

MORE THAN A VOLUNTEER SHIFT

For some New Yorkers, volunteering isn't just about giving back; it's what allows them to keep putting food on their tables.

Earlier this year, the federal government expanded SNAP work requirements, creating new barriers for older adults and young caregivers, making it even more onerous for millions of adults to maintain their SNAP food assistance. Many people affected are already working part-time, piecing together multiple jobs, or actively searching for employment. But navigating the new rules and finding an approved volunteer opportunity can be challenging.

That's why WSCAH became a Self-Enrolled Volunteer Service Provider (SEVSP) and launched our SNAP ABAWD (Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents) Volunteer Program. This allows eligible SNAP recipients to fulfill their required volunteer hours with WSCAH while also accessing healthy food and receiving one-on-one support from our Benefits Access team to help them navigate the complexities of the benefits system.

Volunteers pack groceries, glean and sort produce, prepare food for distribution, and assist with other essential warehouse operations that help us serve 100,000 New Yorkers each year.

For Maygan R., the program came at exactly the right time.

Maygan works hard. She she sells home-made custom treats, walks dogs, and picks up housekeeping jobs whenever she can. Like so many of our neighbors, she's juggling several part-time jobs while searching for a full-time position. When she heard about the new SNAP work requirements, she assumed she was already complying with them.

"I actually do have a part-time job, so I was a little confused," she says. "I didn't think it applied to me."



Then, in late May, she received an official notice that she would no longer be eligible to receive SNAP benefits.

"I was a little shocked," she recalls.

Familiar with WSCAH through our Community Hub at Councilmember Shaun Abreu's office, Maygan turned to us. **Today, Maygan volunteers at WSCAH's 180th Street warehouse, where every shift helps satisfy her SNAP work requirement while supporting other families facing food insecurity.**

Like many participants in the program, Maygan isn't avoiding work—she's actively looking for more of it. Despite having submitted a number of applications, including at grocery stores and retailers, finding stable employment has proven difficult.

"It's been hard," she says. "I feel like the job market is really intense, especially here in New York City."

She knows firsthand what losing SNAP benefits can mean. A clerical error once caused her benefits to lapse for seven months, forcing impossible financial decisions.

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Annual Food Distribution by the Numbers



HEALTHY FOOD

5M

pounds of food are distributed to families across NYC.

COMMUNITY HUBS

10

local distributions take place monthly in high-need zip codes.

OLDER ADULTS HOME DELIVERY

200

homebound older adults receive groceries twice monthly in partnership with Citymeals.

SNAP GAP HOME DELIVERY

500

households excluded from SNAP receive groceries twice monthly.

More Than a Volunteer Shift

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"I fell behind on my Con Edison bill," she says. "It was rough."

During that difficult period, WSCAH became an important source of support.

Maygan knows she's fortunate. Not everyone affected by the new requirements will be able to find an approved volunteer placement.

She hopes people will look beyond common misconceptions about SNAP recipients.

"The economy is not allowing for jobs, and it's not allowing for people to really get ahead. So it's hard. I can't get ahead. It's not that I want to depend on the government for assistance, but we live in the greatest city in the world. We should all be able to eat. There's more than enough food for everyone. **The misunderstanding is that we want the check and that's it. A lot of us want to work.**"

Maygan's story reflects what WSCAH sees every day: Our neighbors want opportunities, not handouts. They want to work and provide for their families.

Through our SNAP ABAWD Volunteer Program, we're helping ensure that eligible New Yorkers can meet the new requirements while continuing to receive food assistance. At the same time, these volunteers are strengthening our operations, helping us distribute healthy groceries to 100,000 WSCAH customers.

It's one more way WSCAH is standing beside our community, meeting people where they are.



A Day of Food, Fun, and Community at

WSCAH ROCKS THE BLOCK

What an incredible day we had at our annual block party, WSCAH ROCKS THE BLOCK!

On Sunday, June 7, more than 1,000 neighbors came together on West 86th Street to learn, celebrate, and advocate. The day was filled with impact and connection:

- Hundreds of volunteers rolled up their sleeves to **pack more than 2,000 bags of healthy groceries for New Yorkers facing food insecurity.**
- Community members **added their voices to advocacy efforts** for a more equitable food system.
- Families and neighbors enjoyed **music, crafts, great food, and time together.**
- Young leaders inspired us through powerful **Writing Against Hunger** readings. You can find all the entries from our finalists and winners at wscah.org/writing-against-hunger.

