# The Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger



FY 2020-21 Annual Report



**OUR MISSION:** The Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger strives to build a community where all people have the food they need to lead healthy lives. The Coalition connects people with food assistance programs and nutrition education; provides resources to a network of food pantries; and educates the public and policymakers about responsible solutions that prevent people from going hungry.



### A Letter from the Executive Director



### Dear Friends,

We never imagined that COVID-19 would continue to wage war on our health and our economy throughout the past year, resulting in more individuals and families experiencing food insecurity, with a disparate impact upon Black and Hispanic households, as well as all households with children. Many relief efforts that supported nutritional needs, such as SNAP Emergency Allotments (EAs), a temporary 15% increase in SNAP, Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) and a wide range of administrative flexibilities, allowed programs to operate safely, while providing urgent support. While relief efforts were critical, the implementation of them and communications about these programs were challenging at times and incredibly frustrating for individuals and families who desperately needed help. This is where our team was really able to make an impact.

Our SNAP Hotline Team continued their core work of helping people navigate the SNAP application process by completing SNAP applications and providing case management. This year, our Hotline team answered more questions than ever before regarding P-EBT, changes to SNAP, unemployment and more. They also passed along the questions and challenges they heard from callers to our Advocacy and Education team members. This shaped our creation of educational materials, informed our advocacy/policy efforts and created a feedback loop to share client experiences with policymakers.

We also continued to reimagine ways to support our food pantry and soup kitchen Victory in Partnership (VIP) partners, as they struggled to deliver food safely. We hosted virtual sessions, including a COVID-19 vaccine information session and we connected VIP partners with additional funding opportunities, in addition to the dollars they were able to raise from our annual Race Against Hunger.

As a team and Board, we began talking about where and how to focus our efforts moving forward. Through this process we gave voice to our deep organizational value of mutual care: of our clients, our partners, our community and of each other. And it is in this spirit of mutual care, that we continue our work to build a community where everyone has access to the food they need to live a healthy life. Will you join us?

With hope and gratitude,



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Katie Milholin, Community Educator
Glory Morales, SNAP Hotline Counselor
Claire Richardson, SNAP Hotline Counselor
Tanya Thampi-Sen, Nutrition Program Manager



# 2nd Annual Night to Fight Hunger Gala Went Virtual!

On November 12, 2020, the Coalition Against Hunger hosted its second annual Night to Fight Hunger Gala. Due to the importance of social distancing, the gala was a virtual event. We are beyond grateful to our supporters that helped us raise more than \$25,000 to support our hunger relief programs. Thank you to our food pantry partners, staff and board for your commitment to fighting hunger in the Greater Philadelphia region!

### The 25th Annual Race Against Hunger

Hunger doesn't pause for a pandemic, so neither could we! That's why the Coalition Against Hunger team, board members, sponsors, fundraisers, runners and walkers from the Philadelphia area and several other cities came together from April 16, 2021 to April 26, 2021 to support our 25th Annual Race Against Hunger 5K Run/Walk. The 10 day virtual event raised close to \$90,000 to support the work of the Coalition, as well as local food pantries, soup kitchens and anti-hunger organizations in the Philadelphia area. We hope to see everyone in the Spring of 2022 to kick off the 26th year of the race (hopefully in person)!

### We Offer A HUGE Thank You To:

- Over 300 #HungerFighters that registered to run or walk virtually.
- 31 food pantries and soup kitchens that took on the challenge of raising money for their hunger-relief programs
- 7 very generous sponsors who helped us underwrite the cost of hosting this event.
- 3 teams and 18 fundraisers that helped to bring in 273 donations to the Coalition's team page.



### **VIP and Food Rescue Programs**

The Coalition's Victory in Partnership (VIP) program supports Philadelphia area food pantries and soup kitchens by connecting them to food, volunteers and client resources, as well as opportunities for fundraising, grants, technical assistance and peer networking. We call the program Victory in Partnership, recognizing that we cannot battle hunger alone and that we are all stronger when we work together.

For the health and safety of our VIP members, we connected over Zoom this past year. Here are some highlights:

- Policy Director, Kathy Fisher, shared relevant advocacy updates, our Community Educator, Katie Milholin, reviewed the Coalition's food resource materials and Derek Felton, our Coalition Community Organizer, shared fundraising techniques.
- Dr. Helena Kwakwa from the Philadelphia Department of Health addressed COVID-19 vaccine concerns of our members. Her presentation was very well received, and it was recorded so attendees could share this valuable information with their communities.
- Vonetta Robinson from Aunt Bertha, an organization that connects people with social services, including information on where to find food, demonstrated how VIP members could include details about their community services in the database for free. By including their programs, VIP members can let people know about their services and update information when changes to hours or programming occur.
- VIP members participated in a voter education training we did with partners at the ACLU.

