

TONI'S KITCHEN

A FOOD MINISTRY OF ST. LUKE'S CHURCH

2023

IMPACT REPORT



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Recent years have shown the breadth of food insecurity hidden within our leafy suburbs, revealing many more neighbors struggling than previously known. But we have also seen the power of **innovation** and **reimagined approaches** as we pursue long-term solutions. We know the issues that give rise to food insecurity are not going away. The high cost of housing, the instability of a gig economy, medical bills, inflation... all these structural drivers cause neighbors to struggle to put nutritious food on their tables. But if we step back and acknowledge the persistence of these issues, we can leverage our resources and **collaborate** across sectors to **build** a fully food-secure, healthy community. Let's imagine this vision together!

What if children attending after-school tutoring also had a hot meal and went home well fed? What if parents working multiple jobs but choosing between medicine or food found weekly opportunities to select fresh, healthy groceries right in their neighborhood? What if seniors could afford to turn on their heat in the winter because groceries and homemade meals were delivered to their doors weekly?

At Toni's Kitchen, this is the food security we are actively building. We are halfway through a five-year plan to see this approach fully implemented in our service areas of Montclair, Bloomfield, and West Orange. Our progress on this journey during the last year has included designing and testing new customer-defined programs, making sure we have the physical resources to support our vision (refrigeration, vans, work space) and looking inward to ensure we are agile, with a culture of listening, innovation, and respect.

What is the **impact** of this work? Together, we are demonstrating that when we mobilize our whole community, we are measurably stronger and healthier—all of us! Children today go to school having slept well after a nutritious dinner with parents who know they will have food for tomorrow and next week. Adults working multiple jobs know their neighbors are there for them, taking tangible steps to ensure they succeed.

Help us build a **collective solution** to food insecurity. Let's be there in all the daily moments that help us grow, be healthy, and connect with one another. Join us!

Anne Mernin



Executive Director
Toni's Kitchen

*"Food insecurity is not an issue any longer... You have been life saving.
It will never be forgotten. Thank you!"
-Client, Grocery Deliveries*

ONE SIMPLE VISION

RELIABLE ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD... FOR ALL OF OUR NEIGHBORS

RELIABLE Our neighbors can **TRUST** that healthy food is and will be available because all of our programs are offered at least weekly.

ACCESS

We have learned to focus on how diverse populations **CONNECT** with food as much as on the food itself. We collaborate with food-insecure communities to design programs tailored to their unique needs:

- **NEIGHBORHOOD MOBILE MARKETS** offer a farmers-market-style setting for families to select fresh produce and shelf-stable groceries conveniently in their local neighborhoods or schools.
- **TONI'S GRILL** food truck prepares cooked-to-order meals for our unhoused neighbors, those with limited cooking facilities, and others for whom a prepared meal is the best solution.
- **HOME DELIVERIES** ensure that a disability or lack of transportation do not become obstacles to accessing healthy food.
- **COMMUNITY PARTNER MEAL SITES** integrate healthy food into tutoring programs, teen mentoring groups, senior social gatherings, summer camps, and preschools. Easy, convenient, meaningful.



HEALTHY FOOD We know fresh, healthy food can be out of reach for many. All our meals include fresh produce, a core value of Toni's Kitchen.

FOR ALL OUR NEIGHBORS

Toni's Kitchen is there for the bus driver, the older adult on social security, parents with multiple food-service jobs, and recent immigrants doing roofing and landscaping. These are our neighbors, all working toward health and stability. Together, we can make their goals achievable.

"I cannot thank you enough... It means all the difference that someone is in my corner."

-Guest, Choice Pantry

2023: A YEAR OF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS

BUILDING FOOD SECURITY



We launched new **Neighborhood Mobile Markets** and now have a total of five in Montclair, Bloomfield, and West Orange.



Over **60 community partners** worked with us to embed healthy food in their programs serving children, families, and seniors.



