

CC MONTHLY

The official newsletter of Charity Crossing



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Donor spotlight - Dot foods

By Emily Waterman,
Corporate Communication Manager, Dot foods

Dot Foods, North America's largest food industry redistributor, is on a mission to give back. At each location of their 12 distribution centers, DOT Works not only provides jobs within the community but also fights hunger in their communities by donating some of their products. The company carries 131,000 products from 1,040 food industry manufacturers. Since April 2020, the Bear, Delaware, distribution center has been donating to Charity Crossing. Every couple of weeks, the Charity Crossing team heads spend their Sunday morning picking up a donation at Dot's warehouse in Bear.

"It started as a way for us to get rid of the excess product during the COVID pandemic, but it quickly turned into a long relationship between Dot and Charity Crossing," explained Nakishia Bailey, the Human Resources Manager at Dot Foods Delaware.



Bailey first connected with Charity Crossing through volunteering with her church. She knew what great work Charity Crossing was doing and thought DOT could help.

“We work with Charity Crossing because we know it’s effective, and we know it’s working,” says Bailey. “They show up when they need to and deliver results.”

Dot Foods was founded in 1960 by Robert (RT) and Dorothy Tracy in Mt. Sterling, Illinois. They dreamed of solving problems within the food supply chain and creating good quality jobs in their community. The early days were challenging with eight children at home, little money, and only a station wagon. But the Tracys found success through hard work and dedication. They were always passionate about helping others, and as their company became successful, it gave them more opportunities to give back.

Last year, Dot’s Neighbor to Neighbor program donated and delivered more than \$330,000 of food products to 67 food pantries in just 2021 alone. Dot is always looking for new ways to give back, and the Delaware facility is thrilled with its partnership with Charity Crossing.

“We just work well together as a team,” Bailey says.

Using Dot’s donations, Charity Crossing has been able to help thousands across the New Castle and Kent Counties. Each pickup from Dot helps feed hundreds of families. Dot Foods and Charity Crossing have formed a great partnership that will continue to give back to the Delaware community.



Awards from Rosehill community center

By Sahil Langote

On March 30th, 2021, Jay Muthukamatchi (founder of Charity Crossing) and my mother, Rupali Langote, had a great meeting with Sheila Berkel, executive director at Rosehill Community Center (RHCC). As a part of their meeting, they explained what Charity Crossing is and how it serves and helps different communities. She was very impressed with our charity work and thus invited us to start serving at RHCC alongside them. This is the second location for Charity Crossing to serve the community.

We had our first serve at RHCC on April 4th, 2021, Easter Sunday. Since then, we have been serving at RHCC every Sunday. On average, we serve 50 to 100 families during the serve. This serve as well as others, wouldn't be possible without our team of dedicated volunteers.

After almost one and a half years, on August 7th, 2022, RHCC recognized the leads, volunteers, and Charity Crossing with awards and medals. This was a pleasant surprise for all of us during our weekly serve on that day. This recognition is only possible due to our volunteers' dedication and hard work.



Volunteer Spotlight - Vaishali Aliya Ameen

by Jay Muthukamatchi

Vaishali Aliya Ameen is a Quality Assurance Specialist at a financial institution and a mother of two teenagers. She is an active leader and volunteer at Charity Crossing, a volunteer-run nonprofit that provides basic needs to economically disadvantaged members of our community.

Her husband and children are also active Charity Crossing volunteers. She has been in charge of Walmart donation pick-up and distribution since 2020. She has organized and conducted a few Charity Crossing special events, assisted the warehouse team with donation collection and sorting, established a few new distribution hubs, and led a weekly distribution program serving the Wilmington community. This volunteering takes place in local, diverse community places with groups of designated volunteers and all assigned responsibilities intended to help them understand how to serve the community or comfort themselves on any occasion.

In this organization, as a lead, she empowers volunteers to learn about the neighborhood, develop a sense of community, and demonstrate teamwork, leadership, communication, and management skills in volunteer-related situations.

