SETON HALL’S WSOU DONATES OVER $1,000 TO LOCAL FOOD BANK

Donations raised by university community will create 3,150 meals for those in need

Photo Caption: Station Staff Representative Dalton Allison spearheaded WSOU’s 2020 food drive for the Community Food Bank of New Jersey. The annual event went virtual this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic (credit: Mark Maben)

South Orange, N.J. – WSOU 89.5 FM, the student-run radio station at Seton Hall University, raised a total of $1,050 to donate to the Community Food Bank of New Jersey (CFBNJ) in Hillside, N.J. The station’s donation will be used by the CFBNJ to provide 3,150 meals to those in need. Students, alumni, and community members all contributed to this annual effort to fight food insecurity in New Jersey.
Now in its seventh year, the food drive is one of several community service projects the station organizes on an annual basis. With the COVID-19 pandemic bringing logistical challenges to the forefront in regard to collecting physical food items, WSOU decided to pivot toward a monetary donation for 2020, with a goal of $895. Undaunted and up to the challenge of continuing its commitment to the food bank despite the pandemic, the station raised its one thousandth dollar on November 25, the day before Thanksgiving.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made a growing food insecurity problem worse in the state of New Jersey. According to the CFBNJ, 13.5 percent of New Jersey residents are projected to become food insecure because of the pandemic, a statistic that includes 19.7 percent of children in the state.

In years past, students at WSOU would collect non-perishable food items such as rice, canned goods, and other pantry items to help support the CFBNJ. Last year, WSOU collected 1,202 pounds of food, which was a record donation for the station. This year, it was a grassroots social media campaign that led to the $1,050 donation. According to The Community Foodbank of New Jersey, for every $1 donated, the organization is able to provide three meals to individuals in need.

WSOU Staff Representative Dalton Allison, who led this year’s food drive, was determined to keep WSOU’s tradition of giving going strong, even if it meant adjusting the way that the station would donate. “There was absolutely no way that we were going to abandon a tradition of giving at a time when our community needs it the most.” Allison said. “It was certainly different than years prior when we could literally weigh our donations to the food bank, but luckily our community of students, alumni, and university members came together to help us smash past our goal of raising $895 to donate to CFBNJ.”

WSOU’s General Manager Mark Maben wasn’t surprised that the students were able to reimagine how to conduct the station’s annual food drive in the midst of the pandemic. “Adaptability is one radio’s core strengths and it is why our students could quickly adopt a new approach to this vital community service effort,” said Maben. “As much as we all missed the satisfying feeling of watching food donations pile up at the station, it was critical that we continued this annual event. Before the pandemic, almost nine percent of New Jersey residents were food insecure. Now that has grown to nearly fourteen percent and too many of those residents are children. I am so proud of what our students are doing to address food insecurity in our listening area.”

WSOU’s donations were raised through the GoFundMe online donation platform, where the CFBNJ will receive the funds in the month of December. For more information about the Community Food Bank of New Jersey and how to help, visit www.cfbnj.org.

About WSOU
WSOU 89.5 FM, which began broadcasting in 1948, is the student-run radio station of Seton Hall University. Celebrated for its loud rock format and coverage of Seton Hall athletics, WSOU’s signal reaches all five boroughs of New York City and much of northern and central New Jersey and is available on iHeartRadio. WSOU was the 2016 winner of the National Broadcasters Association’s Marconi Award.
for Noncommercial Station of the Year and a 2019 nominee for the Marconi Award for Best College Radio Station. More information about the station can be found online at www.wsou.net and www.facebook.com/WSOUFM.

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