

# the Feed

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2021

## PHILABUNDANCE

MEMBER OF  
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AMERICA**



# From the Director's Table

Dear Friend,

I hope this issue of The Feed finds you happy and healthy as we all settle into a new year, one full of possibility for Philabundance and all those we serve.

It's been nearly a year since life as we knew it changed with the onset of COVID-19. We have seen firsthand that the consequences of this pandemic do not discriminate and have left so many throughout our region in need of emergency food assistance.

While there is no doubt that a vaccine has put us on the road to recovery, for so many of our neighbors, it will take much longer to recover from the financial and economic hardship of the last twelve months.

But, thanks to the support of you — our loyal donors — we can ease that burden, and continue our work to drive hunger from our communities and end hunger for good.

On the pages that follow, you'll find stories of the volunteers, donors and partners who embody our mission and inspire our work, reminding us all of the difference we can make together.

Despite its challenges, 2020 showed us what we're capable of and was further proof that our collective impact can — and will — change lives.

On behalf of the entire Philabundance family, thank you for your continued partnership and tireless dedication.



With gratitude,

**Loree D. Jones**  
Chief Executive Officer

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## YOU HELP PROVIDE FRESH ACCESS FOR ALL

For many residents of Chester, Pennsylvania, fresh and healthy food options are by no means guaranteed.

In a community with many living at or below the poverty line, the staff at CityTeam Chester witness firsthand the impact that their food pantry program has on the city's residents, according to Anna Donahoe, Director of Women's and Neighborhood Programs.

"Chester is a bit of a food desert; many of our clients don't even have access to a grocery store," she says. "We have people come from pretty far away — many walk or use public transit — just

because they know they'll have fresh options."

As a Philabundance agency, CityTeam Chester has reliable access to fresh food, supporting its food distribution efforts to individuals and families throughout the city. It's a partnership that allows CityTeam to meet the needs of the community, while also providing consistent access and a degree of choice to residents.

"We have a client who is vegan, another who doesn't eat pork," says Cindy Klein, Food Outreach Coordinator. "It makes me feel good that they can adhere to

a lifestyle that suits their belief systems, and still have access to fresh, healthy alternatives."

It's that commitment to supplying fresh, healthy food that makes Philabundance such a resource and a valued partner, says Anna.

"For the people we serve, especially in our kitchen, it might be their only meal of the day. So to be able to offer a well-balanced meal, it means the world."



Igniting Hope. Restoring Lives.

## ADVOCACY BEET



**Kate Scully**  
Director of Government Affairs

Traditionally, Philabundance has relied heavily on private donations and grants, only receiving a small portion of our funding from government programs. COVID quickly changed that and as the government stepped up with programs, we worked to utilize any food or funds for the people we serve while also advocating for more funding for nutrition programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

One program that played a large role in our work to address the increased need was the USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box Program. This program provided much needed pre-boxed food that was, for the most part, shipped directly to our agency network. The boxes included quality products that were much needed at a time when we are seeing a 60% increase in people coming to our agency partners. The program, however, did come with some challenges in how it was administered and if it continues we look forward to helping make it run better.

# You Made It All Possible!

To all of our Philabundance family,

One of the things I like to do as a year ends is to take a few minutes and think back about who I was a year ago, and how I've changed in the past twelve months. I'm always surprised at how much change can occur in that short period of time, especially if we're trying to grow in a particular way.

When I do that with Philabundance and think back at where we were a year ago, and what we can do today, it's really remarkable. A year ago, we announced a search for a new CEO. We were moving through construction on a new building, expanding a catering business, and were very pleased with ourselves at the thought of distributing 30 million pounds of food to those in need in our community. We worked the way we always worked, and we did it well. No one had ever heard of a COVID.

What 2020 has shown us more than anything is of how much more we were capable. In the past twelve months we've welcomed a new CEO, and more recently a new CFO. We have radically changed the way we source, store and distribute food. We've opened the new Philabundance Community Kitchen (PCK) building and grown that program, while maintaining our path to End Hunger for Good.

