

Our Very Own Bank of America Hero

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by *Brian Pham*

O'Neil Hutchinson, a dedicated Food Bank **volunteer**, **guest blogger** for Bank on It and a good friend of mine was recently named a **Bank of America Hero** in recognition of all the work he has done at our **Community Kitchen & Food Pantry of West Harlem**.



O'Neil Hutchinson and Jeff Barker, New York City President, Bank of America

While we think all of our volunteers deserve awards and recognition, we're especially glad that Bank of America is able to help us celebrate O'Neil's dedication to the community. Working nights on computer networking, O'Neil has been preparing, cooking and serving meals at our Community Kitchen two to three days a week for almost two years! Even if you ignore the extraordinary amount of time he donates to the Food Bank and forget for a moment how consistently he volunteers week after week, anyone who sees O'Neil in action immediately recognizes how much of a difference he makes at the kitchen. O'Neil takes his role at the Community Kitchen very seriously, and his dedication to the New Yorkers we serve is immediately evident. Let's just say he has been confused as an actual Food Bank employee on more than one occasion — sometimes by actual Food Bank staff!

And — to top it all off — O'Neil's award was given as part of Bank of America's **Neighborhood Excellence Initiative**, which donates \$5,000 to the organizations its heroes serve. Thanks to this gift given in O'Neil's honor, the Food Bank will be able to provide 25,000 meals for New Yorkers in need. That is enough to provide nutritious meals for a family of five for close to four years! We couldn't thank O'Neil enough for his phenomenal dedication to serving the community, and we are so gratified that we are not the only ones to recognize him as a hero. And thank you, Bank of America, for bringing attention to the value of volunteers and helping to provide meals for hungry New Yorkers.