

A bird in hand

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By **ALEXANDER MacINNES**
HERALD NEWS

Two outreach efforts for Thanksgiving dinner offered pickup or delivery meals, with both reaching those who need help most.

In Passaic, members of the North Jersey Local Residents Work Force and BROTHERS (Brothers Reaching Out To Help Everyone Rebuild Self) went door to door Wednesday evening delivering about 25 turkey dinners around the city.

In Paterson, St. Paul's Community Development Corp. prepared about 350 meals for families to pick up at the church Tuesday. The recipients from St. Paul's were pulled from a pool of 3,500 families who applied for the Thanksgiving feast.

Richard Williams, director of programs for St. Paul's Community Development Corp., said that over the years, staff at the food giveaways have seen an increase in working-poor families coming in for help. This year, he said, was no different.

"They are employed, but their income does not cover rent, utilities and groceries each month," Williams said.

The St. Paul's CDC operates a food pantry throughout the year and feeds approximately 2,500 people a month, according to Williams. Those chosen came in to St. Paul's regular food pantry more than four times this year and met the family size requirement, Williams said.

Wanda Barrett, 45, raises two children and two grandchildren. As she walked away from St. Paul's on Tuesday, she was asked what the food effort provided her and her family.

"To have a nice Thanksgiving with my kids," Barrett said.

Jeffrey Dye, director for the North Jersey Local Residents Work Force, said churches, local activists and other nonprofit groups submitted lists of families in need. He added that donations came in from Mayor Samuel Rivera, City Councilman Gerardo Fernandez and the ShopRite supermarket on Paulison Avenue.

"I think in this season, some of us, we are fortunate enough to be able to put this together," Dye said.

Hector Cruz, an unemployed truck driver living in Vreeland Village, said he was grateful for the donation.

"There is not a lot of money to eat," Cruz said.

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