



**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
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**RI Community Food Bank Elects New Board Members & Presents Leadership Award to Scouting for Food Volunteer Coordinator at Annual Meeting**

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** On Tuesday afternoon, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Rhode Island Community Food Bank held their 2007 Annual Meeting. During this year's event, the Food Bank elected new members to the Board of Directors and also used the meeting as an opportunity to present the first-ever Leadership Award.

The meeting began with Doug Johnson, President of the Food Bank's Board of Directors, thanking the many representatives from the Food Bank's network of agencies who were in attendance for their hard work and tireless dedication to helping those in need. "Our achievements have been made possible by the collective efforts of those in this room, the volunteers and agency staff that work to ensure those who struggle to put food on the table do not go hungry. You are a group that is second to none. "

Following his introductory message, Mr. Johnson introduced Andrew Schiff, the Food Bank's Executive Director since May. "Since becoming the Executive Director of the Food Bank, I cannot describe how inspired I am at the level of community support for our work and our member agencies," commented Schiff. "The commitment to help our hungry neighbors is truly extraordinary. If caring and compassion break down boundaries, Rhode Island is the biggest state. "

Schiff continued by outlining some of the Food Bank's goals of their recent Strategic Plan to increase the overall quality of the food that is acquired for distribution, to continue to grow the Food Bank's nutrition education programs and to further expand outreach efforts that help those in need participate in vital Government sponsored nutrition programs. As he completed his comments, Schiff made a special presentation, the first of its kind for the Food Bank, to a gentleman who has worked countless hours over the past two decades to help those in need.

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank recognized Joseph DeStefano for his work as Volunteer Coordinator for Scouting for Food for the past 20 years. Scouting for Food is one of the Food Bank's most crucial drives each year and the 2007 collection will begin with the distribution of the collection bags on Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup> with Scouts returning to collect the food donations the following Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Since its inception in 1988, the Narragansett Council of the Boy Scouts of America have collected over 5 million pounds of food through this effort in Rhode Island alone.

"I'm proud to be presented with this wonderful award and I accept it on behalf of the thousands of Scouts and volunteers that have made Scouting for Food a success throughout the years," stated Joe DeStefano. "Each year, the Scouts perform their Good Turn of helping local families in need, giving them the opportunity to give back to their communities, a key focus of Scouting. "

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In addition, the Food Bank is pleased to announce the following individuals have been selected to serve on the Board of Directors:

- Gerry Fernandez, President & Founder, Multicultural Foodservice & Hospitality Alliance
- Amanda Frye Leinhos, Executive Director, Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center
- Susan Santos, Assistant Executive Director, Girl Scouts of Rhode Island
- Dale J. Venturini, President & CEO, RI Hospitality & Tourism Association
- William Walter, President & CEO, Capital City Community Centers.

Currently, the Rhode Island Community Food Bank is feeding over 40,000 Rhode Islanders in need each month through a network of nearly 400 certified member agency programs. A USDA statistical study on food insecurity shows that 1 out of every 8 Rhode Island households does not have enough to eat this is an increase from 1 out of 10 in 1998. Additionally, Rhode Island's percentage of hungry residents is the highest in New England and also exceeds the national average.

**Photos of the Annual Meeting & Award Presentation are available upon request.  
Please contact Michael Cerio at (401) 942-6325 ext. 213.**

**The Rhode Island Community Food Bank** is a non-profit organization located in Providence, RI. The Food Bank solicits, stores and distributes food products donated by supermarkets, wholesalers, food processors, local farmers and community food drives. The food is then distributed to the Food Bank's network of nearly 400 member agency programs. In the past fiscal year, the Food Bank distributed 8.4 million pounds of food. For more information about the Food Bank, please visit [www.rifoodbank.org](http://www.rifoodbank.org)

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