We are especially grateful to our partners, sponsors, and community organizations whose generosity helped create such a vibrant and welcoming experience for all.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS





Home Delivery Pilot Program

REACHING FAMILIES LEFT OUT OF THE SAFETY NET

For an estimated 1.4 million New Yorkers, food insecurity is a daily reality compounded by systemic barriers.

Many of these residents are also excluded from SNAP due to federal eligibility rules, including some immigrant communities, struggling college students, and others who do not meet participation requirements.

This gap in access leaves many households reliant on local food pantries. However, for some neighbors, physical, logistical, or safety barriers make it difficult or impossible to stand in public pantry lines. To address this need, ensure privacy, and expand equitable access to food, we launched a home delivery pilot for food-insecure New Yorkers who are excluded from SNAP.

Participants in this program receive groceries twice a month for six months.

The food is more than 50% fresh produce, and it's familiar, culturally appropriate, and reliable, allowing families to focus on their health, work, and loved ones rather than where their next meal will come from.

We built this program intentionally, partnering with trusted community and healthcare organizations that already have strong relationships with the people they serve. These partners identify and enroll households that meet clear eligibility criteria and can benefit most from this support.

The response has been powerful, with the program reaching 500 households by the end of our last fiscal year (June 2026). **Each new enrollment represents a family gaining greater food stability and peace of mind.**

Your generosity makes all of this possible. Because of you, we can respond quickly, thoughtfully, and compassionately to the needs of our customers. Thank you for helping us support our communities with nourishment, dignity, and care.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Meet Millie Aquino

WSCAH Receptionist



If you've visited our 180th Street office, chances are you've been welcomed by Mildecia "Millie" Aquino and her signature smile.

As WSCAH's receptionist, Millie is often the first person volunteers, community members, and partners meet when they walk through our doors. She greets everyone with warmth, kindness, and genuine care, helping create the welcoming environment that defines our community.

Behind the scenes, Millie is an essential part of the WSCAH team. Her exceptional organizational skills, strong work ethic, and willingness to help wherever needed keeps our operations running smoothly. Whether we're short on volunteers, tackling a special project, or navigating a busy day, Millie is always ready to step in and lend a hand.

Jessica Sano, Director of People and Facilities, praised Millie's dedication and impact:

"Millie embodies the spirit of WSCAH. She treats everyone with dignity and respect, always looks for ways to help, and consistently goes the extra mile for our team and our community."

The next time you're at 180th Street, be sure to say hello—you'll be greeted by Millie's friendly smile and the warmth that she brings to WSCAH every day.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WSCAH

There are many ways to get involved with WSCAH throughout the year. Mark your calendars and join us as we come together to support our neighbors and strengthen food access across New York City.



November 2026

Healthy Foods Holiday Challenge

During the month of November, you can help ensure that thousands of families can celebrate the holidays with healthy, nutritious food. This annual campaign raises critical funds to provide holiday groceries and proteins for our community members during one of the busiest times of the year.

VolunteerFest

Friday, November 20 and Saturday, November 21

Join hundreds of volunteers for our annual two-day "volunteerathon" as we pack and distribute healthy food in preparation for the holiday season. With collective volunteering, entertainment, and snacks, this is an activity for the entire family.

January 2027

Walk, Pack, Give

Monday, January 18 • MLK Day of Service

Honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy through service at our 180th Street warehouse. This family-friendly event combines community, volunteerism, and action to help ensure that our neighbors have access to healthy food.



For more details about these events and how to participate, please visit wscah.org/news or scan the QR code.

SOFRITO RECIPE

By Martina Santos



Martina is a longtime customer, volunteer, and Board member of WSCAH. She has been an important part of the WSCAH community for many years, sharing her love of cooking, culture, and family traditions through recipes like her homemade sofrito. Sofrito is a flavorful vegetable and herb base commonly used in Latin cooking for soups, rice, beans, and stews.

During the month of June, sofrito ingredients were included in every distribution so our neighbors could give this delicious recipe a try.



Ingredients:

2 red bell peppers	4 tablespoons oregano
2 green bell peppers	1 small head of garlic
3-4 sticks of celery	½ cup olive oil
1 bunch cilantro	Salt
3 onions	

Directions:

- 1 Wash all vegetables.
- 2 Cut everything into small pieces.
- 3 Add everything to a blender with oil and a little salt.
- 4 Blend until smooth.
- 5 Taste and add more salt if needed.
- 6 Store in the refrigerator or freeze for later.

Want to be the first to hear about upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and ways to support WSCAH? **Scan the QR code to the right to sign up for our email list and stay connected all year long.**

Questions? Email development@wscah.org



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