Impact Report
Anshe Emeth Community Development Corporation
featuring
Central Jersey Diaper Bank
2019-2020
The Anshe Emeth Community Development Corporation has provided free services to the neediest families in Greater Middlesex County, NJ, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, age, or gender since 2000. We believe that all people deserve to be treated with dignity, respect and compassion as we meet their physical, economic and social needs. The Central Jersey Diaper Bank, our signature program, is the only dedicated diaper bank in the region and has grown to be a robust, critical service supported by a team of Board, Staff, and Volunteers.

The 2019-20 year has been a year of growth and change. We dramatically increased the number of families we serve, expanded our donor base, diversified our funding streams, and with the support of our generous community successfully met the unanticipated spike in demand caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The addition of an Executive Director in January 2019 has catapulted our organization to the next level and we are excited to share the many milestones we reached with our friends, community supporters, and partner agencies in Middlesex County.
Executive Director’s Letter

Dear Friends,

It is satisfying to know that the work of our organization is more relevant today than ever before. Before Covid-19, we never had a line for diapers at our office; today, people wrap around the block of Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple to receive the assistance YOU are providing. Before the pandemic, we distributed an average of 12,000 diapers a month; now, we distribute as many as 19,000 diapers in one day.

The year ahead holds incredible uncertainty, but one constant is the need for a baby to have a diaper change. At the very moment you are reading this, a mom, dad, or other caregiver who might even be your neighbor is concerned they may not be able to provide a clean diaper for their baby.

We have one overriding goal in the coming year: to meet the new demand that has been thrust upon us by the pandemic. Our board, staff, and volunteer corps are compelled to take an already outstanding organization and make it exemplary. We are fortunate to have a Dream Team: staff who always show up with enthusiasm and creativity; our Board of Trustees, whose members are motivated and committed; and our booming Volunteer Corps who are ready to roll up their sleeves and do whatever it will take to meet the moment.

Let’s change some diapers!

Be well,

Ginny Adams Kafka
Executive Director

President’s Letter

Friends of the AECDC,

It is always daunting to look back over a year and survey the wonderful successes and satisfying progress of an organization, while simultaneously assessing the challenges and difficult decisions encountered along the way. This past year held many successes for the AECDC along with, of course, its share of challenges.

By July, 2019, the new Executive Director had brought her formidable energy to our organization and recharged our signature program, the Central Jersey Diaper Bank. Our social media presence has grown, we have seen a huge increase in community diaper drives, our fundraising has new life online, and our volunteer corps is energized. Members of the Board of Trustees enthusiastically support new ideas and ways of operating and we welcomed for the first time members that were not affiliated with Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple. This decision was made to broaden both our reach in the community and our ability to attract new donors. We also said goodbye to our long serving Board President, Deborah Cherniss, whose guidance and leadership was the bedrock of this organization since its inception. Deborah left us with a clear vision to pursue, supported by a dedicated and capable array of staff, volunteers, and board members to carry it out.

Covid-19 hit in March, and seemingly overnight we needed to revamp every aspect of how we served our community. Demand for the basic necessities we provide exploded in a matter of weeks, and what we normally distribute in one month, we were suddenly distributing in a single day. Our ability to meet the challenge is our proudest achievement this year.

Every member of the Board of Trustees, our staff, our donors, and the congregants at Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple stepped up to meet the challenge Covid-19 presented. Donors gave generously, board members worked with staff to establish new safety protocols, and Temple leadership collaborated with our agency as we evolved with our “new normal.” In June, together with AEMT, we hosted our very first Diaper Drive Thru, a no-contact event that garnered a whopping 43,000 diapers! Throughout this period, our Executive Director, Ginny Adams Kafka, took the lead in updating protocols, networking with other safety net programs, creating new avenues of revenue, and literally working day and night to meet the crisis of need laid at our door.

It is with profound gratitude that I and the entire Board of Trustees give thanks to Ginny, our staff, and all of our supporters for creating an oasis for our families in this turbulent time. Together we have made, and will continue to make, a difference in their lives.

As I review the challenges and successes of this past year, I look forward to the next year with great confidence, knowing that we will continue to do all this, and more, with our dedicated board, staff and volunteers.

Stay safe!

MaryEllen Firestone
President, Board of Trustees

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Stay safe!

MaryEllen Firestone
President, Board of Trustees
This was a year of transformative growth. As March approached, we were already responding to a 30% increase in referrals to our agency. We quickly felt the ripples of the COVID-19 pandemic and distributed 230% more diapers than we were expecting in the last quarter alone. Because of a strong donor response, we were able to rise to the moment.

218,916
Diaper changes in 2019-20

$60,000
Saved by families in diaper expenses

1,758
Families served in 2019-20

“IT is good to know such good people are still around to help.”

R.P. and his wife are newly adoptive parents to their three month old granddaughter. As retirees on a fixed income, the assistance we have provided with formula and diapers has given them a sense of relief.

“For our diapers, this is the thing that makes ends meet.”