Eleven Schools in Montclair, Bloomfield, and West Orange partnered with Toni's Kitchen on programs such as: a student-run, in-school food pantry; weekly Healthy Meal Kit distributions; school-based Neighborhood Mobile Markets; home deliveries for families identified by school staff; and programs designed for Special Needs students.





Six new gleaning partners boosted our food supply and kept thousands of pounds of soon-to-spoil food out of landfills.



Town-wide food drives brought in **20,000 pounds** of food, enabling us to expand our grocery programs.



Fourteen social-service partners connected with our guests on-site with access to dental care, medical screenings, nutrition education, diabetes and hypertension management, mental health counseling, affordable internet, housing resources, legal resources, and enrollment guidance for SNAP, Medicaid, Medicare, and other important programs.



"What a great (dental) cleaning, I'm thrilled! And I was able to get my groceries right after. Thank you."

-Guest, Choice Pantry

BUILDING OUR PHYSICAL CAPACITY

Our generous community funded the **\$1.2 million** renovation of **5,000+ square feet of space** with **walk-in refrigeration** and increased storage and packaging areas to support our growing volumes.



A new **Toni's Grill food truck** took cooked-to-order meals on the road, especially for those without housing or with limited cooking facilities, and served an average of **100 meals** per run.



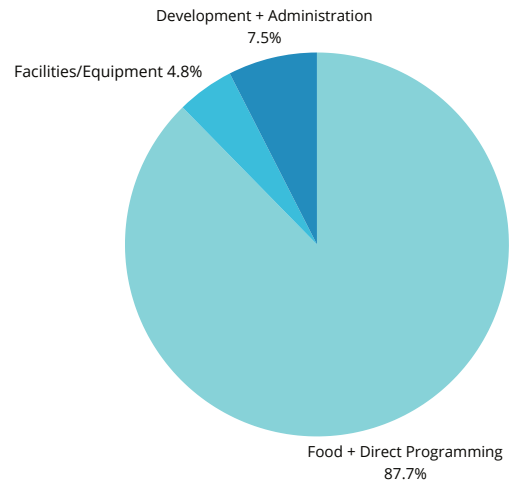
A successful Giving Tuesday allowed us to purchase a **new van** to help with Neighborhood Mobile Markets and home deliveries, making an average of **21 trips** per week.

"I thank you all for volunteering your time and energy to help those in need... I especially want to thank the young gentleman who showed up at my door through all kinds of weather this cold winter, not only with a wonderful package of groceries but a warm and friendly smile."
-Client, Home Delivery for Seniors

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Toni's Kitchen had **\$2,075,000** in operating income in 2023. Importantly, an additional nearly **\$2 million** in gleaning, food drives, and garden donations allowed Toni's Kitchen to produce **2.3 million meals at a cost of less than \$1 per meal**. Last year, **88%** of funding directly supported the provision of healthy food to our neighbors in need.

TOTAL REVENUE: **\$4,049,748** **TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES:** **\$3,725,397**



LOOKING AHEAD: 2024 PROGRAM PRIORITIES

In 2024, we will expand our Neighborhood Mobile Markets into five new sites and increase the Toni's Grill food truck service in Montclair, Bloomfield, and West Orange. We will also strengthen Toni's Kitchen behind the scenes, with technology and operations upgrades to support the growth in need for our services.



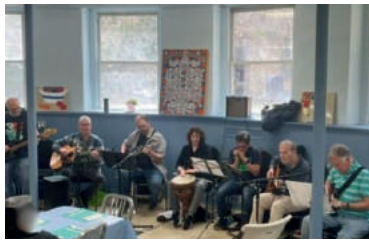
*"Every time I come here I am treated well and the food choices are very good.
I feel lucky to have found Toni's Kitchen."*

-Guest, Choice Pantry

We are able to serve our community so cost-effectively thanks to over **2,000 dedicated volunteers**. Thank you to those who have:

cooked in our kitchen
staffed our Town-Wide Food Drives
participated in our committee work
tended our gardens
provided legal and technical advice
contributed food and supplies
prepared our monthly newsletters
volunteered in Toni's Closet
delivered meals to afterschool programs
gleaned surplus food from local markets

created opportunities for children
sorted groceries
played music at our meals
packed family bags
planned for our future work
engaged our community
shared our social media posts
spent time with our guests
attended the Chili Cook-Off
connected us with important resources



You inspire us with hope! You bring possibility to this joyful work! YOU are the reason we can say **YES** when our neighbors turn to this food ministry for help.

thank you



WHO WERE OUR PARTNERS?

