

Law Firms, Legal Departments Step Up Target to Provide More Meals for Food Bank

Organizers are aiming to raise \$200,000, translating to a million meals—double from last year. About 25 law firms, legal departments and others have signed up.

By Christine Simmons

At a time of even greater need, more than a dozen law firms along with corporate legal departments and other organizations are participating in an annual charity effort called Justice Served to support the Food Bank for New York City.

The campaign, now in its sixth year, launched in early February, and the program's organizers are aiming to raise \$200,000, said Lary Stromfeld, a Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft partner and founder of the Justice Served campaign. That would translate to a million meals, about double from last year, when the Justice Served campaign raised funds for over 500,000 meals.

"We're seeing a lot of interest and enthusiasm for the campaign this year," Stromfeld said. "We're taking advantage of that and pushing as much food through the system as we can."

The pandemic and recession have prompted **even greater demand** for New York's food pantries, with visits up over 70% during the pandemic over the prior year, Stromfeld said.

"That is straining all kinds of resources because you have the increased demand but also the challenges dealing with COVID and social distancing and staying safe," he said. "There's no question, the need is

greater than ever and the logistics for delivering that are more challenging than they were before."

"The need is going to remain at a sustained level for some time, unfortunately," he said.

The 25 organizations participating in the 2021 campaign, which lasts until about March 12, include: Alston & Bird; Barclays; Bloomberg; Cadwalader; Carter Ledyard & Milburn; CUNY School of Law; Dentons; Faber Daeufer & Itrato; Fenwick & West; Goldman Sachs; the Hispanic National Bar Association—Young Lawyers Division; King & Spalding; Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel; McGuireWoods; McLaughlin & Stern; Morgan Stanley; Noerr; O'Melveny & Myers; Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison; Ropes & Gray; Shearman & Sterling; Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom; Wells Fargo; Withers Bergman; and Wolters Kluwer.

The Justice Served campaign goals include soliciting donations from partners, associates and other employees; introducing Food Bank for New York City to a firm's charitable foundation; volunteering with Food Bank's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program; and raising awareness about hunger in NYC and about Food Bank.

While the Justice Served campaign is a six-week campaign that provides



Cadwalader Wickersham & Taft and Goldman Sachs personnel together for the Justice Served campaign in 2017.

an intense focus for fundraising, the need for donations and awareness is year-round, Stromfeld said, and there are opportunities throughout the year to support the Food Bank.

It's not too late to participate in the 2021 campaign, Stromfeld said. Interested law firms, legal departments and others can register at <https://www.foodbanknyc.org/justice-served/> or contact Jessica Presedo at the Food Bank at 212-566-7855 ext. 1611.

The Food Bank provides free meals annually to 1.4 million New Yorkers throughout the five boroughs through a network of nearly 1,000 charities and schools citywide. Every \$1 raised helps Food Bank for New York City provide five meals, the organization said.