Vaishali said, "Knowing I've positively impacted someone else's life motivates me to continue volunteering. It brings happiness and warms my heart. The path I've been on over the past four years has significantly improved my outlook on life".



Volunteer Spotlight - Chandra Dontaraju

by Jay Muthukamatchi

Chandra Dontaraju is a Software engineer by profession working at JPMC. He has been living in Newark, DE, since 2004. He has a lovely family – wife Naini and son Tanuj.

He is passionate about helping the community, volunteering, and giving back to the less fortunate people. He volunteers actively at Charity Crossing and other nonprofit organizations in and around Delaware and across the globe.

He has been volunteering at Charity Crossing since Feb 2021. In 2021, he led the Hick's location and some special events. Currently, he is leading the William Hicks Anderson Community Center and serve every week and Open house at the same locations. He is one of the Co-leads for a Warehouse located in Newark, DE, overseeing the loading, sorting, unloading, and managing the inventory activities.



Charity Crossing started a new monthly service at “Glasgow” park in Newark, DE in which he is one of the leads, and CC is serving more than 300 families in this monthly service. Also, involved and continued in leading the other serve location serves like collaborating with the “Department of Justice” for their monthly serves, Herlihy serve location, and other serve as needed. Daily, he works closely with other leads to make the distribution process effective so that the donations reach the maximum number of less fortunate people.

He Volunteered 158 hours in 2021 and received the PVSA Bronze award.

Chandra said, "I am encouraging, inspiring, and instilling volunteerism in my son and many other young and adults."



Volunteering in CC Interviews

by Saatvik Kumar

Adil Ameen

Adil is a rising junior at MOT Charter High School, majoring in engineering. Adil also enjoys watching and playing basketball, which he does on his school's travel basketball team. In Charity Crossing, Adil is the Youth Leader for the Herring Manor serve in Wilmington.

Adil originally started volunteering at Charity Crossing at first in 2019 as a way to help the community during the hard times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, he found greater meaning and happiness in his experience volunteering when he committed to it in 2020. "Initially, I saw it as a way to help the people who were struggling through the pandemic, but as time passed, the feeling of making others happy was the real reason I wanted to continue," he states. "I also learned a lot from Charity Crossing, and it was making the world a better place to live in."



Adil attributes much of his growth to Charity Crossing. "Charity Crossing helped me grow as a leader and developed me as a person." When asked what skills he is most grateful for developing in his time at Charity Crossing, he responded, "Communicating and working with others. Before I struggled to work with others, so that's something I'm really happy about."

As a student who has school work and other responsibilities apart from volunteering, Adil has to manage his time effectively to be efficient in what he does. "I always prioritize school first, because that is something that should be prioritized," he says. "I always plan ahead to see if I'm busy that day, and that is one of the reasons I do Sunday serves, [because] I'm rarely ever busy on Sunday." One tip that Adil has is to complete all school work and other responsibilities first, and if there is any free time where nothing meaningful will be done, set it aside for volunteering.



Being a longtime volunteer, Adil also had a few pointers for newer volunteers who want to make a difference in their community. “Volunteering isn’t something that should be taken lightly; you should be giving your all to it. You have to have a commitment.” He also had a few words for volunteers about time management, an important skill beneficial to everyone. “It’s not ‘I want to volunteer, but I don’t have the time.’ You can make the time IF you plan accordingly.” He stresses the importance of time management in balancing volunteer work with other responsibilities. “If you plan accordingly, you’ll find time to volunteer. If you don’t plan accordingly, you’re more likely not to have enough time.”

