

CRRERO

CENTER FOR RESEARCH, REGIONAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT NEW PALTZ



Food Insecurity in Ulster County

Discussion Brief #9 – Fall 2012

Sue Books



The food safety net is under considerable stress. Agencies and organizations are attempting to meet escalating need with frozen or reduced resources.



Sue Books, a professor in the Department of Secondary Education at SUNY New Paltz, teaches courses in education and poverty, comparative and international education, and teacher research. Her scholarship has focused primarily on issues of equity in U.S. schooling. She is editor of *Invisible Children in the Society and its Schools* (Erlbaum, 1998/2003/2007), author of *Poverty and Schooling in the U.S.: Contexts and Consequences* (Erlbaum, 2004), and a member of the SUNY Press Editorial Board. In recent years she has taught and conducted research in South Africa as a visiting scholar and in Iceland and Brazil as a Fulbright Scholar.

Students contributing significantly to this project: Renee LaMonica (Adolescence Education-Earth Science, '13) and Andrea Mazziotti (Sociology, '13).

Editorial Staff: KT Tobin

Mapping: Josh Simons

LOW INCOME, LACK OF TRANSPORTATION, LAND INSUFFICIENT AWARENESS OF THE HELP THAT IS AVAILABLE ALL COMBINE TO MAKE ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM FOR MANY PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IN ULSTER COUNTY, NEW YORK.

This report finds:

- Approximately three in every twenty Ulster County residents, and nearly one in five children, at times lack adequate food to meet basic nutritional needs.
- This burden seemingly is disproportionately felt by low-income children and teenagers, elderly and near-retirement adults (growing populations), and people without transportation who live too far from sources of healthy and affordable food.
- In Ulster County in 2010, approximately 12% of all residents, 15% of all families with young children, and 47% of all single-mother families with young children had incomes below the poverty level. In the Village of Ellenville, an astonishing 70.6% of all single-mother families were living in poverty.
- Almost 14% of all Ulster County households received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in 2011. Among households not receiving SNAP benefits, 7.8% had incomes below the poverty level.
- Food costs in the county are roughly double the average SNAP benefit.
- In the 2009-2010 school year, more than 37% of K-12 students received free or reduced-priced lunches, up from 31.6% in 2004-2005. Concurrently, 37% of first, third, fifth, and seventh graders at eight of Ulster's nine school districts were obese or overweight in 2010.
- The Ulster County Office for the Aging serves approximately

520 meals every day and has a waiting list of over 100.

- The food safety net in the county is under considerable stress. Agencies and organizations, both public and private, are attempting to meet escalating need with frozen or reduced resources.
- The Food Bank of the Hudson Valley distributed approximately 1.4 million pounds of food to charitable organizations in Ulster County in 2008, and approximately 2 million pounds to these same organizations in 2011 – a 57% increase over the three years.

WHAT WE NEED TO DO:

- increase participation in food programs by decreasing the stigma associated with all programs and the difficulty of applying;
- expand access to food for children when school is out;
- increase enrollment in school lunch programs while improving the nutritional value of the food served;
- improve transportation to healthy food sources; and,
- fund the food safety net adequately.

Ulster County's complex safety net, designed to prevent chronic hunger and starvation, consists of a combination of governmental and volunteer community-based efforts. Governmental efforts involve local administration of federal and state initiatives. From the more general in scope to the more targeted, these include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program (FSP); the

National School Lunch Program, which provides free and reduced-price school meals for students in low-income families; Ulster County Office for the Aging programs that provide low-cost meals for seniors; and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which provides food and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women and their young children. The locally-rooted community-based elements of the safety net include soup kitchens, food pantries, and other volunteer efforts.

There are many resources and places in Ulster County for people to obtain food if they need it. Thus, from one perspective, the safety net is working as intended. "I would like to say, with everyone's hard work, that needs aren't being overlooked," said Mike Iapoce, Commissioner, Ulster County Department of Social Services. "If people in Ulster County are hungry or starving and they can be identified, we can help. There are places for them to turn."

However, the scope and complexity of the safety net itself bears witness to a troubling reality. If not widespread hunger and starvation per se, many in our communities experience chronic anxiety about how to feed themselves and their families – a painful irony in the lush Hudson Valley, once known as, and aspiring again to be, the "breadbasket of New York." Without the income and transportation required to shop regularly and conveniently at a range of food

outlets, too many Ulster County residents are struggling to get by as best they can: a food pantry one morning, a soup kitchen the next afternoon, a welcome ride to a grocery store from a friend or neighbor from time to time.

This report provides an overview of hunger-related hardship, or food insecurity, in Ulster County. It is informed by available statistics and by interviews or conversations with thirty-one "frontline" workers in human services agencies, nonprofit food banks and soup kitchens, and anti-hunger research and advocacy organizations. The report considers the broader economic, geographic, and demographic context of need, as well as the current policy environment – i.e., the multiple components of the safety net.

Also discussed are specific populations at risk of or experiencing food insecurity. These populations include children in low-income families who qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program during the school year, but have nothing on snow days or during school holidays and the summer. Other populations at risk are teenagers who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, but opt out; residents living in parts of Ulster County where a lack of full-service grocery stores is exacerbated by transportation challenges; low-income older adults, about 45% of whom are potentially eligible for SNAP benefits, but do not apply for them; and adults nearing retirement age, especially men, who are not yet eligible for Social Security benefits.

Day in and day out, extraordinary governmental and volunteer efforts provide help. However, a refrain heard throughout the interviews that inform this report was the need for more funding for agencies and organizations, both public and private, all of which are attempting to meet growing needs with frozen or reduced resources.

A STATISTICAL PICTURE OF POVERTY AND HUNGER

The root cause of hunger in the United States is poverty. In Ulster County in 2010, approximately 12% of all residents, 15% of all families with young children, and 47% of all single-mother families with young children had incomes below the poverty level.

Nationally, among all households experiencing what the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) terms “food insecurity,” those living in poverty, not surprisingly, are at the greatest risk by far. However, a word of caution is in order: When reviewing poverty statistics, it is important to recognize the limitations of the federal definition. The official poverty line in 2012 for a family of three is an annual income of no more than \$19,090. Clearly, supporting a three-person family with even twice this income, or \$38,180, would still be very difficult. Poverty scholars for decades have argued that the federal metric underestimates the real scope of economic hardship in the United States (Citro et al.,

1995). Also problematic is the suggestion, implicit in the language of a “line,” that families with incomes above the official cutoff can meet their basic needs (Books, 2000).

In partial recognition of the shortcomings of the official metric, many government programs peg eligibility for assistance to some income level higher than the poverty line. SNAP eligibility, for example, extends to households with annual incomes up to 130% of the poverty line, or up to 200% if an elderly person or someone with disabilities is living in the home or if there are child- or dependent-care expenses. Eligibility for WIC extends to 185% of the poverty level. Students in families with annual incomes up to 130% of the poverty line are eligible for free school meals or for reduced-price meals if the family income does not exceed 185% of the poverty line.

Governmental efforts to address hunger have become increasingly consequential in Ulster County in recent years. The percentage of personal income derived from federal income-support programs (SNAP benefits as well as aid to low-income families, disability payments, and the earned-income tax credit) more than tripled in the county in three decades, increasing from 0.56% in 1969 to 1.86% in 2009 (Wight et al., 2011). The share of personal income from income-support programs now is undoubtedly even higher.

Poverty Without SNAP Benefits: One Indicator of Unmet Need

Although it is possible that individuals and families living in poverty have adequate access to nutritious food even if they do not receive SNAP benefits, this gap is one indicator of unmet need. Table 1 shows data for households in poverty in all Ulster County municipalities. For example, in the City of Kingston hundreds of households (667) are at or below the poverty line and are eligible for SNAP benefits, but are not receiving them. The Village of New Paltz has the largest percentage of households (29.5%) in this situation. Countywide, more than 4,000 households in poverty are eligible for SNAP benefits but do not receive them.

Unmet need is both an urban and rural problem in Ulster County. Shifting the view to census tracts further pinpoints struggling households. Nearly one-third of the Ulster County census tracts, fifteen of forty-eight, have poverty rates of 10% or more. Ten tracts have a “SNAP-benefits gap” of 10% or more. This gap represents the percentage of households living in poverty that are not receiving SNAP benefits. The ten tracts that meet these criteria are located throughout the county: two in New Paltz, one in the Town of Shandaken, two in the City of Kingston, two in the Town of Woodstock, two in the Town of Wawarsing, and one in the Town of Olive.

By this definition, the greatest unmet need is in the two New Paltz tracts where 23% of the households living in poverty are not receiving SNAP benefits.

UNMET NEED:

An estimated 4,000-plus Ulster County households in poverty are eligible for SNAP benefits but do not receive them.

One tract includes the SUNY New Paltz campus. Whether the census counts college students as residents depends on how students respond to the census questionnaire. While there may be some students who can rely on parental support, there is growing evidence that a sizable population of college students and recent graduates are working in low-wage jobs in the college community that leave them in or near poverty (NYSOSC, 2012). At SUNY New Paltz, several campus organizations have anecdotally reported increased requests from and referrals for students in need. In the tract that includes the campus, 24% of households with related children under age eighteen are living in poverty – evidence that the hardship is not limited to student residences.

Using data published in *The New York Times* (DeParle & Gebeloff, 2009), the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), a non-profit research and advocacy group, developed a county-level comparison of SNAP participation to a more broadly defined low-income population: residents with incomes up to 125% of the poverty line. FRAC then estimated the share of this population reached by SNAP county by county. In Ulster County, 14.9% of county residents, but

Table 1. Unmet Need for Food Assistance in Ulster County 2010

Municipality	Households at or Below Poverty Level not receiving SNAP benefits	
	%	Number
Ulster County	6.0%	4269
Denning	1.5%	3
Ellenville	10.6%	165
Esopus	3.6%	121
Gardiner	5.5%	123
Hardenburgh	2.8%	2
Hurley	1.4%	36
Kingston, City	7.8%	667
Kingston, Town	3.9%	16
Lloyd	3.4%	129
Marbletown	4.1%	96
Marlborough	6.2%	198
New Paltz, Town	15.1%	602
New Paltz, Town outside of Village	5.1%	136
New Paltz, Village	29.5%	466
Olive	10.1%	205
Plattekill	8.0%	279
Rochester	7.1%	205
Rosendale	2.3%	57
Saugerties, Town	5.3%	397
Saugerties, Town outside of Village	5.1%	312
Saugerties, Village	4.4%	85
Shandaken	9.2%	126
Shawangunk	2.8%	104
Ulster, Town	6.1%	296
Wawarsing	8.4%	297
Wawarsing, Town outside of Village	4.9%	132
Woodstock	11.9%	310

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Margin of error for households at or below poverty level not receiving SNAP benefits: county level numbers is +/- 453; for municipalities it ranges from +/- 1.2 to +/- 7.4.

only 56% of those eligible, received benefits in 2009 (FRAC, 2010). A more recent analysis of potential unmet need by Hunger Solutions New York (HSNY), a state-level research and advocacy group, found that of the 31,167 Ulster County residents who likely were eligible for SNAP benefits as of December 2011, only 20,399 or 65% were receiving them (HSNY, 2012, unpublished data).