In addition to providing opportunities for our VIP members to network, we also connected our members with other resources.

- Funding: Throughout the year, we worked with local funders to provide recommendations for food pantries and soup kitchens in need of additional funding. We were able to connect 41 community food programs with over \$81,000, so they could better meet their neighbors' food needs. (This is in addition to the funds raised through our Race Against Hunger.)
- Client Resources and Advocacy Updates: Through our weekly texts, Pantry Partner newsletters and regular email updates, we keep our VIP members up to date on the latest nutrition program policy changes, calls to action to support these programs, community food giveaways, nutrition education resources and more. After a request for more resources on how to cook with some unfamiliar foods, we developed a database of simple recipes that incorporate these foods, for members to access.







### **Food Rescue Program**

Our Food Rescue Program connects VIP members with additional food resources for their feeding programs. This program was started after we found that about half of the participating pantries sometimes, often or always run out of food. This past year we helped coordinate:

Total Pounds of Coordinated Food Distribution: 224,917 lbs.

**This Served:** 8,120 Households 23,630 People

The Coalition's SNAP Hotline team helps individuals and families navigate the application process, apply for benefits, renew their benefits, and provides one-on-one case management for anyone dealing with problems with their SNAP benefits.

During the past fiscal year (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021), the SNAP Hotline screened close to 3,100 people for eligibility and completed nearly 2,900 SNAP applications. Our SNAP Hotline also referred 106 clients to the many food pantries in the Philadelphia region, and provided case management services to 140 households. Our team worked closely with our Advocacy and Policy team to always be on top of the latest anti-hunger program changes, of which there were many due to the pandemic.





### **Our SNAP Hotline Team in Action**

### **Working Together to Find Solutions**

The delays in the U.S. postal system, due to issues brought about by COVID-19, heavily impacted callers to the SNAP Hotline. A caller who applied for and was approved for SNAP in November 2020 didn't receive her EBT card in the mail until late February 2021. When it finally arrived, she learned that the card had a zero balance with no benefits available to feed herself or her three children. Our Hotline Case Manager reached out to an administrator at the County Assistance Office, who found there was an error which prevented the client's benefits from processing. The administrator was able to correct the error, and the client received more than \$2,000 in retroactive benefits for herself and her family.

### **Getting Our Clients Help Quickly**

A woman called our SNAP Hotline looking for help. As soon as she started to tell her story, she began to cry. She was retired and receiving a small pension. She had recently returned home from the hospital, after having a stroke, to discover that her childhood home, where she lived, had been cleaned out. There was nothing left except her mattress and bedframe. Our Hotline Counselor listened to her story and helped her submit a SNAP application. By the end of the call, she was laughing. She received her SNAP benefits the next day, as well as an additional \$700 from the recent CLS Class Action Suit. She was so pleased, and said "I have enough to get me through the summer."

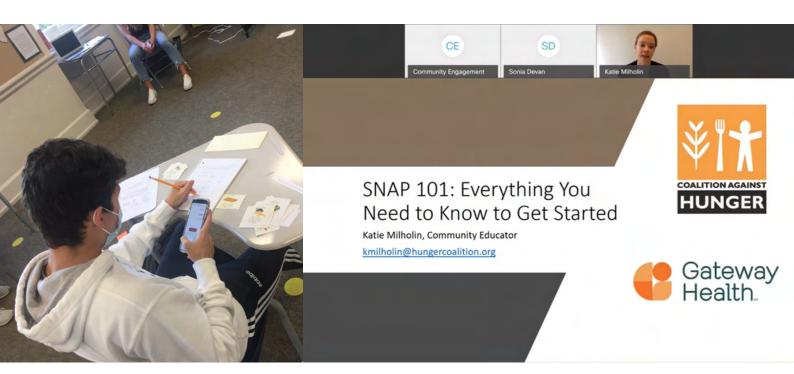
### **Community Outreach**

In the past year, the Community Education program promoted the Coalition Against Hunger's resources at 109 community events. Due to the pandemic, our outreach efforts were unlike any previous year. Through technology, we were able to connect with partners such as the Free Library of Philadelphia, PA Health and Wellness, Temple University Hospital, and the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. Using technology creatively has allowed us to virtually conduct staff trainings, community webinars, workshops and more. This kept us connected to the community, our partners and our clients as we continued to work from home. We also continued to build relationships with local schools, including William Penn Charter School, Wissahickon Charter School, Southwark Community School, Logan Community School, and Girard College. We are proud to educate young people on the issues of food insecurity and food justice, as we build a coalition of hunger fighters at every age!