AND HOW DID THEY HELP US?

Food provision and gleaning partners donated food that helped to serve an astounding 2.3 million meals.

Bloomfield-Montclair CSA
Community Food Bank of NJ
Gus & Co. Seafood Market
Jose's Gardens
Kings Food Markets
Le French Dad Boulangerie
Montclair Community Farms
Montclair Community Food Co-op and CSA
Montclair Farmers Market
Montclair Public Schools Community Garden

Nicolo's Italian Bakery
Profeta Farms
Rao's
ShopRite
Table to Table
Tacoria
Toni's Kitchen Garden (HomeCorp)
Trader Joe's
Wegman's
Whole Foods

Our onsite complementary service partners assist with housing, dental care, healthcare, diabetes management, affordable technology, legal services, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) enrollment, mental health, income tax preparation, and other important services.

Essex County Family Assistance and Benefits Office
Family Promise
Frontier Insurance Services
Health Insurance and Employment Coaching
Mental Health Counseling
NJ Citizen Action
NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority

Maxsip Telecommunications
National Council for Jewish Women
Newark Community Solutions
SNAP (food stamp) Navigation
Summit Health Cares
Volunteer Lawyers for Justice
Zufall Health

Our community partner programs collaborated to ensure that low-income neighbors become more resilient and healthier by serving nutritious meals during their program activities.

Aging in Montclair
Bloomfield Farmers Market
Bloomfield Health Department
Bloomfield Neighbor to Neighbor Network
Bloomfield Public Library
Bloomfield Public Schools
Brother to Brother Mentoring Program
Care Plus New Jersey
Carteret Elementary School
Family of Caring
Family Promise Essex County
First Montclair House
Heritage Village at Bloomfield
Kessler Rehab Center
Kiwanis Club of Montclair
Lifelong Montclair
Mental Health Association of NJ
Montclair Child Development Center, Inc.
Montclair Fund for Educational Excellence
Montclair Health Department
Montclair Mutual Aid

Montclair Public Schools
Montclair Neighborhood Development Corporation
Montclair Police Department
Montclair Public Library
Mountainside Medical Center
Neighborhood Child Care Center Daycare
Oaks Integrated Care (COPE)
Saint Peter's Haven
Side Door at Union Congregational Church
Sister to Sister Mentoring Program
South End Gardens
St. Marks United Methodist Church
Succeed2Gether
The Montclair Inn
Trinity Episcopal Church
Washington Street School in West Orange
West Orange Health Department
West Orange Public Library
West Orange Public Schools
West Orange Senior Services
YMCA of Montclair

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO ALL 2023 CONTRIBUTORS TO TONI'S KITCHEN!

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING DONORS WHO GAVE \$500 OR ABOVE LAST YEAR:

Cynthia & Murray Aitken
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IMPACT 2023

TONI'S KITCHEN

A FOOD MINISTRY OF ST. LUKE'S CHURCH

2.3 MILLION MEALS

200+

weekly home deliveries
to older adults



NEIGHBORHOOD
MARKETS SERVING

360+

families weekly

100+

children and young
adults with special
needs helping to run
our program

2,564

families
VISIT CHOICE PANTRY

FOOD TRUCK

100+

meals per run

637

guests connected
with accessible
medical care



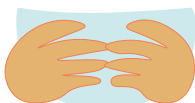
WEEKLY DELIVERIES TO
FAMILIES

80+

76 community
partners

10-25

warming center
visits per day



2,000 +
VOLUNTEERS

THANK YOU

SOUP KITCHEN
50-70
daily guests



42 community
partner meal
sites



46,000

items repurposed via
Toni's Closet