

## AIDS PHILANTHROPY

## Feeding Food Program Growth

Marking the 25th Anniversary of the first CDC-reported AIDS case in June, grant-makers and service providers alike convened locally and on the national stage to examine the successes and failures of efforts to address the devastating effects of this epidemic. AIDS highlights both what works and what does not work in our health care system. In the early days of the epidemic, the response was based on experience and lessons learned in other arenas such as elder care and disability; nobody was “trained” to address AIDS.

Philanthropy mobilized long before the government did, helping fund the pioneering service-providing entities that reacted to the public health threat in their communities. Infrastructure was built, systems of disease management and care made tremendous strides, and a community’s ability to affect change was proven – with philanthropy, and the philanthropic efforts of the Broadway and performing arts communities specifically, at the helm.

The challenge 25 years later is the sustainability of these efforts. One funder recently asserted that HIV/AIDS is *endemic* rather than an *epidemic*, which introduces a different set of challenges. And when government resources are continually shifted and diminished as the proven need continues to increase, Aids Service Organizations (ASOs) are forced to examine their viability.

Through this process, the participation of philanthropy remains essential. Many grantmakers like BC/EFA have been leaders in providing necessary resources to ASOs who choose to expand their missions or service scopes – rather than close their doors – in order to better serve their clients with HIV/AIDS.

Hawaii-based ASO and BC/EFA grantee Save The FoodBasket wrote recently, “As a result of a substantial loss in [federal Ryan White CARE Act] funding and at the behest of several funding

sources, the FoodBasket expanded into two other serious terminal diseases, Hep C and cancer. Thus, [BC/EFA’s] increased funding in these areas could not come at a better time for us.”

Philadelphia-based BC/EFA grantee MANNA explains that it finds itself “...at an important transition point as we seek to ensure the long-term sustainability of our services while focusing on how to best maximize the health and well-being of the people we serve. [BC/EFA’s] support is helping to provide a strong, lasting foundation for MANNA to meet demand and most effectively address the nutritional health needs of individuals and families living with HIV/AIDS... as we now seek to expand our services to people with other debilitating diseases.”

Save The FoodBasket and MANNA join 14 other expanded delivered meal programs to which BC/EFA provided larger grants in January. Ninety grants totaling \$777,500 were made to food service programs in that grant round.

Philanthropy has the ability to rapidly respond to the evolving needs of ASOs in ways that government often cannot or will not, and such an investment has measurable results for people living with HIV/AIDS and also those with other medical challenges. BC/EFA joins leading AIDS grantmakers in recognizing that philanthropic funding must evolve with the same thoughtful, forward-thinking intention demonstrated by those who deliver AIDS services.

Somebody else’s financial commitment is simply not enough; it will take all of us to fund this fight. As BC/EFA has said since its founding: “What We Do Together Makes A Difference.”

Mary-Shannon Ryan,  
Program Manager  
Fundraising Concerned About AIDS



MANNA (Metropolitan AIDS Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance) volunteers prepare food for delivery to clients. “MANNA provides essential and specialized services to men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS in Delaware, Pennsylvania and Central/Southern New Jersey and has served over 4,000,000 meals to date.” What’s for lunch today? Beef macaroni, broccoli and pears - yum! For more information visit: [www.manna.org](http://www.manna.org).



Founded in 1996, Save the FoodBasket, Inc. is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. Based in Hawaii, it is a grass-roots organization which has as its mission to provide “nutritious food, basic essentials and support for people living with HIV & AIDS.” Programs range from lunch feeding programs, to grocery distribution programs, nutritional consultations and a vitamins and supplements program. For more information please consult: [www.savethefoodbasket.org](http://www.savethefoodbasket.org).