We've learned how to work at a distance from each other, and (sadly) sometimes even at a distance from those we serve. We've done Camp Out in our cars, and drive-through distributions in stadium parking lots. And we've received overwhelming community support throughout — from grandmothers in their wills to kids with their nickel jars, from the Fraud Street Run to Good Pizza and from rock stars, film stars and football stars. **As a result, we distributed over 50 million pounds of food to people in greater need than ever before.**

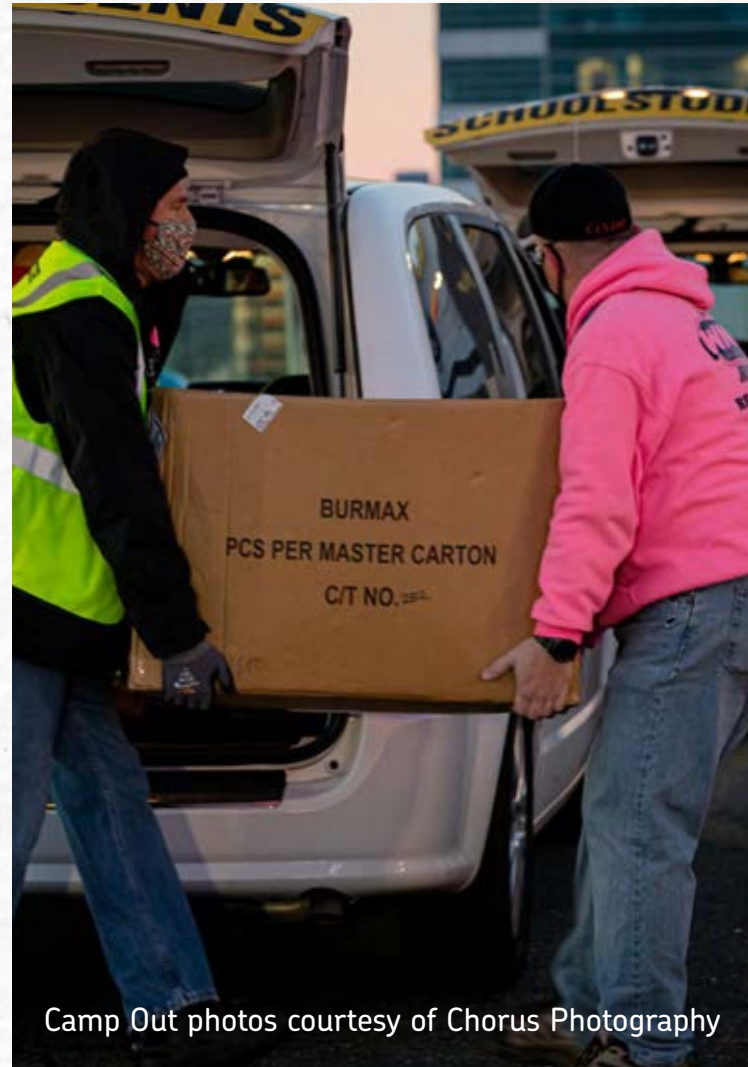
None of this would have been possible without your dedication and passion, your generosity and commitment. We appreciate what you do for your community, for each other and for Philabundance.

Happy New Year.



In gratitude,

**John F. Hollway**  
Board Chair



Camp Out photos courtesy of Chorus Photography



Camp Out photos courtesy of Chorus Photography



Camp Out photos courtesy of Chorus Photography



## Thank You for Helping Fight Hunger

The 2020 holiday season looked a lot different for many in the Philadelphia region, including Philabundance. We are so grateful to our wonderful donors and friends in the community who came together — whether virtually or at safe distances — to ensure that the annual events we have come to rely on to stock our warehouses through the tough winter months were successful.

- Over 600 Porsche, Mopar, Tesla, Corvette and Jeep club members participated in a literal

food drive. The Phil-A-Trunk drive-through donation event raised an astonishing 42,155 pounds of food and \$22,325 for Philabundance!

- Despite major changes to the schedule of events in order to maintain social distance and keep all participants safe, the 93.3 WMMR Preston & Steve Camp Out for Hunger kicked off its 23rd annual event on November 16, 2020. By the end of the week-long event, monetary donations in excess of \$1.7 million were collected and volunteers had logged over 200 hours unloading more than 2.5 million pounds of food from generous individuals, groups and businesses. Special thanks and congratulations to Business Challenge winners: Subaru, Comcast and Unilever.
- In what is usually an in-studio evening of generosity, the 2020 6abc Telethon raised nearly \$63,000 to help drive hunger

from our communities while maintaining social distance with Philabundance staff taking calls from the Galloway warehouse location. We are so grateful to 6abc for being able to adapt their annual telethon, food drive and hunger series to ensure everyone in our region remained informed about the increases in hunger and ways to help our neighbors in need. The six-part holiday hunger series can be found on our website. (Look for the 6ABC Holiday Hunger Series in the News section under "About Us" on the home page.)

- The National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP) conducted a fundraiser beginning in early November to benefit Philabundance. At an event on December 12, 2020 at the Navy Yard, the group gathered to donate more than 40,000 pounds of dry food product collected. Thank you NAAAP for being fantastic partners!

