

2019 WINS

ISSUED JANUARY 2020

A PROGRAM OF THE
CENTER FOR FOOD ACTION

Hunger Free New Jersey



Fueling Change. Feeding All.

REDUCING HUNGER IN THE GARDEN STATE

ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Advancing efforts to reduce hunger among college students. Fighting harmful federal efforts to cut food assistance. Feeding more New Jersey children. Engaging state and federal officials in efforts to feed all New Jersey residents.

These are all results Hunger Free New Jersey – along with its many partners – realized in 2019.

From the Hunger Free Campus Act to changes in state rules that provided increased food aid to some residents, these wins mean the difference between hunger and healthy food for tens of thousands of New Jersey residents – children, working parents, the elderly, the disabled, veterans and others who struggle to put food on the table. Here is a look at the highlights of 2019.

A RECAP OF 2019 WINS AGAINST HUNGER THAT BROUGHT US CLOSER TO OUR COLLECTIVE VISION OF ACHIEVING A HUNGER FREE NEW JERSEY.

CHANGING POLICY & PRACTICE SO EVERY NEW JERSEY RESIDENT HAS HEALTHY FOOD TO EAT, EVERY SINGLE DAY.



COMBATING CHILDHOOD HUNGER

GROWING SUMMER AND AFTERSCHOOL MEALS

Hunger Free New Jersey tracks progress in boosting participation in three key child nutrition programs – summer and afterschool meals and school breakfast.

Our annual reports hold communities and schools accountable for their efforts to feed hungry children, while equipping local advocates with tools to make a difference in their own backyards. These reports also serve to draw media attention to the issue of childhood hunger.

In addition, HFNJ's summer meals report kicked off a statewide awareness campaign that helped inform parents across New Jersey about the availability of summertime nutrition for their children.

Maximizing participation in these child nutrition programs brings federal dollars into New Jersey communities to feed hungry kids. We will continue these efforts in 2020.

HFNJ WORKS LOCALLY TO FEED KIDS

In addition to our statewide work, HFNJ organizes local communities to team up to launch new or expanded summer meals and afterschool meals programs and switch to serving breakfast after the bell. This has resulted in effective community partnerships that are reducing childhood hunger in towns across New Jersey.

One great example in 2019 was Dover, where the city and faith-based and community organizations partnered to launch a brand new summer meals program with fun activities for Dover children. The program attracted about 50 kids a day. Plans for 2020 expansion are already underway.

Learn more at njfoodforthought.org.



ADVANCING CHILD NUTRITION LEGISLATION

Hunger Free New Jersey worked with state lawmakers to craft legislation that will provide more struggling students with free lunch.

Signed into law in January 2020, A-5855/4200 will provide \$4.5 million in state funds to pay the cost of meals served to students who pay a reduced price for those meals, helping families who struggle to make ends meet.

We also worked with legislators on a measure that would prevent schools from taking action against students whose families fall behind on school meals, requiring instead more proactive, parent-focused solutions. We are hopeful a strong bill will be passed in 2020.

And we are working to ensure successful implementation of two legislative mandates that went into effect in 2019. One requires high-poverty districts to participate in the Summer Food Service Program. That other requires high-

poverty schools to serve breakfast after the bell. We will be reporting on the results of those measures in 2020.

CHILDHOOD HUNGER ON THE DECLINE

Since the launch of the Food for Thought Campaign in 2011, New Jersey schools and communities have achieved a 65 percent increase in school breakfast participation, a 38 percent jump in the number of kids served summer meals and a 34 percent spike in afterschool suppers served.

This likely has contributed to a decrease in hungry kids. From 2013 to 2017, the number of “food insecure” children dropped an encouraging 24 percent, according to Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap report.

That’s great news for children and families across the Garden State!

Learn more at njfoodforthought.org.



EXPANDING FOOD AID FOR THOUSANDS OF NEW JERSEYANS

STATE CHANGES RULE TO BOOST BENEFITS

In 2019, New Jersey lawmakers restored a provision that gives residents who receive energy assistance the opportunity to receive higher monthly benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, aka food stamps).

We also worked with state officials to simplify the SNAP application process for elderly applicants, making it easier for them to receive this critical nutrition assistance. The elderly are among the least likely group to reap the benefits of SNAP, even when they qualify and desperately need the help.

Hunger Free New Jersey continues to lead the SNAP Working Group, which advances ways to expand SNAP participation across the state. And we are gearing up to release the first-ever report examining SNAP participation on the county level.

Stay tuned!

FIGHTING SNAP CUTS ON THE FEDERAL LEVEL

An unprecedented number of attacks on SNAP at the federal level were launched in 2019. Through legislative measures and program rule changes, these proposals would take food from vulnerable citizens.

With our many partners, Hunger Free New Jersey rallied opposition to these measures. We successfully delayed implementation of a proposed SNAP cut for many low-income families. But other harmful measures were approved, with two being challenged in court.

