

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: NJEDA Announces Additional \$5 Million for Sustain & Serve NJ Program

12/20/2022

Now funded at \$57.5M, Sustain & Serve NJ helps program grantees buy meals from local restaurants and feed families over the holidays

TRENTON – The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zs6hqi/7ys5259b/v5hci1__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PYjaMImPPfhg5f8bGWJ1JiMnqOQrPrMjLcRY4-lv47B3f-GbL5yGDxmeoCgKwQx-DxZ2C27SOPRr5YCA09I2FIS) today announced plans to allocate an additional \$5 million in state funding to Phase 3 of its Sustain & Serve NJ program. Sustain & Serve NJ provides nonprofit organizations with grants to support the purchase of meals from New Jersey restaurants that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and the distribution of those meals at no cost to recipients. The announcement comes at a time of year when nonprofits are facing peak demand for food assistance. The funding announced today is expected to support the purchase of an additional 450,000 meals.

Sustain & Serve NJ launched during the pandemic as a \$2 million pilot program to boost restaurants impacted by COVID-19 while combatting rising food insecurity and has grown into an over \$57 million program that continues to bring much-needed food to people across New Jersey. Since February 2021, Sustain & Serve NJ has already supported the purchase of more than four million meals from over 400 restaurants in all 21 counties with grants totaling \$57.5 million through three rounds of funding.

“Sustain & Serve NJ is a unique tool with a proven track record of enabling nonprofits to buy meals from local restaurants to combat food insecurity,” **Governor Phil Murphy said**. “Food banks and other nonprofits statewide are seeing a rising demand this holiday season and this added \$5 million for Sustain & Serve NJ will significantly aid their efforts to connect New Jerseyans with nutritious meals.”

Earlier this year, 31 New Jersey nonprofits were approved to receive a total of \$17.5 million through Phase 3 of Sustain & Serve NJ. Each of these awardees will now receive additional funding to support their efforts.

“Sustain & Serve NJ grantees are working extra hard this holiday season to feed their neighbors and support their communities,” **said NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Tim Sullivan**. “Governor Murphy has championed Sustain & Serve NJ since the beginning, and we are grateful to him and the Legislature for continuing to provide the resources we need to combat hunger every day of the year while supporting local restaurants throughout the Garden State.”

“This additional \$5 million committed to Sustain & Serve NJ partners will go extra lengths in making sure more families see hot and freshly prepared foods on their tables this holiday season, into the New Year, and beyond,” **said Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin**. “And that’s incredibly critical as our food banks report sharp increases in food insecurity among our communities.”

Sullivan noted that Sustain & Serve NJ is a key part of the NJEDA’s efforts to strengthen the economic security of all New Jerseyans. The Authority is putting forth a multi-pronged strategy to eliminate food deserts ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zs6hqi/7ys5259b/byici1__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PYjaMImPPfhg5f8bGWJ1JiMnqOQrPrMjLcRY4-lv47B3f-GbL5yGDxmeoCgKwQx-DxZ2C27SOPRr5YClw0Mnwy\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zs6hqi/7ys5259b/byici1__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PYjaMImPPfhg5f8bGWJ1JiMnqOQrPrMjLcRY4-lv47B3f-GbL5yGDxmeoCgKwQx-DxZ2C27SOPRr5YClw0Mnwy$)) within the state and to bolster the child care sector ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zs6hqi/7ys5259b/rjici1__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PYjaMImPPfhg5f8bGWJ1JiMnqOQrPrMjLcRY4-lv47B3f-GbL5yGDxmeoCgKwQx-DxZ2C27SOPRr5YCPwbsM5n\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zs6hqi/7ys5259b/rjici1__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PYjaMImPPfhg5f8bGWJ1JiMnqOQrPrMjLcRY4-lv47B3f-GbL5yGDxmeoCgKwQx-DxZ2C27SOPRr5YCPwbsM5n$)), an industry whose critical importance was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The NJEDA is also working with partners statewide to create a Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center in Trenton ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zs6hqi/7ys5259b/7ikci1__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PYjaMImPPfhg5f8bGWJ1JiMnqOQrPrMjLcRY4-lv47B3f-GbL5yGDxmeoCgKwQx-DxZ2C27SOPRr5YCNd-BITq\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zs6hqi/7ys5259b/7ikci1__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!PYjaMImPPfhg5f8bGWJ1JiMnqOQrPrMjLcRY4-lv47B3f-GbL5yGDxmeoCgKwQx-DxZ2C27SOPRr5YCNd-BITq$)) as part of First Lady Tammy Murphy’s Nurture NJ initiative to make New Jersey the safest and most equitable place to give birth in the country.

“Under Governor Murphy’s leadership, we are taking a holistic approach to ensuring New Jerseyans’ basic needs are addressed and have placed a large focus on food security,” **said NJEDA Executive Vice President of Economic Security Tara Colton**. “Sustain & Serve NJ has the ability to transform lives – both by bolstering the restaurant industry and bringing nourishment to New Jerseyans in a respectful and dignified manner.”

Grantees and restaurant owners alike welcomed the news of additional funding and focused on the impact it will have statewide:

“As the cost of living has risen over the past year, many pantries at the Jersey shore are reporting that they are serving even more people than at the height of the pandemic,” **Fulfill President and CEO Triada Stampas said**. “Sustain & Serve NJ has been a critical tool to help address the food security needs of our neighbors. Over the past two and a half years, we were able to work with 35 restaurant and catering businesses to provide over 701,000 meals to our neighbors, while also helping those businesses survive during a really challenging time. Fulfill is grateful to Governor Murphy and our legislature, as well as Tim Sullivan and Tara Colton at the NJEDA, for their leadership in this expanded support.”

“Sustain & Serve NJ is just one of the programs Governor Murphy has initiated to help New Jersey make it during this period of time,” **said Randy Glover, Chairman/Executive Director of All Access Community Development Corporation**. “It is abundantly clear that the governor and his administration understand so well the pain and challenges of those at all income levels being faced in New Jersey. His mandates that have been articulated from the beginning of Covid-19 through this current economic crisis, putting food on the tables of all New Jerseyans illustrates his commitment to people, his compassion to all of New Jersey. New Jersey Pride, New Jersey Strong, that’s our Governor, that’s my Governor. Thank you, Governor Murphy, for your vision to see us throughout this time in history.”

“This program has really helped me keep our doors open and serve our community,” **said Mohamed Elrawy, owner of Newark-based Pita Squared**. “Partnering with Coalition Equity has helped me serve my community by giving not only food but fresh and healthy food – something that everybody should be able to have, no questions asked. If you would have told me pre pandemic that I would be able to help people struggling everyday with hunger while keeping my doors open, I wouldn’t have believed you. It’s put a whole new meaning to what my restaurant can do and is doing for Newark and the surrounding community. I can’t tell you how thankful I am to participate in this program and partner with programs like Coalition Equity, Newark Working Kitchen and University Hospital to serve the

About the New Jersey Economic Development Authority

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) serves as the State’s principal agency for driving economic growth. The NJEDA is committed to making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development by focusing on key strategies to help build strong and dynamic communities, create good jobs for New Jersey residents, and provide pathways to a stronger and fairer economy. Through partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, the NJEDA creates and implements initiatives to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life in the State and strengthen New Jersey’s long-term economic competitiveness.

To learn more about NJEDA resources for businesses call NJEDA Customer Care at (844) 965-1125 or visit <https://www.njeda.com>

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