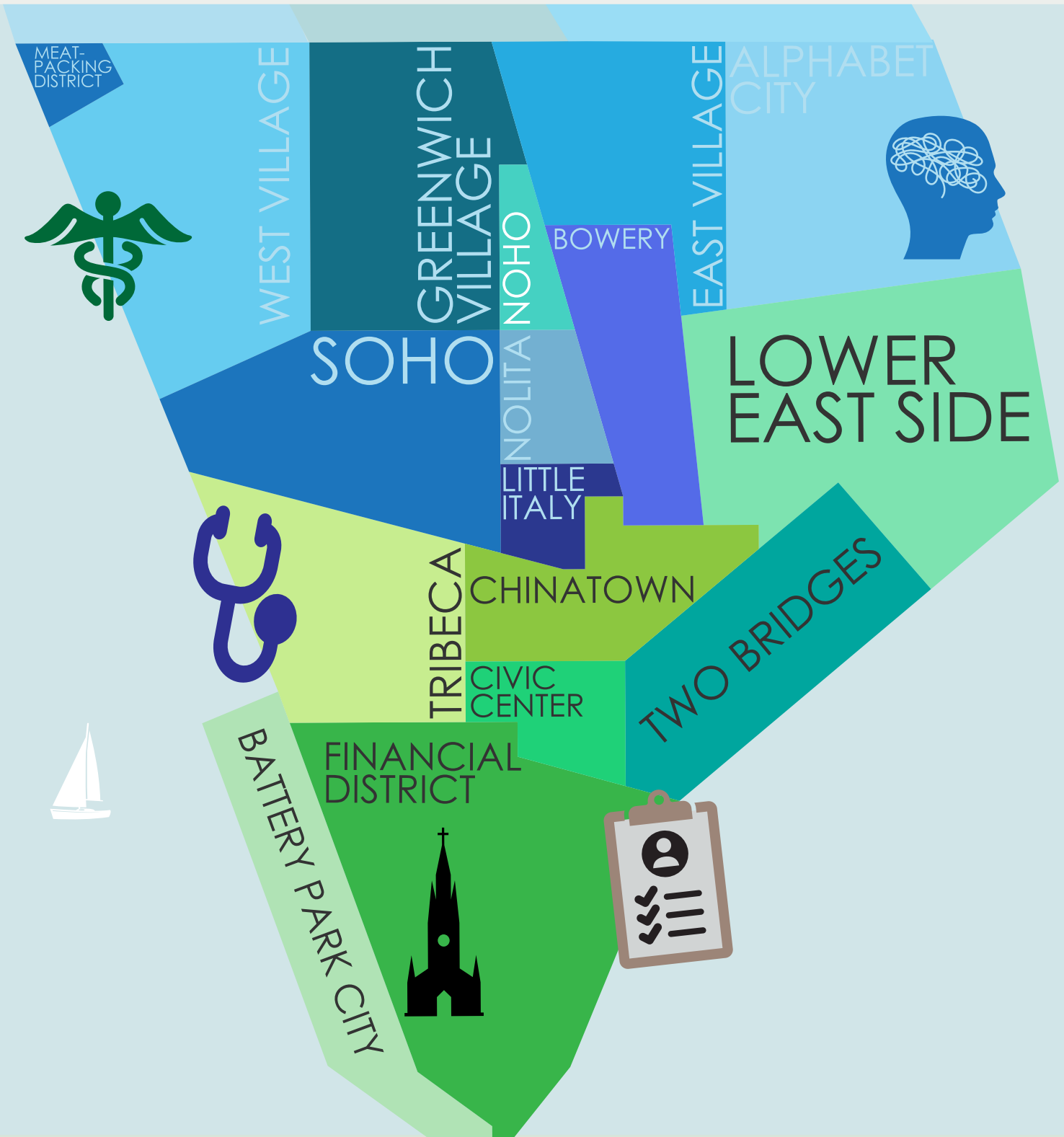


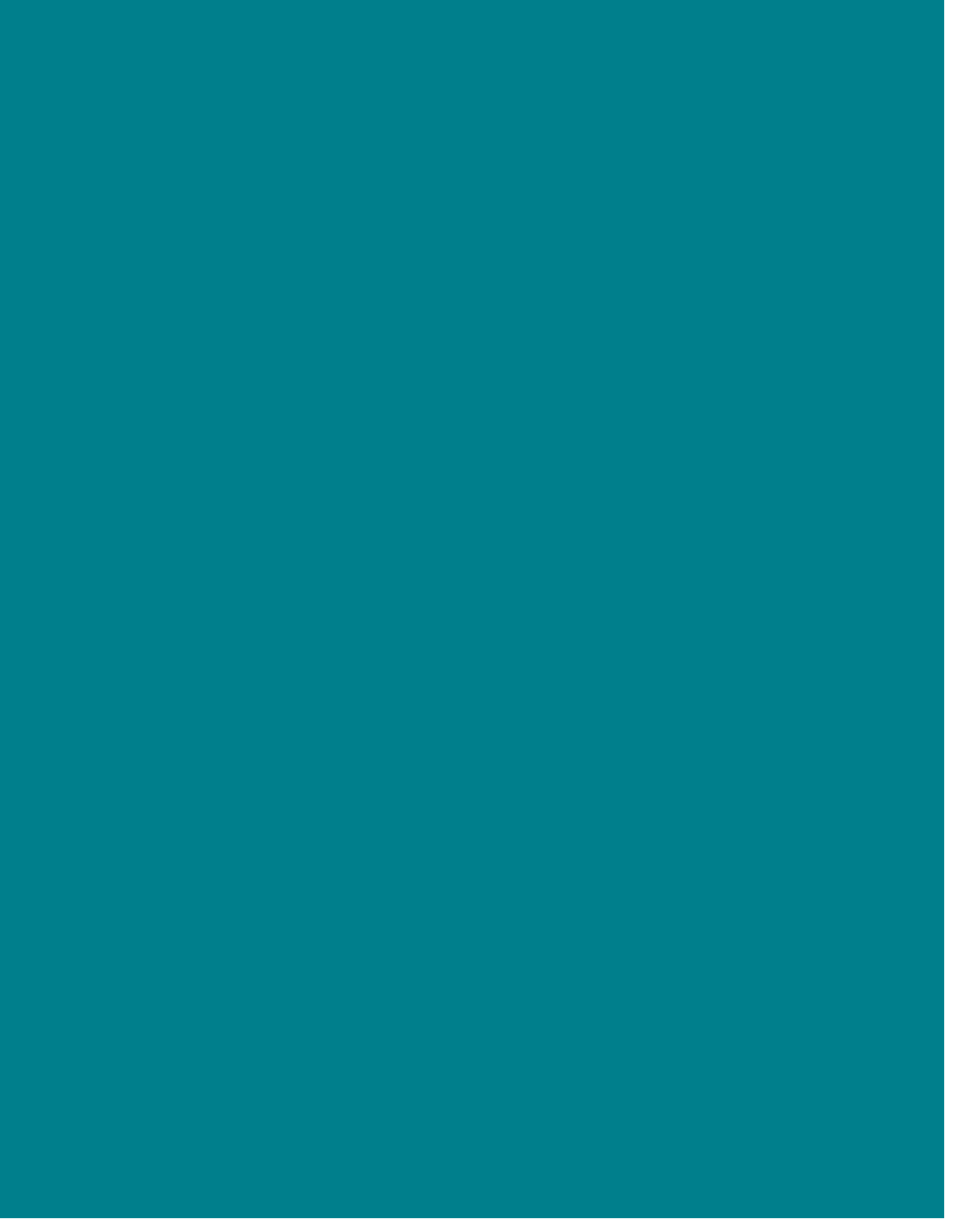
MENTAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM:

Impact of Food Insecurity on Emotional Well-Being

February 2, 2023

SPEAKERS





Keynote: The Intersection of Nutrition and Mental Health

Dr. Gia Merlo

MD, MBA, MEd Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, NYU Grossman School of Medicine and Fellow, American College of Lifestyle Medicine



Gia Merlo, MD, MBA, MEd, DipABLM, FACLM is a clinical professor of nursing and Senior Advisor on Wellness, a clinical professor of psychiatry at the NYU Grossman School of Medicine, and a fellow of the American College of Lifestyle

Medicine. Merlo recently published a textbook *Lifestyle Nursing* (Taylor & Francis/CRC Press, August 2022) that expands Lifestyle Medicine, an evidence-based approach in preventing, treating, and oftentimes reversing chronic diseases, to Nursing. Her first book, *Principles of Medical Professionalism* (Oxford University Press, 2021), stresses the importance of physician wellness, the need to address the social determinants of health, and the need to address chronic diseases with prevention. Merlo is the Associate Editor of the American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine. She is a contributing author of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) curriculum *Lifestyle Medicine 101* and of the board review course, *Foundations to Lifestyle Medicine*.