M.L. is a single mother of two boys and she is a student at Middlesex County College. She was referred to us through WIC and has received diapers from us three times since last summer.
Responding to the Pandemic

Since the inception of the diaper bank, our staff has welcomed clients at our office with respect and dignity. Even on our busiest days, clients rarely waited in a line.

In March 2020, the world changed with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Suddenly, our new normal saw lines of people wrapped around the block to receive assistance.

As the pandemic settled in, demand grew. In April 2020, we increased our distribution to more than 36,000 diapers, a 290% increase. We haven’t turned a single person away.

It has taken “all hands on deck” to meet the enormous increase in demand. In the final three months of the fiscal year, we modified our hours, explored new avenues of fundraising, and reconfigured our warehouse to accept huge quantities of diapers, wipes, and formula.

By the end of June, we developed a new model that would meet the exponential demand for our services. Beginning in the new fiscal year, the diaper bank will pilot a volunteer-driven diaper delivery program to serve the families referred to us by more than 40 partner agencies. We will also host one open-distribution a month to provide relief for families who have limited access to safety net programs.

In ONE DAY, we distributed more diapers than we had distributed during the ENTIRE MONTH of December.

14,000 Diapers in December 2019
19,000 Diapers on July 8, 2020 alone
**Diaper Drives**

**Diaper Drives Make the Difference**

Diaper Drives boomed this year! We rely on these important events to keep our shelves stocked. So many new friends hosted unique diaper drives this year: business owners, teachers, students, families, religious communities, and social groups all contributed to our success.

This year, we saw record numbers of diaper drives and raised a whopping 99,244 diapers.

We need your help!

Reach out to us today to learn about the creative ways you can host your own diaper collection.

**Thank you to all of our friends who creatively collected diapers this year:**

Heros for Moms, Brandeis Women’s Group, Piscataway Public Library, Hadassah, Clearbrook Pool, Ann Thayer, KinderPeds, Silverline, BTai Shalom, NYSC Sports Club, Aden Fogler’s Bat Mitzvah, Noah’s Ark, New Brunswick, Tomorrow Childcare Consortium, Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, Tuesday East Brunswick Weight Watchers, Meeting, New Brunswick Islamic Center, AEMT Women’s Spirituality Group, Susan Kaplan, Judy Owens, Middlesex County Board of Social Services, Cranbury School, Janay Kohn/American Standard Brand, Miriam Dulini’s Bat Mitzvah, Cranbury School Kindness Club, Dina Elkins & Sharon Karmazin, St. Arianus Coptic Orthodox Church, Felicia Patten’s Family Holiday Meal, Childtime, Judd Elementary, Colonial Diner, Central School PTA, The Kiddie Corral, NJParenting.com, Magnifico’s Ice Cream, LA Fitness, Boy Scout Troop 132, City of New Brunswick

**Volunteers Make Us Run**

Volunteers have always been the heart of our organization, doing the critical work required to serve our youngest neighbors. This year, the AECDC’s volunteer corps expanded to almost 50 volunteers serving as warehouse organizers, clothing sorters, diaper drive coordinators, envelope stuffers, diaper shleppers and so much more. We can’t say “Thank You” enough!

**Volunteer Impact: Clothing Sort**

We distribute donated new and gently used clothing and it takes an incredible amount of volunteer effort to keep these donations organized. Several volunteers assisted with this work weekly in our office. Check out this picture from AEMT’s Day of Service, when more than a dozen volunteers helped us prepare for winter clothing distribution.

**Volunteers Respond in the Moment: Diaper Drive-Thru**

In partnership with Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, we hosted our first ever Diaper Drive Thru and raised more than 43,000 diapers! A dozen businesses and organizations in Middlesex County helped spread the word about this contact-free event. Rabbi Bazeley and Rabbi Classer further enticed Temple members to participate in the drive by hosting a challah meet-and-greet at the same time.
FUNDRAISER SPOTLIGHT
Dash for Diapers (Formerly Track Friday)

Four years ago, then board member Laura Gordon organized the first Track Friday event on the day after Thanksgiving as an alternative to ‘Black Friday.’ Each year, runners and their families work off those Thanksgiving calories and raise some much needed funds for the AECDC. Laura and her team raise both awareness and dollars from the small business community, who help sponsor this annual event. Their work has helped transform this organization.

Get excited! This year’s Dash for Diapers will be a virtual run or bike or walk or hike event designed to get you up and moving wherever you may be.
BIG PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

The Warehouse

We are fortunate to have amazing office space at Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, but did you know it takes an offsite warehouse to store our inventory? For the past year, more than 8 volunteer groups have helped us reimagine our warehouse, putting in countless hours and tremendous elbow grease to transform our space. With a special grant through the Karma Foundation, we were able to upgrade shelving and other equipment. Take a peek!

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Wishing Wall

The AECDC’s Wishing Wall is an annual gift program in partnership with Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple. Every holiday season, this initiative brings joy to families across Middlesex County during the holidays. This year, more than 100 children woke up on their holiday morning to a wonderful selection of presents thanks to the generosity of temple members who anticipate this program and make shopping for these gifts a part of their annual holiday routine. A special thank you goes to the steadfast committee who begins energizing efforts in the summer.