Older adults make up a large number of county residents who do not receive the food assistance to which they are entitled. These adults tend not to apply for SNAP benefits for several reasons, according to Misha Marvel, Nutrition Programs for Seniors Specialist with Hunger

Solutions New York. First, many don't know they are eligible. Eligibility guidelines were changed in 2008 to include older adults (age 60+) with annual incomes up to 200% of the poverty line, without regard to other resources. Second, seniors may have the mistaken belief that if they receive benefits, someone else will be deprived. "Many people will say, 'The children need it more than I do,'" Marvel said, "without realizing that SNAP benefits are here for everyone who is eligible."

"It's the way they were raised," added Maureen Swingle, principal SNAP worker with the Ulster County Department of Social Services. "We have a difficult time reaching the elderly, in part

because many don't want to be reached." "It's pride and privacy," said Commissioner Mike Iapoce. "They look at government as intrusion." Michael Raphael, coordinator of the local Project Hope (a FEMA-funded response to disaster areas) recalled circular conversations along these lines during door-to-door visits with elderly residents in the most devastated parts of Ulster and Delaware counties after Tropical Storm Irene:

"We'll knock on a door, see obvious despair, and offer help."

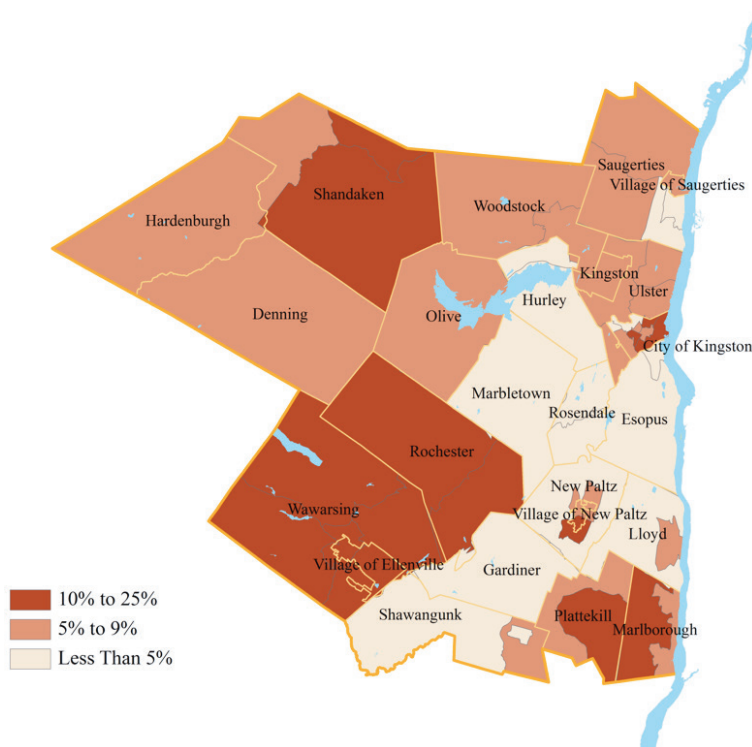
Resident: "No, don't help us – help others who need help."

Project Hope: "But you need help!"

Resident: "No, help someone else."

Transportation, especially in rural areas, is often a problem as well. Although older adults can apply for SNAP benefits by telephone or computer rather than coming into an office, paperwork still must be submitted. The application process is not simple. Then there is the stigma. Although SNAP benefits are now distributed through debit-like cards, which are more private than the vouchers they replaced, the six-page application form requires applicants to list all income, other resources, and living arrangements and expenses. It includes extensive warnings about criminal prosecution, fines of up to hundreds of thousands of dollars, or jail for an IPV (Intentional Program Violation), including, but not limited to, trading food stamps for drugs or guns. Such language

Map 1. 2010 Poverty Rate by Census Tract in Ulster County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Approximately three in every twenty Ulster County residents, and nearly one in five children, at times lack adequate food to meet basic nutritional needs.

undoubtedly dissuades some seniors who fear the consequences of making a mistake. Others might be insulted by the suggestion that their economic circumstances when older make them more inclined towards crime. (According to the USDA, fraud within the SNAP program has fallen to less than 1%.)

FOOD INSECURITY AND FOOD HARDSHIP

USDA defines “food insecure” households as those that at any time during a year are “uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they had insufficient money or other resources for food” (USDA, 2012a). This level of hardship is suggested by “yes” answers to questions like these: Did food you bought run out and did you not have money to buy more? Were you unable to afford to eat balanced meals? Did an adult in the family cut the size of meals or skip meals because there was not enough money for food? Did you eat less than you felt you should because there was not enough money for food? Were you hungry but did not eat because you could not afford enough food?

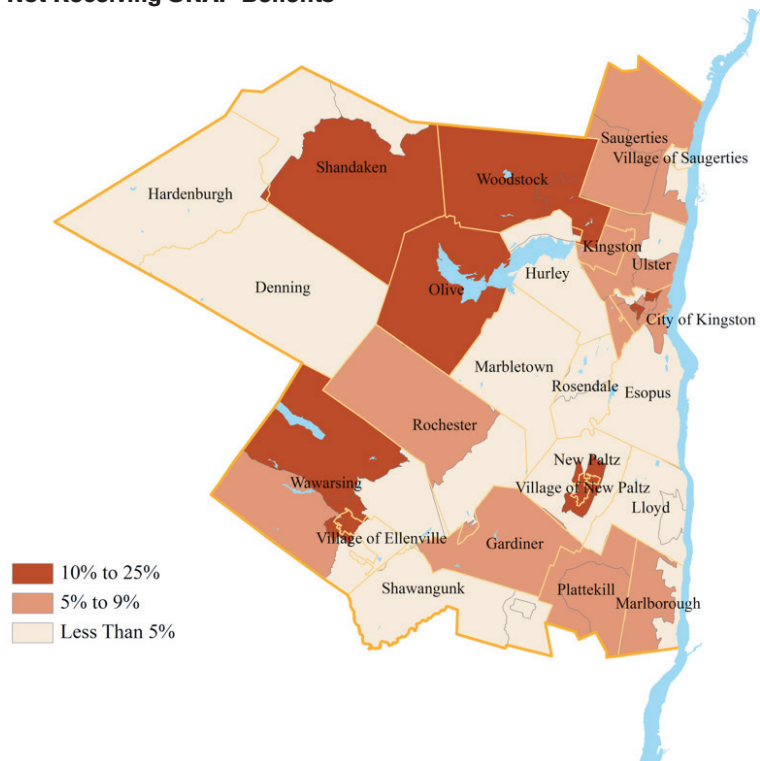
Feeding America, a national hunger-relief charity and advocacy organization, developed a Map the Meal Gap project to assess the number of food insecure

individuals not receiving SNAP benefits county by county. The analysis – based on the USDA definition of food insecurity, census data, and county-level estimates of economic well-being – estimates that 21,030 Ulster County residents (11.5% of the population) experienced food insecurity in 2010. Among these people, 37% had incomes below 130% of the poverty line (the

SNAP threshold in New York), 18% had incomes between 130% and 185% of the poverty line, and 45% had incomes above 185%. Assuming a meal cost of \$2.54, closing this “meal gap” in Ulster County in 2010 would have cost \$9.2 million.

The Map the Meal Gap project also estimated that in 2010, 6,940 children (18.7%) of all

Map 2. 2010 Unmet Need for Food Assistance by Census Tract in Ulster County, Percent of Households at or Below Poverty Level Not Receiving SNAP Benefits



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The economic crash of 2008 and the recession, joblessness, and wage stagnation that have followed undoubtedly contribute significantly to this food insecurity. Aspects of Ulster County's economy, geography, and demography likely contribute as well.

children in Ulster County experienced food insecurity. Of these children, 51% were in families with incomes below 185% of the poverty line. The 49% in families with incomes above this threshold were ineligible for any federal nutrition assistance (Feeding America, 2011).

Using a measure of “food hardship” rather than “food insecurity,” FRAC estimated that 17.2% of the residents of New York's former Congressional District 22 – which included Ulster, as well as parts of Broome, Delaware, Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Tioga, and Tompkins counties – experienced such hardship in 2010-2011, up from 16.9% in 2009-2010. “Food hardship” was defined as a “yes” answer to a Gallop survey question that asks simply, “Have there been times in the past 12 months when you did not have enough money to buy food that you or your family needed?” (FRAC, 2012). Taken together, utilizing the most recent data available, the Feeding America and FRAC analyses suggest that approximately three in every twenty Ulster County residents, and nearly one in five children in the county, at times lack adequate food to meet basic nutritional needs.

Why is there food insecurity on this scale in Ulster County? In some populations, “the issue is no work,” said Michael Raphael of Project Hope. “In the migrant population, the issue is work but little pay. In Wawarsing, the issue is probably the elderly.” “Low-income families must choose what to pay for,” said Michael Berg, director of Family of Woodstock. “Medicine for a child? A car repair? Food? The easiest thing to stop is food.” In many families, “There's more month than money, as they say,” said Su Marcy, vice president of Ulster County United Way and chair of its Emergency Food and Shelter Program Board. “They cannot control the costs of food, gas, or utilities, and, god forbid, someone gets sick.”

Every food pantry or soup kitchen director consulted for this report has seen an increase in the number of families, elderly, college students, working adults, and/or people with mental illnesses seeking food assistance. The economic crash of 2008 and the recession, joblessness, and wage stagnation that have followed undoubtedly contribute significantly to this food insecurity. Aspects of Ulster County's economy, geography, and demography likely contribute as well.

FOOD INSECURITY IN ULSTER COUNTY: A BROADER CONTEXT

Housing and Wages

Ulster County is an expensive place to live; relatively high housing costs are hard to meet with relatively modest wages. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, families that spend more than 30% of their income on housing are “cost burdened” and so “may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.” The 2010 Census showed that four in ten Ulster County households spent more than 30% of their household income on housing (Population Health Institute at the University of Wisconsin, 2012). An assessment of regional housing needs prepared for the planning departments of Ulster, Orange, and Dutchess counties, based on 2006 data, found a monthly “affordable rent gap” of \$164 for Ulster County households at 50% of the median annual income. This is the difference between the monthly affordable rent of \$574 (30% of annual income for this group) and the median rent of \$738. If these same households wanted to buy a house, they could have afforded only 3.5% of the properties sold in the county that year.

Even the highest income group (120% or more of the median annual income and above) could have afforded only 21.3% of the houses sold that year (Planning Departments of Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster Counties of New York, 2009).

Housing would be more affordable, of course, if wages were higher. For the second quarter of 2011, Ulster County ranked 32nd (from the top) among New York State's sixty-two counties with an average weekly wage of \$742 (USDOL, 2012). As Michael Raphael of Project Hope noted, a lot of employment in Ulster County is seasonal. U.S. Department of Labor (2012) data show peaks of joblessness generally in January and February, with an unemployment rate of 9.1% for these months in 2012. However, this year (2012), unemployment jumped in July to 9.4%, almost double the rate of joblessness for the same month five years ago (4.9% in July 2007). This rate put Ulster County 46th out of the state's sixty-two counties, with the lowest ranking corresponding with the lowest rate of unemployment (Caridi, 2012; NYSDOL, 2012).

