

A New Kind of Adoption

Posted At : January 8, 2010 11:49 AM | Posted By : Food Bank Staff
Related Categories: In the News, Volunteering

by Krystine Keeler

In October 2009, a [diverse team of Food Bank staff](#) was called together to develop the Food Bank For New York City's latest volunteer project — the [Adopt a Food Program](#) initiative, a partnership with Mayor Bloomberg's [NYC Service](#).

We began by reaching out to soup kitchens and food pantries in the Food Bank's [citywide network](#), asking them to name their top three priorities that a [volunteer](#) could help with. Choices ranged from grantwriting to maintenance and site beautification.

With our network's input in hand, it was then the public's turn. Kicking off the initiative, Mayor Bloomberg joined Food Bank President and CEO Lucy Cabrera for a [press conference at our Hunts Point warehouse](#), asking individuals and groups to "adopt" a local food program. Adopt a Food Program volunteers are asked to commit three months to a year of their time to assist one of our city's food assistance programs. During this time they will work side-by-side with their program's staff to create the basis for long-term capacity and service improvements — enabling that program to better serve its community over time.

Now that we have a list of food programs and their needs, as well as a list of volunteers who want to adopt a program, we — [Phillip Cooke](#), [Amruta Kale](#) and myself, the Food Bank's [NYC Civic Corps members in residence](#) — have begun the matching process. Just a few weeks ago, Ms. Nayah Paul made a six-month commitment to be a grantwriter at the [Jamaica Hispanic Seventh Day Adventist Church](#). Quick on the heels of that introduction, our second match was made: Ms. Navjot Kaur made a six-month commitment as a fundraiser for [New Life Food & Clothing Pantry](#) in Elmhurst, Queens.

We are all looking forward to making many matches in the future!

[Learn more about adopting your own food program!](#)