



NEWS

Every year brings unique challenges for our community, but **stories of opportunity and perseverance** always emerge. These past two years have been no exception, and I could not be prouder of Foodlink's staff and our **collective response to this ongoing public health crisis.**

With this newsletter, we want to introduce you to a couple of the **'Faces of Foodlink'** behind the scenes — the folks who put in the work and **live and breathe our mission every day.** We also set

aside some space to celebrate the **incredible progress made by our community kitchen, our renewed commitment to advocacy,** and a nod to **our vibrant, new fleet!**

All of this would not be possible without your **steadfast support.** **Thank you** for all that you have done to support us this past year, and prepare us for another busy year ahead.

Julia Fedesco

The Faces of Foodlink



Name: Aleaha

Title: Curbside Market Operator

How does your job support Foodlink's mission or benefit the community? Curbside helps us get affordable food into the community.

If you could tell the people we serve one thing, what would it be? Every Foodlink department brings something to the table that allows us to target the greater cause.

If you could tell our donors one thing, what would it be? Get involved. People can learn more about what goes on behind the scenes and different ways they could help and gain a better understanding of where their money is going.

What is your favorite thing about your job? I get to be in the community, on the front lines, engaging with the people we serve. 🍴



Name: Josh

Title: Production Lead, Community Kitchen

How does your job support Foodlink's mission or benefit the community? I give my all to make sure kids are getting good, healthy food.

If you could tell the people we serve one thing, what would it be? I'm glad they picked Foodlink. They won't be disappointed in the food quality, and I hope they get everything they need.

If you could tell our donors one thing, what would it be? Thank you for donating to the cause. Without donors, helpers, and volunteers, Foodlink wouldn't be what it is.

What is your favorite thing about your job? Cooking for and feeding the community. 🍴

Want to meet more Faces of Foodlink?

This series will continue on our Facebook and Instagram pages (@FoodlinkNY). Follow us to read more about our staff and the work we do!



Nutritious, tasty meals



The month of **March is National Nutrition Month**, a time when everyone is encouraged to **learn about developing healthy eating habits and making informed food choices.**

At the Foodlink Community Kitchen, preparing nutritious

meals is our year-round mission. **Our kitchen team members not only meet federal nutrition guidelines, they exceed them. Every day, more than 10,000 healthy meals are distributed** to schools and after-school sites in Rochester—more than ever before.

Claire Savini, Foodlink’s Child Nutrition Programs Manager, works with Foodlink’s executive chef and talented kitchen staff to strike a balance between healthy meals and

meals that our community’s youth would enjoy. Some of her **favorite menu items are the cheeseburger sliders and BBQ chicken.** Not only are they delicious, but they are packed with nutrients.

Claire said the kitchen avoids using canned vegetables and fruit, and instead uses **fresh ingredients.** The kitchen’s **state-of-the-art ovens** — called Rational ovens — cook the food slowly with a steaming method that helps retain the taste and texture of our meals, and ensures nutrients aren’t lost in the cooking process. Thanks to Foodlink’s innovative thinkers, the Community Kitchen is producing **food that is both delicious and healthy!** 🍴



Our advocacy efforts go national



On Jan. 19, Foodlink President & CEO **Julia Tedesco** was invited to give testimony in front of a Congressional committee about how the nation can be better equipped to respond to future disasters or public health emergencies. Tedesco

joined a panel of experts on a Zoom call with the **House Rules' subcommittee hearing on Legislative & Budget Process** (chaired by our local Congressman, Joe Morelle) to summarize Foodlink's pandemic response, and advocate for a stronger investment in the nonprofit sector.

"Nonprofits are not merely a group of small charities trying to do good," Tedesco said. "We are oftentimes the engine that generates innovative solutions to complex problems in our society. When the government

needed to find ways to distribute food, PPE, vaccines, and information into underserved communities, it relied on the infrastructure, expertise, and flexibility of community-based nonprofit organizations."

Tedesco made it clear that the social safety net needs to be strengthened to adequately lift families out of poverty. Programs such as SNAP (formerly food stamps) are our nation's first line of defense against hunger. **Nonprofits such as food banks, however, remain critical for disaster response.**

"The pandemic has also shown us that the federal government has a real stake in the operational efficiency, infrastructure and capacity, and innovation of the nonprofit sector, especially when responding to disasters," Tedesco said.



A new look for our fleet



If you have traveled around Rochester lately, we hope you've seen some of our **newly designed vehicles** out on the road, delivering food and meals to hundreds of our local partners! Foodlink introduced a **new logo** and new branding in December of 2020 — timed to correlate to the launch of our **redesigned website**. Today, nearly every truck in our fleet, which includes the food bank, kitchen and Curbside Market vehicles, now **showcases our new logo and bright, colorful brand**. 🍴



VIDEO STORIES

Foodlink in the spotlight



Did you know **Foodlink unveiled a handful of new videos** for its televised fundraiser in January? To learn more about our operations, partnerships with schools, work in rural communities, and the Foodlink Community Café, **scan the code below!** 🍴



Kudos for the ops team

Foodlink's operations team deserves huge praise after passing another **AIB audit** with flying colors earlier this year! The audit ensures Foodlink is following all **proper food safety and storage protocols** while we distribute millions of pounds of food annually to the community. **We tied our highest score ever, a true team effort!**

