



# curbside

NEWS FROM PREBLE STREET

WINTER 2021-2022

**INSIDE: WORK TO END HUNGER, SHELTER,  
SUPPORT VETERANS, MORE.**



Preble Street

## Each December, I reflect on all of the good from that year.

2021, while full of many challenges, still delivered many positive outcomes. Despite a global pandemic that continues to affect everything from our daily lives to public health to global supply chains, Preble Street has adapted our services to provide emergency shelter, food, and casework services for more people than ever before.

Preble Street has accomplished so much this year thanks to our hard-working staff, the volunteers who join us every day, and the many people in our community who donate food and funds. I'm proud to work with so many people who care deeply about the individuals and families we serve.

- Over this past year, the critically important role of emergency shelters has never been more evident. Our **Quarantine and Temporary Emergency Shelters** operating in Greater Portland and Lewiston ensured that hundreds of people had a safe place to stay when impacted by COVID-19.
- During this pandemic, **Preble Street Emergency Food Programs** staff have stepped up meal preparations, food sourcing, and distribution and volunteers have been all-stars in adapting to these unprecedented changes right alongside us. For the second year in a row, Preble Street is on track to provide more than 1 million meals. When the Preble Street soup kitchen opened in August 1993, we served about 200 breakfast and 200 dinner meals five days each week and the pantry served approximately 80 families one day a week.
- In September, we opened the **Preble Street Healing Center** to support survivors of human trafficking. We first became involved in this work in 2010, when the Preble Street Teen Center team began hearing from youth trapped in exploitive situations accompanied by terrible violence and trauma. Now eleven years later, we are grateful we can provide comprehensive services to victims of human trafficking.

As we look ahead to 2022, Preble Street will continue to follow our mission and work to empower the people and communities we serve. This is what we do.

Swannie



### BOARD MEMBERS

John Roberts, PRESIDENT  
President & CEO, Assurant Employee Benefits, *retired*

Terry Sutton, VICE PRESIDENT  
CEO, Maine Center Ventures

Yemaya St. Clair, LCPC-C, SECRETARY  
Yemaya Counseling

Rebecca Asen, Esq., TREASURER  
Associate General Counsel, IDEXX

Joann Bautista  
Deputy Secretary of State  
- Policy Advisor, State of Maine

Judy L. R. Bertram  
Owner, Consider It Done

Jane Bradley  
Maine District Court Judge, *retired*

Terry Davies  
Old Port Advisors

Chip Leighton  
Vice President of Strategy and Planning, Hannaford Supermarkets

Rob Ravenelle, Esq.  
Partner, Pierce Atwood LLP

Elaine Rosen  
Chair of the Boards, The Kresge Foundation; Assurant, Inc.

Kini Schoop  
Director of Public Relations, Covetrus

Maurice A. Selinger III, Esq.  
Partner, Curtis Thaxter

Jay Tansey  
Software Strategy & Operations, IDEXX Laboratories

Lannie Welch, Psy.D.

Lori Whynot  
Senior Vice President, Benefit Operations, Unum

Jennifer Wilson  
Corporate Merchant Manager, L.L.Bean







### In Memory of: dee Clarke

For more than 20 years, dee Clarke was a tireless advocate, always speaking up and speaking out with compassion in support of social justice. dee passed away on Sunday, October 31, 2021, and will be dearly missed by all of us here at Preble Street. Whether as a person with lived experience, an advocate, a colleague, a teacher, a partner, or as a valued, trusted friend, dee modeled the Preble Street values of treating everyone with dignity and respect.

## A Sustainable, Comprehensive, and Collaborative Approach to Ending Hunger in Maine

Maine ranks first for food insecurity in New England and is one of the most food insecure states in the country. This year, 85,000 Mainers lacked reliable access to food on a daily basis. Hunger disproportionately affects communities of color. Black families with children are more than twice as likely to experience hunger than their white counterparts, a situation made worse during a pandemic that also disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Preble Street is currently preparing and distributing more food than ever before — over one million meals a year. Our output of food has increased by over 76% since before the pandemic. But our original soup kitchen facilities are just not big enough or well-equipped enough to allow us to respond to the current need.