Food Costs and Deserts

Local food costs relative to the value of SNAP benefits contribute to food insecurity in Ulster County as well. Although SNAP benefits are not intended to meet recipients' full nutritional needs, many recipients lack other resources for food. The average per-person SNAP benefit in Ulster was \$250.42 for the month of February 2012 or about \$4.35

per day (NYSOTDA, 2012a). According to the Marketbasket Survey, for the week ending May 4, 2012, feeding a local family of four in Ulster County would have cost \$227.63 or \$8.13 per person per day – almost double the average SNAP benefit. (The survey, conducted monthly, finds the average cost in three chain supermarkets in Ulster County for items consistent with the USDA's Moderate Cost Family Food Plan.) Whether the gap between SNAP benefits and food costs says more about the inadequacy of the benefits or about food costs in Ulster County is unclear.

In conjunction with Michelle Obama's Let's Move campaign, a working group from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Treasury, and Health and Human Services mapped national food deserts, defined as "low-income Census tract[s] where a substantial number or share of residents ha[ve] low access to a supermarket or large grocery store." More specifically, tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20% or a median family income of not more than 80% of the area's median counted as low-income, and tracts with at least 500 people or 33% of their population living more than a mile from a supermarket or large grocery store counted as low access.

Based on these criteria, Ulster County contains four food deserts: one in Kingston, where 17.4% of the residents are both low-income and low-access, one in Ellenville, where 16.4% of the residents are low-income

and low-access, and two in New Paltz, where 6.1% and 2.6% of the residents are low-income and low-access (USDA, 2012b). However, these findings are questionable, in part because the data is old. Population statistics are from the 2000 Census, and the directory of grocery stores is from 2006. One of the New Paltz tracts includes the SUNY New Paltz campus, where students living on campus must buy an institutional meal plan. Also, there are two full-service supermarkets, Stop & Shop and ShopRite, on the town's Main Street (Route 299), which divides the two New Paltz tracts.

In part for these reasons, students in the Ulster BOCES New Visions Health Careers Exploration program (class of 2011-2012) surveyed all the stores in Kingston that sell food and then, in conjunction with the Cornell University Cooperative Extension Ulster County, mapped the city's food deserts. For the project, the students modified the USDA criteria by lowering the poverty threshold to a Census block group with a poverty rate of at least 15%, broadening the definition of "grocery" to include any store selling food, and assuming that many residents would be unable to walk more than a quarter mile to buy groceries. With these criteria, they found four large swaths of the city of Kingston to be food deserts. The New Visions students mapped food deserts in Saugerties, Ellenville, and Phoenicia in summer 2012, and were still "crunching numbers" when this report went to press.

Transportation

Most of the full-service grocery stores in Ulster County, with a land mass about the size of Rhode Island, are clustered within a few miles of the New York State Thruway, Interstate 87. Lack of transportation limits many residents' access to nutritional food, especially in more sparsely populated western Ulster. Although not within the USDA definition of a food desert, this part of the county has only one grocery store of significant size, the IGA Boiceville Market, which is six miles from Phoenicia and up to twenty miles from the far side of Pine Hill. Phoenicia has a small grocery store, the Phoenicia Market, but it is very expensive and does not sell fresh fruits or vegetables. "Transportation, oh my, that's a big issue," said Jane Todd, director of the food pantry at the United Methodist Church in Phoenicia. "People walk four to five miles to get to this pantry; most who come do not have a car. They get by as best they can and help each other out," she said. A caregiver for one person may shop for a whole group. Jane delivers food from the pantry upon request and takes a woman from Pine Hill to Kingston once a month to shop for groceries.

To travel by bus on the regular Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) route from Belleayre, Pine Hill, or Phoenicia to the Hannaford supermarket in Kingston takes 4 to 4½ hours roundtrip and is possible only on weekdays. A better option for these residents might be Fleischmanns Supermarket in Delaware County, but it is not

accessible by bus. As UCAT Director Robert DiBella noted, "The bus is the only means of transportation for many people. A lot of folks can't afford vehicles anymore, and taxis are too expensive." Ridership on the UCAT buses increased 56% between 2007 and 2012, DiBella said, in part because a popular Poughkeepsie-New Paltz link was added, but also because fewer people could afford to buy or maintain a car.

Demographic Changes

The number of older adults in Ulster County increased by more than 26% between 2000 and 2010, Census data show, and the median age in the county rose from 38.2 years to 42 years. As the overall population ages, often, so too does the prevalence of what is sometimes called the "tea and toast syndrome." Misha Marvel of Hunger Solutions New York explains:

Many older adults can no longer fend for themselves very well and are too proud to admit they need help. They are humble and think someone else needs help more than they do. Their children may live far away. Migration is common in New York State, and they struggle alone in their homes. They miss out on things – social connections and good meals for healthy living. No matter what a person's income, often after the death of a spouse or the need for one spouse to move into a nursing home . . . the remaining spouse (usually the wife) loses interest in preparing well-balanced meals. Over

time, this can spiral down into eating habits with negative health impacts – the tea and toast syndrome.

Over this same decade, 2000 to 2010, the number of migrant families in Ulster County, an invisible population in some ways, dropped sharply as did the number of children and youth served by the federally funded Mid-Hudson Migrant Education Outreach Program (MEOP). In Ulster County, the number of students served by MEOP dropped by almost two-thirds, from 647 to just 232 (MEOP, 2012). Many of these young people attend the Highland, Kingston, Marlboro, New Paltz, Rondout Valley, and Wallkill public schools, with the largest number (79) in the Kingston schools. Although schoolchildren in migrant families are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, their needs go well beyond school food. "The family needs are really great," said Margaret Gutierrez, director of MEOP. "A lot of migrant families are living doubled up," often with three- or four-person families sharing a single room. Through a small, grant-funded program, MEOP is able to provide such families, if identified as homeless, with a ShopRite food card worth \$15 per person. Lack of income and lack of transportation contribute to food shortages in this community, said four tutors working with MEOP. Also, most of the mothers do not drive. Only three or four migrant families have applied for SNAP benefits this year (2012) versus maybe ten times as many five years ago,

according to Maureen Swingle of the Ulster County Department of Social Services.

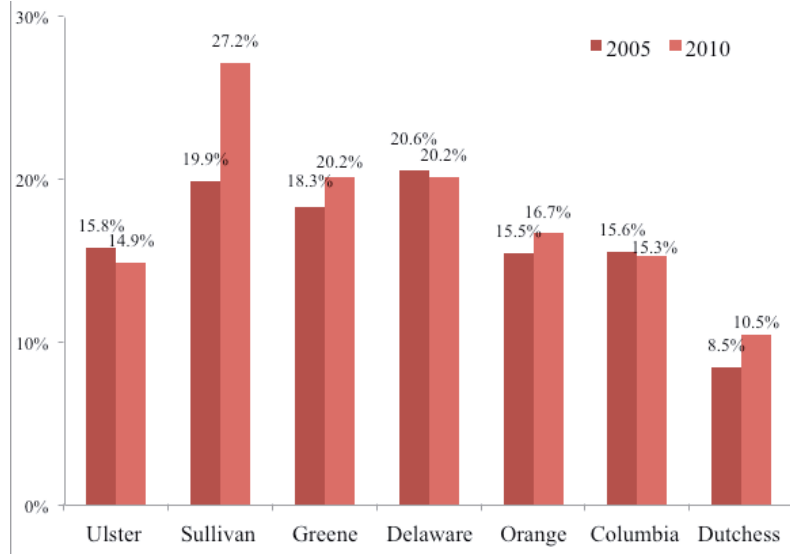
Regional Comparisons

Although poverty and chronic hunger are harmful at any age, they are particularly dangerous for children. In Ulster County and its surrounding counties changes in the child/youth poverty rate were fairly small between 2005 and 2010, except in Sullivan County where the rate increased 7.3 percentage points (see Figure 1).

Participation in the free and reduced-price school lunch program increased moderately during these years (see Figure 2), and child/youth participation in the SNAP program increased significantly in line with national trends (see Figure 3).

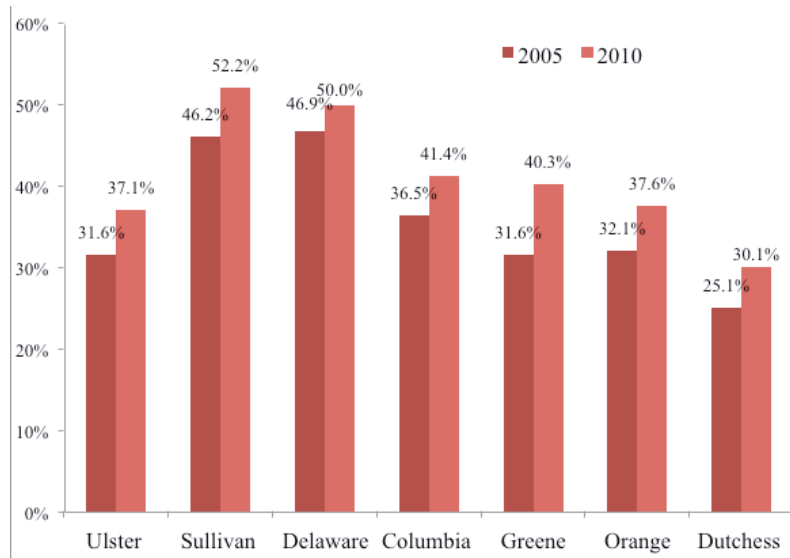
Among its surrounding counties in 2010, Ulster County had the second lowest child/youth poverty rate, the third lowest child/youth SNAP participation rate, and the second lowest participation rate in the free and reduced-price school lunch program. However, Ulster County had a larger increase in child/youth SNAP participation (+10.3 percentage points) than any of the surrounding counties except Delaware and Sullivan, and a larger increase in participation in the free and reduced-price school lunch program (+5.5 percentage points) than any of the surrounding counties except Greene and Sullivan. Orange County, like Ulster County, showed a 5.5 percentage-point increase over the five years.