Merlo has served on the board of directors of many nonprofits over the years and is currently on the board of directors of Plant-Powered Metro of New York (PPMNY) and the advisory board of the Global Positive Health Institute (GPHI). She is chair of the Mental and Behavioral Health Member Interest Group of the ACLM. She has been involved in clinician care and medical education for nearly 30 years in professional development and mental health, particularly for healthcare professionals.

Panel: The Current Reality of Food Insecurity in New York City

Carmen Boon | Moderator

Vice President for External Affairs, Food Bank For NYC



With over 20 years of experience creating and implementing proactive outreach strategies that have greatly helped increase awareness on government and nonprofit organizations' programs and initiatives, Carmen is proud and honored to play a role every day in many of NYC's communities in need citywide getting life-changing help and support. Specializing in strategic communications, media relations, marketing, public affairs and government relations, Carmen uses her experience to manage large-scale and issue-based integrated multi-platform, multicultural, and multilingual public awareness campaigns to influence policy and public opinion. With a portfolio in areas ranging from affordable housing and social services to workers, human and immigrant rights and public health care, Carmen's strengths as an outreach campaign producer have garnered her and her teams recognition by the Shorty, MarCom, and AVA Digital awards, among others. Prior to Food Bank, Carmen served as Senior Director for Strategic Communications at NYC Health + Hospitals where she led strategic communications for NYC Care, the largest health care access municipal program in the nation for people not eligible or unable to afford health insurance. She was also part of the team leading all communications for programs and initiatives connected to COVID-19 response, including workforce support, testing, tracing, and vaccination. Carmen arrived in New York City over 20 years ago from her native Venezuela as a Fulbright scholar to pursue a Master of Arts in Media Studies at The New School.

Panelists

Joseph B. Jones

**Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Research,
Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies**



Joseph (“Joe”) has spent most of his career in public service in government and nonprofits working on policy, procedure, and program development in the areas of social services, economic development, and housing. Currently, Joe serves as the

Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Research at the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (FPWA), where he oversees the organization’s research and policy agenda, promoting poverty alleviation and reducing systemic barriers to economic deprivation. Prior to FPWA, Joe held several roles at the NYC Department of Social Services where his projects included: designing a first-of-its-kind city-wide community outreach effort for the Agency; creating and managing the largest local COVID-19 responsive emergency feeding program; designing the operational plan for the country’s largest municipal cemetery; and implementing the nation’s first “right-to-counsel” program in New York City Housing Court. Joe started his career in housing policy and has worked and lived in most regions of the country. Joe holds graduate degrees in law and urban policy from the University of Michigan.

Rachel Sabella

Director, No Kid Hungry New York



Rachel Sabella has been a respected advocate, strategist, and spokesperson on behalf of nonprofit organizations for nearly 20 years. She has been the Director of No Kid Hungry New York, a campaign of Share Our Strength, since 2018. In this role,

Sabella works closely with stakeholders across New York State to ensure children have access to the nutrition they need to grow and thrive. She oversees grant-making, awareness-building, and programmatic and advocacy priorities for No Kid Hungry New York and manages relationships with state and local policymakers. Since the start of the pandemic, she developed a strategy and new partnerships to distribute more than \$6 million in emergency grant funding to organizations across the state of New York and Puerto Rico to connect more kids and families to meals. She has led successful advocacy campaigns at both the city and state levels on issues including expanding access to Breakfast After the Bell programs and SNAP. Prior to this role, Sabella served as the Director of Government Relations and Policy for the Food Bank For New York City. During this time, she led advocacy campaigns to grow and strengthen resources for anti-hunger programs, which led to unprecedented support for food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City.

