

First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney Announces “First Chance” Award Recipients

Awards recognize leaders, organizations that provided meals for children during spring and summer

WILMINGTON, Del. – First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney and members of the End Childhood Hunger Task Force (ECHO) on Friday announced recipients of [“First Chance”](#) awards. The award recipients consist of leaders and teams that stepped up to keep feeding Delaware children when school buildings had to close from mid-March through June due to COVID-19.

*“School-based food services represent our front line of defense against childhood hunger and in support of the nutrition essential to healthy development and learning,” said **First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney**. “When school buildings had to close, it took a wide range of teams – comprised of dedicated, creative, determined individuals – to devise and implement plans to continue to feed our kids. We are so very grateful for their extraordinary work, which they are still doing, on behalf of the children of Delaware. We are proud to recognize these leaders and teams with First Chance awards for extraordinary service to Delaware’s children during the pandemic.”*

First Chance Award Recipients:

- Appoquinimink School District – *Janice Vander Decker*
- Boys & Girls Club of Delaware – *Tony Windsor*
- Brandywine School District, School Nutrition – *Colleen Carter*
- Caesar Rodney School District – *Paul Rodgers*
- Cape Henlopen School District – *Cheryle Lord-Gordon*
- Capital School District – *James Trower*
- Christina School District – *Andrea Solge*
- City of Wilmington, Department of Youth and Families, Food Service Program – *Victoria Fuentes-Cox*
- Colonial School District – *A. Paula Angelucci*
- Community Education Building PS #5 LLC – *Havena Hollins*
- Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Delaware Division of Social Services – *Mondel Powell*
- Delaware Department of Health and Social

Services, Delaware Division of Social Services (Pandemic-EBT Customer Service Team) – *Maggie Smith, Carolyn Kincaid, and Marcella Spady*

- **Delaware Department of Transportation – *Mike Rivera, Dan Sturgeon, Warren Ziegler, Butch Kelley, and Laura Brown***
- **Delaware National Guard – *Captain Kevin Caneco, Army 1st Lt. James Willey, and Sgt. 1st Class Brian Turner***
- **Ezion Fair Community Academy – *Reverend Dr. Christopher Curry***
- **Family Outreach Multipurpose Community Center Inc. – *Stephanie Dukes***
- **Food Bank of Delaware – *Sanjay Malik***
- **Harry K Foundation – *Harry Keswani***
- **Indian River School District – *Clifton Toomey***
- **Lake Forest School District – *Jennifer Montano***
- **Laurel School District – *Julie Gibbons***
- **Milford School District – *Sharon Forrest***
- **Polytech School District – *Carol Arrington***

**Red Clay Consolidated School District
– Jessica Terranova RD, LDN**

- **Seaford School District – William Mengel**
- **Smyrna School District – Roger Holt**
- **Tarbiyah School – Dr. Amna Latif**
- **The Little People Child Development Center
– Janice Palmer**
- **Woodbridge School District – Joann Joseph**
- **YMCA of Delaware – Courtney Hoy**

The award recipients, many of whom are Delaware's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors, were able to coordinate sites early this spring so that families could pick up meals for children to eat at home. Additional organizations and community partners worked with the SFSP sponsors to ensure students had nutritious meals outside of school.

Members of the statewide ECHO Task Force selected the award recipients. With a central team convened by the First Lady, the Task Force includes representatives from the Food Bank of Delaware, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health and Social Services. The task force's specific goals include increasing participation and building partnerships in support of the Summer Food Service Program and alternative model school breakfasts. The task force also seeks to promote awareness of all programs, public and private, available to Delawareans experiencing food insecurity.

"The Delaware Department of Education is grateful for all of the hard work and dedication of the Summer Food Service Program Sponsors who quickly jumped into action when schools

closed,” said **Aimee Beam, an Education Associate for Nutrition Programs at the Delaware Department of Education.** “Without their creativity and hard work, many children would have gone without the nutritious meals that the need to grow and learn.”

“Nothing is more important to all of us at the Department of Health and Social Services than making sure that Delaware children in need receive meals regularly,” said **Ray Fitzgerald, Director of DHSS’ Division of Social Services.** “We are grateful to all of the First Chance award recipients who helped us meet that priority during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“The demand for food assistance as a result of the pandemic has been unprecedented,” said **Charlotte McGarry, Chief Programs Officer for the Food Bank of Delaware.** “It has truly taken our entire community to ensure that the nutritional needs of Delawareans – especially our children – are met. We are so thankful for all of the hunger heroes who have stepped up during this crisis to make sure children’s most basic needs are met.”

First Lady Carney launched the [First Chance Delaware](#) initiative in 2018 to recognize and facilitate effective partnerships, to share research and best practices, and to promote opportunities to collaborate in support of Delaware’s children. First Chance Delaware focuses its work on ending childhood hunger and expanding access to nutritious food for low-income children; promoting learning readiness through literacy, health and parent-child engagement programs; and advancing the recognition of – and effective responses to – adverse childhood experiences.

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