We saw numerous changes to SNAP and other anti-hunger programs over the past year. To help our clients navigate these changes, we created clear flyers and materials, which were shared through partner networks, in our Friday emails and on social media. In an effort to make our materials more inclusive, we created narrated informational videos, providing an opportunity for clients who may not be comfortable with a text heavy flyer the chance to learn and digest important information. Finally, we began trying to better serve immigrant communities in our outreach efforts. In addition to translating multiple flyers into Spanish, we translated a flyer aimed at immigrant families into 7 languages.

COVID has made it impossible to conduct in-person activities like our hunger simulation, but the information and learning opportunities that come from such activities are more important than ever! In addition to running our first hybrid virtual/in-person hunger simulation with William Penn Charter School, we've also created a virtual interactive Hunger Simulation that participants can complete from home, allowing our supporters to learn more about the challenges and choices food insecure individuals face and our work at the Coalition.

While we look forward to the return of in-person outreach opportunities, we are proud of the ways that we have been creative during the pandemic, and plan to keep the creativity, flexibility, and new activities as a lasting part of our outreach work.





### How the COVID Relief Bill Impacts Middle Class and Lower Income Families

There are \$1,400 checks on their way coming from the COVID Relief Bill, but middle and low income families may have a chance to put even more real dollars in their pockets soon. NBC10's Danny Freeman explains.

COVID-19 created a host of challenges for nutrition programs to reach those in need. Little did we know at the start of the fiscal year that those first few months of policy changes, program adaptations, additional federal resources, and pivoting would last all year.

As tens of thousands of families in our region continued to struggle to meet basic needs, we pressed for adequate federal response, including advocating for the USDA to extend critical waivers so that states could adapt operations to meet increasing demand, keep clients and staff safe and maintain access to supports while many schools and in-person services closed. We had virtual meetings with staff from all six Congresspersons from the southeastern PA region (Reps. Boyle, Dean, Evans, Fitzpatrick, Houlahan, and Scanlon). During meetings we shared what we were seeing locally, the need for stronger federal support of nutrition programs and the emergency food system, the need for greater stability and efficiency of federal waivers and funding so that states, localities, and agencies could plan for effective responses and the crucial need to get dollars directly to families on the brink of disaster.

As a result of temporary waivers and ongoing uncertainty, we worked to keep people informed of changes to nutrition programs by providing regular updates, hosting webinars, conducting virtual presentations and regularly developing materials. We worked with partners to follow the development and implementation of Pennsylvania's plan for Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT), the program Congress created to provide resources to families whose children missed out on free and reduced-price school meals due to remote and hybrid learning.

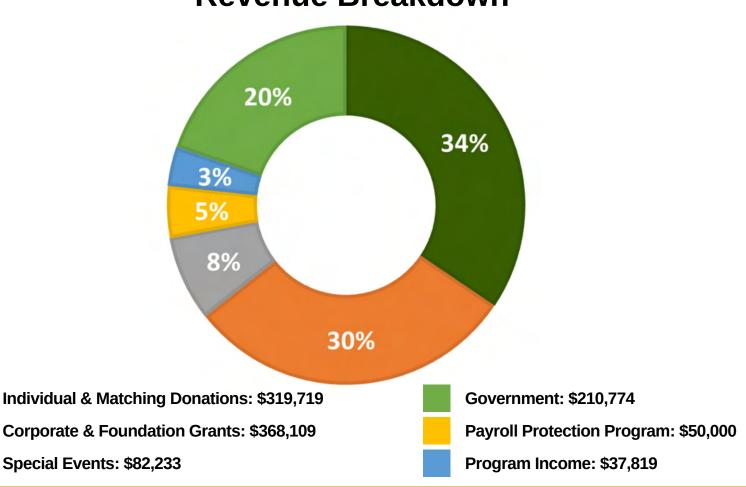
Along with partner organizations and allies, we expanded our work to highlight those with lived experiences and get their input about programs. We did this by surveying and conducting phone interviews with over 350 SNAP and WIC (Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children) participants. Our persistence on WIC advocacy yielded some success, as the PA Bureau of WIC shared its policy and procedures manual (PA was one of the last to do so) and posted county level enrollment data, allowing everyone to give consistent information to clients. We are hopeful that as a member of the Thriving PA Campaign, we can continue to successfully advocate for much-needed program improvements to help thousands of women, infants and young children secure WIC's health and nutritional benefits.

Locally, we continued to fill a leadership role for benefits access by coordinating meetings with the Philadelphia County Assistance Office (PCAO) and a range of partner agencies. We resumed quarterly meetings that allow advocates and service providers assisting clients with public benefits (SNAP, TANF, etc.) to discuss issues with PCAO leadership, so we can remain on the same page about policies and the implementation of new procedures.

