

## Direct from the Director

As we roll into 2009 all of us are holding our breath. No need for me to reiterate what has been in the news. We in the non-profit world are especially concerned as donations are our life blood. Our programs cannot operate without your contributions. I am personally in a dilemma because over the past 20 years our donors have responded very generously to our requests. As in the past we have tried to limit the number of appeals. We have long recognized that you are inundated with requests, some coming over and over again. My dilemma is that while I know that many people are hurting, donors as well as participants, our programs must go on. For instance, our Meals on Wheels program is under extreme pressure because of the sky-rocketing cost of food. Yet several thousands of people rely on us, the elderly and the disabled, for their daily meal. So I ask those who are able, please send us what you can. We will continue our pledge to never tolerate waste and to meet our goal of 96% to 97% of our donations going to directly benefit the people to whom it is intended.

— Joe Marmora

## Have You Thought of Donating Stock?

If you wish to donate stock, we have the mechanism in place to accommodate your donation with relative ease. If you have appreciated stock, you can claim a tax deduction at the appreciated amount and avoid paying capital gains tax.

Call our director, Joe Marmora, at 732-775-0525 for details.

### Interfaith Neighbors, Inc.

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## State Resolution



*The State of New Jersey passed a resolution recognizing Interfaith Neighbors' 20 years of service in Monmouth County. Pictured from L to R: Paul McEvily, Associate Executive Director; Rabbi Sally Priesand, Board Chair; Assemblywoman Mary Pat Angelini; Assemblyman David Rible; Joe Marmora, Executive Director*

## We Get Letters...

"Thank you for everything you have done for me to help me reach my dreams and goals. I will never forget you." (Youth Corp graduate)

"My father is 82 years old and recently lost weight because he was not eating properly. I do provide him with meals when I can but he stopped driving and can't make it over. He really likes the food and enjoys the daily visit of your volunteers (grateful daughter) I don't know how to thank you for a wonderful and needed service."

"Thank you for your kindness in helping feed me during my illness. The food and service was excellent. You are truly food angels." (grateful elderly gentleman)

"Thank you so much for helping me. My family is very grateful. The food gift cards came in handy right away. I have posted a special prayer of thanks to St. Theresa on her website. God Bless." (a grateful single man)

"I would like to thank you for all of your help in my recent problem with my mortgage. I have never felt so helpless in my life as I did going to court for foreclosure procedures...may God bless you and all the wonderful people who helped me in my time of need." (a grateful homeowner)

## Graduation (from front)

The Youth Corps of Monmouth County has a valued relationship with Prevention First. Every Friday, Liza DeJesus-Guthridge and Jessica Ford of the KART program provided special workshops for the Youth Corps.

"They did a great job. The youth really did outstanding with them. The last day some youth cried when they were leaving," said Meg Flores, Director of the Youth Corps program. DeJesus-Guthridge was responsible for securing the caps and gowns through Asbury Park High School, as well as finding a location to host the graduation.

In speaking to the graduating class, Executive Director Joe Marmora said "You failed once but given a second chance you succeeded. This is great day for you and for Interfaith Neighbors".

The Youth Corps graduates include: Daniel Graves, Yvon Lesperance, Arnaldo (Nandy) Lopez, Sean Mokrane, Chris Reevey, Ebonee Sosa, Rashon Whittaker, and Alena Woodhouse. These graduates will be joined by a group of students from the Prevention First KART program, and include: Dea'Shaunna Brown, Kauwanda Brown, Marc Careter, Alex Davis, Lynette Hines-Clayton, Tykeem Jones, Kiara Lentz, Sidney Matador, and Felicia Reevey,

About the graduating class, Meg Flores says, "They all have worked so hard to accomplish a dream they never thought would happen. They are great youth who have become part of the Interfaith family."

Since 2006, Interfaith Neighbors (IFN) has been operating the New Jersey Youth Corps of Monmouth County, part of the statewide Youth Corps program. This program serves young men and women between the ages of 16 and 25 from all over Monmouth County who have not been able to complete high school. The mission of the NJ Youth Corps is to restore and preserve the dignity of young adults who have been underserved, and enhance their value to society by providing a comprehensive program of academic instruction and community service that form a solid foundation upon which to build a brighter future.



## Interfaith Neighbors Holds Graduation for Youth Earning GED's

Eight youth from Interfaith Neighbors' Youth Corps program participated in a special graduation ceremony recognizing them for earning their GED's. The ceremony was held at Triumphant Life Church at 1003 Asbury Ave. in Asbury Park on Friday, December 19, at 12 noon. These youth were joined by nine other participants from Prevention First's KART program (Keys to Achieving Resilient Transitions).



Graduates from the Youth Corps program have spent a minimum of three months preparing for the GED exam and providing community service throughout Monmouth County.

Prevention First provided food, decorations, and also had a professional photographer take pictures of the youth in caps and gowns that were generously provided by Tyler Blackmore, principal of Asbury Park High School.