Figure 1. Children/Youth (Birth to 17 years) Living in Poverty in Ulster and Surrounding Counties, 2005 and 2010



Source: New York State Council on Children & Families, Kids' Well-Being Indicators Clearinghouse (KWIC)

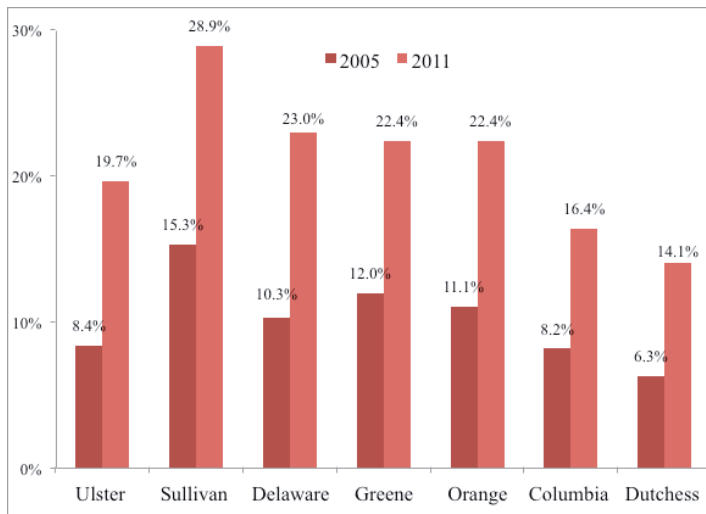
Figure 2. Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunch in Ulster and Surrounding Counties, 2004-2005 and 2009-2010 School Years



Source: New York State Council on Children & Families, Kids' Well-Being Indicators Clearinghouse (KWIC)

“Food is one place where society has said, ‘We’ll help you.’”
 — Michael Berg, Family of Woodstock Director

Figure 3. Children/Youth Receiving SNAP Benefits in Ulster and Surrounding Counties, 2005 and 2011



Source: New York State Council on Children & Families, Kids' Well-Being Indicators Clearinghouse (KWIC)

These statistics suggest that many Ulster County children are suffering from an economic squeeze in which relatively expensive housing and relatively low wages or unemployment leave less income than needed for nutritional food, the cost of which has been rising.

THE FOOD SAFETY NET IN ULSTER COUNTY

As Michael Berg, Family of Woodstock director, noted, “Food is one place where society

has said, ‘We’ll help you.’” However, as *The New York Times* reported in 2010, “With millions of jobs lost and major industries on the ropes, America’s array of government aid . . . is being tested as never before” (DeParle & Gebeloff, 2010).

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Communities across the nation have seen a rise in participation in SNAP. Known formerly as the food stamp program, this is the largest of the public anti-hunger

programs and one of the largest anti-poverty programs. Enrollment in SNAP grew substantially during the recession and stalled recovery, rising by 45% between January 2009 and January 2012 (Tavernese, 2012). New eligibility guidelines also contributed to the spike in SNAP applications in New York State. In 2008, the state expanded categorical eligibility, first for adults age sixty and older and for people with disabilities, and then for families with dependent-care costs. “It was a perfect storm in some ways,” said Dawn Secor, SNAP benefit specialist with Hunger Solutions New York, referring to the economic crash and the eligibility changes. “SNAP became the only lifeline to keep people out of poverty.” Ulster County reflects the national pattern. Between 2007 and 2011, the number of individuals and households receiving SNAP benefits more than doubled and the total benefits almost tripled, noted Marijane Knudsen, Director of Temporary Assistance, Ulster County Department of Social Services. As of May 2012, 20,825 county residents and more than 11,050 county households were receiving SNAP benefits worth \$2.9 million (NYSOTDA, 2012b) compared with 9,483 residents and

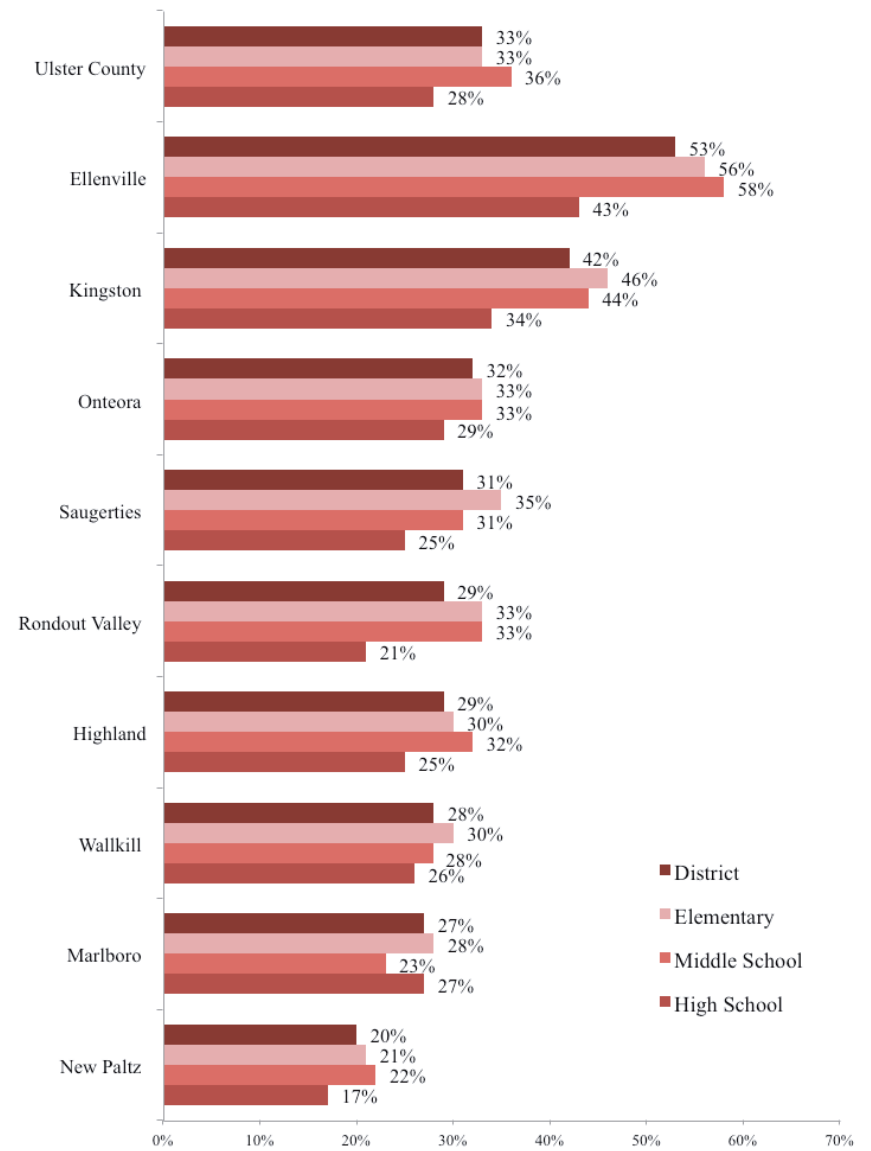
5,258 households in May 2007 with benefits worth \$892,981 (NYSOTDA, 2012c).

The National School Lunch Program

The National School Lunch Program, another major government financed anti-hunger initiative, provided free or reduced-price lunches to 9,433 students (38% of the 24,577 students enrolled) in Ulster County in May 2012 school year (NYSED, 2012). Figure 4 shows the percentage of students in the program at each school level (elementary, middle, and high school) during the 2010-2011 school year.

With the exception of the Rondout Valley and New Paltz school districts, the rate of participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program increased across Ulster County school districts between 2006-2007 and 2010-2011 (see Table 2). In thirteen schools across the county, participation rates increased ten percentage points or more between 2006-2007 and 2010-2011. Enrollment in Ulster County public schools declined by 2,065 students in this period. Nevertheless, the total number of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches increased (+615), with an overall rate increase of 28% to 33%. Although the 2008 recession and persistent high rates of joblessness undoubtedly are the main factors, the increases may also reflect a new way of qualifying students for subsidized meals. Through “direct certification” schools now can enroll all students whose families receive SNAP benefits, without requir-

Figure 4. Students Receiving Free and Reduced-Price Lunches in Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools in Ulster County, 2010-2011



Source: NYSED, School Report Cards, School Districts in Ulster County

Table 2. Ulster County Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunches, 2006-2007 and 2010-2011

	Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunch					
	2006-2007		2010-2011		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	2006-2007 to 2010-2011	Percentage point
Ulster County	7662	28%	8277	33%	615	5
Elementary Schools	3679	32%	3943	33%	264	4
Middle Schools	1965	32%	1948	36%	-17	4
High Schools	2018	22%	2386	28%	368	6
Ellenville CSD	720	41%	896	53%	176	11
Ellenville Elementary	316	49%	358	56%	42	7
Ellenville Middle School	226	43%	313	58%	87	15
Ellenville High School	178	32%	225	43%	47	11
Highland CSD	427	22%	535	29%	108	7
Highland Elementary	191	23%	240	30%	49	7
Highland Middle School	106	24%	145	32%	39	8
Highland High School	130	20%	150	25%	20	5
Kingston CSD	2792	38%	2847	42%	55	4
Anna Devine Elementary	39	16%	58	25%	19	9
Chambers School	171	45%	187	50%	16	5
E R Crosby Elementary School	136	40%	140	43%	4	3
Ernest C Myer	63	24%	46	21%	-17	-4
Frank L Meagher School	164	59%	143	63%	-21	4
George Washington School	241	74%	222	64%	-19	-10
Harry L Edson School	147	33%	155	35%	8	2
Robert R Graves School	107	32%	121	37%	14	5
Sophie Finn School	104	56%	148	67%	44	11
Zena Elementary School	60	35%	46	27%	-14	-9
John F Kennedy School	203	83%	151	74%	-52	-9
Kingston Elementary Schools	1435	45%	1417	46%	-18	1
J Watson Bailey Middle School	392	40%	326	42%	-66	2
M Clifford Miller Middle School	352	41%	324	46%	-28	4
Kingston Middle Schools	744	41%	650	44%	-94	3
Kingston High School	613	26%	780	34%	167	8
Marlboro CSD	362	17%	546	27%	184	10
Marlboro Elementary School	46	20%	57	29%	11	9
Marlboro Intermediate School	75	17%	130	28%	55	11
Middle Hope Elementary School	16	17%	25	22%	9	4
Milton Elementary School	21	17%	30	25%	9	8
Marlboro Elementary Schools	158	18%	242	28%	84	10
Marlboro Middle School	87	16%	112	23%	25	7
Marlboro Central High School	117	16%	192	27%	75	11

— continued —

ing an additional application (but districts are not required to follow this process).

In Ulster County school districts overall, there was a significant drop in participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program in 2010-2011 between the middle (36%) and high school (28%) levels. This drop reflects a national pattern generally attributed to older teenagers' reluctance to affiliate with a stigmatized program. "At that age, late middle school to high school, students are extremely self-conscious about free lunch, so they filter themselves," said Mike Robinson, food services director for the New Paltz schools. This self-filtering happens despite use of a PIN-based payment system that makes it impossible to tell which students have prepaid.