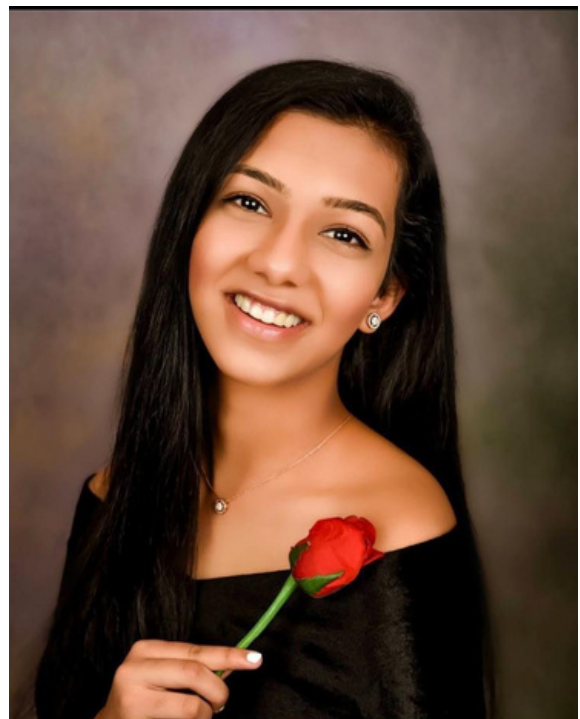
Aside from being a Youth Leader for the Herring Manor serve, Adil is also a member of the Digital Communications team and the Volunteer Appreciation team. He will be co-leading the upcoming Holiday Drive.

You can watch Adil’s full interview here: <https://youtu.be/jis4FDxbENo>

Kirti Daga

Kirti is a graduating high school senior from the Charter School of Wilmington. She will be attending the University of Delaware in the fall, where she will be majoring in Medical Diagnostics while also a part of the Honors college and World Scholar program. Kirti’s many hobbies include dance, cross country, sketching, and bullet journaling. In Charity Crossing, Kirti is the Youth Leader for the Herlihy serve in Wilmington.

Kirti started volunteering for Charity Crossing during the peak of COVID-19 in 2020, as a way to help her community during the difficult times. “Due to the high-risk factor, people losing their homes and livelihoods, I wanted to help mitigate that pain by any means possible, and Charity Crossing was one of the outlets to help me do that,” she says. “[It’s] actually quite helpful to know that I can do something for the community, whether weekly, daily, monthly – anything.”



Kirti also talks about opportunities she has had to serve people from different communities as well and talks about how grateful she is for those opportunities that joining Charity Crossing has provided her. “Charity Crossing has provided me with many outlets to help the underprivileged around Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and other places through many services activities, whether its blood donations, serving the community with household goods and food, and things like that.”

Just graduating high school from a frantic year of college applications on top of academics, Kirti has a lot of advice about balancing time with responsibilities and volunteer work for newer volunteers who want to make a difference in their community. “There’s been a lot of things to join and outlets to go through, but it’s definitely a lot of work in order to manage these things,” she states. She recalls her own experiences in Charity Crossing. “It’s definitely going to be a lot at first, but all that hard work has paid off since I earned the Governor’s Youth Service Award this year, which is kind of a nice honor.” Kirti effectively manages her time by organizing her work and her time for volunteering, and her academics. “It’s important to allot specific times for that and focus on getting that task done at hand with efficiency.” She emphasizes the importance of setting aside a certain time for each thing and has advice for those struggling with procrastination. “If you struggle with managing your time, it’s important to work ahead and not procrastinate.” She gives advice such as setting due dates earlier, so work can get done earlier without being put off until close to the deadline. “It’s definitely going to be tough, trying to manage both [personal/academic responsibilities and volunteering], but it is possible as long as you stick to a plan and try to set your due dates earlier.”

Apart from being a Youth Leader for the Herlihy serve, Kirti is very active among Charity Crossing’s other teams and initiatives. She also leads the Socks Drive, in addition to being on the Digital Communications and Newsletter team. She has also joined the Leadership Team for the Blood Donation group, and is joining the Charity Crossing team at the University of Delaware. You can watch Kirti’s full interview here:

You can view Kirti's full interview here: <https://youtu.be/CT56acHZbVg>



School supplies Giveaway

by Saathvik Swamy and Abhijeet Parmar

The 2022 Charity Crossing school supply drive, led by Abhijeet Parmar and co-led by Abhinav Parmar, has been a success. All the school supply donations were given to Charity Crossing, along with the other regular donations, by Amazon. Then, the school supplies were separated from the other donations in the warehouse. Four Charity Crossing volunteers- Abhijeet Parmar, Goldy, Lalit Karaparapu, and Karthik Karakarapu, came together to divide the supplies between 5 locations and 3 big events. The five locations were LGBC, Hicks, ICH, Rose Hill, and Herring Manor. The three big events were donation giveaways at Glasgow park, DOJ, and NCCPD.