➡ (on back)

## Benefit Concert for Interfaith Neighbors

On Sunday, March 8th, a benefit concert was held for Interfaith Neighbors at the Starland Ballroom in Sayreville, NJ in an effort to help us expand our Youth Corps program.

Several months ago, Interfaith Neighbors was approached by the Bohm family as their son, Max was preparing for his Bar Mitzvah. Rather than throwing a traditional party to celebrate this important occasion, Max decided to turn this special milestone into an opportunity to help others in need. Max and his family wanted to host an event that not only celebrates Max becoming a Bar Mitzvah but also to help him start his life as a man by raising money to help others. Max and his family established the Maxwell Bohm Foundation, and generously offered to donate his Bar Mitzvah gifts, as well as the proceeds of the concert to Interfaith Neighbors Youth Corps program.

Operated by Interfaith Neighbors, the Youth Corps of Monmouth County provides academic, occupational, and counseling services to young men and women between ages 16–25 who have dropped out of high school and are vulnerable to gangs and gang violence.

The current Youth Corps model allows up to six months for youth to complete program requirements. This timeframe is often insufficient for achieving the earlier stated goals. Interfaith Neighbors is currently restricted to this time frame by space and funding limitations.

### New Agency Video!

Be sure to visit our website at [www.interfaithneighbors.org](http://www.interfaithneighbors.org) and watch the new video all about Interfaith Neighbors!

With the funds raised by Maxwell Bohm and his family, Interfaith Neighbors will be able to remodel and expand underutilized storage space as well as existing program space in order to meet the needs of our Youth Corps members, and allowing us to serve up to 100 youth each year. The expansion will provide new offices for all staff members, and include increased conference areas and classroom space, private counseling rooms, as well as additional space for new initiatives and program offerings.

We at Interfaith Neighbors marvel at Max's thoughtfulness and concern for those less fortunate, and his willingness to raise awareness as well as funds on their behalf. We congratulate him and vigorously applaud his decision to establish the Maxwell Bohm Foundation, and we are ever so grateful that he has selected our agency as the beneficiary of his efforts.

## Our Latest Affordable Homes



*Interfaith Neighbors is finalizing construction on two two-family homes at 47 & 51 Ridge Avenue. These homes represent our 22nd & 23rd affordable housing projects!*

## March for Meals

On Tuesday, March 17th, Interfaith Neighbors hosted their annual “March for Meals” event. This important campaign was originally designed by the Meals on Wheels Association of America to help increase awareness of senior hunger. The national campaign features community-based events throughout the month of March, during which numerous civic, community and business leaders are invited to help deliver meals to seniors.

Volunteers and staff gathered at Interfaith Neighbors’ Asbury Park headquarters at 10 AM. Each volunteer accompanied one of our drivers, helping them to deliver meals to homebound seniors through five different routes.

Volunteers in attendance included Freeholder Amy Mallet and her aide Keith Rella; Mayor Pam Brighthill, Twp. Of Middletown; Bryan Dempsey, Borough Administrator, Tinton Falls; Lynn Miller,

Director, Dept. of Human Services, County of Monmouth; Kathy Abatemarco, Asbury Park Press and Gannett Foundation; Danny McKee, President Asbury Park Little League; Donna Palmer, Community Education Liaison, Care Alternative; Bill Heine, Public Information Officer, County of Monmouth; Tykeem Jones, Interfaith Neighbors Youth Corps member; Linetta Wall, Assistant Kitchen Supervisor, Interfaith Neighbors; Diane Madsen, Volunteer Unit, Interfaith Neighbors.

Nearly 4,000 seniors throughout Monmouth County receive meals through our Meals on Wheels nutrition program, funded through the Monmouth County Office on Aging. Interfaith Neighbors has been the sole operator of the Monmouth County nutrition program since 1991.

This year, approximately 400,000 meals were prepared, served and delivered to seniors and disabled persons living in Monmouth County. Interfaith Neighbors is supported by a volunteer unit consisting of 600 dedicated individuals working throughout Monmouth County, recording over 75,000 hours annually in volunteer service.”People don’t understand that there are seniors going to bed hungry,” said Sandi Silber, Interfaith Neighbors Nutrition Director. “We want to make that point.”

Interfaith Neighbors’ Meals-on-Wheels Program not only fulfills the nutritional needs of seniors, but their social needs as well. Participation in the congregate meal program can ease the void created when a person lives alone, and for the homebound senior, the meals-on-wheels program provides a vital link to the world. The senior can remain comfortably at home with the dignity of independence and the security of having someone visit once a day with a nutritious meal.

By participating in Interfaith Neighbors “March for Meals” program, community leaders not only demonstrated their support for preventing senior hunger, but also had a first-hand look at what the Meals on Wheels program means to the thousands of seniors who receive meals each day.