Dorella M. Walters

Senior Director of Business Development & Community Partnerships



Dorella Walters is the Senior Director of Business Development & Community Partnerships at God's Love We Deliver, an agency that, in calendar year 2022, delivered more than 3.1 million nutritious, medically tailored, high-quality meals to men, women,

and children living with HIV/AIDS, cancer, and other life-altering illnesses in New York City, Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties in New York, and in Hudson County, New Jersey. In this position, she is responsible for the critical role in helping God's Love identify, prospect, and navigate new business opportunities, as well as maintain and increase current engagements and business relationships. Her responsibilities include securing and establishing new engagements that help God's Love find the sickest of the sick, bring in new contracts that build varied and sustainable revenue streams, and expand and increase current revenue streams. Prior to this role, Walters served as the Senior Director for Program Services, where she was responsible for all client-related programs, establishing strategic partnerships, and coordinating program-related relationships; and as the Director of Client Services, responsible for planning and designing the department's response to agency goals around mission expansion, client growth and retention, along with the agency's evolution of service provision. Walters currently serves as the Community Co-Chair of the HIV Health and Human Services Planning Council of New York.

Jerome Nathaniel

Director of Policy & Government Relations, City Harvest



Jerome Nathaniel has been a part of the fight for food justice ever since helping out at pantries and shelters in his native East New York, Brooklyn through the Brooklyn Youth Club at age eight. As an avid blogger and writer for Mic's digital political news platform

for millennials in 2012, he has also written a host of investigative articles about food policy and urban gardens across East New York. Now as City Harvest's Director of Policy and Government Relations, Jerome engages elected officials and anti-hunger advocacy groups to strengthen local, state, and federal policies that combat hunger and buttress the food system. For the past eight years, Jerome has worked to carry out City Harvest's mission to help ensure that all New Yorkers have equal access to healthy, affordable food through legislative advocacy for systems changes. Prior to joining City Harvest, Nathaniel provided SNAP assistance to over 2,300 New Yorkers in the Finger Lakes/Genesee Valley region and operated a mobile farm truck called Curbside Market, which offers deeply affordably local farm products for three years while he was at Foodlink. Jerome earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business and Religion from the University of Rochester and is currently enrolled at Pratt Institute's City and Regional Planning graduate program.

Panelists | Continued

Jessica Chait

Managing Director, Food Programs, Met Council



Jessica Chait is the Managing Director of Food Programs at Met Council and is responsible for the Kasher Food Network, the largest free kosher food distribution system in the world, as well as bringing greater visibility to food insecurity within the Jewish community. Prior to joining Met Council, Jessica worked for UJA-Federation of New York in various roles of increasing responsibility, culminating as Chief of Staff, and was responsible for several important strategic initiatives, including UJA's yearlong centennial celebration. Jessica is passionate about helping the vulnerable, and prior to her move to New York, she worked for nonprofits in Poland and Zambia. Jessica grew up in San Antonio, Texas, and holds a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Texas and a master's degree in Public Administration from New York University.

Remarks from Mayor's Office of Food Policy

Kate MacKenzie

MS, RD, Executive Director of The Mayor's Office of Food Policy



As Executive Director of NYC Mayor's Office of Food Policy (MOFP), Kate Mackenzie advises the Mayor on all issues related to food policy and the City's food system. She leads the interagency COVID-19 food response to ensure that no New Yorker experiences hunger as a result of the pandemic. Through that work, more than 230 million free meals have been provided to New Yorkers through emergency home delivery and the school system. Additionally, she designed and executed a \$50 million food reserve that has distributed over 50 million pounds of fresh produce and culturally appropriate food to more than 400 community organizations, and provided necessary equipment to enable organizations with capacity to safely distribute food. She oversaw the creation of data systems to track the flow of emergency food through the city and ensure it is equitably distributed to areas of highest need. She leads the City's Good Food Purchasing commitments, focused on increasing access to healthy, sustainable foods for the over 238 million meals and snacks served daily by City agencies, from public schools to senior centers. Kate is a recognized leader, with over two decades of experience fighting for food security and broader anti-poverty solutions in New York City and nationally.

Responding to the Need: A Look at UA3 Community First

Donald Hong

President, UA3 Community First



Donald Hong was born and raised in New York City. He is a graduate of Brooklyn Technical High School and has a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Buffalo. He began his career as an Exxon Petroleum Engineer and is currently a real estate

entrepreneur. Don has a strong commitment to community and has volunteered for more than 45 years, across multiple social services, with a strong emphasis on low-income senior housing.

He was also a Commissioner for the New York City Council in 2003. As President of UA3, he is dedicated to bridging the digital divide and fighting food inequities. Don lives in Manhattan with his wife and two children, Katelyn and Sean, who are co-founders of UA3.

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