However, a concerted effort seemingly can make a difference. Marlboro schools were an exception to the overall pattern of high school students dropping out of the free and reduced-price lunch program. When asked about the unusual increase in participation in the program between middle and high school, Fred Callo, Marlboro Central School District food services director, mentioned the PIN-based payment system, which he believes eliminates any stigma, but also food quality, an atmosphere in which "kids enjoy eating lunch," and diligent efforts to enroll all eligible students. "We are aggressive about contacting the students in the beginning of the year," he said. "We'll call them down to the office and say, 'Hey, your benefits

— continued —

New Paltz CSD	455	20%	437	20%	-18	0
Duzine School	87	19%	82	18%	-5	-1
Lenape Elementary School	105	22%	114	23%	9	1
New Paltz Elementary Schools	192	21%	196	21%	4	0
New Paltz Middle School	74	14%	117	22%	43	8
New Paltz Senior High School	189	24%	124	17%	-65	-7
Onteora CSD	438	23%	498	32%	60	10
Phoenicia Elementary School	73	34%	92	44%	19	10
Reginald Bennett Elementary	85	28%	78	33%	-7	5
Woodstock Elementary School	61	19%	67	26%	6	7
Onteora Elementary Schools	219	26%	237	33%	18	8
Onteora Middle School	86	25%	89	33%	3	7
Onteora High School	133	18%	172	29%	39	11
Rondout Valley CSD	898	34%	638	29%	-260	-5
Kerhonkson Elementary School	146	47%	129	43%	-17	-3
Marbletown Elementary School	67	24%	62	23%	-5	-1
Rosendale Elementary School	100	39%	65	30%	-35	-9
Rondout Valley Elementary Schools	313	37%	256	33%	-57	-4
Rondout Valley Middle School	323	40%	213	33%	-110	-6
Rondout Valley High School	262	27%	169	21%	-93	-6
Saugerties CSD	691	21%	917	31%	226	10
Cahill School	138	35%	159	45%	21	10
Morse School	78	20%	89	24%	11	4
Mount Marion Elementary School	114	28%	152	43%	38	15
Riccardi Elementary School	95	22%	107	28%	12	6
Saugerties Elementary Schools	425	26%	507	35%	82	9
Saugerties Junior High School	117	21%	152	31%	35	10
Saugerties Senior High School	149	13%	258	25%	109	12
Wallkill CSD	879	24%	963	28%	84	4
Leptondale Elementary School	115	19%	131	23%	16	4
Ostrander Elementary School	99	16%	120	22%	21	5
Plattekill Elementary School	216	35%	239	45%	23	10
Wallkill Elementary Schools	430	24%	490	30%	60	6
John G Borden Middle School	202	34%	157	28%	-45	-6
Wallkill Senior High School	247	20%	316	26%	69	6
West Park UFSC	41	100%	35	100%	-6	0

Source: NYSED, School Report Cards, School Districts in Ulster County.

are about to end,’ and hand them the paperwork to take to their parents.” The high school mails application forms, which are also online, to all students who received free and reduced-price lunches the previous year. “If the forms aren’t returned within a couple of weeks, we work with the previous year’s list and contact all the students and then their parents,” said Rose-Ann Collins-Judon, principal of Marlboro High.

Since the early 1980s, K-12 food service operations have been required to become self-supporting; school districts’ general funds cannot be used to help finance school meals. Many scholars, including Janet Poppendieck, author of *Free for All: Fixing School Food in America*, blame growing reliance on sales of a la carte items in school lunch rooms for lowering the overall quality of the food served and for reinforcing the stigma of “free lunch.” A la carte options arguably create two classes of students: those who can buy these items (which generate revenue but generally are far less nutritious) and those who cannot. However, according to one food service director in Ulster County, a la carte options are necessary to make the economics work. The a la carte business accounts for about 40% of his school’s total food service revenue.

Expected to “operate like a business,” school food services have sought ways to cut costs and to attract more paying “customers” – largely by increasing sales of a la carte foods, which tend to be

“We have children for whom these [school meals] are their meals. This is it.”

– Mike Robinson, Director of Food Services, New Paltz Central School District

high-fat and high-sugar, and by adapting the regular menu to students' preferences for these same high-fat, high-sugar items (Poppendieck, 2010). A la carte sales of French fries, pizza, or cookies are profitable; full balanced meals sold for \$1 or \$2 a plate are not. Yet, charging more would leave some students unable to afford the regular school meals and lead others to conclude they could pack their own for less. For the 2011-2012 school year, meal costs in Ulster County elementary schools for lunch ranged from \$1.25 in Ellenville to \$2.50 in Marlboro. For breakfast, costs ranged from 65 cents in Wallkill to \$1.35 in Rondout Valley. In the middle and high schools lunch costs ranged from \$1.25 in Ellenville to \$2.75 in Marlboro, while breakfast was 65 cents in Wallkill up to \$1.50 in Onteora. Reduced-priced meals across the county were 25 cents.

To lower costs and reduce waste, some schools have instituted “offer v. served” policies. Under federal regulations, each school meal must include five “food items” in four categories: meat or meat alternative, vegetables and/or fruits (at least two servings), grains or breads, and milk. Under “offer v. served,” students can opt out of one or two of the components. New regulations

starting in September 2012 allow schools to continue practices of “offer v. served,” but only if the student takes a fruit and a vegetable, which also must be offered in larger proportions. “This is fantastic from a nutrition point of view,” one food service director said. “But we may get only six cents more per meal [in federal reimbursements]. The cheapest fruit I could sell is an apple, and they are 25 cents each.”

These problems notwithstanding, the school lunch program provides some basic nutrition. As Mike Robinson said about New Paltz students, so too for students in schools across Ulster County, there are, “children for whom these [school meals] are their meals. This is it.” Once school is out, there is nothing.

Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals

The Ulster County Office for the Aging serves approximately 520 meals per day. This includes 450 home-delivered meals, plus 60 more at nutrition sites around the county: in Ellenville, Rosendale, Saugerties, Kingston, New Paltz, and Olive. Although participation in the congregate-meal program has been dropping, demand for home-delivered meals (also known as “meals on

wheels”) has been growing. The office keeps intermittent wait lists for this program, which, despite the increased demand, is actually serving fewer people than in the past because of budget constraints. The waiting list grew to more than 100 people in January 2012.

Participants must be at least 60 years old. There is no income eligibility requirement. However, in the face of limited resources, the office has focused more closely on critical needs and the lack of any other “meal support,” such as a family member who can help out, said Mary Jo DeForest, deputy director of the office.

The cost per meal to the Office for the Aging is \$7.61, including transportation and delivery. The meals are portion-controlled and designed to supply one-third of recipients' daily nutritional needs. The office asks for a \$3 contribution per meal, but does not deny anyone who cannot pay. These contributions have been diminishing, from almost \$89,000 in 2009 to \$75,578 in 2011, said Deputy Director DeForest.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
The WIC program distributes

The Food Bank of the Hudson Valley distributed approximately 1.4 million pounds of food to charitable organizations in Ulster County in 2008 and approximately 2.2 million pounds to these same organizations in 2011 – a 57% increase over the two years.

food vouchers to low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, and to infants and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk. Administered by the Ulster County Department of Health, the local program provides an average of \$70 a month in food vouchers to eligible families. The vouchers can be used only for certain types and brands of foods, but this “frees up families to buy the other foods they need,” said Gene Aquirre, program coordinator of Ulster County WIC. Participation in the program increased 15% between January 2008 (when there were 2,181 participating women and children) and June 2012 (2,500 participants).

The Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

Among its many other programs, the United Way of Ulster County administers the federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program. Housed within the Department of Homeland Security, this effort is designed to help communities provide food and shelter for the hungry and homeless. Recently, this source for meeting food needs has been sharply constrained. With a program cut at the federal level last year, the amount that reached the Ulster United Way

dropped 80% from \$102,327 in 2010 to \$20,469 in 2011, said Su Marcy, vice president of Ulster United Way and chair of the EFSP Board. The program allocates 80% of the funds to housing and 20% to food. The \$4,094 that was available last year went to nine food pantries in Ulster County, most of which used the money to purchase food from the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York (RFBNNY).

Food Banks, Pantries, and Soup Kitchens

Besides the federal programs, the food safety net in Ulster County includes a range of local food pantries and soup kitchens run by secular and faith-based organizations, which have experienced an increased demand for their services. From 2010 to 2011, Family of Woodstock saw a 19% increase in requests for assistance at its food pantry in Ellenville and an increase of 21% at the pantry in New Paltz. Woodstock requests were down, but probably only because another food pantry opened there. In the five years that Jane Todd has run the food bank in Phoenicia, she has seen requests increase from no more than six or seven families per week to thirty to thirty-five families. The Happy to Help food pantry at

St. James Church in Kingston started with thirteen families three years ago and now has more than 150. The Rondout Valley Food Pantry in Stone Ridge served 105 households in 2009 and now serves more than twice as many (215). The Pointe of Praise Church in Kingston hosts a “food giveaway” once a month at its Family Life Center. As many as 200 cars, some with several families, now line up to fill the trunks and back seats with bags of food.

The Queens Galley, a soup kitchen in Kingston, served 5,000 meals per month in 2008 and now is serving “solidly over 9,000,” said Diane Reeder, the soup kitchen’s founder and director. The kitchen, which serves three meals a day seven days a week, is busiest from the 15th of the month on – that is, when SNAP benefits run out. “In August, it spikes 47%,” Diane Reeder said. She attributes the jump during the summer to the absence of school meals. In the winter as well, “A snow day after a long weekend can wreak complete havoc on a family,” she said.

The Food Bank of the Hudson Valley (FBHV) distributes food to member food pantries and soup kitchens, including

many in Ulster County. FBHV distributed approximately 1.4 million pounds of food to charitable organizations in Ulster County in 2008 and approximately 2.2 million pounds to these same organizations in 2011 – a 57% increase over the three years (RFBNNY, 2008, 2011). The August spike Reeder noted is apparent in Figure 5, which shows meals served by FBHV member organizations last year (2011). April, July, November, and December were also high-need months, no doubt reflecting school closings for spring break, the summer, and the winter holidays.

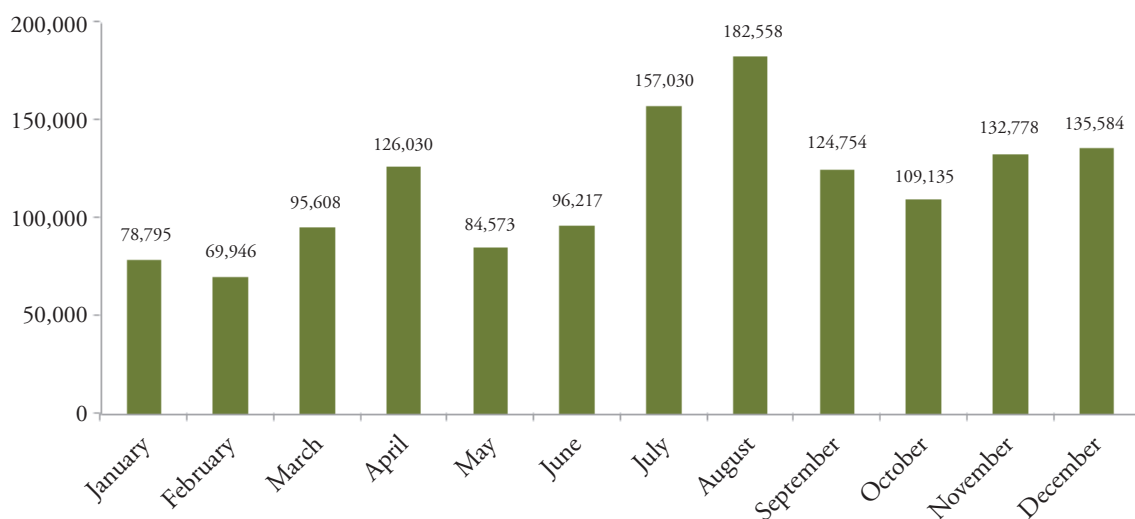
Who visits the local food pantries and soup kitchens? The Queens Galley serves “an eclectic mix,” including “homeless families living in hotels with no

cooking facilities,” said Diane Reeder, who worries particularly about “those who are working and don’t qualify for food stamps, but are struggling with so many other bills.” Many elderly people and families visit the pantry in Phoenicia. “The family thing is new,” said Jane Todd. She also sees a lot of people with mental illnesses who are “truly unable to care for themselves.” Michael Berg mentioned the same groups: more people who are employed and more people with mental health problems, especially homeless teenagers. “Now they are thrown out of the house with some regularity,” he said. “These people have a huge need. This [homelessness] results directly from economic pressure on families.” Food pantries have seen more double-income

families or families that were double-income: middle-class folks who have never before had to ask for help, but now have had a job loss, said Su Marcy of the United Way. “We’re not just talking about the homeless or the jobless,” said Pastor James B. Childs of the Pointe of Praise Church and Kingston School Board member. “We are seeing people who never, ever had to go to anybody for help before – the working poor, if you will. Sometimes people are almost embarrassed to be in line. Our hope is that we can provide assistance without people feeling like they are getting a handout. We want to let them keep their dignity.”