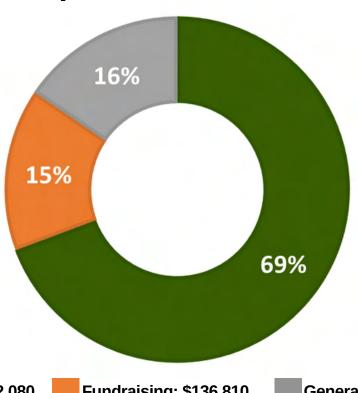
### A few highlights of our work this year:

- We co-hosted P-EBT webinars for parents and created videos and materials to keep families informed of this completely new program and developments with it.
- We worked with Just Harvest and Allies for Children to garner support from nearly 200 organizations on a letter to USDA Secretary Perdue, urging the continuation of child nutrition waivers.
- We continued to press our federal elected officials to include a 15% increase to SNAP benefits in COVID relief legislation, which finally occurred in December 2020.





### **Expense Breakdown**



Program Services: \$622,080 Fundraising: \$136,810 General & Administrative: \$138,740

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**Annual Reviews** 

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Bristol-Meyers Squibb Matching Gift Program

Charities Aid Foundation of America

Chubb Charitable Foundation

**Edward Lifesciences Foundation** 

**Exelon Foundation** 

General Mills Matched Giving

IBX Employee Match Program (Independence

Blue Cross)

Johnson & Johnson Matching Gift Program

Merck Foundation

PavPal Giving Fund

PNC Matching Gifts Program

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SEI Giving Fund

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The Benevity Community Impact Fund

The Blackbaud Giving Fund

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**United Way Suncoast** 

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ACME Give Back Where It Counts Bag Program

Airbnb via Global Giving Community Fund

Allies for Children

BNY Melon Mid-Atlantic Charitable Trust

Bonfire Funds, Inc.

Centene Corporation (PA Health & Wellness)

Claneil Foundation

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### **2021 Race Beneficiary Teams**

**AHARI** 

Bibleway Baptist Church

**Devereux Memorial UMC** 

**Drueding Center** 

Eastwick UMC Church

Faith Chapel

Feast of Justice

First Church Worship Center

(Safe Haven)

Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry

Harambe Baptist Church

Haven Peniel UMC

Healthy Choice Now

Helping Hands Soup Kitchen

Lombard Central Presbyterian

Love in Action Food Ministry

Masjidullah

Mizpah SDA

Nat'l Service Center of Phila

Nutritional Development Services (NDS)

Northwest Mutual Aid Collective

Pennypack Farm

Pinn Memorial Baptist Church

Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Truth Baptist Church

VNA Philadelphia

### **Giving Opportunities**

Your gifts support our work to end hunger across our region by connecting people to food resources they need, supporting a network of food pantries and soup kitchens, our SNAP (food stamp) Hotline and our education and advocacy of policies that create access to nutrition programs. Please join our fight to ensure all people have food they need to lead healthy lives.

#### **Give Today!**

#### **Annual Fund**

All gifts contribute to the ongoing success of the Coalition Against Hunger. The Annual Fund provides immediate and flexible funding to support important initiatives such as enhancing our hunger-relief, community education and advocacy programs, technology and food rescue program. Grants alone do not provide the funds necessary to cover the costs associated with these essential opportunities.

To make a **One-Time donation** to the Coalition's Annual Fund, please visit **HERE**.

To become a **Monthly Donor** by making a recurring gift to the Coalition's Annual Fund, please visit **HERE**.

### **United Way Donations**

Do you donate to the United Way at your workplace? You can designate us to receive your donation through Donor's Choice. <u>Our Donor's Choice number is 15757</u>.

#### **Stock Donations**

The Coalition Against Hunger gratefully accepts gifts of appreciated securities (stocks). Please consult your financial advisor, attorney or accountant for assistance with your philanthropic plans. To make stock donation, please visit **HERE**.

### **Employee Match Gift Donations**

Many companies have matching gift programs for which the Coalition Against Hunger qualifies. Ask your employer how you can double your gift by making a match to your gift.

#### **Amazon Smile**

Support the Coalition whenever you shop on Amazon, with Amazon Smile. Find directions <u>HERE</u> and choose the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger as your selected charity.

You may also send a check or money order to our office at:

Coalition Against Hunger 123 Chestnut Street, Suite 401 Philadelphia, PA 19106

### Save the Date



**November 30, 2021** 



26th Race Against Hunger Spring 2022 Details Coming Soon!