

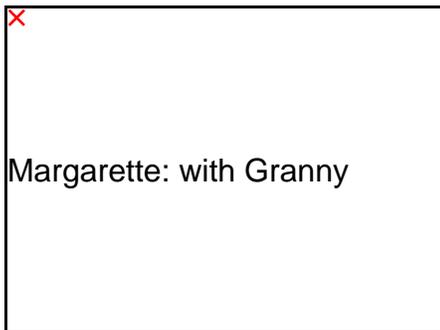
# Show and Tell with Granny

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[By Margarett Purvis](#)

August 1st marked my 10 month anniversary at the Food Bank as CEO. I'm lucky enough to have experienced many high points to be sure but there was one that I've been anticipating that finally happened. My Granny was healthy enough to fly in from Mississippi for a visit. I felt like a gleeful little girl watching her roll up at the airport. I couldn't stop smiling as we hugged and kissed as soon as we saw each other. For me, my granny represents the most authentic and natural part of who I am. She is a microcosm of my upbringing, my family, my faith and all of the things I hold most dear. Her jokes, like those from my mom, are the ones that make me laugh the hardest. Her memory is not what it used to be but she never lets you forget how much she loves her family.



*Margarett and Granny, at the Food Bank Warehouse*

This is not my granny's first visit to the City. When Hurricane Katrina impacted our family, I flew her up here during my first stint at the Food Bank. She joined me for that year's Agency Conference. It was the perfect distraction. In a room filled with servant leaders, my granny felt surrounded by like spirits. In every room during the day she met ladies and gentlemen who had dedicated their lives to serving others. She was miles away from the Magnolia state and right at home.

During this trip I couldn't wait to reintroduce my granny to my new home. What would she think of my new apartment? Would she enjoy church service? How would she react to the buildings that she loved so much the last time? I knew I wanted to show her our newly renovated offices. Since I learned THRIFTYNESS from her as well I knew that she would get a kick out of the fact that we paid nothing for any of the changes. It was going to be a great day starting with a walk around Harlem.

As a Double Decker bus drove by I wondered if she remembered her time atop a similar bus wearing a handmade red cap. Instead she looked at me and said, "I think I would like to do something like that." She didn't remember. As we continued to walk and I became lost in my thoughts about my granny's memories she leaned towards me and said something I will never forget: **"these people are hurting here."**

My granny's eyes have seen many things in their many years of serving her. Some things she remembers, some things have been long since forgotten. As I crafted a list of "best things to show her" I walked away with the lesson that I must never forget. ***As long as the very worst of New York is everyday life for so many of our neighbors, our city will never see its true greatness.*** No amount of glitz, gloss or entertainment will change our visitor's questions about , "how are so many children, seniors and families allowed to struggle to put food on their tables?" Hunger and poverty are stains on a community requiring the collective and sustained elbow grease from all citizens to remove it. Turning our heads and pretending to not see it or worse still, questioning its reality in hopes of initiating an intellectual conversation as a solution can't be acceptable. Allowing any person to be hungry is like giving a green light to a world where basic human dignity is chosen by a coin toss.

I am proud to be a New Yorker again. There is no other city like this one. I will be more proud when my granny feels surrounded by more of her kind in places outside of conference rooms under an orange and white logo. Food Bank For New York City provides an excellent opportunity for regular New Yorkers to go beyond wanting to SEE better to joining an organization and mission in order to **DO better**. In the words of my granny, "Come on in...there's plenty of room."

Find YOUR place by connecting with us at [Volunteer@foodbanknyc.org](mailto:Volunteer@foodbanknyc.org) or [Give@foodbanknyc.org](mailto:Give@foodbanknyc.org)



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