## EPSTEINS LET PASSIONS FUEL HUNGER RELIEF

In his business ventures, his philanthropic interests — and even his hobbies — Gene Epstein's passion is undeniable. But, above all else, it's his desire to help others that provides him the greatest sense of purpose.

"I've always believed it's imperative to do whatever you can to help others," says Gene. "That's why I'm doing everything in my power to support organizations that are helping those in need."

The Bucks County philanthropist, who found success in the automotive and commercial real estate industries, is the namesake of the Gene & Marlene Epstein Humanitarian Fund, a charitable organization committed to causes that further the interests of vulnerable populations. In the wake of the ongoing global pandemic, the critical work of Philabundance became increasingly clear, according to Gene.

"Every day, people are going hungry," he says. "Unless everyone is willing to turn to their neighbor and offer them food and shelter, we must do more."

Recently, the Epsteins did just that. Gene, an antique car collector, sold one of his most beloved possessions; a 1969 Mercedes Benz that once belonged to Elvis Presley. Proceeds from the sale went to support local and national food banks.

"We thought, 'what's more important — knowing more people have food

and shelter or keeping this car just to look at it," he says. "We couldn't sell it quick enough!"

It's that mindset that Gene hopes will encourage others to contribute what they can through their Helping the Hungry Challenge, an initiative to drive donations to Philabundance and provide emergency food assistance to more individuals and families throughout the region.

With support from the Gene & Marlene Epstein Humanitarian Fund, donations received in response to this issue of The Feed will be matched up to \$10,000, providing every donor the opportunity to have an even greater impact, says Gene.

"Now, more than ever, people understand the plight of being hungry," he says.

### UNIVERSAL CHARITABLE DEDUCTION IN EFFECT FOR 2021

The pandemic relief bill signed at the end of President Trump's term extends the \$300 universal, above-the-line deduction for non-itemizers through 2021 and also allows joint filers to deduct up to \$600. This deduction only applies to cash gifts and does not apply to cash gifts to donor-advised funds or supporting organizations. The bill also extends the temporary increase of the adjusted gross income limits for cash gifts through 2021 (100% of AGI for individuals, 25% for corporations).

## A CALL TO ACTION

As Litty Paolone approached retirement in 2020, she knew she wanted to put her newfound time to good use. What she didn't realize was just how much time she'd have.

Litty, an employee of the city of Philadelphia, was out of work for nearly three months, and began working with Philabundance as part of its COVID-19 relief team.

"Volunteering amid this pandemic, it humbled me," she says. "I'm guilty — we all take things for granted. Who would have thought something like this would happen?"

It didn't take long for Litty to become a regular fixture at the Galloway warehouse where she assembled food boxes for seniors and got to interact with Philabundance's agency partners as they picked up supplies for their communities.

"I probably would have never realized without seeing it firsthand how many people need food who don't have it," she says.

Since then, Litty, who officially retired in August, hasn't slowed down. She continues to volunteer four days a week — something she says helps her stay positive in such tough times.

"Philabundance has shown me that there is hope in this world," she says. "They are here for everyone — no discrimination — and it makes me feel good knowing I'm just a little piece of that."



*Marlene & Gene*



*Litty*

## BIDEN VISITS PHILABUNDANCE ON MLK DAY

Just two days prior to his inauguration, President Joe Biden and First Lady Dr. Jill Biden, along with their children and grandchildren, joined Philabundance staff and volunteers in paying tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. and the spirit of volunteerism and public service for which he stood. We were honored to have the Biden family work alongside us, to learn how Philabundance works, learn about our accomplishments and the challenges we will face in the coming years.

Feeding America CEO Claire Babineaux-Fontenot also was onsite

to help with packing boxes of food that would later be distributed throughout Philadelphia and Delaware County. It was an extraordinary moment we won't soon forget.

Martin Luther King Day is always a day of service, not only at Philabundance, but throughout our region. Ordinary Philadelphians participated in a wide range of public service projects. This MLK day was special. Along with the President of the United States, we paused to pay tribute to the extraordinary life and legacy of Dr. King, and reflect on the lessons he taught us: Equality and justice for all.

We still have much to do. This COVID crisis has just increased a need that was already there and brought so many new people to need food pantries, cupboards, and emergency kitchens. Recovery for our communities from this pandemic will be long and we will need continued and expanded support from government and others to keep people fed.

For links to media coverage of the Bidens' visit to Philabundance as well as information on all the ways you can partner with us to drive hunger from our communities, visit our website [www.philabundance.org](http://www.philabundance.org).

You can become a  
Philabundance *Ambassador*  
for hunger relief, too!

Please visit  
[philabundance.org/volunteer/ambassador](http://philabundance.org/volunteer/ambassador)  
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to learn more.

