

The Crisis Ministry
is a program of
Princeton Outreach
Projects, Inc., a
501 (c) 3 nonprofit
organization.

Neighbor to Neighbor



Our 2011 Year-end Appeal is under way! We are grateful to all who have contributed so far, and look forward to entering 2012 with stability thanks to your support.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Thalia Mingo and Bill Creager,
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Volunteer Coordinator, x12
Warentha Washington
Care Coordinator, x28
Vanessa Lagares
Utilities Care Coordinator, x16

Hunger Prevention

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Director, x26
Shalanda Williams
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Coordinator, x17
Delia Bailey
Assistant, x23
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Assistant, x22

Administrative Staff

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Communications/Development, x15
Pat Foo
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Princeton Office

Cecilia Avila
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Johnson, Sr., Community
Social Worker
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Crisis Ministry Supporters Kept Busy in November with

Cornucopia of Contributions

• **Pace Elementary School** in Hamilton kicked off the month with 300 food items collected during a Halloween party
• **U.S. Trust of Princeton** (Bank of America) held a food drive
• **Princeton Patch** held a food drive Nov. 12 at McCaffrey's Princeton and collected 145 bags! • Nov. 17 we distributed **502 frozen turkeys** with accompaniments. 200 turkeys were from **Mercer Street Friends Food Bank**. **Notre Dame High School wrestling team** helped distribute. • **Princeton University's Tiger Trot** Nov. 18 helped Crisis Ministry • **Yoga Above** of Princeton held a special food awareness event Nov. 19 and collected \$1229 for our food program • The same day, **West Windsor Farmers Market** hosted **Yes We CAN! Food Drives** for the Crisis Ministry • **819 bags' worth of food** were donated by All Saints' Episcopal Church, Christ Congregation, First Baptist Church of Trenton, Nassau Presbyterian Church, Princeton United Methodist Church, Trinity Church Princeton, and Trinity Rocky Hill Nov. 20 • **Tony & Kim Stewart** of Ewing donated pies for our work trainees Nov. 23 • A contributions drive by **Paul Family Chiropractic** in Skillman yielded



Notre Dame High School wrestling team helped give out turkeys November 17

L-R: Staff members **Delia Bailey** and **Shalanda Williams** and Harvesting Hope trainees **Yolanda Becket**, **Cora Evans**, and **Shawna Baldwin** shelve food from the 819 bags' worth collected at congregations during **Can-U-Copia 2012**.



\$250 • **Princeton Regional Schools Valley Road Staff** held a personal products and contributions drive • **Johnson & Johnson** employees visited Nov. 21 to deliver bags from their food and personal products drive • **Rider University Campus Life Dept.** held a food drive. • **Bristol-Myers Squibb** employees donated reusable shopping bags filled with turkeys and trimmings. • Thanksgiving morning 1000+ runners and walkers came out for the 4th annual **Trinity Church Turkey Trot** to benefit the Crisis Ministry, Urban Promise of Trenton, and Housing Initiatives of Princeton. • **Studio Hillier** in Princeton donated 1,125 reusable shopping bags.

Sunday, January 29 • 1 to 3 pm • Princeton Public Library Film and discussion • Free admission
Donations of fresh produce for the Crisis Ministry gratefully accepted at the door.

This humorous and award-winning documentary, directed by **Shira and Yoav Potash**, follows the couple as they attempt to eat a healthy, well-balanced diet within a budget of about \$1 per meal, per person—the approximate amount of food stamp benefits for low-income Americans. Along the way, the filmmakers consult with members of Congress, food justice organizations, nutrition experts, and people living on food stamps.

Following the hour-long film, a panel discussion will include the directors via Skype; Julia Hicks de Peyster, a former resident of Princeton and graduate of Princeton University ('86), who attempted to feed her family of five on the allotted food stamp budget for forty days; and Mark Smith, the Crisis Ministry's Hunger Prevention Director. The panel moderator will be Liz Cohen of Yes We Can! Food Drives, a volunteer group that collects food donations for the Crisis Ministry.

This screening is part of the 2012 Princeton Environmental Film Festival and is sponsored by Princeton Public Library, Yes We CAN! Food Drives, and the Crisis Ministry. Learn more about the library (including directions and parking) and the film festival: princetonlibrary.org. More on the film: foodstamped.com.



