



## **MIDDLESEX COUNTY IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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#### **Independent Collections Driving MCFOODS Holiday Distributions**

Many of the area's struggling residents will have a lot to be thankful for this holiday season, as an outpouring of community donations has replenished the Middlesex County food bank's waning supplies.

Only weeks ago, the Middlesex County Food Organization and Outreach Distribution Services (MCFOODS) was facing a troubling outlook.

"Our supplies were dwindling, and all we could do was hope for the best and prepare for the worst," said MCFOODS Project Manager Jennifer Apostol. "When there are fewer donations, it translates into smaller distributions for families and individuals, many of whom rely on our food to survive."

But in the past few weeks, a cache of canned goods, household products and personal items has streamed in from independent collections, amounting to 17.7 tons in donations. Organizations like Coca Cola in South Brunswick with 20,726 pounds, Monroe Township's senior communities with 13,140 pounds, Old Bridge High School's Junior ROTC with 8,550 pounds, Rutgers Against Hunger with 2,300 pounds, Randstad Staffing in Edison with 1,150 pounds, Right Answers with 850 pounds, the Prudential Financial with 650 pounds and HomeBridge Financial Services with 450 pounds came through for the region's less fortunate in a big way.

"We're always seeking out someone in the community to help," said retired Chief Master Sgt. Tom Pitzer, one of Old Bridge High School's Junior ROTC program heads. "We're helping these kids put their efforts into a good cause, and this is a good cause."

A flurry of sizeable donations also came from the Edison AARP, Von E. Mauger Middle School in Middlesex, the East Brunswick MOMS Club, Speedway in Woodbridge, Kiddie Academy of North Brunswick, Centenary United Methodist Church of Metuchen, Bright Horizons at Spotswood, South Brunswick High School's gymnastic team and Johnny on the Spot in Old Bridge.

Of those tallies, the county's food bank received some 22,476 pounds or 11.23 tons of food between Thursday and Friday.

With Thanksgiving just days away, the influx arrived just in the nick of time too, MCFOODS organizers say.

To put these numbers into perspective, MCFOODS routine distributions, which are coordinated through the Middlesex County Improvement Authority, allots in the vicinity of 15 tons of food to 40-plus local food emergency and support agencies each week.

"In this case, there's really not enough thanks to go around," Apostol said. "These donations have made a huge impact on our supply levels this year. But believe it or not, our biggest challenges mount after the holidays, when the season of giving passes and the associated drives dry up."

For further instructions on sponsoring a MCFOODS collection, log onto the MCIA's website at [www.mciauth.com](http://www.mciauth.com) or call 609-655-5141.

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