To shore up opposition to these proposals, we held a Congressional roundtable, educating our elected officials in Washington D.C. and solidifying their support in opposing these harmful cuts.



FIGHTING CAMPUS HUNGER

HUNGER FREE CAMPUS ACT PROMISES TO FEED HUNGRY COLLEGE STUDENTS

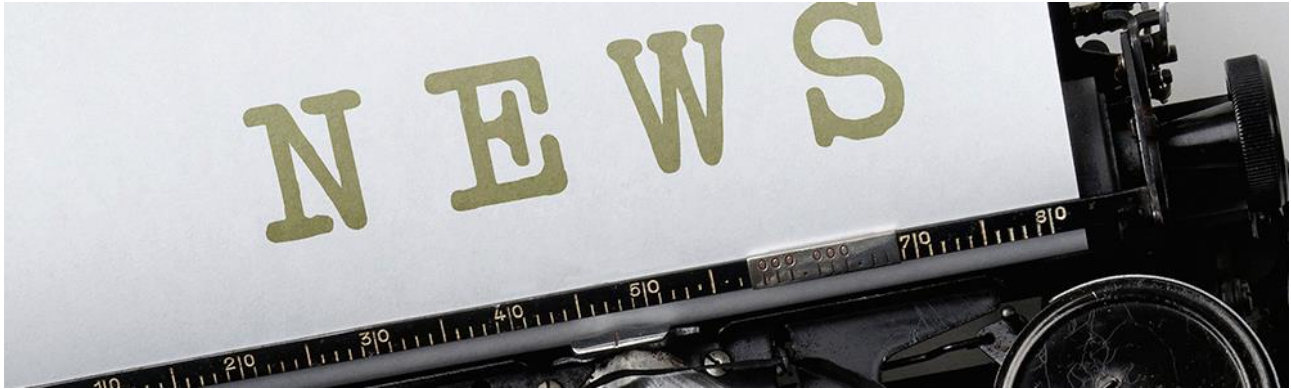
This important piece of legislation, signed into law in May 2019, provides grants to help colleges establish hunger taskforces, assist students in enrolling in SNAP and allow students to use SNAP benefits at campus stores, among other measures.

We are now working with the college community to help colleges apply for grants and implement successful solutions to college hunger.

PACKAGE OF BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW TO ADVANCE HUNGER SOLUTIONS

In addition to the Campus Free Hunger Act, the Legislature passed and Gov. Phil Murphy signed other measures that promise to address food desserts, reduce food waste and expand awareness of programs that provide food assistance.

Roughly half of community college students face hunger, often forcing them to choose between completing their education or putting food on the table.



RAISING THE VOLUME

SPOTLIGHTING HUNGER ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS HELPS SPUR CHANGE

In addition to using data to measure progress and spur change, HFNJ's strategic communication elevates the issue of hunger and gets people to pay attention. In 2019, we continued to strengthen our communications efforts, including deploying a summer meals awareness campaign that reached tens of thousands of people with important information about summertime nutrition for kids.

Overall, Hunger Free New Jersey's efforts earned nearly 100 media hits, 200,000 social media impressions and generated messages from hundreds of supporters sent directly to our elected officials, all adding their voices to the need to address hunger in the Garden State.

All this attention helped to advance our many hunger solutions that will mean the difference between going hungry and having healthy food to eat for tens of thousands of New Jersey residents.

Sign up for our e-news at hungerfreenj.org & join efforts to fight hunger in the Garden State.

ADELE NAMED ONE OF NJ'S MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN – AGAIN!

For the second year in a row, HFNJ Director Adele LaTourette received well-deserved recognition for her leadership in fighting hunger in New Jersey when she was named on Senator Loretta Weinberg's 2019 Women Power List.

Along with cabinet members, chiefs of staff, business leaders and other strong influencers, Adele was recognized for her role in shaping public policy that moves us toward the goal of a hunger-free state.



OUR PARTNERS

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

In 2019, food banks and food pantries across New Jersey stepped up to hold events, meet with elected officials and engage their networks in our advocacy efforts. State agencies, especially the New Jersey Departments of Agriculture and Human Services, worked diligently to expand and enhance their efforts to feed those in need. We also forged new partnerships at the local and state levels.

Our fellow advocacy organizations helped rally the troops, proving there is strength in numbers. And our national partners at the American Dairy Association Northeast and Food Research & Action Center provided invaluable assistance on many fronts.

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS!

As a non-partisan, non-profit organization, we rely on foundation support and private donations to conduct this critical work.

We would like to extend a very special thanks to Albertson's/HungerIs, Food Research & Action Center, Partners for Health, Reinvestment Fund, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Walmart for their invaluable support in 2019.

Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter @hungerfreenj.

Hunger Free New Jersey is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that relies on support from individuals and foundations to support our work. To donate, visit hungerfreenj.org.