

Giving Back



Evantz Saint-Gerard
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This month I'd like to talk about giving back to the less fortunate. The holiday season may be over, but it is always a good time to give thought to the less fortunate.

I used to automatically think of this being a major problem in city. I was surprised to learn how many people risk going hungry here in Long Island.

It's estimated that over 259,000 Long Island residents (including nearly 93,000 children and 39,000 seniors) go hungry. Those numbers to are extremely disturbing to me. So I felt it was time I started doing something. I started digging on-line to find different organizations to help put together food and coat drives. I didn't know at the time that there were many efforts to feed the hungry here in Long Island.

One of the organizations that I'm sure most people are aware of is **Food Bank for New York**. I've been involved in collecting canned goods in my office in the city since 2006.

My business associate, **Dean Graber** and I also decided to add a Food drive & Coat drive as part of the Long Island holiday business network mixers.

Dean and I discovered, **Island Harvest**, an organization which was founded in **1992** by **Linda Breitstone**. **Mrs. Breistone** found out that a local convenience store was throwing away perfectly good food while there was a soup kitchen right down the street.

Much like other similar organizations, **Island Harvest's** mission is to end hunger and reduce food waste on long Island. The Coats that were donated were collected for **New York cares**.

With help of fellow long Islanders, both drives were very successful in reaching their goals.

Someone once told me that it only takes a small act of kindness to change another person's world. There are many ways to help change things. There are many organizations out there that are welcome volunteers all across Long Island: Soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, Head Start programs, senior and community centers. Find the one that feels right for you. Hopefully you feel like I do that giving really is the best gift.

Here are a few helpful web links.

<http://www.Nycares.org>

<http://www.licares.org/>

<http://www.islandharvest.org>

<http://www.crdli.org/>