

New Executive Director at Nutley Family Service Bureau, Inc. Leads Thanksgiving Initiative

By Emma Cortese, PhD, NFSB Board of Trustees

The Nutley Family Service Bureau Board of Trustees welcomes Katherine Carmichael, MS.Ed, MSW, LSW, as our new Executive Director. Ms. Carmichael comes to the position as a 20-year administrative leader within non-profit organizations supporting youth, families, and communities. She joins NFSB after a successful term in the child welfare sector as an executive director of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for children. Prior, she was senior director of operations at the YWCA Bergen County overseeing all aspects of operations for the Aquatics, Health, Wellness, Childcare and Youth programs. She also served as senior director of Program Services and Outreach for the Princeton-Blairstown Center, and as director for Good Shepherd Services where she oversaw extensive programmatic activities with the NYC Department of Education.

NFSB's unique organizational structure, which houses The (Psychotherapy) Center, The (Food) Pantry, and The (Thrift) Shop, requires an executive director with the diversified skill set that Carmichael brings to the position. She is a Licensed Social Worker and Certified School Social Worker. She earned a Master's degree from Columbia University School of Social Work and a Master's degree from Bank Street College, with dual certification in general and special education. Additionally, she is a Certified Fund Raising Executive and completed an Advanced Certificate in Executive Leadership from NYU. As a lifelong volunteer, from Girl Scout to serving in the AmeriCorps VISTA program, and most recently, as a member of Princeton's Municipal Committee, she possesses a strong commitment to community and social justice initiatives.

Carmichael's career and personal life, which have been dedicated to the fostering of thriving families and neighborhoods, is in total alignment with NFSB's mission to strengthen the emotional and social well-being of individuals and families. She stated, "I truly am honored to lead the Nutley Family Service Bureau. I'm eager to partner with the dedicated board of directors, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders to build on NFSB's current momentum and bring its vital, affordable, mental health counseling and social service programs to more people as these services are needed more than ever in our community and beyond."

She continued, "One of the first big undertakings in my role as Executive Director is to oversee the upcoming annual NFSB Thanksgiving Initiative. This event draws upon township residents, civic organizations, church groups, and businesses, to pull together to help NFSB create a plentiful holiday meal for the food pantry patrons."

In 2019, 165 households received all of the makings of a traditional holiday dinner, including a turkey, stuffing, gravy, and cranberry sauce, mashed white and candied sweet potatoes, carrots, peas, corn, vegetable options,



Katherine Carmichael, at the NFSB Pantry with the makings of a Thanksgiving meal

and apple pie. In order to be as efficient as possible and ensure that there is a supply of each item for our "holiday grocery bag menu," we are again using an online sign-up roster at www.nutleyfamily.org. Due to practical considerations associated with small freezers, undersized ovens, and inadequate thaw, we are asking for turkey breasts or small turkeys to ensure ease of preparation. As in previous years, Nutley's ShopRite reward program provides an opportunity for customers to effortlessly donate their free turkey breasts to The (Food) Pantry.

This year, in the midst of the pandemic, many local families are experiencing the compounding effect of food insecurity and the stress that goes along with "making ends meet" on a day-to-day basis. Feeding America, a non-profit supporting nationwide food banks, projected over a 50% increase in New Jersey's food insecurity rate in the months ahead due to the pandemic economy. In view of the devastating impact, NFSB supports our pantry participants' ability to maintain normalcy in their daily routines as they cope with overwhelming financial and emotional disruptions that includes food insecurity. Toward that end, we have a continuing need to stock the NFSB Food Pantry shelves with staples that are distributed throughout the year.

During this season of thanksgiving, NFSB is grateful to all the community partners that consistently support our mission. We wish everyone a safe and abundant holiday. ■