Adults with mental illnesses (about 1,200 in Ulster County) visit food pantries and soup

Figure 5. Meals Served by Member Organizations of the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, 2011



Source: Andrea McNeil, Member Services Coordinator, Food Bank of the Hudson Valley

“We are seeing people who never, ever had to go to anybody for help before – the working poor... Our hope is that we can provide assistance without people feeling like they are getting a handout. We want to let them keep their dignity.” – Pastor James B. Childs

kitchens in disproportionate numbers largely because so many live in poverty, said Kelly McMullen, program supervisor for adult services for Ulster County Mental Health. Many of these county residents qualify for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) benefits, but the cash assistance on top of the housing subsidy is approximately \$135 a month. If there is no other income, and there usually is not, that sum must cover all expenses beyond housing: transportation, any entertainment, toiletries and food. “These people are too poor to buy a car, too poor to buy a home, and too poor to buy the food they need. That’s why they are using the food banks,” McMullen said.

Everywhere, it seems, the need for private donations is escalating. Some organizations rely mostly on local, state, and federal government sources. These provide 78% of the funding for Family of Woodstock. Others, like the Queens Galley, rely completely on contributions. The soup kitchen does not screen for poverty, and so is ineligible for government funding. As Diane Reeder sees it, “Screening would add a level of humiliation – of having to document poverty and potentially having to tell people,

‘You’re not poor enough.’” “My husband says we’re like a bumblebee,” Reeder said with a laugh. “Based on the physics, it shouldn’t be able to fly!” The soup kitchen is flying, but barely. Reeder (who takes no salary if necessary) sometimes has to borrow to meet the payroll of two full-time and five part-time employees who are assisted by a corps of volunteers.

The food pantry in Phoenicia – a closet, with food items arranged as in a grocery store – also relies almost completely on donations. The pantry received \$2,000 from the Town of Shandaken last year (2011), but its expenses exceeded \$30,000. Jane Todd credits the skills of two hard-working volunteers, one of whom is “an extreme couponer and a very good beggar” who solicits leftovers and other donations from local businesses. Because this pantry operates under the auspices of the Town of Shandaken, it does not qualify for non-profit, 501(c)(3) status, and so cannot access regional food banks. Like the Queens Galley, the food pantry in Phoenicia is open to all. “I won’t screen,” Todd said.

People come here because they are hungry. All of that (screening) is such an

invasion. They have to go through that in every other facet of life – sometimes to be told they cannot have something because they make 10 cents too much. It’s atrocious. People wouldn’t come if they didn’t have to.

A group that tends not to visit food pantries and soup kitchens in the community are low-income college students or recent graduates in New Paltz, generally those living in small apartments off campus. Erica Wagner, SUNY New Paltz service learning coordinator, has noted an increase in the number of referrals for students in need of food. Many of these students are getting by on one meal a day, said Rev. Dianna Smith, chaplain of the Student Christian Center. Full-time college students are eligible for SNAP benefits only if they also work at least twenty hours a week and have no meal plan.

Rev. Smith started a food pantry on the campus in the fall of 2012. She became aware of the need after several students asked her about food assistance. She then convened a focus group of about thirty students, all of whom said they knew four or five others who were not eating

regularly because they could not afford it. Based on the focus group, Rev. Smith believes as many as 50% of the off-campus students could be going hungry from time to time. “This is a hidden – a very hidden – population because they are embarrassed,” she said. “That will be my biggest struggle with the pantry: to ensure there is no stigma.” College students do not visit other pantries in the community for this reason and because they often lack the necessary documentation, Rev. Smith said. The pantry on campus is stocked with donations from local churches as well as faculty, staff, and students, and is open to “all students who feel they need to come,” no questions asked beyond first name.

Michael Berg of Family may be right that food is a place where society has said, “We’ll help.” However, the vulnerability of the poor and near-poor to hunger and food insecurity and the vulnerability of anti-hunger efforts to empty-handedness make it hard to rest easy.

ADDRESSING A SPECTRUM OF UNMET NEEDS

Many Ulster County residents are suffering from the economic stress and rising poverty experienced by millions of Americans, and therefore also are facing what is now deemed “food insecurity.” “To alleviate poverty, we need gainful employment and a living wage with health insurance for everyone who is able to work, and we need to cure men-

tal illness,” said Diane Reeder of The Queens Galley. “But in the meantime, we can ease the burden of food insecurity.” In Ulster County that burden seemingly is disproportionately felt by:

- children in low-income families that cannot compensate for the loss of school meals during the summer and other school closings;
- teenagers in low-income families who do not participate in the school lunch program;
- residents in certain geographic areas, in particular, western Ulster County, who lack the economic wherewithal (a car or taxi fare) to shop regularly at full-service grocery stores and other venues;
- the many low-income older adults who have not applied for the SNAP benefits for which they are eligible – because they don’t know they qualify, feel someone else deserves the benefits more, or simply don’t want to be affiliated with the program; and,
- adults near retirement age who are not yet eligible for Social Security benefits and are living in poverty.

Each of these needs comes with challenges, of course, but might be addressed in the following ways.

Expand Summer Feeding for Children

As Michael Berg of Family points out, “Feeding during the summer is critical when families have even more stress. They now have to pay for day care and for more food.” However,

providing summer meals in a community like Ulster County is difficult. “How do you distribute in a rural community? What are you going to do in Kerhonkson? Shandaken? Someone driving door-to-door? It’s not feasible. This is a big issue,” Berg said. The Town of Shandaken sponsors a summer recreation program. However, as far as food, “you are on your own,” Jane Todd said.

The Queens Galley started a summer program for children last year (2011) at a camp for homeless children three to six years old at the Kingston YMCA. The camp provided lunch, which for many of the children was their only meal of the day, Diane Reeder said. This summer (2012) the program operated five days a week throughout July and August. Meals were prepared in the kitchen at the Queens Galley, then transported to the YMCA. However, as successful as this program has been, it is “less than a Band-Aid when you consider all the needy families in Kingston.” Fully funding a program for sixty-three days to include school vacation days, snow days, and the summer would cost \$73,000, Reeder estimated. The money would pay for a program coordinator, gas to deliver meals to four locations in Kingston, and 1,500 meals per week (lunch for 300 children per day). In this case, a relatively small investment would help tremendously.

Increase Enrollment in the School Lunch Program

Despite the hope expressed by

several school food service directors that PIN-based methods of payment destigmatize “free lunch,” program participation rates suggest otherwise. As Janet Poppendieck argues in *Free for All: Fixing School Food in America*, providing lunch free of charge to all students would solve the problem. In the meantime, enrolling all eligible students and using school meal times to build community, rather than reinforce a mentality of “us and them,” would help.

Concerned about the health consequences of a stigmatized “free lunch,” students in the Ulster BOCES New Visions Health Careers Exploration program have made several recommendations, including requiring all students to complete the application for free and reduced-price lunch; simplifying and standardizing the application; and, including a promotional flyer informing high school students about the multiple but perhaps unrealized benefits of participating, including reduced fees for the SAT and ACT as well as AP tests and community college courses. The New Visions students also are advocating for schools to establish a no-cash policy with swipe cards to be used by all school districts. They are suggesting that the cards be programmed to allow the school to track food choices and to allow parents to opt out of unhealthy choices or to set healthy foods as the default. It is in school districts’ interest to enroll all eligible students in the lunch program both because free and reduced-price meals are

federally subsidized and because the percentage of students enrolled helps to determine a school’s state-aid category.

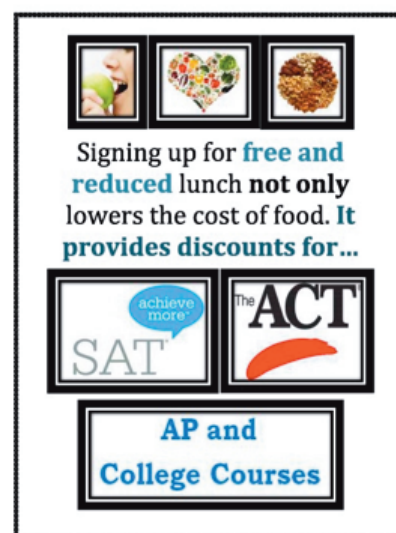
Improve Transportation to Healthy Food Sources

As Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) Director Robert DiBella notes, “Getting folks to areas where there is good, healthy food – that’s the main issue.” UCAT operates a rural route four days a week. Ridership for these routes increased 10% last year (2011) and as of June 2012 was up another 18% for this year. A map of all food pantries and soup kitchens in Ulster County, created by the New Visions Health Careers students, has now been posted on UCAT buses. Still, the relative lack of full-service groceries in the western part of the county makes regular shopping difficult for these residents, especially those without cars.

Help Eligible Residents Receive SNAP Benefits

Much like teenagers who shun “free lunch,” many older adults forego SNAP benefits, and it is not hard to understand why. The application form itself is insulting and likely frightens some potential applicants. However, other challenges seemingly could be ameliorated through more effective efforts to reach out to potential applicants, to provide practical help, and to challenge the pervasive notion that needing help is somehow shameful or that accepting benefits takes away from someone else. A recent expansion of the state-funded Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP), managed by Hunger Solutions New York, includes Ulster County, and this initiative likely will increase SNAP

Figure 6.



Drazen Bacarra, a student in the New Visions Health Careers Exploration program, developed this poster as part of a campaign to reduce the stigma of “free lunch.”

enrollment. NOEP outreach workers help applicants complete the necessary paperwork, provide individual help as needed, work with local government offices to ensure correct processing of applications, identify and address barriers to participation, refer households to other resources, and collaborate with local service providers. The New Visions students have taken on the SNAP challenge as well, and plan to conduct sign-up workshops at soup kitchens and food pantries in the county.