Celebrate the Achievements and Embrace the Challenges

Carolyn Biondi, Executive Director

2011 was a year of record setting, starting with our 7th Annual Valentine's for Food Drive. Thanks to the generosity of [Rotary Club of Princeton](#), [McCaffrey's Supermarkets](#), [Princeton Regional Public Schools](#), [West Windsor-Plainsboro Public Schools](#), and many more congregations and community organizations, we received more food and monetary donations than in any year prior! And we just capped off the year's special events with a tremendously successful 4th Annual Turkey Trot sponsored by [Trinity Church](#), Princeton. Many thanks to the 1000+ runners and walkers who came out for a sunny, cold Thanksgiving morning to support our work and that of our fellow community agencies [Urban Promise of Trenton](#) and [Housing Initiatives of Princeton](#).



Sharon Jackson, who works as a security guard, moved into an apartment with assistance from the Crisis Ministry

It was also a record setting year for service: in our homelessness prevention program we provided [more emergency financial assistance than ever before](#) for families to avoid eviction or foreclosure, to move into a new home after experiencing homelessness, or to keep their heat and electricity on (an 11% increase in funds distributed over last year's level).

In our current contract year with the Mercer County One Stop Career Resource Center, our workforce development program helped more people than ever before — 14 to be exact — to find jobs, despite crushing unemployment rates.

Not all of the record setting of 2011 is good news. In only one example of the impact of our struggling economy, more of our neighbors are experiencing hunger than ever before. According to the most recent USDA data, 12.1% of households in New Jersey are food-insecure and 4.2% have very low food security, increased from earlier reports of 8.5% and 2.9%, respectively. These stark figures underscore the importance of our food pantries in Trenton and Princeton where each year [we provide more than 250 tons of food to more than 3,800 Mercer County households in need](#).

In 2012 we will continue to serve as a safety net for our neighbors facing hunger, the threat of homelessness, and the challenge of finding employment. We are braced for a challenging funding climate of government cuts and reduced private giving as we all continue to experience the negative effects of the economy. Still, we will continue to strengthen and build our programs with generous resources from our community — a community that I am proud to say demonstrates time and again how much we all care about our neighbors in need.



We're on YouTube— Watch our terrific new video by **Paul Budline Productions**, and send it to your friends!

youtube.com/CrisisMinistry

Fall for the Crisis Ministry



L-R: Former Harvesting Hope trainee William Franklin, Crisis Ministry Steering Co-chair Thalia Mingo, Benefit committee member Cathy Smiddy.

The Crisis Ministry's annual fundraiser took place October 21 in the beautifully decorated D&R Greenway Trust Johnson Education Center. Thanks go to committee members **Beth Fitzgerald, Keating Johnson, Daphne Jones, Martha Lashbrook, Candy Saltsman, and Cathy Smiddy**; to major sponsor **Accenture**; and to the guests and individual and business supporters who contributed **\$41,280**.



Highlights of **Fall for the Crisis Ministry** included wonderful food by IQuisine LLC, the screening of our new video, announcements of Carolyn Biondi as our new Executive Director and of the new job of Harvesting Hope trainee William Franklin (see left), and a lively trombone and electric bass duo from Princeton High School.

Business sponsors: Accenture, Klatzkin & Co. Nassau Presbyterian Church, Princeton Fuel Oil, Trinity Church Princeton, Trinity Rocky Hill, and Town Topics,

HUNGER PREVENTION

● **Shalanda Williams**, a former work trainee, joined the staff as an AmeriCorps and Bonner intern in our Hunger Prevention program. She assists director Mark Smith. At right: **Shalanda, Rose Shaw of ShopRite Ewing, and Mark** during ShopRite's Bag Hunger in September.



● Thanks to a broad coalition including the **Rev. Karen Hernandez-Granzen** of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Trenton, we are piloting a new Friday pantry to serve families in the Chambersburg neighborhood. An energetic band of 35 employees from **Bristol-Myers Squibb** helped us to prepare the space to open in September. Catch some of the action in our new video!



Photo by Fran Engler

Market November 19. Yes We CAN! Food Drives has collected 64 tons of food for our clients since November 2008!

● **Yes We CAN! Food Drives** remains an invaluable supporter by coordinating and staffing food drives regularly throughout the year. At left, **Susan Stein** of Yes We CAN! accepts produce from farmer **Amy Stoltz** at the **West Windsor Farmers**

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

Since January 1 of this year:

- **517 families and individuals** have remained stably and safely housed under their own roofs or moved into new apartments.
- **379 households** received assistance through our **Back Rent** program.
- **200 households** avoided shut-off of heat, electricity, or water through our **Utilities Assistance** program. We increased our Utilities Assistance service by 11% thanks in part to funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- **24 households** avoided foreclosure through our **Mortgage Assistance** program.
- **114 families and individuals** moved into an apartment through our **Security Deposit** program after being homeless for a brief period.
- We offer Homelessness Prevention services at both our Trenton and Princeton locations
- We received about 800 calls per month seeking homelessness prevention assistance.
- We received about 250 calls per month seeking to prevent shut-off of vital utilities.