To meet this increase in food needs, Preble Street is launching a **Food Security Hub** to combat food insecurity through expanded and innovative partnerships and collaboration — bringing more nutritious meals and grocery boxes to people in need. This will be the first food hub in Maine that creates a dynamic, comprehensive, and holistic space to address food insecurity. Once completed, the Food Security Hub will serve as full-scale production kitchen serving the most nutritious meals and a food processing center allowing us to maximize local produce and reduce waste. The space will also serve as an educational and vocational site and offer space for Preble Street and our partners to work collectively on advocacy efforts to end hunger.

“Because the model for emergency food services has stayed the same for the last 60 years, we need a revitalization of our food system, especially our food pantries, soup kitchens, and our approach to food insecurity,” says Mark Swann, Executive Director, Preble Street. “I am so excited by this collaborative and comprehensive approach and its potential to end hunger in Maine. There is so much potential at this new site, and as always, we are thrilled to be able to evolve and expand to support our community.”

The Preble Street Food Security Hub will be located at 75 Darling Avenue, South Portland, Maine. For more information about this exciting new chapter for our food programs, visit [preblestreet.org/foodsecurityhub](https://preblestreet.org/foodsecurityhub).



## Successfully Unlocking Homes for Heroes

100 Maine Veterans who were homeless in 2021 are now warm, safe, and housed as we enter the winter months — including a Veteran who had been homeless for 951 days and a family with seven children.

No individual or family should face homelessness or hunger, but that has been the reality for too many Veterans across the country. COVID-19 and the affordable housing crisis have only presented more challenges and made life harder for our nation's heroes. In Maine, Veteran homelessness increased 84% during the pandemic, and the amount of time it took to connect people to housing extended from an average of 86 days to 232 days.

In August 2021, partners throughout the state launched the 100 Veteran Challenge, a successful campaign to house 100 Veterans and their families. Some of these groups — including Preble Street Veterans Housing Services — provided outreach, casework, and housing connections, while others donated furniture, move-in assistance, and other critical resources.

During the Challenge, Preble Street nearly doubled the rate at which we were housing Veterans. And this initiative wouldn't have been possible without collaboration between partners across the state, and the individuals at each agency who do the hard work, day in and day out, of directly serving Veterans and building relationships with landlords to connect clients with housing.

While 100 Veterans and their families were housed during this challenge, the work is not over. Now we turn to the next goal: ending Veteran homelessness in Maine. To achieve this, we need landlords! Learn more at [LandlordsHelp.org](https://LandlordsHelp.org).



Volunteers of America®

NORTHERN  
NEW ENGLAND



**Elizabeth, a U.S. Air Force Veteran who served in the 1950s,** unexpectedly fell into homelessness earlier this year. She was able to stay safe and sheltered by immediately connecting with Preble Street Veterans Housing Services [VHS], who secured her a room in a hotel shelter until she could find permanent housing.

"I can't say enough about Chelli [Elizabeth's caseworker]. She has been there every step of the way. She is so willing to listen and not criticize. The Preble Street caseworkers I've talked to always listen and respond in a non-critical, non-judgmental way. No matter what I need, no matter how small it would seem to anybody else, they never make me feel less than or not worthy of their time."

Thankfully, Elizabeth's stint of homelessness was relatively brief, and with the help of her caseworker, she was able to find an apartment that fit her needs within three months. And casework doesn't end once a client is housed!

VHS caseworkers continue to follow up to ensure client's basic needs - like warm winter clothing - are met and they are making progress toward their long-term goals.



# 2021 By the Numbers

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>1.5 million</b> | Meals provided since March 2020   |
| <b>47,000</b>      | Meals supplied to New Mainers in an 8-month period this year  |
| <b>1,500</b>       | People connected to Preble Street Health Services   |
| <b>600</b>         | Individuals supported with outreach and social work services through the Street Outreach Collaborative                            |
| <b>300</b>         | Emergency shelter beds managed in Portland, Lewiston, Scarborough, and Bangor   |
| <b>222</b>         | Individuals vaccinated at COVID-19 vaccine clinics in collaboration with Greater Portland Health and MMC Homeless Health Partners |
| <b>150</b>         | Youth experiencing homelessness provided with services  |
| <b>100+</b>        | Veterans connected with emergency housing assistance  |
| <b>100</b>         | Survivors of human trafficking supported through Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Services  |
| <b>85</b>          | Tenants housed at Preble Street Housing First programs  |
| <b>68</b>          | People experiencing homelessness connected to permanent housing through the Rapid Re-Housing program                              |

