

Fall 2012



The PorchLight

The newsletter of Intown Collaborative Ministries



From the Director

I love fall in Atlanta. Cool nights and warm days have rolled in. Sweaters and soups stretch and yawn as they re-awaken into my life. Fall is harvest time, a traditional time of feasts and banquets celebrating the bounty of food from the land. Yet in Atlanta and around our country too many of our brothers and sisters will experience no such abundance. There will be little celebration for so many poor people. Instead there will be worry. Worry that the \$17-29 in food stamps won't go far enough this month. Poor people worry that a medical emergency or loss of a job will eat up their fixed income, leaving nothing left for meals for kids and family.

It doesn't have to be like this. Intown is working hard to fight this "food insecurity" where our neighborhood families and kids don't have enough to eat. You can do something about this too. Come help at our Food Pantry on a Saturday morning. Get your faith congregation to join our Food Co-Operative ministry. Read about Audrey Morgan, one of our amazing Food Co-Op leaders and write a letter to your elected officials urging them to save the vital Food Stamp program.

Tough times like these reveal who we are as a people. Let's keep working toward a neighborhood, a city, a country where abundance is for everyone, not just those of us blessed with wealth. My vision of a beloved community is where kids are happy and healthy, and seniors, veterans, and all of God's children have enough to eat. Come join us in making this a reality.

Blessings to you this fall,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Schweers".

Brad Schweers
Executive Director

Sponsoring Congregations

Atlanta Primitive Baptist
Church of Our Saviour
Congregation Shearith Israel
Druid Hills Baptist
Druid Hills Presbyterian
Druid Hills United Methodist
Epworth United Methodist
at Candler Park
Glenn Memorial United
Methodist
Grace Lutheran
Haygood Memorial United
Methodist
Greater Smith Chapel AME
Inman Park United Methodist
Mercy Community Church
Morningside Presbyterian
St. John's Lutheran
Virginia-Highland Church



Member Profile:

Audrey Morgan

Intown Collaborative Ministries
Food Co-Operative Leader

Morgan is a natural leader. She's the person who warms up any room she walks into. Since moving to the Briarcliff Summit Apartments in Atlanta's Virginia-Highland neighborhood, Morgan has been a catalyst for community in the building. So it's no surprise that she has emerged as one of the leaders of the Intown Food Co-ops.

Like everyone in the apartment building, Morgan is on a fixed income. She receives \$29 a month in food stamps and her money had been very tight. Like one-in-five Georgians, Morgan was food insecure. "Before the Co-Ops, it was a struggle," Morgan says. "I would get low on food and I'd be wondering if I would make it to the end of the month." Since joining the co-op, however, her food worries are no more. "The Co-Ops are wonderful," Morgan shared. "I get my staples of a meat, vegetables, juices, and starches every month." Now she often has food left over to share with others in her building.

This sharing and community-building is the other pillar of the Co-Ops. In every culture, food brings people together. It's no different with the Co-Ops. Co-Op members must volunteer and be active participants in ordering, picking up, unloading, and distributing food. Others set up the meeting room and arrange for educational speakers or organize advocacy efforts around food and poverty issues. Morgan serves on the Food Committee, tasked with setting each menu. "The Co-Ops have made me aware of everyone in the building," relates Morgan. "I enjoy taking a leadership role. It makes me feel connected to the community in the building. And not just about the Co-Ops." Community building through food is exactly what the Co-Ops are all about.

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Program Spotlight: Food Co-Ops

Every second and fourth Thursday a group of 48 Briarcliff Summit Apartment residents join together around food and fellowship as part of our Food Co-Op program. A low-income food co-op aims to distribute food to the needy, while empowering the members and promoting leadership. Intown has opened two co-ops, partnering with the Atlanta Community Food Bank to provide about \$100 worth of nutritious food per month to members. All residents at Briarcliff Summit are on a fixed income and many are elderly or have disabilities. Co-op membership is open to anyone in the building for a monthly fee of \$10, which goes to pay for delivery and staffing. The co-op builds community by providing a space where members can work together, form relationships, and grow their social circles of friendship and support.



Fundraiser rescheduled!

**May 5, 2013
4-7 p.m.**

Mark your calendar and keep an eye out for more information about our festive fundraiser coming soon!

Want to help out? Do you have auction items you'd like to donate? www.intowncm.org/artsandeats

Quick Facts

About

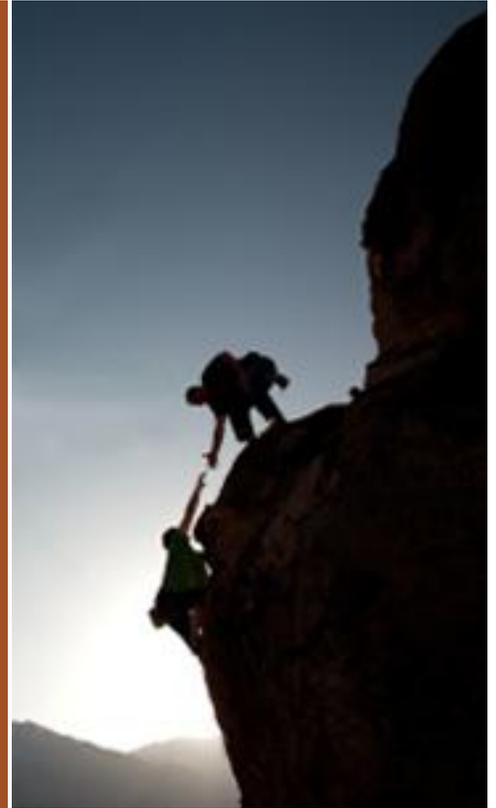
Food Stamps

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the official name of the Food Stamps Program.
- 84% of benefits go to children, the elderly, or the disabled
- The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$731, net monthly income of \$336, and countable resources of \$333
- The average length of time a participant stays on the program is 9 months.
- Learn more from Bread for the World—www.bread.org

How Can I help?

There are no small actions. 1+1+1 might = a small amount but 0+0+0 always = nothing.

- **Advocate** Write, call, or email your Congressperson and tell them to support food security programs like Food Stamps.
- **Educate** yourself. Did you know the average Food Stamps recipient is in the program only 9 months?
- **Participate** in your community. Sign up on our website: www.intowncm.org/volunteer
- **Donate.** 87% of donated funds go directly to people in need. www.intowncm.org/donate or use the enclosed envelope



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