Help the Growing Poor and Near Poor at Pre-retirement Age

Since 2007, there has been a large increase in the number of Ulster County adults age 55 to 64 living in poverty. Although SNAP participation data for this age group is not available, Cen-

Table 3. Older Adults in Ulster County Living in Poverty, 2007 and 2010

	2007		2010	
	55-64 years	65-74 years	55-64 years	65-74 years
Men	689	314	1,982	297
Women	1,031	410	1,578	401

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007 and 2010 1-year estimates

sus data show a 53% increase in the number of Ulster County women 55 to 64 who were living in poverty in 2010 compared to 2007, and a 187% increase in the number of men in this situation (see Table 4).

These sharp increases perhaps reflect workers laid off in the recession who have been unable to find new jobs that pay a living wage. A better understanding of how these county residents are faring is needed, especially in light of a Census Bureau forecast predicting that when today's workers ages 50 to 64 reach age 65, almost half of them (48%) will be poor or near-poor. "That's going to have repercussions for state and local governments," said Nari Rhee, a researcher with the Center for Labor Research and Education at the University of California, Berkeley. "They're responsible for providing services to the elderly who won't have the means to support themselves" (Lemov, 2012).

CONCLUSION: HUNGER MATTERS

The stakes are high. Even mild "food insecurity" can impair

Supporting Local Agriculture and Getting Fresh, Nutritious Food to Those in Need

Increase Connections to Community Supporting Agriculture (CSAs)

Many CSAs in our region have programs designed to address the needs of those in poverty. In 2004, Cheryl Rogowski of Orange County was the first farmer ever awarded a MacArthur Foundation fellowship, in recognition of her creation of a CSA targeted to provide low-income households with local produce. The Phillies Bridge Farm Project in Ulster County has a "Farm to Families" program that provides free or subsidized shares to low-income families. The program also hosts farm visits and provides cooking demonstrations for participants to raise awareness about nutrition and agriculture in underserved communities. Some CSAs have policies or programs, like sliding-scale pricing, designed to provide low-income people with access to quality food. Nationally, about four in ten CSAs report donating excess product to food banks

(Woods, et al., 2009). Often farmers will allow their members to donate part of their shares to food pantries and soup kitchens.

Get More Local, Nutritious Food in Our Schools

Some parents and other child advocates in the region have been seeking ways to link schools and local farms. "Healthy Food, Healthy Kids" in New Paltz and "From the Ground Up" in the Rondout Valley have pressed school districts to provide more nutritious food options for students, including more fresh, local, and organic produce. These advocates have faced barriers in their attempts to get more local food incorporated into school lunch menus. This is rooted in current school district budget constraints, coupled with federal agricultural policy that makes available inexpensive foods subsidized in ways that favor large commodity-crop producers. This is one indication that optimizing local agriculture and getting healthier food into schools will necessitate policy reforms at the national as well as the state level.

Every \$5 spent on SNAP benefits generates \$11 in Ulster County.

physical and emotional health, raise family stress levels precipitously, and set in motion a lifetime of hardship (Hoefer & Curry, 2012; Wight, et al., 2010). It's also expensive. SNAP benefits foregone for whatever reason amount to lost income circulating in the local economy, which arguably only exacerbates the hardship. Every \$5 spent on SNAP benefits generates \$11 in the county, said Maureen Swingle of the Ulster County Department of Social Services. "Federal, state, and local officials all want to see the proliferation of food stamps because the dollars are spent," said Commissioner Iapoce. "To the degree that it helps SNAP recipients participate in the economy, it has a beneficial effect."

As Michael Berg of Family argues, Ulster County needs a strong workforce, "so anything we don't do to promote a stronger, healthier workforce, we're letting the county down." As Joe Huben, director of the New Visions Health Careers Exploration Program, contends whenever he can, the link between poor nutrition and obesity is well documented. Consequently, improving nutrition for everyone would lower

skyrocketing health-care costs (NYSOSC, 2008). In 2010, the Ulster County Department of Health in conjunction with CRREO collected and analyzed Body Mass Index (BMI) data for first, third, fifth, and seventh graders at eight of Ulster County's nine school districts, and found that 37% of these students were obese or overweight, with 20% obese. Across the grades, the rates rose steadily from 32% overweight/obese first graders to 42% overweight/obese seventh graders (Ulster County Department of Health, 2011). Reducing obesity will require improving nutrition, which in turn will require increasing access to affordable, quality food.

As valid as these economic and health arguments are, addressing chronic food insecurity needs no additional rationale beyond "this is the right thing to do." That many of our neighbors are malnourished or worried about how to feed themselves and their families is reason enough to respond as thoughtfully, compassionately, and generously as possible. As Berg says, "The real question is how to convert the strong commitment of individuals to not seeing their neighbors

go hungry into a solution." Many local groups have taken that commitment to heart and are working diligently to try to ameliorate hunger or food insecurity in Ulster County. The United Way of Ulster County, for example, helps to coordinate the National Association of Letter Carriers and United States Postal Service's annual "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive, the largest one-day food collection event in the nation. The drive in May 2012, centered at the Kingston post office, brought in 8,380 pounds of food (a 249% increase over 2011), which was delivered to fourteen food pantries. The New Visions Health Career Explorations students, in addition to the projects already mentioned, have surveyed students at Kingston High School and Saugerties High School to ascertain their nutritional status as well as the number of students who are homeless, and plan to survey high school students in Ellenville and Rondout Valley next.

UlsterCorps, an organization that pairs volunteers with other agencies and organizations that rely on their help, and the group that requested this study, has created the Hunger Project, a

“The real question is how to convert the strong commitment of individuals to not seeing their neighbors go hungry into a solution.”

– Michael Berg, Family of Woodstock

coalition of concerned citizens working with community gardens and farms, food processors and storage facilities, and food pantries and soup kitchens to reduce hunger in Ulster County. Since 2008, UlsterCorps has recruited and organized volunteers to glean and distribute more than 25,000 pounds of produce, 840 quarts of fruit, and 80 gallons of cider to local food pantries and soup kitchens. Director Beth McLendon and other members of UlsterCorps worked with the Mid-Hudson Coalition to End Hunger and with the New Visions students to develop a blueprint for making adequate, nutritious food available to all county residents. The blueprint as well as maps of local CSAs, food pantries and soup kitchens, and the UCAT bus route can be found on the UlsterCorps Web site (see Collaborations: Hunger Project). The Hunger Project Steering Committee works to strengthen communication and collaboration among stakeholders across diverse fields: human services, transportation, education and research. “People don’t always know what others are doing,” said Larraine Mai, UlsterCorps board member and a member of the Hunger Project Steering

Committee. “As we got more involved with the hunger issue, we became more aware of the gaps, and thought, ‘There’s something not computing: We’re in an agricultural area, but there is all of this hunger.’”

Without these and many other anti-hunger initiatives, food insecurity in Ulster County would be far worse than it is. Yet, addressing the problem here, as elsewhere, is complicated, in part because the immediate needs are so urgent while the underlying causes, including poverty and unemployment, are so difficult to alter. “Too often, people who want to help are not focused on self-development and self-empowerment, but more on charity and service,” said the Rev. Richard Witt, executive director of the Rural and Migrant Ministry. “I find that when people want to address hunger issues, they focus on feeding programs rather than more systemic issues.” Until and unless social priorities are directed towards “human well-being, and not necessarily profit making, it will be an uphill battle, skewed in a direction that’s not going to work,” said another advocate. To a troubling extent, “food banks and

soup kitchens are functioning as income-support programs disguised with other names.”

The very existence of Ulster County’s complex hunger-prevention system attests to a need that is not really invisible, yet somehow still not in plain view. We are living side-by-side in two worlds. Some of us shop for food regularly and conveniently in a range of venues, from full-service groceries to local farm stands. Others must obtain food wherever and however they can in a shadow system of food pantries, soup kitchens, and food distributions. The challenge is to bring all in our community into one world. We must work together to meet the immediate needs for nutritious food while, at the same time, addressing hunger’s deeper systemic roots in poverty and unemployment. Preventing hunger and starvation is important, but this is a low bar. The goal must be to ensure that all in our community can regularly enjoy nutritious food, obtained in ways that do not stigmatize or separate.

“There’s something not computing: We’re in an agricultural area, but there is all of this hunger.”

– Larraine Mai, UlsterCorps

Sources

For a complete list of works cited for this paper please reference the electronic version on the State University of New York at New Paltz CRREO website: www.newpaltz.edu/crreo

Citation

Books, Sue (2012), Food Insecurity in Ulster County (CRREO Discussion Brief 9, Winter 2012). New Paltz, NY: State University of New York at New Paltz Center for Research, Regional Education and Outreach.

Comment

To comment, write to CRREO at CRREO@newpaltz.edu.

Acknowledgements

This report would not have been developed without the help of many people. Among them are UlsterCorps Board President Rik Flynn and Board Member Laraine Mai who, along with CRREO Director Gerald Benjamin, initiated the project; Renee LaMonica (Adolescence Education-Earth Science, '13) and Andrea Mazziotti (Sociology, '13), SUNY New Paltz students who completed data-gathering tasks with great care and enthusiasm; and Paul Edlund, who created many of the figures.

Many actively concerned citizens took time out of their very busy days to share their insights and observations, and they all deserve a special thank you: Gene Aguirre, Program Coordinator, Ulster County Department of Health, WIC Program; Michael Berg, Director, Family of Woodstock; Fred Callo, Food Service Director, Marlboro Central School District; Anne Cardinale, Director, Ulster County Office for the Aging; The Rev. James B. Childs, Pastor, Pointe of Praise Church and Kingston school board member; RoseAnn Collins-Judon, Principal, Marlboro High School; Mary Jo Deforest, Deputy Director, Ulster County Office for the Aging; Robert DiBella, Director of Public Transit, Ulster County Area Transit; Rik Flynn, President, Board of Directors, UlsterCorps; Margaret Gutierrez, Director, Mid-Hudson Migrant Education Outreach Program; Melinda Herzog, Project Coordinator, Creating Healthy Places, Cornell Cooperative Extension; Joseph Huben, New Visions Health Coordinator, Ulster County BOCES; Michael Iapocce, Commissioner of Social Services, Ulster County; Laraine Mai, Board Member, UlsterCorps; Su Marcy, Vice President, United Way of Ulster County; Misha Marvel, Nutrition Programs for Seniors

Specialist, Hunger Solutions New York; Kelly McMullen, Program Supervisor, Adult Services, Ulster County Mental Health Department; Andrea McNeil, Member Services Coordinator, Food Bank of the Hudson Valley; Vince Napoli, School Business Administrator, Ellenville Central School District; Michael Raphael, Project Coordinator, Project Hope; Diane Reeder, Director, The Queens Galley; Mike Robinson, Food Service Director, New Paltz Central Schools; Lori Rotolo, Chair, Wawarsing Council of Agencies; Rachel Hye Youn Rupright, Child Nutrition Program Specialist, Hunger Solutions New York; Dawn Secor, SNAP Benefit Specialist, Hunger Solutions New York; Rev. Dr. Dianna Smith, Chaplain, Student Christian Center, SUNY New Paltz; Maureen Swingle, Principal SNAP Worker, Ulster County; Jane Todd, Director of the Food Pantry at Phoenicia Methodist Church; Ruth Ann Wesserling, Data Clerk, Mid-Hudson Migrant Education Outreach Program; Kristen Wilson, Cornell Cooperative Extension Ulster County; and Rev. Richard Witt, Executive Director, Rural and Migrant Ministry.