*These numbers represent approximate data collected through September 2021; we look forward to compiling the final numbers in the new year.*

## From Hunger to Hope

This summer, the Preble Street Advocacy program was issued a Community Nutrition grant from No Kid Hungry to ensure that families with children under the age of six, children and families experiencing homelessness, and immigrant families were enrolled in the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) and Summer P-EBT programs. These programs provide families with supplemental income for food; and Preble Street partnered with nine organizations\*, including agencies that primarily serve New Mainers, to collectively enroll 1,222 eligible people in the programs, and provide education about the programs to families across the state.



91,413 Maine children benefited from critically needed supplemental funds for food this summer and fall. And the work continues! In a time when hunger is on the rise — Feeding America estimates 1 in 5 Maine children are currently experiencing food insecurity — we will continue to advocate for strengthened SNAP benefits for Maine individuals and families.

Working for solutions to hunger and poverty is a key part of Preble Street Advocacy efforts. Join us and learn more about how you can help at [preblestreet.org/take-action](https://preblestreet.org/take-action).

*\*Community Nutrition Grant Partners: Preble Street, Burundi Community Association of Maine, HOME Inc., Knox County Homeless Coalition, Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter, Rumford Group Homes, Rural Community Action Ministry, Rwandese Community Association of Maine, Sustainable Livelihoods Relief Organization, and the YMCA Alliance of Northern New England*

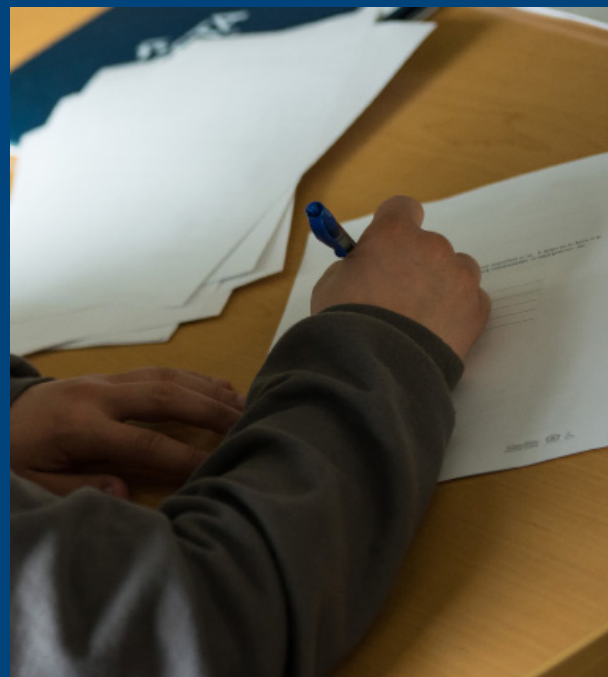


Izzy Ostrowski, Maine Hunger Initiative coordinator, conducting outreach at a Portland event.

## Finding Permanent Housing for Youth

In September 2021, five young people completed and graduated from the **Preble Street First Place Transitional Living Program** and transitioned into safe and permanent housing. First Place is a federally funded program for youth ages 16-22 years currently experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

These five youth are a beautiful example of why and how Housing First for youth works. All were unstably housed or homeless when they entered the First Place program over a year ago. Throughout the duration of the program, they had the opportunity to develop a Plan of Care outlining their vision and goals for themselves and received support from their caseworker. They have weathered a pandemic, maintained employment, and sought health care and mental health services when necessary. We are honored to have spent a year getting to know them better, and we wish them the very best as they move into the next phase of their journeys!





## Board Profile: Joann Bautista

### How did you get involved with Preble Street?

My first interaction with Preble Street was when I was a student at the University of Maine School of Law. The legal clinic I was a part of was looking for ways to team up with unaccompanied teens being helped through the Preble Street Teen Center. Then in May 2020, at the height of the pandemic, I was looking for a tangible way to help members of my community during a scary, unpredictable time. I started working at the Preble Street Temporary Emergency Shelter. I was then hired as the Advocacy Director where I spearheaded policy priorities at the local, state, and federal levels.