While all the sorting was done in the month of July, the items were distributed at the 8 locations during the month of August. An example of the school supply drive is seen during the William Hicks center serve, held on August 20. More than 50 families came, collected, and benefited from the school supplies on this day. One volunteer at another location noticed, "Parents were happy that the school supply donations would ease their pockets. Kids were also happy to see the book bags, binder, pencil boxes, erasers, folder, loose sheets, pencils, erasers, markers, sharpies, planners, and table organizers, for all grades and ages". Last but not least, we would like to thank Rajesh and his team at TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) for donating school supplies.



Giveaway at the extended hand ministries, NJ

By Preeti Rao

On August 28, 2022, the New Jersey chapter of Charity Crossing had its first giveaway event of many to come. I was very excited about this because I was allowed to help expand this organization into another state and further the number of people we serve. I joined Charity Crossing about a year ago, and it was one of the first times I was directly involved with helping a group of people, allowing me to see the faces of the people we would assist and their appreciation. From when Jay gave me the opportunity to open a chapter of Charity Crossing in NJ, and throughout the whole process, I began looking forward to it more and more. I started looking for shelters to volunteer at and came across a homeless shelter in Mount Holly, NJ, called The Extended Hand Ministries.

The shelter's manager was very enthusiastic after hearing about Charity Crossing and willingly partnered with us. We decided that when the shelter serves hot food on Sundays, we would have tables set up outside for people in need to take items from. A few weeks prior, my family and I picked up several items from the CC warehouse to give away during our event. When the day came, there were tables set up already, so we laid out everything. Almost immediately, people started lining up to take whatever they needed. I could see the gratitude on their faces as they repeatedly thanked us. Though we were there for an hour and a half, almost everything we had brought was gone. The event went very well. I learned how to communicate with different people and understand their stories. It was meaningful to see how much everyone appreciated us. I look forward to our next event and serving the community more!



Volunteering through art

By Varsha Danduri



Art is essential to humanity; helping express ideas in no other format can bring people closer to forming a community. This is what the members of “Reconnecting The Community” and Charity Crossing believes in. At 10th Street, between Adams & Jackson, Charity Crossing helped paint primer on the bridge for the artist to sketch and paint on. The primer prevents the painting from peeling and helps protect the colors and details.



Starting at 9 AM, we primed two walls in the heat. The painting was hard work, but it was a fun experience! After finishing, you could see the other bridge volunteers were working on. Seeing the process of turning a light sketch into a fully finished mural was inspiring. The art showed Wilmington's colorful and diverse nature, showing us beauty in an otherwise unexpected place. One of the murals depicted two hands reaching toward each other, showing the bond of people in Wilmington.

We are excited to see the finished product of this ambitious project. Charity Crossing was happy to help our community out, just like how it helped us. Reaching out to help people is what this organization is about, so doing anything to help Delawareans is our goal.

Back to School Community Giveaway Event at Somerset, NJ

by Venky Udayavar

For the first time in New Jersey, Charity Crossing participated in a Back to School Community event last Saturday, Aug 13th - at Williams Park, Somerset. Our volunteers helped bring the donations from our Delaware warehouse and helped to set up and distribute them to the school/college-going youths and their families in our community. We gave away household items, bedding, toys, socks, and miscellaneous items. Being the first time, we were prepared to be there for the day. Still, the distribution was completed within an hour with active participation from the community members and the organizers. As people came one by one to take the things, we could see the joy and the happiness they felt at that moment. Young and old members thanked us wholeheartedly for the donations, took pictures with the volunteers, and posed with their day gifts.

