

By Rowena Daly

For nearly four decades, Jim Duffy, a grandfatherly volunteer, has stocked shelves, made sandwiches and ladled soup for the hungry guests of the New Covenant House (NCH) soup kitchen and food pantry in Stamford, Ct, and a program of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County.

On a July evening, Duffy welcomed prospective donors and volunteers to NCH. He humorously and enthusiastically recounted how NCH had evolved from a soup kitchen that served primarily single men to an operation that offers men, women, families lunch and dinner and access to a fully stocked food pantry.

The group of prospective donors and volunteers were in awe of his consistent and selfless service over that past 40 years. “When I started volunteering in 1978, we served two items to our guests – soup and reheated soup,” joked Mr. Duffy. Amid the laughter, Mr. Duffy clearly conveyed the joy of helping others and the need to support NCH.

The volunteers and donors toured the state-of-the-art kitchen, food pantry, offices, café, computer and laundry facilities. John Gutman, NCH Executive Director and Paul Harinstein, NCH Advisory Board Chair, explained the need to raise \$325,000 to create a job skills program, a client casework initiative, medical and health services, and welcome more families to the Food Pantry. “Our work is not simply to feed the poor but help people break the cycle of poverty, build self-confidence and independence,” said Gutman.

New Covenant House serves the greater Stamford area, which includes Stamford, New Canaan, Greenwich and Darien. The guests are the poor and disadvantaged including the homeless, working poor, elderly, mentally ill, HIV/AIDS clients, the disabled and immigrants, both with and without citizenship documentation. Sixty percent of the 425 people that come every day are of Spanish descent.

In October 1978, New Covenant House served its first meal from the basement of little building on West Main Street in Stamford. Since then thousands of hungry people have found physical and social nourishment at NCH. It now resides at **174 Richmond Hill Avenue, on Stamford’s West Side.**

To contribute or volunteer please visit <https://nchstamford.org/capital-campaign/>
Or send a check to 174 Richmond Hill Avenue, Stamford, CT 06902

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