WORKFORCE TRAINING

● Harvesting Hope, our work training and mentoring program, is in its **sixth year** of operation in conjunction with the Mercer County One-Stop Career Resource Center.

● This year alone, 14 Harvesting Hope trainees have been **hired to new jobs** throughout Mercer County. One of these employers is our generous supporter and friend, **McCaffrey's Princeton**.

● In addition to sharpening their **customer service and food service skills**, trainees engage in daily job search activities such as online applications, resume prep, and mock job interviews.

● Harvesting Hope director Margaret Cowell reports that one of our current trainees is a **Navy veteran** and a member of the Naval Reserves is an experienced office administrator with excellent customer service skills. Margaret invites Crisis Ministry supporters who have served our country to help connect a fellow veteran to an employer.

WE THANK the following foundations, businesses, and organizations for their financial and in-kind support since June 2011:

- ◆ Accenture
- ◆ Bristol-Myers Squibb employee matching program
- ◆ Church & Dwight Employee Giving Fund
- ◆ City of Trenton
- ◆ Concordia Foundation
- ◆ Anonymous Foundation
- ◆ Essig Enright Family Foundation
- ◆ FEMA through the United Way of Mercer County
- ◆ Janssen Pharmaceuticals of the Johnson & Johnson Companies
- ◆ J. Seward Johnson, Sr., 1963 Charitable Trust
- ◆ Lena Willis Fund of Central Presbyterian Church
- ◆ McCaffrey's Supermarkets for the ongoing receipts program; for the \$4,485 in proceeds from October Specialty Foods Show
- ◆ Merancas Foundation
- ◆ Mercer County
- ◆ Mercer Street Friends Food Bank
- ◆ New Jersey Office of Faith-based Initiatives
- ◆ Novo Nordisk
- ◆ Paul Family Chiropractic
- ◆ PNC Bank Fund of Princeton Area Community Foundation
- ◆ Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville
- ◆ Princeton University Class of 1956 internship grant
- ◆ Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust
- ◆ Roma Bank Community Foundation
- ◆ ShopRite Supermarkets' Stamp Out Hunger event
- ◆ Tenacre Foundation
- ◆ Theodore Cross Family Foundation
- ◆ Yes We Can! Food Drives
- ◆ Yoga Above and their students for generous collections throughout November
- ◆ **PLUS**—ongoing food donations from: Rotary Club of Princeton, our congregational partners, Lucy's Ravioli, Maidenhead Bagels, Village Bakery, Italian People's Bakery, Whole Foods Market, and Bagel Street Deli (Bagel St. Deli donations coordinated by Janie Jolly of Kids for Kids)

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME

Volunteer coordinator **Alicia Morrison** reports the following openings for volunteers:

- Harvesting Hope—assist with online job search and internet guidance.
- Homelessness Prevention, Trenton—Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays 9am to noon; Wednesdays 1 to 3pm
- Trenton Pantry—Tuesdays & Wednesdays 9am to noon
- Bethany Pantry—Fridays 9am to 1pm



Visit thecrisisministry.org for full volunteer job descriptions or contact **Alicia**: cmvolunteer@gmail.com 609-396-9355, ext. 12.

Princeton Outreach Projects, Inc.

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Princeton, NJ 08542

Trenton Office:
123 East Hanover Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

If you prefer to no longer receive this newsletter, or if you need to update your name and/or address, please send an email to:
patf@thecrisisministry.org.

The Crisis Ministry is a program of Princeton Outreach Projects, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization incorporated in the state of New Jersey.

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Warmest Greetings of the Season from the Staff of the Crisis Ministry



The colorful scarves modeled above were among 50 colorful hats and scarves hand-knitted and delivered for Crisis Ministry clients by supporter and Trinity Church parishioner Catherine Stroup. Thank you, Catherine, for your talent through this gift of warmth for our clients!

Stay in touch with us through:

[facebook.com/TheCrisisMinistry](https://www.facebook.com/TheCrisisMinistry)
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thecrisisministry.org
Can Do!, our e-newsletter

Trenton: 609-396-9355 Princeton: 609-921-2135

We welcome donations of Personal Care Items like soaps, lotions, shampoos and conditioners, razors & shave cream, toothpaste & toothbrushes, diapers, and feminine products! Learn more: click on the "personal products" link at thecrisisministry.org

We are proud to team with many partner organizations, including:



FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER
CORPORATION
Family & Children's Services



THE CORELLA AND BERTRAM F.
BONNER FOUNDATION



Yes We CAN! Food Drives