



## **HG Realtor Foundation donates to Food Bank; supports Westchester BackPack Program**

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White Plains, NY The Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation's (HG Realtor Foundation) \$5,000 donation to the Food Bank for Westchester has helped to supply funding for the Elmsford-based charity's BackPack Program, designed to help alleviate child hunger. Created in 2009, this program provides Westchester's at-risk children with nutritious, easy-to-prepare food for weekends and school vacations.

Members of the Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation Committee recently volunteered at the Food Bank warehouse to assist in the packing of food bags for backpacks distributed to various schools and community centers throughout Westchester County.

Last year, the Backpack Program served 3,769 Westchester children each month with family-friendly foods such as soups, macaroni and cheese, cereals, pancake mix, applesauce, raisins and other non-perishable foods.

"Sometimes, this is the only food they're getting over the weekends," said Tamar Jacobson, manager of corporate engagement and events for the Food Bank of Westchester. "We pack about six pounds of food in each backpack."

Children who qualify for free school lunches and snacks will also qualify for this program, which is income-restricted. Typically, the backpacks are distributed to various schools and community centers throughout the county. Because the Food Bank orders in large quantities and also receives food donations, their average cost of food for the backpack is about \$1.62.

The Backpack Program receives funding from private donations, Westchester County and Feeding American, a national organization. "People all over the county are affected," added Jacobson. "Today about one in five people are struggling with hunger here in Westchester, and about one in three of that group is a child. Most of these people are also working, but they're spending so much money on rent that they can't afford food."

For over 28 years, the Food Bank for Westchester has led the fight against hunger in Westchester County, serving 300 frontline programs that provide food directly to the 200,000 county residents who are hungry or food insecure. Food Bank for Westchester supplies 95 percent of all food distributed annually across the region's food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and daycare and residential programs – delivering over 8.4 million pounds of food and 7 million meals to people. Food

Bank for Westchester's collaboration with major retailers and corporations, and its expertise in food procurement, storage, and distribution, turns every monetary donation into fresh food provided for our community.

Established in 2003, The Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation is the charitable arm of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, serving more than 10,500 Realtors in the lower Hudson Valley and Manhattan.

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors is the second largest Realtor Association in New York, and one of the largest in the country. It owns and operates the Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service (HGMLS), offering more than 22,000 properties in the Bronx, Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster counties. It is among the top 50 largest MLSs in the country.

The Hudson Gateway Realtors Foundation is currently accepting applications from lower Hudson Valley 501 (c) (3) charities and non-profit organizations interested in obtaining funds for their organization or for specific events.

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