Thank you all volunteers, for your time and dedication to making this event successful. Special thanks to councilman Sivaraman Anbarasan and Benjamin Guy III for extending the invitation and allowing us to serve the community.



Volunteer Handbook

by Rohan Sivva and Jay Muthukamatchi

Now, more than ever, becoming a Charity Crossing volunteer has never been easier! For all of our prospective volunteers, here's a handy guide on how to get started with Charity Crossing. Volunteering benefits everyone involved, since it allows you to help people in the community, but also allows you to learn new things, make new friends, and have fun. Here's a detailed guide on becoming a CC Volunteer who can help bring change to our community. First, take a look at the CC website, <https://charitycrossing.org>, and learn about our purpose, mission, and goals as an organization. Next, in the Register option in the Account tab, sign up with your email, and agree to the rules and ideals that CC values. After that, you can navigate to the Events option in the Volunteering tab, or go to <https://charitycrossing.org/events> to sign up for events that you are interested in and are available for. You can even bring your family and friends to volunteer at events, however, they need to sign up as well (so we don't have too many volunteers). Remember, all tickets are free, so anyone can volunteer as long as they are dedicated and respectful. To make things even more simple, you can always check the Registered Events option under the Volunteering tab, or go to <https://charitycrossing.org/registered-events> and have a detailed schedule of the events that you signed up for. Finally, after your event, make sure to add your hours in the Entering Service Hours option in the Volunteering tab or go to <https://charitycrossing.org/entering-service-hours>, and continue signing up for events!

When becoming a volunteer, there are a few small things to keep in mind, which include the fact that minors can't come to events alone, for their own safety, and must have a parent/guardian with them. Additionally, Charity Crossing discourages canceling events without a proper reason, since it suddenly creates a lack of volunteers for a specific event. Finally, every volunteer is expected to be respectful, kind, and helpful. But remember, the most important thing is to have fun, make new friends, and see yourself create an impact in the community. Now, I encourage every possible volunteer to go to <https://charitycrossing.org> and bring a positive impact to our community!

You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and LinkedIn. We are also on the web, through our website. Through volunteer work, you can even build your social media profile, which is especially helpful when you are applying for higher education or searching for a job.



Fundraiser Opportunities

Amazon Smile

Charity Crossing is a member of the Amazon Smile program, a great way for you to raise funds for Charity Crossing. To start, Amazon Smile has the same products as the Amazon that you normally shop on, except this site donates a part of the money from your purchase to Charity Crossing. No extra cost to you! Please go to smile.amazon.com or use the regular Prime app on your phone to sign up first.

Matching Donations

As Charity Crossing is a non-profit organization, a big part of the reason we can constantly serve the community is due to help from corporate donors. An amazing example of this occurred in February, when JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America, and other employers matched employee donations and helped raise \$11,713 for Charity Crossing's vehicle fundraiser. We encourage you to check with your employer to see if similar programs are available!

Dollars-for-Doers / Volunteers Grant Program

Dollars-for-Doers is a corporate program that distributes monetary grants to non-profit organizations where its employees volunteer. They are also known as volunteer grants or dollars-for-hours programs. The process of receiving one of these grants is essentially the same. First, the employee must volunteer with a nonprofit. They then request a grant from their employer, who will verify the number of hours performed, then send a check to the non-profit organization. Some companies offering dollars-for-doers or volunteer grants include Bank of America, TD Bank, Aetna, Microsoft, and many more. Please check with your employer.

Birthday Fundraisers

Organizing a birthday fundraiser using social media is a great way to raise funds for Charity Crossing. By doing so, you will enjoy a contented feeling, knowing that you played a part in helping those in need on your special day. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc., offer features that allow you to raise funds for Charity Crossing. Please check them out.

For more information, please contact info@charitycrossing.org

MEET OUR TEAM!



Shriya R.
Writer



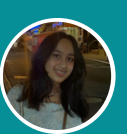
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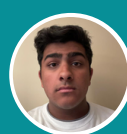
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