



The Town of Newton, in conjunction with You Give Goods, an online donation entity, recently gathered donations of fresh fruits and vegetables, cereals, pasta and other food for the low-income families served by Project Self-Sufficiency. The food drive, which was conducted completely online, was held from November 2013 – January 2014; delivery of the items took place in mid-February.

YouGiveGoods is a for-profit company which serves as a catalyst for online donations to non-profit organizations and other entities. The company aims to use social networking and online resources to speed the delivery of necessary goods and services to those in need. Newton Town Manager Thomas Russo, Jr. and Marketing Consultant Gina Thomas spearheaded the recent food drive which benefitted Project Self-Sufficiency. During the drive, 22 participants succeeded in donating 755 pounds of food totaling \$1,321.00. The bulk of the items consisted of fresh fruits and vegetables. Boxes of whole grain cereals and pastas, as well as canned goods, were also provided.

Newton Town Manager came up with the idea of conducting an online food drive in Newton after learning of the process from a colleague in another part of the state. “It’s really difficult to get fresh fruit at this time of year. It’s expensive. I didn’t think anything quite like this was happening in our town at the time. It’s an easy thing to do and it is different. We needed a partner to distribute the food, so I reached out to Project Self-Sufficiency. This is helping people who don’t have food resources and getting it to them directly.”

Marketing Consultant Gina Thomas set up the drive on behalf of the Town of Newton. “Doing this food drive was a lot of fun. I got to meet a lot of people and talk about things that are important to me. There are people out there who want to help, and the fact that we have all of these fresh fruits and vegetables makes it all worth the effort.”

“Hunger is real issue for many families in our community, and the scarcity of fresh produce at reasonable prices during the winter months can be a challenge,” noted Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director of Project Self-Sufficiency. “We were thrilled to be the beneficiary of this food drive. The produce was beautiful. The families

we serve will be extremely grateful for the community’s generosity.”

The food pantry at Project Self-Sufficiency will always welcome donation of the following items:

- canned soups and stews
- canned fruits and vegetables
- fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables
- frozen meals
- coffee
- tuna
- pastas and sauces
- peanut butter and jelly
- toothpaste
- shampoos and conditioners
- hair care products
- skin care products
- laundry detergents
- diapers and baby wipes
- toilet tissue
- facial tissue
- feminine hygiene products

To make a donation to the food pantry at Project Self-Sufficiency, call 973-940-3500.



Newton Town Manager Tom Russo surveys the results of the You Give Goods Food drive along with Mary Lee, Project Self-Sufficiency, and marketing consultant Gina Thomas.