CRREO

The Center for Research, Regional Education and Outreach (CRREO) conducts studies on topics of regional interest, brings visibility and focus to these matters, fosters communities working together to better serve citizenry, and advances the public interest in our region. Publication of this Discussion Brief is one way that CRREO at New Paltz seeks to contribute to the further development of a vibrant community in our region.



The Power of SUNY, the State University of New York's Strategic Plan adopted in 2010, has as one major purpose reinforcing SUNY's role as an enduring, enriching presence in communities across our state. In SUNY, "We want to create a broader sense of common ground and make a lasting difference for everyone in the places we call home."

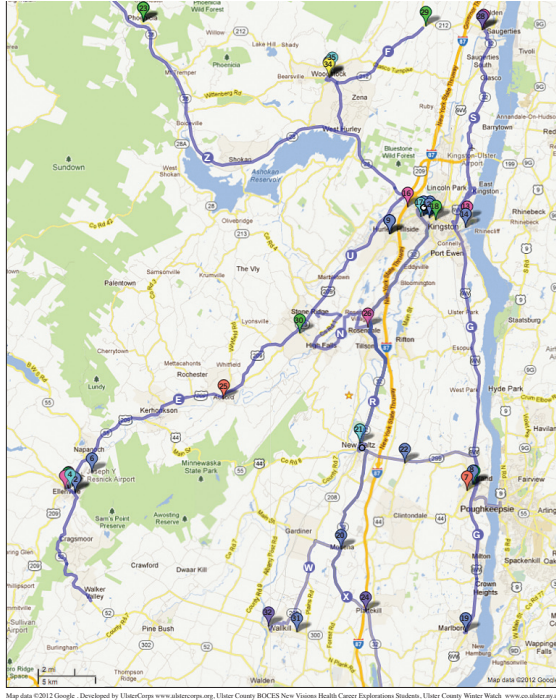


The State University of New York at New Paltz is a highly selective college of about 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students located in the Mid-Hudson Valley between New York City and Albany. One of the most well-regarded public colleges in the nation, New Paltz delivers an extraordinary number of high-quality majors in Business, Liberal Arts & Science, Engineering, Fine & Performing Arts and Education.

Ulster County Food Pantries & Soup Kitchens

accessible by Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT)

UCAT Dispatch: 845-340-3333 or 888-827-8228 or www.co.ulster.ny.us/ucat/ for schedules & information



KEY:

- Morning Hours
- Midday Hours
- Evening Hours
- Morning & Midday Hours
- Open All Day
- Day & Evening Hours
- Miscellaneous / Call for Hours
- UCAT Bus Route

- 16 KINGSTON (cont'd.)**
Pointe of Praise Family Life Center – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 339-4615
243 Hurley Ave, Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: Mon-Fri, 9:30 am-3 pm
- 17 Queens Galley – Soup Kitchen**
Phone: (845) 338-3468 – Admin
254 Washington Ave., Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: 7 days/week: 8 am breakfast; 12 noon lunch; 5 pm dinner.
- 18 Salvation Army of Ulster County – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 331-1803 – Admin
35 Cedar St, Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: 9 am – 12 noon daily
- 19 MARLBORO**
Saint Mary's Church – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 236-4340
71 Grand St / PO Box 730, Marlboro, NY 12542
Hours: Mon 1 pm – 4 pm, Wed 11 am – 2 pm, Fri 10 am – 1 pm
- 20 MODENA**
Modena United Methodist Church – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 883-7142
1928 Rt 44/55, Modena, NY 12548
Hours: Tue, 11 am – 12 noon
- 21 NEW PALTZ**
Family of New Paltz – Food Pantry
once a month for Ulster County residents
Phone: (845) 255-8801
51 North Chestnut St, New Paltz, NY 12561
Hours: Mon – Thu 10 am – 5 pm, Fri 10 am – 4 pm
- 22 Saint Joseph's Catholic Church – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 255-5635 – Admin.
34 South St, New Paltz, NY 12561
Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed & Fri, 11 am – 12 noon
- 23 PHOENICIA**
Phoenicia Methodist Church – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 688-5670
25 Church St, Phoenicia, NY 12464
Hours: Thu, 10 am – 12 noon

- 1 ELLENVILLE**
Community Action – Food Pantry, Headstart, Emergency Services, Outreach
Phone: (845) 647-6061
85 Center St, Ellenville, NY 12428
Hours: Mon – Fri, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
- 2 Ellenville Seventh Day Adventist Church – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 647-5998 – Admin.
161 Center St, Ellenville, NY 12428
Hours: Mon, Tue 1 pm – 5 pm, last week of each month only.
- 3 Ellenville United Methodist Church – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 647-7094 – Admin
83 Canal St / PO Box 591, Ellenville, NY 12428
Hours: Wed, 9 am – 10:30 pm
- 4 Family of Ellenville – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 647-2443
221 Canal St, Ellenville, NY 12428
Hours: Mon – Thu 10am – 5pm, Fri 10am – 4pm
- 5 Hosanna Assembly of God – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 647-4341
178 Canal St, Ellenville, NY 12428
HOURS: Every third Fri 5 – 7 pm (Call immediately if emergency - i.e. there are no other options and waiting is not possible)
- 6 Shiloh Baptist Church – Soup Kitchen**
Phone: (845) 647-8662
Berne Rd, Ellenville, NY 12428
Hours: Wed, 12 noon – 2 pm
- 7 HIGHLAND**
Family Outreach – Food Pantry, Home Delivered Meals
Phone: (845) 380-8799 – leave message
157 Vineyard Ave, Highland, NY 12528
Hours: Call for appointment.
- 8 Highland Community Action – Food Pantry, Outreach, Emergency Services, Headstart**
Phone: (845) 691-8722 – Admin.
15 Church St, Highland, NY 12542
Hours: Mon, Tue, Fri 10 – 11:30 am & 1:30 – 3 pm
Also open for emergencies. Free bread and produce available after 1 pm Wed.
- 9 HURLEY**
St. Joseph's Mission Church – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 338-7121
Conifer La, Hurley, NY 12443
Hours: Tue, 11 am – 3 pm, call in an emergency
- 10 KINGSTON**
Catholic Charities – Special Needs/Chronic Illness Food Pantry (doctor verification on 2nd visit)
Phone: (845) 340-9170 – Admin
(800) 566-7636 – Immigrant Line
59 Pearl St, Kingston NY 12401
Hours: Mon-Wed, 11 am-3 pm
- 11 Church of the Holy Cross – Food, Hygiene Products, Thrift Shop, and Soup Kitchen**
Phone: (845) 331-6796 Admin.
30 Pine Grove Ave, Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: Every fourth Sun, call for details
- 12 Kingston Soup Closet (also at above location) – Cleaning products only**
Hours: Last week of month only, Tue & Thu 10 am – 12 noon, Wed, 1 – 3 pm
- 13 Clinton Avenue United Methodist Church – Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 331-7188 – Admin
122 Clinton Ave / PO Box 1099
Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: Mon-Fri meals served at noon. Pantry Mon – Fri 11 am-12 noon, Fri evening by appt
- 14 Community Action – Extra Helpings, Headstart, Emergency Services, Outreach**
Phone: (845) 338-8750 – Admin
70 Lindsley St, Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30 am-4:30 pm
- 15 New Central Baptist Church – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 338-0589
229 East Strand, Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: Mon 11 am – 1 pm & by appointment
- 16 People's Place – Food Pantry, Clothing, Emergency Services**
Phone: (845) 338-4030
773 Broadway, Kingston, NY 12401
Hours: Mon – Fri, 10 am – 1 pm
- 24 PLATTEKILL**
New Day Tabernacle Church – Food Pantry, Food Delivery for Homebound
Phone: (845) 566-4441
38 Fire House Rd, Plattekill, NY 12568
Hours: Sat 10 am – 12 noon; Wed 6 pm – 7 pm
- 25 ROCHESTER**
Rochester Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 626-7501
P.O. Box 12, 22 Main St, Accord, NY 12404
Hours: Call for appointment
- 26 ROSENDALE**
Rosedale Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 658-9385
45 James St, Rosendale, NY 12472
Hours: Mon 9 am – 1 pm, Sat 10 am – 12 noon
- 27 SAUGERTIES**
Atonement Lutheran Church – Food Pantry, Soup Kitchen
Phone: (845) 246-8322 – Admin.
100 Market St, Saugerties, NY 12477
Hours: Tue, Wed, Thu, 9:30 am – 1 pm; Lunch program, Tue & Thu, 12 noon
- 28 Saugerties Area Council of Churches – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 246-6885
44 Livingston St, Saugerties, NY 12477
Hours: Mon & Thu 10 am - 12 noon; Tue 7 - 8 pm
- 29 St. John the Evangelist – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 246-9581
915 Rt 212, Saugerties, NY 12477
Hours: Wed & Fri, 10 am – 12 noon
- 30 STONE RIDGE**
Christ the King Church – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 687-4013
3021 Rt. 213 East, Stone Ridge, NY 12484
Hours: Tue & Thu 8 am – 10 am
- 31 WALLKILL**
His Love Unveiled – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 895-3006
2393 Route 300, Wallkill, NY 12589
Hours: 2nd & 4th Tue 12 pm – 1:30 pm; Fri 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm
- 32 WALLKILL (cont'd.)**
Wallkill Reformed Church – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 895-2181
45 Bridge Street, Wallkill, NY 12589
Hours: Thu 6 pm – 7:30 pm, Fri 11 am – 1 pm
- 33 WAWARSING**
Wawarsing Town of – Food Pantry
Phone: (845) 647-6570 x 6 Welfare Office
108 Canal St / PO Box 671, Ellenville, NY 12428
Hours: Mon – Fri, 8 am – 4 pm
- 34 WOODSTOCK**
Christ's Lutheran Church – Soup Kitchen
Phone: (845) 679-2336 Message
Phone: (845) 246-3036 x7333 – Admin
20 Mill Hill Rd., Woodstock, NY 12498
Hours: Kitchen M, W, F 4 pm – 6 pm
- 35 Family of Woodstock – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 679-2485
16 Rock City Rd., Woodstock, NY 12498
Hours: Mon-Thu 10 am – 5 pm; Fri 10 am – 4 pm
- 36 Reformed Church of Woodstock – Food Pantry**
Phone: (845) 679-8800 – Admin
18 Tinker St / PO Box 66, Woodstock, NY 12498
Hours: Wed 4 pm – 7 pm, Thu 9 am – 11 am

860350



New Paltz
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

CRREO
1 Hawk Drive
New Paltz, NY 12561-2443

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #6127
Newburgh, New York

Independently and in collaboration with
local governments, business and not-
for-profits **across the Hudson Valley,**
CRREO: conducts **independent research**
on topics of **regional interest;** brings
visibility and focus to these matters;
fosters communities **working together**
to better serve the citizenry; and seeks
to **advance the public interest** in
our region.