OPERATIONAL SPOTLIGHTS

SalesForce & Little Green Light

In order to securely track our client information, we adopted SalesForce, an industry-leading database. We then collaborated with Israeli-based consulting firm, AnanimForce (now Avodaas), to customize SalesForce for our specific needs. The resulting improvement to our workflow has been substantial.

Our donor record keeping also got an upgrade as we adopted Little Green Light, giving us the power to better understand and connect to our donor community.

PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Interns from Rutgers School of Public Health

This year we welcomed three interns from the Rutgers School of Public Health. It was a transformational experience for everyone. The interns brought fresh energy and much needed elbow grease for a myriad of tasks. They completed a critical data entry project for our new Salesforce database, developed an online Car Seat program, and have been key players in transforming our warehouse. We look forward to continuing this partnership for many years to come.

“Before my internship, I had seen what lack of access to diapers looked like. I knew I would be doing good work as an intern here.”

Cristina Rodriguez
Spring 2020 Intern

New Initiatives

We finished this year poised with confidence to face the unpredictability of the future. With a healthy and steady base of donors, new approaches to our fundraising, and growing support from new friends, we continue to seek innovative ways to keep people aware of this essential need in our community.

This year we built our online fundraising presence with two new initiatives:

PATREON: For as little as $1 a month, donors subscribe to this monthly giving opportunity. The Patreon platform has helped us attract new donors and increased our donor funding by 5% while bringing in new, consistent monthly revenue.

FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS: Your distant acquaintances could become donors when you celebrate your birthday with the AECDC on Facebook! Facebook’s Birthday Fundraiser platform has stimulated giving to our organization from a totally new audience. It takes 5 minutes to set up your fundraiser and you will be surprised who chips in.

“I couldn’t believe how many people chipped in to my Facebook Birthday fundraiser. It was such a nice way to turn my birthday into something that helps others.”

- Jacob Binstein, Board of Trustees
Get Involved

Inspired to Get Involved?

Here are three great ways to help the Diaper Bank:

1. Join Our Delivery Squad
   Deliver diapers directly to our families and be a part of the Delivery Squad! Each month, we distribute more than 200 bundles of diapers, wipes, and formula. Volunteers sign up to deliver a minimum of 5 bundles once a month, it is a 1 hour commitment.

2. Become a Diaper Drive Ambassador
   Collecting in-kind donations of diapers is an important part of our fundraising efforts. There is plenty of room for creativity and we are available to assist you with ideas as well as execution. We’ve created a tool kit to help! Please reach out to learn more about hosting your diaper drive.

3. Celebrate Your Birthday on Facebook
   Facebook Birthday Fundraisers have quickly become one of our most successful fundraising opportunities. For you, it only takes a few minutes to set up your Birthday Fundraiser so your friends and family can honor you with a contribution to the Diaper Bank. You will be surprised to see how good it makes you feel on your special day.

For more information, reach out to info@CentralJerseyDiaperBank.org

We will never turn down your donations!

To make a one-time donation on our website, please visit centraljerseydiaperbank.org/donate

To join us for as little as $1 on Patreon, please visit Patreon.com/jerseydiapers

For information on how to sponsor a distribution, please visit our website centraljerseydiaperbank.org

To send a check, please mail to 222 Livingston Ave. New Brunswick, NJ 08817

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Board of Trustees

The Anshe Emeth Community Development Corporation
Board of Trustees

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Deborah Cherniss

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Matt Feldman
Shani Rothstein

We said goodbye to our long time Board President, Deborah Cherniss, who retired in March. Along with Rabbi Bennett Miller, Deborah was a founding member of the AEDC and it was her vision, passion, and hard work that guided the organization for the past 20 years. Deborah leaves behind a strong agency whose Board of Trustees is determined to carry on her legacy. Thank you, Deborah.

We simultaneously said hello to our new Board President, MaryEllen Firestone. MaryEllen brings over 20 years of non-profit management experience to this new role, including serving as President of the Board of Literacy Volunteers of Middlesex County and Executive Director of the East Brunswick Public Library.

During the reorganization of the AEDC in 2018, the Board of Trustees initiated term limits. This new by-law helps to ensure that the board maintains a fresh perspective, while also preventing burnout. Due to these term limits, we must say goodbye to long time board members Rochelle Newman and Sol Heckelman. We thank them for their dedication and hard work and wish them well in their future endeavors.

We say hello to new members of the Board of Trustees: Jacob Binstein, Kerigo Ndirangu, Cathi Fischer, Cari August, and Steve Eisendorfer. Each of these board members brings experience and enthusiasm to their new roles. We look forward to many years of collaborative work and lively conversations.
Thank You!

We want to express our deepest appreciation to our supporters. We cannot do it without you:

Rutgers Community Health Foundation

AMBOY Bank

MIDDLESEX COUNTY NJ

Walmart Foundation

National Diaper Bank Network

Catchfire

OPERATION warm more than coat

and

The Anshe Emeth Community Development Corporation Board of Trustees