### What do you do when you're not at Preble Street?

When I'm not at my day job as the Deputy Secretary of State - Policy Advisor, I enjoy spending time with friends and trying out new restaurants in and around Portland.

### There are a lot of nonprofit organizations in southern Maine. Why do you think Preble Street stands out in the crowd? What can Preble Street do better than anyone else?

Preble Street has staying power. The organization has been able to withstand the test of time and adapt to the needs of the community. Because of this resiliency, people know they can count on Preble Street to be around to help.

### We know why Preble Street is important to the people we serve, but why is it important to you or to others who might consider supporting us?

The pandemic really illuminated and exacerbated the inequities we have in our communities and state when it comes to basic necessities like housing and food security. Thankfully, there are organizations, like Preble Street, which, instead of scaling back, ramped up to help our most vulnerable neighbors and community members.

### Being a nonprofit board member can be very demanding and time-consuming. What makes it all worthwhile?

Hearing the stories of all the different lives Preble Street has touched and knowing that I am a part of something that is actually changing people's lives. I'm so proud to be on Team Preble Street.

### What else would you like to share?

The staff at Preble Street are rock stars. They are the most hard-working group of people I've ever encountered. I have nothing but respect for the staff at Preble Street and am so grateful for the work they do!

## How can you help this winter?

In a fast-changing world, Preble Street needs to adapt rapidly to ensure we are providing strong and effective services. Our ability to respond quickly is possible thanks to the amazing volunteer board of directors, individual donors, kitchen volunteers, and philanthropic foundations who invest in our mission.

**Donate:** Every year, we are amazed by the generosity of our community and their commitment to fulfilling basic needs for the people who need them. To help where it's needed most, please visit our website at [preblestreet.org/you-can-help](https://preblestreet.org/you-can-help).

**Remember:** Every year on December 21 or the Winter Solstice - the longest night of homelessness - we remember those persons who have died in our community. The life expectancy of our friends who endure chronic homelessness is 28 years shorter, on average, than that of people who are housed. To learn more or to join us, [preblestreet.org/vigil](https://preblestreet.org/vigil).





# curbside

NEWS FROM PREBLE STREET

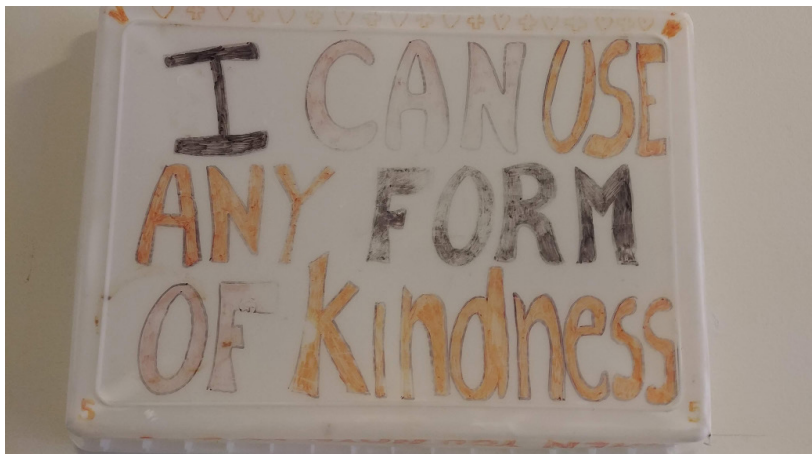
NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT 698  
PORTLAND, MAINE

*"I have seen firsthand what an article of clothing, a warm blanket, new underwear, or a pair of socks can do for a person in need when prepared and presented with dignity."*

*Deborah on volunteering at the Preble Street Receiving Center*

**TO:**

**THE MISSION OF PREBLE STREET IS TO PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE BARRIER-FREE SERVICES TO EMPOWER PEOPLE EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS WITH HOMELESSNESS, HOUSING, HUNGER, AND POVERTY, AND TO ADVOCATE FOR SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS.**



**Preble Street depends on the community to keep us going — especially in a time of crisis.**

Supporting Preble Street with a recurring monthly donation is the most convenient and impactful way to move Mainers forward.

Become a monthly donor and make long-term impact with just one click!

**For more info: [preblestreet.org/donate](https://preblestreet.org/donate)**