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Farash Foundation grant allows Foodlink to expand reach into more RCSD schools

More school pantries planned for the 2019-20 school year

ROCHESTER – The Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation has awarded Foodlink \$25,000 to help expand and launch multiple school pantries within the Rochester City School District.

The grant allows RCSD Community Schools to join Foodlink as member agencies, and purchase vital equipment, supplies and food for their students. The RCSD’s Community Schools adopt a more holistic approach to education and help connect families to a wide array of services, so that educators can focus on teaching and students can focus on learning.

“Food insecurity is a barrier to academic success for thousands of local students,” said Holli Budd, Executive Director of the Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation. “We’re proud to support Foodlink and the Rochester City School District to ensure that Rochester’s future leaders have the nourishment they need to thrive.”

East High – one of 10 designated Community Schools – has already partnered with Foodlink to implement their onsite school food and resource pantry. Mary Mcleod Bethune School No. 45 joined Foodlink’s network in 2018.

“Unfortunately, material insecurity is a reality for many of our scholars,” said Jason Taylor, Community Coordinator for East’s Upper and Lower schools. “Each year around 180 scholars access our pantry to alleviate their food insecurity. Not only does this food serve these scholars, but it also supports around 800 of their family members. Having a school pantry as a resource allows scholars to focus on what they should be doing in school, like learning and growing, rather than worrying about where their next meal is going to come from.”

Other schools that will become new Foodlink member agencies through this grant funding include: Nathaniel Rochester Community School No. 3, Roberto Clemente School No. 8, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. School No. 9, Enrico Fermi School No. 17, Abraham Lincoln School No. 22, RISE Community School 106, James Monroe High School, and Northeast College High School. RCSD's Office of Adult & Career Education Services (OACES) also will join its member agency network.

Aside from establishing a pantry at each school, Foodlink is seeking to broaden the partnership by offering additional programmatic support through its Curbside Market, nutrition education workshops and food safety trainings.

“Expanding our emergency food network into more schools is a deliberate and necessary step for us to ensure students and their families have adequate access to nutritious food,” said Julia Tedesco, Foodlink President & CEO. “We’re so grateful for the Farash Foundation for giving Rochester schools the resources they need to support their students’ basic needs.”

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About Foodlink

Foodlink is a community food resource center and the Feeding America food bank serving Allegany, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties. For 40 years, we have leveraged the power of food to transform lives, end hunger and build healthier communities. Through good stewardship, innovation and collaboration, Foodlink mobilizes a diverse network of partners and stakeholders to eradicate both the symptoms and root causes of hunger.

Our suite of food access programs provides new access points to nutritious and affordable food in underserved communities. Our team of nutrition educators empowers people at risk of diet-related illness with the skills and knowledge to make healthy choices. Our food banking operations distribute millions of pounds of food to a network of hundreds of human service agencies throughout our service area. The Foodlink Community Kitchen prepares and delivers thousands of meals daily for Rochester children, supports our regional agricultural economy by slicing locally grown apples, and hosts a one-of-a-kind career empowerment program to train individuals with barriers to employment for careers in the regional food industry. Learn more about how we are creating healthy futures for every community we serve at www.foodlinkny.org, or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram at @foodlinkny.

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