetable shares that were not collected each week and were told the leftovers were donated to an organization called WSCAH that ran a food pantry and also offered other services to people in need in the community. We were looking for a way to give back in a very local way, and WSCAH fit the bill. We began supporting the organization in its endeavors, participating in family days and introducing the organization to others in the community.*

*We were delighted when our daughter was admitted to Trinity and enjoyed meeting other families in the community. We were especially excited that opportunities for community service began early in the school year. My husband and I volunteered to help at WSCAH one Friday morning along with other Trinity families. We distributed bags of fresh fruit and vegetables, an assortment of canned goods, pasta and rice, a protein and more to WSCAH’s customers.*

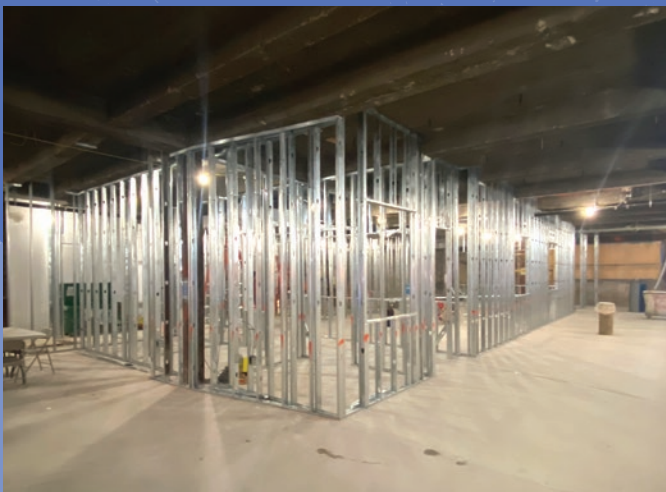
*WSCAH’s staff was friendly, organized, energetic and efficient. They were familiar with their customers and their needs. The organization’s commitment is truly inspiring and highlights the magnitude of need that exists in our community. We are hoping to return again and make volunteering there a regular part of our lives. An added bonus was getting to meet other Trinity parents while doing something useful for the community. I’m so grateful to WSCAH for all they do and to the Trinity community outreach team for facilitating this opportunity to work with this worthwhile partner organization.”*



# THE FUTURE OF WSCAH

WSCAH looked forward to our next chapter, the January 2024 opening of our food storage and distribution hub in Washington Heights. This 13,000 square foot facility will allow us to regularly store and process 170,000 pounds of food. Our dry storage capacity will increase by 3.5 times (new capacity 80,000 pounds), freezer capacity by 10 times (new capacity 36,000 pounds), and refrigeration capacity by 30 times (new capacity 54,000 pounds). This new location will allow WSCAH to provide for a greater variety of healthy food (including more fresh fruits and vegetables) more efficiently to more people and community distribution partners across NYC than ever before.

Our new distribution hub represents a milestone for WSCAH and the broader emergency feeding sector. It goes beyond being just a warehouse, facilitating teamwork across our organization with over 3,000 square feet of office, meeting, and volunteer space. As we continue to push for systemic change in the emergency feeding sector, this custom designed facility will enhance WSCAH's ability to transform the sector in accordance with our guiding principles of dignity, community, and choice.



# DIGNITY.COMMUNITY.CHOICE.

**West Side Campaign Against Hunger (WSCAH)  
alleviates hunger by ensuring that all New Yorkers  
have access with dignity to a choice of  
healthy food and supportive services.**



263 West 86th St • New York, NY 10024 • 212-362-3662 • [info@wscah.org](mailto:info@wscah.org) • [www.wscah.org](http://www.wscah.org)

